

Martin Zöbeley



“All music is transient.” Martin Zöbeley’s statement reflects the leitmotif of his musical craft. For all music reverberates both with the idea that brought it into existence as well as with the specific conditions of each performance. For Martin Zöbeley, the historical background is crucial; in his musical interpretation, it is his ambition to always do justice to the historical context at the time of each work’s composition.

Martin Zöbeley’s broad knowledge of Early Music, his experience as a choral conductor, and his theological vocation have all influenced his predilection for sacred choral music of the 15th and 16th centuries. He has especially dedicated himself to research and edit lost or forgotten works (e.g. J.K. Kerll), but he nonetheless also performs contemporary music and the great works of classical choir repertoire. With intensity and rigor he creates music

that seeks a balance between intellect and emotion, a credo that Zöbeley scrupulously implements with the Gruppe für Alte Musik, which he founded in 1985, and with the Vokal Ensemble München, founded in 1992. Both ensembles place great emphasis on historically informed performance practice and the corresponding instrumentation.

Martin Zöbeley earned his diploma in choral conducting in 1988 at the Musikhochschule in Munich. He concluded his musicological studies with a thesis about the ‘Psalm Settings of Josquin Desprez’. From 1998-2004 he studied evangelical theology at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. In 1995 he won the Staatlicher Förderpreis for young artists. One year earlier, he had established his reputation as a specialist in Early Music with the direction of the festival, “Orlando di Lasso – Renaissance in Munich”, in celebration of the 400th anniversary of Lasso’s death. Zöbeley has repeatedly accepted choral conducting appointments for the Biennale or the Opernfestspiele München on occasions when the Vokal Ensemble has done professional gigs. Under his direction the ensemble has won several awards, including the 2001 Bavarian Choral Competition.

In addition to his active concert career, Martin Zöbeley has also made a name for himself beyond Germany’s borders with radio and television broadcasts, as well as CD recordings. Among his recordings are the Mermann Madrigals of Orlando di Lasso, the Cantiones Sacre by J.K. Kerll, and the St. John Passion by Heinrich Schütz. Since 2007 Zöbeley has combined his musical career with his profession as a pastor in Karlsfeld near Munich.