

PLAINCHANT

Recordings of chant fall into 3 main categories -

**Old Roman - (pre Gregorian)/ Eastern - Byzantine, Coptic etc,
Gregorian Other rites, Gallican, Mozarabic, Ambrosian etc.**

The performers are either communities of monks - or nuns,

Schola specifically performing chant and/or early polyphony or other choirs who often include chant in their recordings. My favourites in this last category are mentioned in other lists -

but I will mention 2 Christmas collections which include fine chanting -

CHRISTMAS WITH THE TALLIS SCHOLARS - GIMELL - CDGIM202 and

FROM THE VAULTS OF WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL - HYPERION - CDA 67707 and an

ADVENT PROCESSION from Chichester Cathedral - HERALD - HAVPCD379 on which the "O Advent" Antiphon chants are included.

1. CAPPELLA ROMANA. This group based in Portland, Oregon specialises in Byzantine and early Orthodox repertoire under academic and performer Alexander Lingas.

My CD choice - GOOD FRIDAY IN JERUSALEM - CAPPELLA ROMANA - CR413

2. ENSEMBLE ORGANUM - Marcel Perez (See Vocal Ensembles) Their many and varied chant recordings - from 7th century to the 17th century reforms have been a mainstay of the early part of Gloria since the beginning. The eastern influence is never far away and Peres' use of Greek cantors and untrained Corsican voices sets them far removed from the smooth gentleness of Gregorian chant as we know it.

My CD choice - CHANTS from the BYZANTINE PERIOD - Harmonia Mundi - HMA1951218

3. SCHOLA GREGORIANA CAMBRIDGE - Mary Berry was a Benedictine, a Cambridge academic and an indefatigable promoter, singer and teacher of Plainchant - she died in 2008 aged 90.

I remember spending a weekend workshop with her in Maynooth in 1992 - Her Schola made a number a fine chant programmes on Herald, including.....

My CD choice - MASS FOR THE ANNUNCIATION - HERALD HAVPCD189.

4. SCHOLA OF VIENNA CATHEDRAL - FR. Hubert Dopff, S.J.

A 6 CD set on Philips from Wiener Hofburgkapelle frequently provides the opening chant for Gloria The Jesuit chant specialist Huber Dopf directed them for over 20 years.

My CD choice - GREGORIAN CHANT FOR THE CHURCH YEAR - PHILIPS - 468399-2

5. CAPELLA ANTIQUA , MUNICH - Konrad Ruhland.

Konrad Ruhland founded Capella Antiqua in 1958 and was foremost in Germany's contribution to the Early Music revival. He also directed Niederaltaicher Scholaren. Both groups have recorded excellent chant programmes.

My CD choice - THE QUINTESSENCE OF CHANT - Niederaltaicher Scholaren - SONY VIVARTE - S2K62805

6. CHANTICLEER - It may seem strange to chose a group who is unsurpassed in multi-part singing over many octaves - but the fact that they can come together in unaccompanied unison chant is amazing - and their chant album is as good as any.

My CD choice - Chanticleer - Gregorian Chants - WARNER CLASSICS - Das Alte Werk - 2564683624.

(See also Chamber Choirs)

7. CHOEUR GREGORIEN DE PARIS - This choir was set up in 1974 specifically to promote Gregorian chant - they sing in concerts and liturgies around the world. Their female Schola began in 1994 and their recording of Marian

chants is lovely.

My CD choice - MARIE - NAIVE - V4868

8. CISTERCIAN MONKS OF STIFT HEILIGENKREUZ - In 2007 Pope Benedict XVI visited this Abbey in the Vienna Woods. The following year Universal, one of the major recording companies made an album of their chants which became hugely popular. The Abbot writes in the booklet that the monks have had no formal voice training - but they spend 3 hours a day at prayer - much of which is chanted - it is in their bones - and it shows in their chanting.

My CD choice – MUSIC FOR PARADISE - UNIVERSAL - UJC1798006

9. SCHOLA HUNGARICA -

My CD choice –

10. MONKS OF SOLEMNES

My CD choice –

TIM THURSTON – AUGUST 2015