

THE CHAMBER ORCHERSTRA MANNHEIM – UNESCO CITY OF MUSIK

Since it was founded in 1952, the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim has been particularly committed to the rediscovery of and care for the Mannheim School, thus acting as a direct descendent of the famous Mannheim Hofkapelle during the times of Prince Elector Carl Theodor (1724–1799).

Thanks to Carl Theodor's modern and enlightened thinking, Mannheim and the Palatine Electorate developed into one of the most innovative and forward-thinking regions in Germany and Europe in the realms of science and art during his reign. It was particularly in the area of music that he succeeded in setting new standards by attracting the best composers and instrumentalists of their time – among them Johann Stamitz and his sons, Anton and Carl, Franz Xaver Richter, Ignaz Holzbauer or Christian Cannabich – to the Mannheim court, who were to pave the way for a new orchestra culture with their work. Indeed, classical instrumental music as we know it today would be unimaginable without the work of the Kurfürstliche Hofkapelle and the accomplishments of the Mannheim School. When Carl Theodor moved to Munich in 1778, the illustrious era of Palatine musical history ended, and its memory was increasingly forgotten over the course of time.

It was not until the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim was founded that the Mannheim School returned to the Rhein and Neckar rivers and reentered the awareness of a broader public. Due to the decades of its indefatigable work – be it at numerous concerts, on the radio – and audio recordings as well as collections of works – many significant works of the Mannheim composers made their way back onto global concert programs. For music lovers all over the world, the Mannheim School is thus inextricably linked to the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim, or rather: it is generally considered *the* orchestra of the Mannheim School.

Thus, to this day, with its almost one hundred concerts a year, the Chamber Orchestra Mannheim has been providing an indispensable contribution to keeping the region's extremely rich musical history heritage alive far beyond the boundaries of the State. Numerous performances in national concert centers such as Gasteig Munich, Glocke Bremen, Dresden Church of Our Lady (Frauenkirche), Tonhalle Zürich, Philharmonie Luxembourg or Seoul Arts Center as well as regular invitations to play at national and international festivals are also evidence of the high artistic quality of the orchestra, its enthusiasm as well as its enormous bandwidth ranging from the Baroque to the Modern era, making it a sure bet for first-class music with a program focus on the early classical and the classical periods.

