



## FRANCISCO J. GARCÍA FAJER

Oficio de Difuntos

La Grande Chapelle  
Schola Antiqua  
Albert Recasens

## FRANCISCO J. GARCÍA FAJER Office of the Dead

### La Grande Chapelle

Soloists: **Cyrille Gerstenhaber, Anna Dennis, James Oxley, Jonathan Brown et al.**

**Schola Antiqua / Juan Carlos Asensio**

Director: **Albert Recasens**

Lauda – LAU008

Release: November 2008

Digibox; digipack; booklet 68 p.

Duration: 62:41



FRANCISCO J. GARCÍA FAJER (1730-1809): *Regem cui omnia vivunt; Venite, exsultemus Domino; Domine ne in furore tuo; Parce mihi Domine; Taedet animam meam; Dies irae*

Plainsong: *Domine, labia mea aperies, Dirige Domine, Convertere Domine, Nequando rapiat, Domine Deus meus (+falsobordone), Credo quod redemptor, Qui Lazarum resuscitasti*

**World Premiere Recording**

### Francisco Javier Garcia Fajer: Office of the Dead

This is the world's first recording of the *Oficio de Difuntos* (the Office of the Dead) by "el Españoletto", one of the most important composers in the history of Spanish music before 1800, whose work enjoyed great prestige in his lifetime and was widely circulated in both Spain and Latin America.

Francisco Javier Garcia Fajer (1730-1809), better known as "el Españoletto" is one of the great names in Spanish music of the 18th century. He was born in La Rioja but trained in Italy and was Chapel Master in La Seo Cathedral in Zaragoza for 53 years. During his stay in Italy Garcia Fajer wrote at least two oratorios and four operas although in Spain his output was mainly of religious pieces. His music was very widely disseminated, as attested to by the copies that are preserved in several Spanish and American cities.

The *Oficio de Difuntos* itself comes from the archives of Guadalupe (Mexico) and Lima (Perú) and has been revived by La Grand Chapelle. It is composed of two psalms and two readings of the first nocturn of matins. Fajer's office is written for eight voices with violins, flutes, horns and *basso continuo* and is characterized by its melodic sweetness, simple harmonics and formal clarity, each at the service of the liturgical texts for which they were conceived. The music has been contextualized by including Gregorian responses and antiphons taken from a *Prontuario* of 1799-1800; a labour which was undertaken by Juan Carlos Asensio who is also the leader of Schola Antiqua. The Cd is completed with the *Dies irae* sequence attributed to Fajer and preserved in the church of Madre di Enna (Sicily).

The present recording provides the first opportunity to hear the highly interesting Office of the Dead by one of the composers most in tune with international developments in the years leading up to the War of Independence. It provides evidence that Spain was not as musically isolated as others have claimed and that this composer from La Rioja, while still including late baroque and rococo elements, had completely assimilated the classical style without leaving aside the Spanish musical tradition.