

Collegium 1704 & Collegium Vocale 1704

The Prague-based Baroque orchestra and vocal ensemble **Collegium 1704 & Collegium Vocale 1704** were founded in 2005 by harpsichordist and conductor **Václav Luks** on the occasion of the project *Bach — Prague — 2005*. Today, both ensembles rank among the world's leading performers in the field of historically informed performance and appear regularly at major Czech and international venues.

In addition to their presence at leading festivals in the Czech Republic, the ensembles are frequent guests at Europe's most prestigious festivals and concert halls, including the **Salzburg Festival, Berliner Philharmonie, Theater an der Wien, Wiener Konzerthaus, Lucerne Festival, BOZAR (Brussels), the Chopin Festival in Warsaw, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, Bachfest Leipzig**, and in residence at the **Opéra Royal at the Palace of Versailles**. In May 2021, Collegium 1704, conducted by Václav Luks, opened the **Prague Spring International Music Festival** with a performance of Bedřich Smetana's cycle of symphonic poems *Má vlast*.

Long-term dramaturgical projects form a central part of the ensemble's artistic profile. In 2008, Collegium 1704 launched the **Music Bridge Prague — Dresden**, building on the rich cultural traditions of both cities. This initiative led in 2012 to the establishment of a second Prague concert series of Collegium 1704 at the **Rudolfinum**. Since 2019, **Collegium Vocale 1704** has curated its own chamber concert series in Prague, which has been based at the **Vzlet Cultural Centre** since 2021.

Collegium 1704 has also gained an outstanding reputation in the field of opera. Following the international success of Handel's *Rinaldo*, the ensemble presented Josef Mysliveček's *L'Olimpiade*, which received a nomination for the **International Opera Awards 2014**, and Antonio Vivaldi's *Arsilda, regina di Ponto* in its modern world premiere. In February 2022, Collegium 1704 performed Handel's *Alcina*, directed by Jiří Heřman, in a co-production with the **National Theatre Brno, the Opéra Royal at the Palace of Versailles**, and the **Théâtre de Caen**. In 2024, the ensemble achieved major international acclaim with a production of Jean-Philippe Rameau's *Platée*, created in collaboration with the orchestra of the **National Theatre in Prague**. In 2025, Collegium 1704 presented Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* at the **Janáček Theatre in Brno**, again to enthusiastic critical response.

The ensemble's recordings have received widespread international recognition from both audiences and critics, earning numerous prestigious awards, including **Diapason d'Or, Gramophone Editor's Choice, CD of the Month**, and nominations for **Gramophone Awards**. Highlights of the discography include recordings of violin concertos by Josef Mysliveček, Bach's

Mass in B minor, Jan Dismas Zelenka's *Sonatas* and *Missa Divi Xaverii* (world premiere recording), the first complete Czech recording of Handel's *Messiah* (2019), and a three-CD set of Rameau's opera *Les Boréades*, which received the **Trophées 2020** and the **Edison Klassiek Award 2021** for Best Opera Recording of the Year.

In **2025**, marking its **20th anniversary**, Collegium 1704 released the recording *Missa Circumcisionis* by **Jan Dismas Zelenka**, the first performance of this mass to be recorded on period instruments. The album was met with outstanding international critical acclaim.

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