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## **FRANZ JOSEPH AUMANN**

Chamber Music



in the Abbey of St. Florian

**Ars Antiqua Austria**

**Gunar Letzbor** violin

**FRANZ JOSEPH AUMANN**

Chamber Music in the Abbey of St. Florian

**Ars Antiqua Austria**

Ensemble for new baroque music

**Gunar Letzbor** violine, leader

**Nina Pohn** violine

**Markus Miesenberger** viola, tenor

**Peter Aigner** viola

**Jan Krigovsky** violone 8'

**Michael Oman** flautello

**Christian Simeth** clarino

**Martin Mühringer** clarino

**Stefan Reichinger** timpani

**Szilárd Chereji** violone 16'

**FRANZ JOSEPH AUMANN** (1728 - 1797)

**Parthia ex G a 5 Stromenti**

**Violino Primo, Violino Secondo, Viola Prima, Viola Seconda con Violone**

[1] —	<b>3:41</b>
[2] Menuet	<b>4:03</b>
[3] Andante	<b>4:30</b>
[4] Finale	<b>1:47</b>

**Cassatio in D a 2 Violini, Flautello concertato, Alto Viola e Violoncello**

[5] Allegro	<b>2:16</b>
[6] Menuet - Andante	<b>4:32</b>
[7] Andante - con sordino	<b>3:55</b>
[8] Menuet - Allegro	<b>2:00</b>
[9] Finale	<b>1:25</b>

**Cassatio ex C a 2 Violini, 2 Viole e Basso**

[10] Divertimento - gustoso	<b>4:02</b>
[11] Menuet	<b>3:56</b>
[12] Andante - con sordini	<b>4:35</b>
[13] Finale - Presto	<b>1:45</b>

[14] <b>Die Hex</b>	<b>2:47</b>
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Text: Maurus Lindemayr

**Divertimento in B a 5 Stromenti**

**Violini 2, Alto Viole 2 e Violone**

[15] Allegro	<b>2:44</b>
[16] Menuet	<b>4:48</b>
[17] Andante	<b>2:57</b>
[18] Finale - Presto	<b>1:35</b>

**Parthia in C a Violinis 2, Alto Viola, Clarinis 2, Basso\* con Tympano**

[19] Presto	<b>3:28</b>
[20] Menuet	<b>2:36</b>
[21] Andante - sempre piano	<b>4:07</b>
[22] Finale - Tempo di Menuetto	<b>1:50</b>

Total time 69:32



**Franz Josef Aumann** was born in the Austrian town of Traismauer in 1728 and studied music in Vienna, where he came across many important musicians of his time. It has not yet been established why in 1753 he relocated to Sankt Florian, at the age of twenty-five. He must have been unusually talented, as two years later he became *Regens Chori*, one year before his ordination to the priesthood. From that point he remained in the service of the monastery until his death in 1797. Aumann served several prelates, and also showed his gratitude to them; he wrote a new requiem for each funeral (he is said to have written twelve requiem settings), and also mass settings for various festive occasions, as well as many motets, litanies, offertories and even oratorios. His *Singspiele* in the vernacular were especially popular.

His chamber music is scattered throughout Europe. He composed "entertainment" music of the highest quality – pieces that were played for the amusement of invited guests, on special occasions, or simply between the various courses of lavish banquets.

In the archives of St Florian Monastery not many chamber works have survived – only a handful, but these are of outstanding quality. The quintets are remarkable. Here the master develops a particular style of chamber music, which probably has its origins in the polychorality of Salzburg church music and which, to some extent, can also be found in Romanus Weichlein's works (Lambach Abbey): two violins are juxtaposed with two violas. Both groups of instruments have equal status and enter into a lively discourse. One or two generations earlier, Romanus Weichlein had already – and unusually in

instrumental music at that time – assigned leading roles to the violas in his *Encaenia Musices* (1695). Is Aumann picking up where this masterpiece left off? In any case, the composer seems to have been very fond of the viola. Several of his sacred works contain expansive and technically extremely demanding solos for the alto instrument of the violin family. In the large-scale works they form emotional climaxes.

Music during the baroque period at Salzburg Cathedral was modelled on that of St Mark's Basilica in Venice: polychoral performance was preferred. Instrumental and vocal choirs were positioned in different galleries, conveying to the listener a spatial, multi-directional sound experience. We have taken this effect as a model and positioned the violins to the left of the bass, and the violas to the right of the bass. Therefore, the viola choir can perform soloistically from the right, followed perhaps by a soloistic violin choir from the left, and we also hear passages with mutual accompaniment. The result presents a great variety of tonal and spatial possibilities.

Aumann mastered all the compositional techniques of his time. We can, however, observe a particular preference for melodic lines reminiscent of the folk music that was practised in the region above the river Enns. It was exactly during this time that the significance and specific quality of folk music was first knowingly perceived and appreciated. Aumann was apparently on very friendly terms with Michael Haydn, and also maintained regular contact with the other masters of his time, including Joseph Haydn and W A Mozart. During the nineteenth century, some of his compositions were even misattributed to the grand master from Salzburg.

For contrast, we have added to this collection of quintets a piece from the Lambach monastery archives. In the Cassatio in D, the radiant sound of a *flautello* bestows a special aura upon the music.

The concluding Parthia in C could be attributed to the body of music written for representative purposes at monasteries. It is preserved both in Sankt Florian and in Munich. Even during Aumann's early days at the monastery, trumpets symbolised the divinity or a high social position. Their sound would have resoundingly announced the visit to the monastery of eminent ecclesiastical dignitaries and princely rulers. But Aumann lived at a time of upheaval. Following Emperor Josef II's church music reform, for some time the trumpet was even banned from the church. In later works Aumann therefore mostly dispensed with their festive sound.

In recent years, I have had the pleasure of giving first performances of numerous compositions by F J Aumann. I have come to know and love this musician – he often has surprises in store. He must have been extremely innovative, not worrying too much about any rules within his environment. His position as Canon of the St Florian Monastery undoubtedly granted him certain artistic freedoms. Countless gems from his pen still lie dormant in the archives of the former monarchy. This music is waiting to be revived. It is worth it!

Gunar Letzbor

*Translation: Viola Scheffel / Muse Translations*

The Augustinian Canons' Monastery of St Florian celebrates its 950th anniversary in 2021.

To mark this joyous occasion, we have recorded this album of chamber music by the most famous composer of the region above the river Enns during Mozart's time.

Franz Josef Aumann was an Augustinian Canon at St. Florian.

**“D’ Hex”**: the reference to “Zaubrä Jägl” proves Lindemayer’s and Aumann’s connection to Salzburg traditions. The “Zaubererjackl witch trials” were amongst the bloodiest witch trials in Austria, leading to the execution of 138 people, including many children. Although witch trials no longer occurred during Lindemayer’s time, the fear of dark powers that had been fanned among the people continued to have an effect for generations. The author ridicules this superstition among the rural population.



#### [14] Die Hex

Text: Maurus Lindemayr

Auf dä Ofengabel fahrt mein Muedä  
Als ä Hex in Lüften um ä dum  
Macht än ötlä meil grads in ain Fuedä,  
Und dä Fex mein Vadä waiß nix drum.  
Han ä Pichsel gsehä  
Wills gar leicht däspehä  
Obs nöt öpern is ä Hexenschmier  
Braucht dös Toifel weri,  
fahrt in Hexen Beri  
und dä Zaubrä Jägel spannt ihr für.

Z' Nächsten bin i haimli nachi gschlichä  
Wies in Kellä drunt hat butä grüht,  
In än Flux da hats ihr d' Wang angstrichä  
Aftn hats dä Schittel wöckä gführt.  
Waiß nöt iß ä Bösen  
Odä Gabel gwösen  
Auf dems gritten is, hant`s nöt betracht.  
Ist auf d` Nacht beym essen  
Doh schon widä gsessen,  
Hat uns leicht dä Toifel d` Suppen gmacht?

#### Die Hex

Translation: Viola Scheffel / Muse Translations

On a roasting fork my mother moves  
through the air, as a witch,  
easily covering a hundred miles,  
and my wise father knows nothing about it.  
I saw a tin,  
I want to take a closer look to see  
if it might be witches' grease;  
she needs this work of the devil,  
heads to the witches' mountain,  
and Jackl, the magician, hitches up her cart.

Recently I secretly followed her  
when she churned butter in the cellar.  
Suddenly she daubed her cheeks,  
then the evil one led her away.  
I don't know if it was a broom  
or a pitchfork  
on which she rode, I couldn't see.  
In the evening at dinner time  
she sat with us again;  
did perhaps the devil make our soup?



## **Ars Antiqua Austria**

Ensemble for new baroque music

Gunar Letzbor - Direction & Violine  
Nina Pohn - Violine  
Markus Miesenberger - Viola & Tenor  
Peter Aigner - Viola  
Jan Krigovsky - Violone 8'  
Michael Oman - Flautello  
Christian Simeth - Clarino  
Martin Mühringer - Clarino  
Stefan Reichinger - Timpani  
Szilárd Chereji - Violone 16' \*

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**Ars Antiqua Austria**

**Gunar Letzbor**



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**Ars Antiqua Austria**

**Gunar Letzbor**



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The Four Seasons | Violin Concerto in D minor

**Ars Antiqua Austria**

**Gunar Letzbor**



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### **KARL KOHAUT**

Haydn's lute player

**Ars Antiqua Austria**

**Gunar Letzbor**

This Recording was Produced, Engineered and Edited using the 'High Quality Musical Mastering' principle with the use of Sonodore microphones, Avalon Acoustic & Musikelectronic Geithain monitoring, Siltech Mono-Crystal cabling and dCS - & Merging Technologies converters.



[www.northstarconsult.nl](http://www.northstarconsult.nl)



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