

# L'ACADÉMIE

## 2018

Ondřej Adámek, *Seven Songs* – Opéra a capella. Editions Gerard Billandot • Charlotte Bray, *In Black Light* pour alto solo • Bastien David, *Impatience* pour quatuor à cordes • Samy Moussa, *Barfane*. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • Diana Soh, *Soh* pour quatuor à cordes • Fabien Touchard, *Le mélo* – Mélodies pour ténor et piano •

## 2017

Ondřej Adámek, *Throning* – ensemble vocal et percussions. Editions Gerard Billandot • Sivan Eldar, *The White Princess* – deux sopranos, percussions et électronique • Matthew Herbert, *Requiem* – quatuor à cordes et musique électronique, création live • Raphaël Languiat, *Salut, Ernest* (P. 12) – mezzo-soprano, baryton, harpe et deux bols chantants • Oliver Leith, *The Race* – électronique • Oliver Leith, *Poll's Questions* – ténor, baryton, basse et piano • Camille Pepin, *Lyne* – quatuor à cordes, harpe et percussions. Co-commande ProQuartet – CEMC. Editions Jobert • Pascal Robert, *Oblique lumière* pour quatuor à cordes •

## 2016

Moussini Adwan, *Kalila wa Dimna* – opéra • Gilbert Amy, *Le Baiser trachide* pour violoncelle et baryton • Benjamin Attahir, *Afrik* pour trio avec piano. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • Nuno da Rocha, *Ere Pate* pour mezzo-soprano, baryton et piano • Benjamin de la Fucille, *Bocchata* pour deux à cordes, harpe et bande enregistrée. Co-commande ProQuartet – CEMC • Sébastien Hervieu, *D'abord, la fin (d'abord)* – batterie et bande enregistrée. Editions Alliance, collection de Jean Godfroy • Jug Marković, *Ultimatum* – soprano, mezzo-soprano et piano • François Melançon, *La maison pour* quintette à flûtes alto. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • René Orth, *Dialogue between Death and Youth* pour soprano, baryton et piano • Luca Vago, *Druid* pour quatuor à cordes. Commande du Quatuor Tans •

**20 YEARS**  
OF CREATION  
AND OF  
PERSPECTIVES

## 2015

Hye-Yeon Choi, *No Number* se pour soprano, baryton et piano • Andrzej Kwiecinski, *Per non potare* pour mezzo-soprano et piano à quatre mains • Thomas Laetie, *Je ne puis* pour soprano, baryton et quatuor à cordes • Sarah Lianne Lewis, *Although You Sit at a Room that is Gray* pour baryton et piano • Sarah Lianne Lewis, *Relativity and Revolution* pour mezzo-soprano, piano et bols tibétains • Samy Moussa, *The Sick Room* pour ténor et piano. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • Alexandre Ouzoumoff, *Vendredi* pour mezzo-soprano et piano •

## 2014

Jérôme Combar, *Pâtis longuement de fantômes*. Commande de Musique Nouvelle en Liberté – Ville de Paris. Editions Henry Lemoine • Ahmed Essad, *Quatuor avec voix* pour quatuor à cordes et mezzo-soprano. Co-commande Fondation Royaumont • Sebastian Rivas, *Stains in the Carpet* – quintette avec contrebasse. Editions Le Chant du Monde • Francesca Veranelli, *Sky and Drowning Sins* – contrebasse et électronique. Co-Commande CMEM – Centre National de Création Musicale – Marseille •

## 2013

Laurent Ducup, *Supers* pour deux à cordes. Co-commande Villa Médici • François Melançon, *Unblessed* – solo flûte pour quatuor à cordes. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • Vasco Mendonça, *The House Taken Over* – opéra. Co-commande Ircus. Editions Henry Lemoine •

## 2012

Mairo Lanza, *Der König deutschen Karmeliten zu Hatten*, octuor à cordes. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • Magie Malik, *Empathy forest* – pièce avec improvisation pour quatuor à cordes, flûte et musicien électronique en temps réel • Vasco Mendonça, *Boys of Summer* pour mezzo-soprano et trio à cordes. Co-commande Aldeburgh Music (Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme) et Académie du Festival de Verbier • Gilbert Nouni, *Puller* – quatuor à cordes, mezzo et électronique à temps réel •

## 2011

Karel Belfa, *Les heures de l'été* pour trio pour voix, alto et piano. Editions Billandot • Oscar Bianchi, *Thanks to My Eyes* – opéra. Commande de T&M-Paris. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical • Francisco Coll Garcia, *Squads verso l'interno* – quintette avec clarinette. Co-commande Aldeburgh Music (Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme) et Académie du Festival de Verbier. Editions Faber Music • Zoltan Montfaki, *Masdjara* – huit voix, piano, cymbalum et percussions. Onoma éditions musicales • Yann Robin, *Grescent Serenades* – quatuor à cordes n°2. Editions Jobert •

## 2010

Mark Andre, *io* 8 pour trio à cordes. Editions Peters • Charlotte Bray, *L'ère de Louis* pour alto et quatuor à cordes. Co-commande Aldeburgh Music (Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme) et Académie du Festival de Verbier, Composers Edition • Jonathan Harvey, *Songs and Haiku* pour soprano et piano. Editions Faber Music • Felix Ibarroondo, *Bocbi* – 3 manchettes pour deux mezzo-sopranos, deux sopranos et chœur • Betsy Jolas, *Bait* solo pour piano et alto • Piotr Moss, *Une entre les pairs*, d'après un poème de Miriam Van Hee – quatuor et voix • Oscar Stranoy, *Quatuor* – opéra. Co-commande Musiciennes. Editions Gerard Billandot •

## 2009

Francesco Filidei, *Concertino di fu* pour quintette à vents, quatuor à cordes et piano. Editions Rai Trade •

## 2008

Christian Bertrand, *Suila* pour flûte, clarinette, violon, violoncelle, piano et percussions. Editions Nordlo •

## 2007

Franck Bedrossian, *Trues d'ouers* pour quatuor à cordes. Editions Billandot •

## 2006

Jérôme Combar, *Nov'ant* pour trio à cordes • Julien Dassié, *œuvre* pour quatuor à cordes, mezzo-soprano et baryton – quatuor à cordes, mezzo-soprano et baryton •

## 2005

Bruno Mantovani, *Blue City with Red Fagon* pour quatuor à cordes et piano. Co-commande Académie de France à Rome – Villa Médici. Editions Lemoine •

## 2001

Georgew Aporphat, *Engle* pour violoncelle et solo. Editions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical •

## 1999

Yann Harcos, *Fertile* pour double percussion •

## 1998

Yvesolot Chmoulevitch, *Le Rouquier et la Rose* – œuvre lyrique • Juan Jose Lahava, *œuvre* chorégraphique • Jonathan Golove, *Brasserie Rouge (Red Harvest)* – œuvre lyrique • Juh T. Kottinen, *Maiden de Sade* – œuvre lyrique • Alexandros Markaris, *Rondo notturno* (Quintetto) – œuvre chorégraphique •



# CONTENTS

---

- 4 Editorial  
*Émilie Delorme*
- 6 Twenty years of history  
*Aurélie Barbuscia*
- 8 Let's meet again in ten years time  
*Julie Fuchs*

---

## 10

### CREATE NEW ARTISTIC FORMS

- 10 Introduction  
*Jean-Noël Tronc*
- 12 Domesticate opera  
*Ondřej Adámek*
- 15 Rethink and revalue the position  
of women creators in opera  
*Bernard Foccroulle, Katie Mitchell*
- 16 Creation & an impromptu encounter  
*Cordelia Lynn*
- 18 Minimalist perfection  
*Jean-Guihen Queyras*
- 20 The Académie's world premieres  
and commissions

## 22

### PROMOTE AN INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

- 22 Introduction  
*Pauline Chaigne*
- 24 Share, experiment, build together  
*Fabrizio Cassol*
- 26 The Mediterranean Youth  
Orchestra (MYO)  
*Leïla Soldevila, Marie Lestrelin*
- 28 LSO & MYO  
*Kathryn McDowell*
- 30 Medinea  
*Saima Samoud, Davinia Galea,  
Hara Kalomiri, Bujar Sykja*
- 32 The Butterfly effect  
*Mohamed Bouslama*

## 34

### TRAIN TOMORROW'S ARTISTS

- 34 Introduction  
*Christiane Louis*
  - 36 Why Mozart?  
*Susanna Eken*
  - 38 A Musical dramatic  
and theatrical Marathon  
*Leah Hausman*
  - 40 Outreach skills - artists  
*Émilie Delorme, Mark Withers,  
Geneviève Sorin*
  - 42 Sonic and pictorial vibrations  
*Fabienne Verdier*
  - 45 The HSBC Laureates of the Académie  
*Paul Briottet, Beate Mordal,  
Alphonse Cemin, Rupert Charlesworth,  
Quatuor Van Kuijk*
-

# EDITORIAL

The year 2018 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Académie du Festival d'Aix-en-Provence. It's foundation by Stéphane Lissner in 1998 was a visionary act which enabled new generations of artists to train and to participate in the Festival d'Aix. The new development impulsed by Bernard Foccroulle from 2007 transformed the very identity of the festival. Our society has profoundly changed in 20 years: the digital revolution, globalisation, geopolitical upheavals... The world of opera has to face up to these changes. By creating new forms, new narratives, new relationships with the audience, it can play a major role in the evolution of our societies. How should we tackle these transformations and how can we assist the new generations of artists face up to these challenges?

The Académie was conceived as a meeting point for transmission and experimentation. It is these experiments and these avenues for reflection that we wish to share and that this publication gives us the opportunity to do. Far from being isolated the Académie du Festival became enriched by its exchanges with the young artists who took part in this adventure, with the more experienced artists who came and gave of their time to the transmission and to the reflection, as well as with a group of partners, foremost amongst whom were the members of the two networks that it manages: enoa (European network of opera academies) and Medinea (The Mediterranean Incubator for Emerging Artists).

The first part of this publication is devoted to creation. The Académie du Festival d'Aix set up a plan to accompany both male and female composers over several years with the aim of enabling them to create an opera, step by step, in the best conditions, to try out new forms and to encourage artists from other cultures and other disciplines to come and enrich the world of opera. The second part is a testimony to the numerous relationships which were created with different artists and partners around the Mediterranean, the benefits which were to be had on all its shores. A particular accent was put on the sessions of intercultural creation, a programme which was initiated in 2015 and which carries the ambition of opening up to the world which is also that of the Festival. This programme will in fact be developed in the coming years thanks to the support of the European Union.

Finally, the last part deals with new practices, notably training and mediation, which is at the heart of our outreach skills

workshops: artists of different cultures thus learn to exchange, enhance and share the most diverse cultural heritage whilst interacting with new audiences.

Diversity, inclusion and equity are the values which emerge in all these accounts which above and beyond the review outlined during the course of these pages seem to us to be the backbone which will enable us to invent a future common heritage resembling our society.

A huge thank you to all the artists who have had confidence in this magnificent human and artistic adventure. Thank you to our institutional and private partners whose support has enabled the Académie du Festival d'Aix to develop in a spirit of stimulating collaboration. Thanks also to all the teams who have founded and accompanied this project from its creation and notably Eva Wagner-Pasquier, Béatrice de Laage, Antoine Manceau and Stéphan Hugonnier. Thanks to all those whose goodwill creativity and generosity have enabled the Académie du Festival d'Aix to grow and notably: Olivia Modesti,

## Émilie Delorme

DIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMIE AND OF THE CONCERTS  
DU FESTIVAL D'AIX, OF THE MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA  
(MYO) AND OF ENOA (THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF OPERA  
ACADEMIES) AND MEDINEA (THE MEDITERRANEAN INCUBATOR FOR  
EMERGING ARTISTS) NETWORKS.

Louis Geisler, Alain Perroux, Fanny Roustan, Paul Briottet, Marie-Céline Lesgourgues, Helen Naulot-Molmerret, Marie-Laure Favier, Pauline Chaigne, Sébastien Pécot, Virginia Pisano and Anne-Flavie Germain. Thanks to those who have contributed to its standing and notably Élise Ortega, Alice Seninck and Cécile Robert. And thanks to Valérie Benedetto and her team for 20 years of technical accompaniment as well as to all the Festival's teams.

Let the joy which motivates the young artists continue to be a force for the Festival, for all of us and for all audiences!



# L'ACADÉMIE SINCE 1998

Host to over

**3,000**

ARTISTS

More than

**1,000**

PUBLIC EVENTS

Master class, concerts,  
encounters...

**70**

NATIONALITIES  
REPRESENTED

**69**

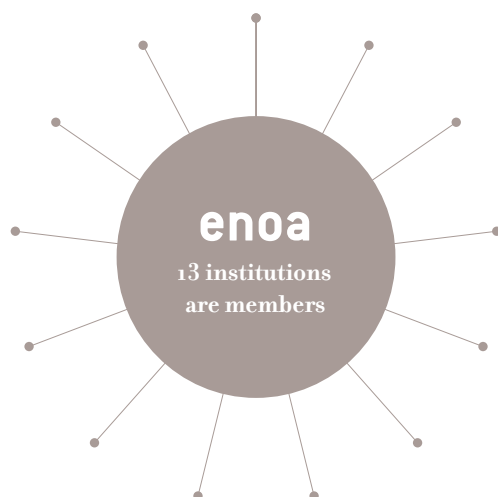
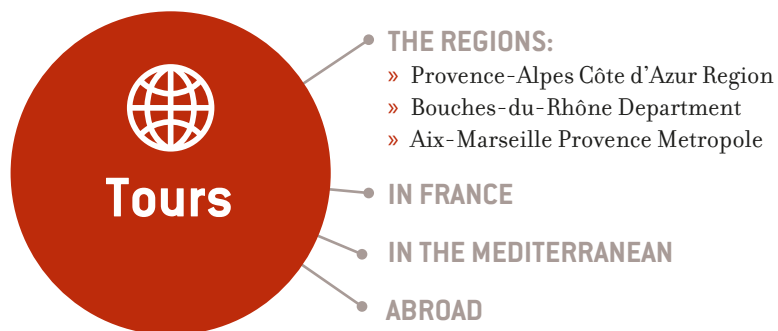
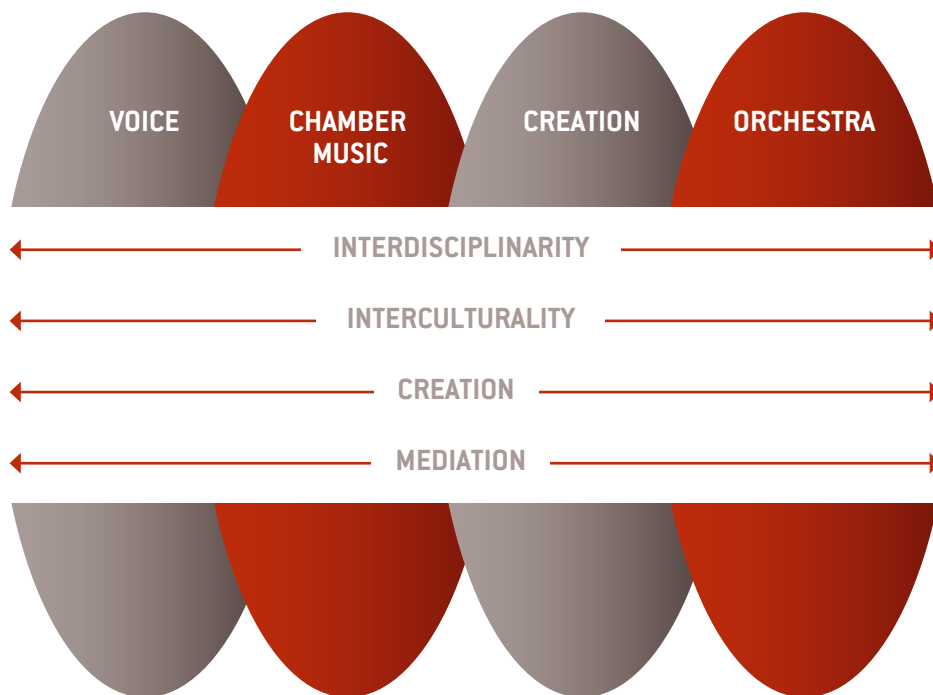
COMMISSIONS

Of which 67 world  
premieres

**11**

HSBC LAUREATES  
PROMOTIONS

That is to say 104 artists,  
4 recordings by  
HSBC Laureates  
co-produced with Alpha  
Classics.



# TWENTY YEARS OF HISTORY

---

## Aurélie Barbuscia

DRAMATURGE AT THE FESTIVAL  
D'AIX-EN-PROVENCE

6

### 1998 – 2001, THE MAKING OF AN UTOPIA

The Académie européenne de musique came to life in 1998, the year in which Stéphane Lissner arrived at the head of the Festival d'Aix. This was one of the great projects of his mandate, an ambitious project for which he received the support of all the Festival's teams in general and the flawless collaboration of Béatrice de Laage in particular. Therefore, before becoming a precisely defined project, the Académie du Festival d'Aix was a fantastic conjunction of energy, ideas and above all, enthusiasm. Although benefitting early on from financial support from the European Union and in spite of the name "European Academy", which it initially was called, the Académie du Festival d'Aix intended opening up to the rest of the world. The protective shadow of Pierre Boulez lingered over its maturation. He was notably to foster an internationally renowned composition residency. The first three years of the Académie européenne de musique which a posteriori can appear to be like a phase of experimentation as in a laboratory turned out to be the creation of a solid base on which the Académie du Festival d'Aix would never cease to develop without ever giving up its initial intuitions.

### 2001 – 2008, TOWARDS STABILITY

From 2001, under the leadership of Antoine Manceau, the Académie européenne de musique began to forge its own identity and gain in autonomy vis-à-vis the Festival which had brought it to life. Bringing together into the same field of transmission all the disciplines present in opera, that is to say, singing, instruments and creation, it proposed three residencies ahead of the Festival period – of singing, chamber music, and then opera in creation as early as 2007.



Taking up their pilgrim's staff Eva Wagner and Antoine Manceau criss-crossed Europe's capitals in search of musicians and singers whose talent was waiting to be brought into the daylight. If the Festival of Aix was above all considered as a temple of operatic art, the Académie européenne de musique gave pride of place to instrumental music thanks to the creation in 2002 of the "Chamber Music Centre". Whilst the large-scale opera productions were being put together on one side, the Académie du Festival d'Aix gave it first concerts which the public had access to by means of a passport, the ancestor of the current Pass. The artists of the Académie du Festival d'Aix

were soon to be making their way across the regions with what is the trademark of the Festival (opera), but also with recitals and chamber music concerts. It was clear that, as soon as it was created, l'Académie du Festival d'Aix produced an object whose identity referred to the Festival's speciality. Whether it be a production entirely produced by the Académie, or that the students of the Académie be the understudies for the official cast or that half of the cast of a large production come from the Académie, it remains nevertheless true that every year an opera is given at the Académie du Festival d'Aix. Amongst the principle partners of the Académie européenne de musique du Festival d'Aix should be mentioned La Poste, the SACD, but also the group HSBC France who as early as 2006 committed themselves to supporting and accompanying the



Pierre Boulez at the Festival d'Aix in 2000

most promising talents of the Académie du Festival d'Aix by immediately promoting them to the rank of HSBC Laureates.

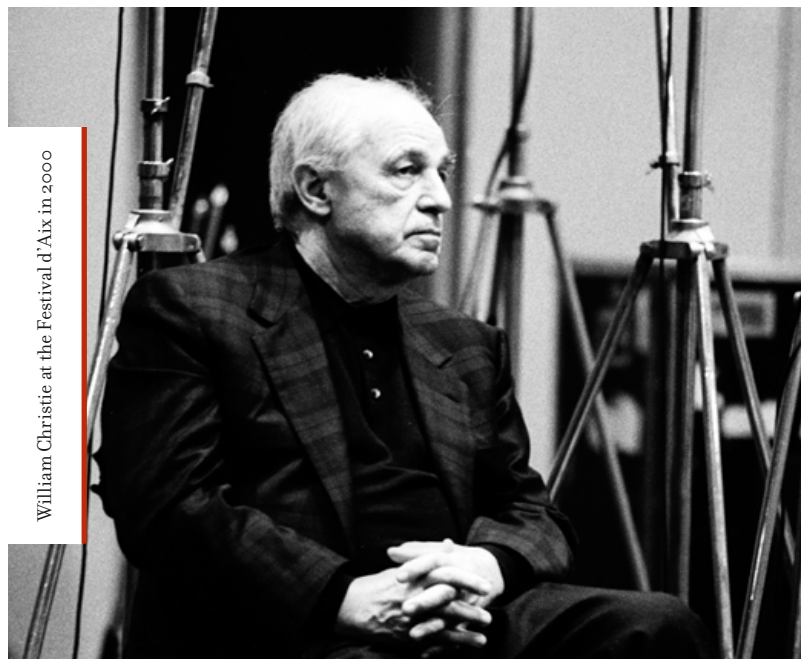
## 2009 – 2018, ENLARGEMENT AND DIVERSITY

At the head of the Académie européenne de musique du Festival d'Aix since 2009, Émilie Delorme has played a vital role in favour of its expansion and its standing on an international scale. The Académie du Festival d'Aix has little by little become a reference in the realm of talent spotting (creators and performers), which means for Alain Perroux, Émilie Delorme and Pauline Chaigne countless trips to the conservatoires and

opera studios the world over. Imposing artistic exigency as a prerequisite and diversity as a value of the first order, the Académie is involved in a multitude of activities which divide into four principle axes being the voice, chamber music, creation and the orchestra. Loyal to the Mozartian tradition of the Festival d'Aix, the vocal centre of the Académie devotes one of its residencies to the Austrian composer. Numerous productions carry the Académie label. It was necessary to wait until 2010 for the Académie to commission an opera. Soon after the bright idea started to germinate of creating a European network of opera academies. The support of the Culture Programme of the European Commission which benefits enoa (European Network of Opera Academies) since 2011 allows it to develop this project by forming an artistic community – a pool of creativity – of innovation and of excellence. Aix en juin, joyful preamble to the Festival d'Aix came into being in 2013 under the impetus of Bernard Foccroulle, who wished to open up the Festival to an even larger and more diversified audience. In 2014, at the end of four years of collaboration and at the request of the public authorities, The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra became a key component of the Académie européenne de musique, which thereupon changed its name in order to open up to a larger geographical and cultural entity to become the Académie du Festival d'Aix. Its programme is enriched by creators and performers of a multitude of horizons, thus mixing written and oral musical traditions, art music and improvisation. Coordinated by the Festival, the network made up of cultural organisations from the Euro-Mediterranean Region took the name of Medinea (Mediterranean Incubator of Emerging Artists) in 2015.

Increase cultural diversity and opening up by encouraging inter-cultural dialogue; intensify local anchorage; support creation and innovation in order to reply to tomorrow's issues and to make transmission the corollary of excellence: such are the principle missions defended by the Académie du Festival d'Aix whose history continues to be written.

7



William Christie at the Festival d'Aix in 2000

## INTERVIEW WITH JULIE FUCHS

Interview by Louis Geisler

# LET'S MEET AGAIN IN TEN YEARS TIME

*The French soprano Julie Fuchs took part in the 2009 Mozart vocal residency devoted to the works of the Austrian composer. She has come back since that time on many occasions to sing at the Festival d'Aix and leads a brilliant international career. Looking back at her experience and her connection with the Académie du Festival d'Aix.*

## Julie Fuchs

SOPRANO (FRANCE)

- » Participant in the Mozart residency (2009)
- » Galatea in *Acis and Galatea* (2011), Alphise in *Les Boréades* (2014 – concert version) and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* (2017)
- » Gabriel Dussurget Prize (2014)
- » HSBC Laureate (2013)

*When you first participated in the Académie in 2009 you were coming up to your 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and still a student at the Conservatoire national de Paris. What did this opportunity represent for you?*

I very much wanted to complete my training with an experience at the heart of the Académie du Festival d'Aix. So, I went for an audition – one of my first! – to take part in the Mozart residency. For the young singer that I was, to come to Aix was the perspective of rubbing shoulders with a network of singers and of professors from the whole world. I had never come across such an international group of people during my studies. I was also very attracted by the mythical side of the Festival, its history and its relationship with the works of Mozart.

*How did you live this experience?*

The programme of master classes and of concerts was very rich, I adored this intensity. I arrived with the idea of taking everything that this experience could offer me, of storing up all the advice of the teachers: the singing professor Susanna Eken, the choreographer Thierry Thieû Niang and the conductor Louis Langrée who I met for the first time. I was also able to take in the atmosphere of the Festival by attending rehearsals and performances of the operas programmed that summer, in the company of the singers and pianists from the residency, with whom by the way I have remained in contact.

*What was the impact of this residency on the beginning of your career?*

This first experience at the Académie enabled me to create a veritable relationship with the Festival. Two years after I was invited to sing the leading role in *Acis and Galatea* by Handel, presented at the domain of the Grand Saint-Jean. It was truly wonderful to work in such an inspiring setting, in which you feel a form a freedom. More recently in 2017 I sang the role of Zerlina in the new production of *Don Giovanni* staged by Jean-François Sivadier at the Théâtre de l'Archevêché. My relationship with the Festival goes beyond isolated engagements. A real relationship of confidence has developed with its teams who know me and who have followed my career for years and do not hesitate to come and hear me elsewhere.

*The baritone Stéphane Degout made his debut on the stage of the Académie du Festival d'Aix in 1998. He has always said that he wanted to give his first master classes at the Festival d'Aix, after twenty years of career. He has kept his promise since this summer together with Alain Planès he will be in charge of the The Art of recital song residency. Can you imagine yourself in ten years time giving master classes at the Académie?*

Teaching is an activity which does attract me and I have already done a little. It is a role which implies a huge responsibility and I am very impressed by good pedagogues and professors. I think that the Académie du Festival d'Aix is a place where I would feel happy to pass on, one day, my experience.



Julie Fuchs, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, 2017



# CREATE NEW ARTISTIC FORMS

10

*Phone Call to Hades, 2017*



# Jean-Noël Tronc

GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE SACEM

**C**ontemporary music, new music, art-music, music of today, written score, music of creation... So many different denominations to describe musical creation. It can be serial, minimalist, repetitive, tonal, atonal, electronic, concrete, spectral. It is part of a classical tradition or on the contrary is the fruit of a long musical search, of a sound experimentation. It is written for a soloist, a chamber formation, a symphony orchestra, an ensemble of variable dimensions, instrument and electroacoustics, acousmonium. Musical creation is therefore just as diverse regarding designations, aesthetics and forms as it is regarding composers.

All composers of which 2800 known as « symphonists » registered with the Sacem are motivated by the vital need to create. Every year, young composers leave the conservatoires with their diplomas and the desire to compose, the desire to enable an audience to discover their works. If creation is a cathartic experience which stems from a questioning of the essence of being, of humanity, with for example *Seven Stones*, the opera by Ondřej Adámek first performed during the 70<sup>th</sup> Festival d'Aix the quotation "Time – the difference between man and stone, is time – when man goes back to being dust, the stone conserves its form": it is also a means for composers to translate a (or the) reality (ies) and is a testimony to contemporary tensions and preoccupations. The work *Ultimatum* by Pierre Jodlowski, commissioned by Musique Nouvelle en Liberté as part of the Grand Prix Lycéen des compositeurs was inspired by the eponymous work by Fernando Pessoa who accuses the "power (political, bourgeois, industrial) to have led the world into a deep state of dilapidation," is a good example of it.

Creation, although associated with sensitivity, the affect of composers, is not a simple passion but a real profession. Composers must therefore be able to make a living from their art and it is because of this that the commission is essential.

The commission, the creator's only salary together with royalties is vital. It is the responsibility of those who commission, orchestras ensembles, cultural institutions to pay composers so that they never cease to create and to be the memory of our societies.

In a context where composers are faced with difficulties in circulating their music, in being present in the media, in being properly remunerated; in a context where we observe that the young are distancing themselves from culture, it is more than important that cultural centres commit themselves in favour of creation, support young composers, and allow everybody to have access to it, most notably the very young.

The Académie du Festival d'Aix in its role as a laboratory for young artists, as a springboard for young composers, as a platform for exchanges and mediation for the attention of all audience types is a reference for the music industry. It has in twenty years contributed to the commissioning and creation of around sixty works. The Sacem as leading partner of the Académie is delighted to have been at its side for 20 years and will continue to support its commissioning policy and its commitment in favour of creation.



## INTERVIEW WITH ONDŘEJ ADÁMEK

Interview by Louis Geisler

## DOMESTICATE OPERA

*The Czech composer Ondřej Adámek presented at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence in July 2018 his first opera, *Seven Stones*, at the Théâtre du Jeu de Paume. This work would probably have not come into being if it had not been for its association with the Académie du Festival d'Aix as well as that of the Festival over a period of several years.*

Ondřej  
Adámek

COMPOSER (CZECH REPUBLIC)

- » Participant in the chamber music residency (2011)
- » Participant in the Opera Creation workshop (2012)
- » Coach for the Pinocchio residency and chamber music residency (2017)
- » World premiere of *Throwing* (2017)
- » Commission and world premiere of *Seven Stones* (2018)

I came to the Festival d'Aix for the first time in 2011 to participate in the Chamber Music Residency. That summer the Académie had proposed to ensembles to work on contemporary creations with their composer. I was invited to supervise the rehearsals of my pieces *Rapid Eye Movement* et *Lo que no 'contamo'* interpreted respectively by the Agora and Girard string quartets and performed in concert at the Hôtel Maynier d'Oppède. During the residency, the Director of the Académie, Émilie Delorme, confided to me that she found my music very « theatrical » and suggested to me to consider composing an opera. I thanked her but at the same time explained that I did not really have the time to dive into such an adventure which requires a lot of energy and availability. I was not against the idea of working on a musical form which follows a dramatical construction, but I was a little reluctant about composing music for operatic voices. This artificial placing of the voice came into being for a purely acoustical reason. Is it still legitimate to systematically resort to the operatic voice today? Nowadays, thanks to amplification, we have a very large pallet of colours and vocal expression.

After this first experience, I was invited to come back the following summer, in July 2012, to participate in the Opera Creation Workshop. This was a residency of about ten days which proposed to young artists – composers, librettists, set designers, dramaturges, etc. – to exchange on their profession and their projects and to reflect upon the creation of opera today. I found this concept of a workshop very interesting, but once again, I was reticent at the idea of only being in a process of exchange and

discussion sitting around a table. What I like is being in “direct contact” with artists in concrete creative action. I therefore proposed to organise a veritable experimental workshop which would bring together the artistic team in its entirety as well as singers chosen by the Académie. The idea was accepted and so I came back to Aix with the stage director Éric Oberdorff – whom I had met at IRCAM on another project, the Icelandic writer Sjón and the musician Hélène Breschand. The Festival d'Aix was presenting the world premiere of *Written on Skin* by the composer George Benjamin. We therefore worked with the understudies of the soloists of this production using fragments written by Sjón. Together we developed a musical and theatrical form which lasted about ten minutes which we presented to professionals. This residency inspired in Sjón the synopsis of a new opera. The restitution pleased Bernard Foccroulle and his team. We began discussing how to follow up this experience. It was thus that *Seven Stones* came to life.

We immediately tackled the question of the format of this new work, the date for its creation, the scoring. I had in mind the idea of an opera with just a few soloists a relatively small chorus which would itself form an orchestra, by using atypical instruments, some of which were created for the occasion, or elements of the scenography. The project grew and came together thanks to several experimental workshops and rehearsals organised by the Festival between 2013 and 2016, bringing together the whole of the artistic team and all the performers. Everybody contributed enormously to the work of their colleagues during highly creative phases. The set designer and



Ondřej Adámek

lighting designer Éric Soyer and myself had worked together on the scenography, its acoustic possibilities and the instruments. Sjón listened to our experiments whilst continuing his research in order to deepen and strengthen his libretto, in which certain Icelandic narrative traditions can be found. We added a scene which took place in Japan, as he like myself had lived some time in Kyoto and we are passionate about the history of this country. Éric Oberdorff insisted on the importance of giving the Story Teller – the Stone Collector – who is mentioned throughout the opera – his own story. The new work of music-theatre on which I am currently working for the Munich Biennale *Alles Klappt*, is in fact set in the same creative process, punctuated with workshops and exchanges between every member of the artistic team.

A posteriori, I realise that my relationship with opera has changed enormously by frequenting the Festival d'Aix every year from 2011-2016. I have seen there an enormous number of works from the baroque repertoire up to contemporary works. I remember notably *Written on Skin* by George Benjamin in the staging by Katie Mitchell, *David et Jonathas* by Charpentier, Simon McBurney's *The Magic Flute* production in 2014 and of course the world premiere of *Kalila wa Dimna* by Moneim Adwan in 2016. It seems to me that *Seven Stones* also came to life out of these encounters and discoveries.



## KATIE MITCHELL • STAGE DIRECTOR (UNITED KINGDOM)

- » Stage director of *Written on Skin* (2012), *The House Taken Over* (2013), *Trauernacht* (2014), *Alcina* (2015), *Pelléas et Mélisande* (2016) and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (2018)
- » Coach for the Opera Creation Workshop (2012 – 2015 – 2018)
- » Tutor in the Women Opera Makers Workshop since 2016 and the Opera Creation Workshop (2017)

“The equality of the sexes in all the domains of operatic production is an essential element for the good health and survival of the unique art form which is opera. This question concerns the very visible – the representation of women on stage – but also to what happens backstage – the awareness of thoughtless prejudices. To succeed in promoting a veritable equality of sexes will enable us to improve the exercise of our professions, to renew stage direction and increase our capacity to attract a larger audience.”

*Trauernacht* rehearsals, 2014



TRIBUNE BY BERNARD FOCCRULLE

# RETHINK AND REVALUE THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN OPERA

---

***Diversity and equality women-men are questions which have started to be dealt with fairly recently in the world of opera. However, the contribution of female creators and great female performers to operatic life is not in any way a matter of doubt: it is decisive, crucial and insufficient!***

In quantitative terms, the Festival d'Aix does not break away from this rule: the position of female creators in its early and recent history is not in phase with the expectations of present-day society. But the majority of female artists (we are thinking of Emmanuelle Haïm, Marie-Eve Signeyrolle, Ana Sokolović to mention a few names other than the great singers) have been warmly welcomed by the public and the professionals. In 2018 we had the pleasure of inviting Katie Mitchell, the stage director and librettist Martina Winkel, the author Maylis de Kerangal, the set designers Chloe Lamford and Aurélie Maestre... There is progress. We must however go further and we are adhering to the recommendations of the Ministry of Culture and the SACD.

The women-men equality results are much more satisfying in the Académie which has been able to attract a good deal of female creative artists. I remain convinced that this commitment to the younger generation will give results in not too long a time. It remains for us to identify and fix the mechanisms

which are at the origin of the weak feminine presence in the Festival's programme.

In residence at the Festival d'Aix since 2012, Katie Mitchell produced some wonderful stagings of *Written on Skin* to *Pelléas et Mélisande*, and also *The House Taken Over*, *Trauernacht*, *Alcina* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*. In conversations with Katie, a good number of them over the years, opera, music, theatre have occupied an important place, but also subjects related to our time: global warming and the major challenges that it

## Bernard Foccroulle

GENERAL DIRECTOR OF THE FESTIVAL D'AIX

poses. Katie did not just content herself with calling upon numerous young artists into her teams, she also encouraged us to seriously tackle the question of equality. We are extremely grateful to her. The workshop which she ran together with a dozen young female creators in 2016 and 2017, enabled us to have a better understanding of a certain number of issues. She put us in contact with Lucy Kerbel who now accompanies our work on this type of question.

## CORDELIA LYNN'S EXPERIENCE

# CREATION & AN IMPROMPTU ENCOUNTER

*The Opera Creation Workshop is a session of exchanges proposed every year by the Académie du Festival d'Aix to young creators who wish to be involved with the development of innovative artistic projects. For certain participants it is also the beginning of a passionate artistic collaboration, as was the case for the dramaturge Cordelia Lynn and the composer Sivan Eldar in 2016. Two years after having met at the Festival d'Aix, the two young women had already presented three projects together.*

16 I met the composer Sivan Eldar during an Opera Creation Workshop in 2016 directed by the dramaturge Willem Bruls. During those two weeks I spent most of my time making grand and hasty declarations about opera in general and its current situation in particular. Sivan, more thoughtful and reserved than I am, wondered who on earth this extravert dramaturge talking willy-nilly could be. In spite of this rather unpromising start to our future collaboration, the workshop provided us with the ideal environment to develop a relationship which was both personal and professional based on a common creation and friendship, a relationship which we believed sufficiently solid to last.

The Académie du Festival d'Aix provided us with an intellectual and social framework which enabled us to learn how to get to know other people's work, to familiarise us with their work and their ideas/dreams. Every day was punctuated with intensive exchanges with Willem and the other participants of the workshop, encounters with experienced artists who were invited to the Festival and ended with a rehearsal or a performance of opera. In the course of this experience and of our conversations, we had the desire, with Sivan as well to develop creations together. Since this workshop we have worked together on three creations for voice: *You'll Drown*, *Dear* for mezzo-soprano and electronics (world premiere in 2017 as part of the festival ManiFeste at the Centquatre in Paris), *The White Princess* for two sopranos, electronics and percussion (world premiere in 2017 at the Festival d'Aix and *Heave* pour vocal ensemble and electronics (world premiere in 2018, (Festival de Royaumont/IRCAM). The Académie teams provided their help and goodwill at every stage of our

collaboration. Thus in 2017 we were invited to take part in a residency devoted to contemporary creation directed by the pianist and vocal coach Jeff Cohen and the composer Ondřej Adámek a former resident of the Académie. After having commissioned a new piece from Sivan, the Académie generously proposed to me to join the project as the librettist. It was a unique opportunity to rehearse and develop together a work, under the watchful eye of our mentors in a friendly

## Cordelia Lynn

DRAMATURGE  
(UNITED KINGDOM)

- » Participant in the Opera Creation Workshop (2016)
- » Participant in the Women Opera Makers Workshop (2016 – 2017)
- » Participant in the Pinocchio residency (2017)
- » Commission and world premiere of *The White Princess* (2017)

environment. This experience turned out to be crucial and reached its culmination with the performance of *The White Princess* at the Hôtel Maynier d'Oppède.

The Académie also asked us to participate in the Women Opera Makers Workshops directed by the stage director Katie Mitchell. I therefore took part in the sessions in 2016 and 2017 and Sivan in the one which took place in 2018. The creation of these workshops is a fundamental policy position which is very important: the Académie therefore recognises that opera, its repertoire, its associated professions are deeply marked by genre discrimination and sexism. This commitment to



the improvement of the condition of women in the world of opera is translated into acts rather than simple customary declarations and has encouraged the emergence in recent years of a powerful network of female creators surrounding Katie Mitchell. In fact, I am convinced that in the next few years, when we will approach artistic maturity, we will begin to see the effects of it on the creation of opera.

I would probably never have met Sivan without the Académie. This artistic collaboration, which has become so important in both our careers, could not have developed without the support and encouragement of its teams. There are a number of residencies around, but the Académie stands out because of its commitment to young artists which it accompanies over a long period of time.

Creations Concert 2017

17

# Sivan Eldar

COMPOSER

(ISRAEL/UNITED STATES)

- » Participant in the Opera Creation Workshop (2016)
- » Participant in the Women Opera Makers Workshop (2016 – 2017)
- » Participant in the Pinocchio residency (2017)
- » Commission and world premiere of *The White Princess* (2017)

## INTERVIEW WITH JEAN-GUIHEN QUEYRAS

Interview by Marie-Laure Favier and Louis Geisler

# MINIMALIST PERFECTION

*Utopian and passionate is how Jean-Guihen Queyras likes to describe artists who choose to devote themselves to chamber music. In 2014 and 2016 the Festival d'Aix gave him two carte blanches for a series of concerts. The cellist's periods of time spent in Provence enabled young string quartets at the Académie du Festival d'Aix to discover his approach to music.*

## Jean- Guihen Queyras

CELLIST AND MEMBER OF THE  
ARCANTO QUARTET (FRANCE)

- » Coach for Chamber Music residencies (2014 – 2016)
- » Concerts at the Festival d'Aix (cartes blanches in 2014 and 2016 – 2018)
- » Coach for the session of intercultural creation of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra (2016)

### *How would you describe the Chamber Music Residency of the Académie?*

This residency is an encounter between great utopians – because you have to be utopian in order to devote yourself to this form which is so demanding and refined – with on one side highly competent coaches and on the other side, youngsters from the upcoming generation all of whom are passionate about chamber music. Together, they will give themselves up to work on detail, on articulation, vibrato, speed, bow depth... This is never-ending work, patience is at the heart of chamber music. The Académie and the Festival d'Aix are also a real open door for these ensembles. They are plunged into a wonderful musical recruiting ground: they can be heard by professionals, extend their network, meet journalists and agents who will perhaps follow them. It is important at the beginning of a career.

### *What is a string quartet doing in an opera festival?*

To reach the quintessence of chamber music you have to be mad about symphonic music and opera. I often say to my pupils: if you want to work on the Bach *Suites* it is not necessary to listen to all the recorded versions, even those by the greatest performers. It is a better idea to listen to some cantatas and to feel the way in which this music "breathes" and replies to the language and to the voice. All the great works for string quartet have a very strong relationship to lyricism and the voice. I think for example, that you should play each note of a Mozart string quartet

as if they were part of an opera. Take his *Quartet n°15 K421* in d minor. We are almost dealing with a quotation here: the violin part is written like an aria, the tonality of d minor is that of the Commander in *Don Giovanni* with the same octave leap at the beginning.

### *For a long time you were part of the Arcanto Ensemble along with Antje Weithaas, Daniel Sepec (violins) and Tabea Zimmermann (viola). What is your relationship to the string quartet and its repertoire?*

I have always been fascinated by the string quartet. When I was 13 years old during my first year at the Lyon Conservatoire I worked on the *F major quartet* by Ravel. This unforgettable experience imbued me with a passion which has never left me since. The Arcanto Quartet came to life after my encounter with Tabea and Antje – I knew Daniel with whom I had worked. Whatever might happen to me in my musical life, I can make the assertion that those twelve years spent with them were the high point of what I could expect from a chamber music ensemble, thanks to the human and artistic qualities of my three colleagues and to the manner in which we resonated with each other.

### *Some see in the string quartet a veritable « laboratory » for composers. Do you think that writing such a piece is therefore an obligation?*

The string quartet is a relatively recent genre. It was Haydn who made its reputation and put it at the centre of musical production. It is one of the rare genres to have gone through both epochs and aesthetics whilst always being well treated by composers. Take for example the sonata for cello and piano: as early as the end of the romantic period it's a genre which has run out of steam, during the whole of the twentieth century treated like an obsolete form. The

string quartet possesses a « minimalist perfection » even if it does limit itself to the family of bowed stringed instruments, it allows – through this very limitation – the achievement of profound and existential truths. It is striking to realise that many composers have given the best of themselves to this formation even though it is a priori more limited in terms of colours and nuances than a symphony. It is as if this

limitation pushed composers towards an extraordinary subtlety and beauty.

*Gabriel Fauré described the string quartet as « the purest form of instrumental music ». What do you think of that?*

He was absolutely right!



Public master class by Jean-Guihen Queyras, 2016



# WORLD PREMIERES & COMMISSIONS BY THE ACADEMIE

## 1998 – 2018

### 2018

**Ondřej Adámek**, *Seven Stones* – A capella Opera. Éditions Gérard Billaudot

**Charlotte Bray**, *In Black Light* for viola solo

**Bastien David**, *Impatience* for string quartet

**Samy Moussa**, *Fanfare*. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Diana Soh**, *Sssh* for string quartet

**Fabien Touchard**, *Ici même* – Melodies for tenor and piano

### 2017

**Ondřej Adámek**, *Throwing* – vocal ensemble and percussion. Éditions Gérard Billaudot

**Sivan Eldar**, *The White Princess* – two sopranos, percussion and electronics

**Matthew Herbert**, *Requiem* – string quartet and electronics, live world premiere

**Raphaël Languillat**, *Sauve, Éternel (Ps. 12)* – mezzo-soprano, baritone, harp and singing bowls

**Oliver Leith**, *The Bow* – electronics

**Oliver Leith**, *Folk's Questions* – tenor, baritone-bass and piano

**Camille Pepin**, *Lyrae* – string quartet, harp and percussion. Co-commission ProQuartet – CEMC. Éditions Jobert

**Pascal Robert**, *Obscure lumière* for string quartet

### 2016

**Moneim Adwan**, *Kalila wa Dimna* – opera

**Gilbert Amy**, *Le Poète inachevé* for cello and baritone

**Benjamin Attahir**, *Asfar* for trio with piano. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Nuno da Rocha**, *Ecce Puer* for mezzo-soprano, baritone and piano

**Benjamin de la Fuente**, *Ricochets* for string octet, drums and recorded tape. Co-commission ProQuartet – CEMC

**Sébastien Hervier**, *D'abord, la fin (done)* – drums and recorded tape. Éditions Alfonse, from Jean Geoffroy's collection

**Jug Marković**, *Ultraterreno* – soprano, mezzo-soprano and piano

**François Meïmoun**, *Tsimtsoum* pour quintet with two violas. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Rene Orth**, *A Dialogue between Death and Youth* for soprano, baritone and piano

**Luca Vago**, *Dredd* for string quartet. Commissioned by the Tana Quartet.

### 2015

**Hye-Yeon Choi**, *No Nonsense* for soprano baritone and piano

**Andrzej Kwiecinski**, *Per non pensare* for mezzo-soprano piano four hands

**Thomas Lacôte**, *Torpeurs* for soprano, baritone and string quartet

**Sarah Lianne Lewis**, *Although You Sit in a Room that Is Gray* for baritone and piano

**Sarah Lianne Lewis**, *Relativity and Revelation* for mezzo-soprano, piano and Tibetan bowls

**Samy Moussa**, *The Sick Rose* for tenor and piano. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Alexandre Ouzounoff**, *Vent noir* for mezzo-soprano and piano

### 2014

**Jérôme Combier**, *Parler longuement de fantômes*, Commission by Musique Nouvelle en Liberté – Ville de Paris. Éditions Henry Lemoine

**Ahmed Essyad**, *Quartet with voice* for string quartet and mezzo-soprano. Co-commission Fondation Royaumont.

**Sebastian Rivas**, *Stains in the Carpet* – quintet with double bass. Éditions Le Chant du Monde

**Francesca Verunelli**, *Sky and Decaying Sinusoids* – double bass and electronics. Co-Commission GMEM - Centre National de Création Musicale-Marseille



## 2013

**Laurent Durupt**, *Super8* for string octet. Co-commission Villa Médicis

**François Meïmoun**, *Untitled – selon Pollock* for string quartet. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Vasco Mendonça**, *The House Taken Over* – opera. Co-commission Ictus. Éditions Henry Lemoine

## 2012

**Mauro Lanza**, *Der Kampf zwischen Karneval und Fasten*, string octet. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Magic Malik**, *Empathie forcée* – piece with improvisation for string quartet, flute and electronic musician in real time

**Vasco Mendonça**, *Boys of Summer* for mezzo-soprano and string trio. Co-commission Aldeburgh Music (Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme) and the Académie du Festival de Verbier

**Gilbert Nouno**, *Punkt!* – string quartet, mezzo and electronics in real time.

## 2011

**Karol Beffa**, *Mes heures de fièvre* trio for voice, viola and piano. Éditions Billaudot

**Oscar Biancchi**, *Thanks to My Eyes* – opera. Commission by T&M-Paris. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

**Francisco Coll Garcia**, *Sguardo verso l'interno* – quintet with clarinet. Co-commission Aldeburgh Music (Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme) and the Académie du Festival de Verbier. Éditions Faber Music

**Zad Moulta**, *Maadann* – eight voices, piano, cimbalom and percussion. Onoma éditions musicales

**Yann Robin**, *Crescent Scratches* – string quartet n°2. Éditions Jobert

## 2010

**Mark Andre**, *iv 8* for string trio. Peters Edition

**Charlotte Bray**, *Verre de Venise* for tenor and string quartet. Co-commission Aldeburgh Music (Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme) and the Académie du Festival de Verbier. Composers Edition

**Jonathan Harvey**, *Songs and Haiku* for soprano and piano. Éditions Faber Music

**Felix Ibarrondo**, *Botsbi* – 3 miniatures for two mezzo-sopranos, two sopranos and conductor

**Betsy Jolas**, *Ruht wohl* for piano and viola

**Piotr Moss**, *Lien entre les jours*, after a poem by Miriam Van Hee – quartet and voice

**Oscar Strasnoy**, *Un retour* – opera. Co-commission Musi-catreize. Éditions Gérard Billaudot

## 2009

**Francesco Filidei**, *Concertino di Aix* for wind quintet, string quartet and piano. Éditions Rai Trade

## 2008

**Christian Bertrand**, *Satka* for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano and percussion. Éditions Novello

## 2007

**Franck Bedrossian**, *Tracés d'ombres*, for string quartet. Éditions Billaudot

## 2006

**Jérôme Combier**, *Noir azur* for string trio

**Julien Dassié**, work for string quartet, mezzo-soprano and baritone – string quartet, mezzo-soprano and baritone

## 2005

**Bruno Mantovani**, *Blue Girl with Red Wagon* for string quartet and piano. Co-commission Académie de France in Rome – Villa Médicis. Éditions Lemoine

## 2001

**Georges Aperghis**, *Profils*, for cello and zarb. Éditions Durand-Salabert-Eschig / Universal Music Publishing Classical

## 1999

**Yan Maresz**, *Festins* for twelve percussion instruments

## 1998

**Vsevolod Chmoulevitch**, *Le Rossignol et la Rose* – operatic work

**Juan Jose Eslava** – choreographic work

**Jonathan Golove**, *Moisson Rouge (Red Harvest)* – operatic work

**Juitta T. Kostinen**, *Madame de Sade* – operatic work

**Alexandraos Markeas**, *Rondo notturno (Jardin secret)* – Choreographic work



# PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

22

Concert at the MuCEM at Marseille, 2013





Multiply perspectives and knowledge, diversify expression and expressivity, question performances and expertise, increase confidence in the face of the unknown are just some of the skills that the Académie du Festival d'Aix identifies today as absolutely necessary to the development and excellence of the artists of tomorrow. Intercultural dialogue undeniably fosters and stimulates their acquisition. With this practice of mutual listening and exchange where cultures bump into one another – with respect and goodwill – are revealed just as much the singularity as the similarity, the known and the unknown, the solidity of memories and the dreams of creation. Intercultural dialogue is therefore a path towards mobility: geographical of course, but also and above all spiritual, some moving towards the others and some with the others.

The Mediterranean is at the entrance to the Festival d'Aix. It was quite naturally that with the arrival of The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra in 2014 at the heart of the Académie, followed by the development of Medinea<sup>1</sup> (Mediterranean Incubator for Emerging Artists network) that a fertile intercultural dialogue developed between the Festival and different partners and artists on the other hand coming from Mediterranean countries on the other. A dialogue which turned out to be more than ever necessary in these globally troubled times of tension and cultural and identity withdrawal, sometimes violent and always dramatic. Proposing a cultural encounter, inviting exchanges and encouraging collective creation based on a common musical passion bringing into play different influences of the Mediterranean (summarily, the Latin influence, the Balkans, the African and the oriental) seem to be obvious necessities.

# Pauline Chaigne

PRODUCTION MANAGER FOR  
THE MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH  
ORCHESTRA

With the development of the Mediterranean programmes of the Académie, it is a question of assuming collective responsibilities with all of the Mediterranean partners and artists: of inspiring possible cultural interactions, to create mobility in all its forms, and to commit to handing over this powerful intercultural dialogue tool to future generations of artists. It is also for the Académie, to take the responsibility and have the joy of welcoming musical and poetic Mediterranean aesthetics – which for that matter are poorly represented on the French and European stages – and to be able to share these musical discoveries and emotions with the Festival d'Aix audience. Then finally it is also a pleasure for the Académie to propose to Mediterranean artists and partners access to the environment and the experience of the Festival d'Aix: the passion for opera in all its forms and the discovery of western music, both classical and contemporary.

It is fully in this dynamic of intercultural dialogue, and with the will to pass on to young artists the necessary skills to develop their professional careers that every year at the heart of the Académie are developed:

- » a symphonic session with The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra bringing together about one hundred classical musicians;
- » several sessions of intercultural creation by the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra bringing together about fifteen male and female improvisors (jazz, Mediterranean traditional music etc.) taking place in Aix and in the heart of the partner structures within Medinea (Mediterranean Incubator for Emerging Artists) network, (in Portugal, in Italy, in Malta, in Turkey and in Tunisia);
- » different sessions of outreach skills workshops proposing training modules to the elaboration of mediation actions modules;
- » Meetings of the Medinea network federating cultural actors from around twenty Mediterranean countries on the subject of the construction of sessions of The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra and a reflection on intercultural dialogue in the Mediterranean area and on intercultural projects which encourage dialogue, transmission and mobility in the Mediterranean.

## INTERVIEW WITH FABRIZIO CASSOL

Interview by Louis Geisler

# SHARE, EXPERIMENT, BUILD TOGETHER

*Each summer, the Académie du Festival d'Aix proposes to young improvising musicians to discover the life of an intercultural ensemble, for the duration of a session devoted to composition and to improvisation. They receive teaching and sound advice from the composer and saxophonist Fabrizio Cassol, founder of the jazz group Aka Moon, who has crossed the globe for more than twenty-five years in search of the music and cultures of the world.*

## Fabrizio Cassol

COMPOSER SAXOPHONIST  
(BELGIUM)

- » Coach for the programme Outreach skills (2013)
- » Concerts at the Festival d'Aix (*Alephba* in 2013 and *Aka Moon* in 2017)
- » Coach for the session of intercultural creation of the MYO (2015 – 2017 – 2018)
- » Stage musician in *Pinocchio* opera (2017)
- » Tutor in the music chamber residency (2017)

*How does a session of intercultural creation take place at the Festival d'Aix?*

Each session brings together about fifteen young instrumentalists and singers chosen from amongst the hundreds of candidates auditioned in the countries of the Mediterranean basin. They all have their own specific features and their own cultural baggage. The Mediterranean is incredibly rich: each one of its regions has different practices and traditions. An artist from the Balkans does not develop in the same musical environment as an artist from the Maghreb or from the South of Europe, even if certain similitudes do exist of course. The starting point of our work is therefore an encounter: the young artists learn to know each other musically. It is an absolutely fundamental stage, during which they must understand and grasp their differences and their similarities in order to approach one another artistically. The next step is to create a musical form together, in a fairly limited time – about ten days – which will then be presented during the final concert.

*How do you approach the task of composing with these young musicians?*

I consider each ensemble as a great constellation, at the heart of which gravitates smaller constellations which are themselves made up of unique stars. I try to encourage the young instrumentalists to be conscious of

their own individual and expressive forces, as well as those of their partners. It is essential in order to be able to develop a musical form which will allow everyone to blossom individually, whilst expressing his cultural horizon, and in which his different elements are going to be able to interact and combine. This requires a lot of listening: we have to share, experiment and build together. The intercultural ensembles which we train every summer do not have a reference to which they can refer to. A composer who wants to write for string quartet or a work for symphony orchestra can refer to the whole of a multi secular tradition. This is not the case for us: we have to invent everything. We have to develop a veritable dramaturgy, as with opera, in order to build and give structure to our creation. In fact, the majority of the young artists who participate in this session discover the world of opera for the first time. It is an experience which influences them during the whole of their time in Aix.

*Improvisation is an important element of your work with these young instrumentalists, just as much during the phase of composition as during the concert. What do you understand by "improvisation"?*

That's a really vast subject! There are a great deal of different visions of what we call « improvisation ». For the musicians who take part in our session, we are dealing with



a method tied to oral traditions. Orality is a memory maintained and sustained, which is passed on and is shared between a master and his disciple but does not mean the same thing for everybody and does not assume the same importance in traditional music. Improvisation techniques are multiple and are also tied to a cultural horizon. Jazz musicians for example are used to improvising on structures and harmonies, whereas in Balkan music improvisation concerns the intonations the notes and the rhythm. Certain musicians have the habit of improvising on the structure and western harmonies others on the modes or the maqam, by using micro-intervals and or even playing on western tempered systems. I therefore try to make sure that each musician shares his experience of improvisation with his partners.

***What do you want to communicate to these young artists?***

I want them to become conscious of the diversity and of the richness of Mediterranean musical practices, that they immerse themselves in them and that they come out of this experience having grown, having acquired advantages which they did not possess before their arrival. The greatest challenge is giving them the necessary tools to be able to participate later on in

other groups and potentially to manage them. Dealing with an ensemble of 12 to 15 musicians is a complex business! I also wanted them to develop an intuition and an instinct in composition and improvisation, whilst posing the right questions: how do you create a group feeling in a group made up of individual personalities? How do you take account of the strengths of each one of them? How do you manage different musicalities and vocalities to try and build up a common language?

***You know the Festival d'Aix extremely well: you have given several concerts there with your group Aka Moon and you took part in 2017 in the world premiere of Pinocchio by Philippe Boesmans. What is your perception of the Festival's opening up to Mediterranean cultures?***

This opening up seems to me to be fundamental. All cultural structures should be conscious of the fabulous artistic agitation that is present all around the Mediterranean. Generally speaking, I have the impression that a lot of institutions are cut off from their environment from their neighbourhoods and from their populations. I think that it is important to break down the barriers of all that. We live at a time where the access to knowledge has never been so easy, thanks notably to the development of internet

and new technologies. It is now possible to listen to music from all around the whole world whilst remaining at home. This was unthinkable twenty-five years ago, what was on offer was much more limited. But, it seems to me that we are yet again missing an essential experience, that which consists of going for an encounter with other people in order to play music together. It is therefore very important that an institution as prestigious as the Festival d'Aix shows the way and looks in the direction of Mediterranean cultures. This approach will necessarily have an impact on other structures.

***How do you see the development of the intercultural creation session over the following years?***

The Académie du Festival d'Aix and The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra only propose one residency per year for the time being, every summer in Aix-en-Provence. Thanks to the support of the European Union and through its programmes Europe Creative and Erasmus+, we are going to be able to organise as early as next year activities in different countries such as Tunisia, Italy, Turkey, Portugal, Malta. This development around the Mediterranean is going to enable us to deepen our work and to give a new dimension to this passionate adventure.



## INTERVIEW WITH LEÏLA SOLDEVILA AND MARIE LESTRELIN

Interview by Pauline Chaigne and Louis Geisler

# THE MEDITERRANEAN YOUTH ORCHESTRA

## CROSS-OVER EXPERIENCES

*Every summer the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra (MYO) proposes two types of training to young Mediterranean musicians: a symphonic session, directed by professional artists and a conductor, and an intercultural creation session, devoted to traditional music and to improvisation. The double bass player Leïla Soldevila and the violinist Marie Lestrelin talk together about their respective positions at the heart of the MYO and share their mutual impressions.*

## Marie Lestrelin

### VIOLINIST (FRANCE)

- » Participant in the symphonic session of the MYO (2013, 2014, violin solo in 2017)
- » Participant in the Outreach Skills Workshop (2018)

*You have both had different experiences at the heart of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra. How did you live this experience?*

**Leïla Soldevila:** I had been invited to take part in the 2017 intercultural creation session directed by Fabrizio Cassol. There were 14 musicians coming from France, Greece, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia, Bulgaria, Morocco, Palestine and Malta. We all came from different horizons: everyone had their own cultural baggage, their own musical references, but we were driven by an immense willingness to share and exchange.

Learning to work together required of us a little time, but it was a very exciting process in which everyone was very engaged. At the end of each day, we pursued our discussions with the desire to surpass ourselves even more, to go even further. I learnt an awful lot during this experience, at the same time musically, culturally and humanly.

**Marie Lestrelin:** I have exactly the same impressions as Leïla, even if as far as I am concerned I took part in the symphonic sessions in 2012, 2013, and 2017. All the young musicians chosen for these workshops have a very deep commitment, which I have not found in any other ensemble. I remember the first rehearsal when we came together with absolutely everybody. There was an incredible emulation: everybody was excited and wanted to give 100%. We benefitted from exceptional working conditions, thanks to the musicians of the London Symphony Orchestra who came to supervise our training. Another important aspect of this residency is the immersion at the heart of the Festival d'Aix: we had the opportunity to attend rehearsals and to meet a good deal of the artists with the feeling of being an integral part of this adventure.

*Is there a souvenir which particularly marked you during your time with the MYO?*

**Marie Lestrelin:** I do have a very fond memory of an improvised jam session backstage before a concert. A musician started playing the theme from Csárdás. It's a very well-known traditional folk piece by the Italian composer Vittorio Monti, inspired by Hungarian music. The violinists followed him and then the cellists, the double bass players and finally the percussionists accompanied them by clapping their hands. Everybody knew this music, but everybody interpreted it in their own way. This little game enabled us to relax and unite us just before going on stage.

**Leïla Soldevila:** The final concert of our session remains for me one of the most powerful and magical moments. It was a mixture of euphoria, of concentration, osmosis, of goodwill, of sharing and of love. This experience went straight to my heart.

*What role did the MYO play in your professional and artistic orientation?*

**Marie Lestrelin:** My participation in the MYO totally shaped my professional choices. When I left the Avignon Conservatoire, I

wanted to become a violinist, but I knew absolutely nothing about the reality of this profession. I lacked self-assurance and confidence in myself. Some people close to me advised me to orientate myself in the direction of literary studies in a preparatory class. Becoming part of the MYO was an ideal opportunity (and free, contrary to many music courses) to continue my training. After my first participation, I was convinced that the violin would be my life. I therefore pursued my studies along this

path, with this objective. I have just this year validated my violin degree and obtained my professor's diploma.

**Leïla Soldevila:** I am a few years older than Marie, but this adventure enabled me to confirm my choices and my convictions. I had already had the opportunity of taking part in workshops with musicians coming from other cultures and traditions. I really do appreciate this kind of exchange. My time in Aix influenced my way of « living music ». Fabrizio Cassol communicated to us an imperative which made us into people that we did not know we were.

*The sessions of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra take place in an international and multicultural environment. What did this double dimension do for you?*

**Marie Lestrelin:** I joined the MYO very young; being close to artists coming from countries and cultures so different taught me a great deal and made me want to discover other youth orchestras in Europe.

**Leïla Soldevila:** I have always loved travelling, discovering new political and artistic contexts, being in contact with different cultures... I had the opportunity of working in Africa, in India, in Cuba. It is important to be confronted with people who have another framework and who have learnt music differently. This creates a dynamic which projects us towards others and the unknown.

*As young artists, what are your desires for the future of the Mediterranean basin?*

**Marie Lestrelin:** It would be fabulous to establish even more cultural ties between the different countries of the region. I have the impression that the Festival d'Aix is one of the rare institutions to propose programmes like those of the MYO. This type of project should be exported to other places in order to intensify the exchanges.

**Leïla Soldevila:** When we play with artists of different countries, we are often confronted with very concrete problems for obtaining visas for example. A few weeks ago, I should have gone to Morocco with a Syrian musician and two Iranian musicians. They were not able to leave because of a break in diplomatic relations between their countries and Morocco, and our tour had to be cancelled. As an artist, we have an important responsibility. Our principle challenge is to create

an opportunity for dialogue. Even between musicians it is not always simple. There can be profound misunderstandings between us, because of our cultural differences. A word or an anodyne gesture for one person can be very badly taken by another person. We have to nevertheless try to understand each other, between artists and with the audience. Above all, we must not judge each other. It is important that faces of different colours be present together on stage, lit by the same projector. This proves that an exchange is possible. In the tense context which we are going through with wars and terrorism, artists must place themselves in this dynamic, to try to comfort and open up the mind, whilst at the same time bringing a note of hope.

**Marie Lestrelin:** Leïla is absolutely right and what she says knocks me out. At our artist's level, we too can try to change things in the Mediterranean area.

**Leïla Soldevila:** I think that we also have a role to play as women. There is still a great deal of inequality between female and male artists in Mediterranean countries. We must make our contribution to changing mentalities.

# Leïla Soldevila

DOUBLE BASS PLAYER (FRANCE)

» Participant in the session of intercultural creation with the MYO (2017)



MYO intercultural creation concert, 2017



## KATHRYN MCDOWELL'S EXPERIENCE

## LSO &amp; MYO

## A PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIP

*Between 2010 and 2014, the London Symphony Orchestra has been invited to be in residence at the Festival d'Aix. The presence of these top level musicians, highly experienced in mediation, has profoundly marked the development of the socio-artistic activities of the Festival. Four years later, the formation continues still today to accompany every summer The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra. Their Director Kathryn McDowell, looks back over this unprecedented collaboration.*

**T**he London Symphony Orchestra has been at the forefront of education and community projects since orchestras worldwide started to embrace this transformative stream of work into their long-term aims, ensuring the future of orchestral music and how we can all offer everyone the chance to participate in music-making activity. Since LSO Discovery launched in 1990, this area of our work has expanded to involve people from all walks of life and of all ages and abilities, and it has become an essential part of the working lives of many LSO musicians.

When Bernard Foccroulle invited the LSO to consider a four-year residency from 2010 at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, it was clear that he intended that the Orchestra engage with his burgeoning programme with young musicians and the wider community, alongside the more standard remit to perform opera. Projects such as the lullabies of women from the Comoros Islands now living in Marseille, and performances by people with special needs working with local musicians, were particular highlights of this time, but the project with the LSO that has flourished throughout the ten years of our association in Aix, is the partnership with the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra.

Each year a team of LSO musicians, drawn from each section of the Orchestra, would spend up to 10 days coaching and mentoring the young musicians, developing their ability to perform in an ensemble, and helping them to listen and respond creatively. Building on the work of their teachers in their homeland, the LSO musicians were able to help each

section prepare the orchestral repertoire in advance of the conductor's arrival. Often they would play side by side, and glean some of the wider skills that a professional orchestral musician develops over years in a professional orchestra, always with tangible results. To see the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra step up its standards and ambition each year in the concluding concerts in Aix and in the region has been a real thrill for the LSO musicians. The focus of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra includes over 20 countries today, with a whole generation of young musicians across the Mediterranean benefitting from this opportunity. There in lay a new cultural diversity and richness that flowed directly into the music-making and enriched the whole experience of everyone involved.

Whilst providing a nurturing environment for the potential professionals of tomorrow is a clear responsibility of any

# Kathryn McDowell

MANAGING DIRECTOR, LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Orchestra, the LSO also has a wider aim of involving as many people as possible in music-making, so it was important to share these ideals with the young Mediterranean musicians too. As a result, the LSO musicians also encouraged and enabled the young musicians to mentor other less experienced young people in the Festival's Junior Youth Orchestra. Focusing on professional repertoire that has been re-arranged for different

abilities, the more experienced young people could share their skills with the younger ones, under the watchful eye of their own mentors from the LSO. In this way, we develop not only the musical skills but the ability to communicate those skills more widely and the notion of being a role model to others, whatever one's age and stage.

Alongside this development of the MYO itself, Bernard Foccroulle proposed that we should create a forum for the sharing of ideas and best practice – something I have always admired in the French approach to developing the arts. Over the last ten years there has been a growing dialogue of the music education leaders from these Mediterranean lands, through an annual conference in Aix running alongside the MYO's annual course. It has been inspirational to hear how each country has handled key issues such as the tension in musical training between indigenous musical styles and western classical or jazz; or the extent to which young musicians are trained in aspects of community engagement alongside their formal technical training; or the more straightforward, but nonetheless challenging matter of funding for music education. It has been a truly inspiring platform for us all – built on mutual trust and understanding – in which we could expand horizons and push the boundaries of our work with young musicians.

What is remarkable about the MYO relationship is the richness of partnerships within it – the cultural differences being respected and transcended through music – I shall never forget the cheer for the young boy from Syria who joined us at the height of the tensions in his land.

As Bernard Foccroulle departs from Aix, he leaves a wonderful legacy on which others can build, and we thank him wholeheartedly for that. In the words of one participant some years ago: 'I was so surprised about how much I learned... It was a very powerful experience to work with the professional musicians and with very young children. Everyone concentrated so much on their role and felt so important in the project. It was lovely when everyone came together.'



MYO's rehearsals conducted by LSO musicians, 2015

## PARTNERS TESTIMONIALS

## MEDINEA

SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF  
YOUNG ARTISTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

*Medinea [ Mediterranean Incubator for Emerging Artists ] has its origins in the desire of the partners of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra to accompany more closely the new generation of Mediterranean artists. Founded and piloted by the Festival d'Aix, the network supports the occupational integration of young musicians by developing intercultural projects encouraging dialogue, transmission and mobility within the Mediterranean basin. The network brings together around thirty festivals, cultural centres, professional music salons and further education establishments, implanted in the Mediterranean basin.*

**TUNISIA**  
**CITÉ DE LA CULTURE IN TUNIS**

The Festival d'Aix and the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra have become over the years an essential meeting point for young Tunisian musicians. The training programmes on offer are a golden opportunity for them to be confronted with high level professionals who help them to increase their exigency in orchestral work. It is also a unique human and artistic experience to be able to share the stage with musicians of different origins in order to form together a mosaic and an attractive image of what the world should be today. What gives to this cooperation with the Académie even more sense is its organisation as a network. Medinea is a collective project which contributes to strengthening reciprocity in the exchanges with the partner countries and leads to intercultural projects opening up to the diversity of artistic languages. Today it is an artistic family, an infallible support to young artists and an incubator for innovative intercultural projects.

**Saima Samoud**  
*Director of the Centre for Music and Opera*

**MALTA**  
**ARC RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY**

The Mediterranean Youth Orchestra and the network Medinea constitute an ideal environment for emerging Maltese artists. They give them the opportunity to take part in a prestigious international festival, as well as quality projects which stimulate their artistic development by enriching it with an intercultural dimension. The contacts that they establish enable our artists to benefit from a network of artists and pedagogues coming from different horizons. This diversity is an invitation to know each other better, to join forces in aesthetic experiments and creative risk taking – creation is by the way at the very heart of Medinea. Working with musicians coming from different traditions and cultures has enriched the musical knowledge of all the Maltese musicians who have taken part in the programme. This intercultural approach enables them to perceive music from a new angle.

**Davinia Galea**  
*General Director*

**GREECE**  
**NATIONAL CONSERVATOIRE  
OF ATHENS**

The future of a young musician at the beginning of his / her career depends on two elements: the quality of his / her further education training and the opportunities of performing at major musical events. These two elements are precisely at the very heart of the programmes on offer so generously by the Festival d'Aix and its Académie to young musicians who take part in the activities of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra (MYO) and of Medinea network. Founded in 1926 by the Greek composer Manolis Kalomiris, the National Conservatoire of Athens has been a partner of the MYO for six years now. We have noted the benefits which our chosen students have been able to profit from thanks to this experience in Aix-en-Provence. Over the course of the master classes and the concerts, they increased their musical knowledge and their aptitude to perform on stage. They also had a unique opportunity to meet and forge invaluable connections with other young promising musicians who come from the four corners of the Mediterranean.

**Hara Kalomiri**  
*General Director of Ethniko Odeio*



## ALBANIA THE TIRANA UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

The first contacts between the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra (MYO) and Albania took place in 1995. Up until the beginning of the 1990's our country was very isolated. The training programme proposed by the MYO was therefore one of the first opportunities offered to the young generation to discover what was then going on in Europe! Twenty years later, more than a hundred Albanian musicians have been selected to take part in these activities. Amongst these a significant number are today pursuing a career abroad in orchestras in France, Italy, Germany, and the United States. I had the chance of taking part in the pedagogical supervision of the MYO between 2000 and 2006. I witnessed firsthand this extraordinary encounter of cultures and different teaching traditions. At that time, I saw incredible energies set free during the sessions. Something magical always happens during the MYO concerts. Sometimes the young musicians succeeded in going beyond the determined objectives. When you take a look at the list of conductors and musicians invited to intervene at the training sessions, you can only be impressed: there are exclusively high level international professionals. This tendency did in fact become even more accentuated with the arrival of the MYO at the heart of the Académie du Festival d'Aix. The musicians of the London Symphony Orchestra who have been taking part in the pedagogical supervision since 2010 have passed on to the orchestra and to its young instrumentalists their professionalism, their artistic discipline and their musical exigency.

**Bujar Sykja**  
*Violin professor*



## INTERVIEW WITH MOHAMED BOUSLAMA

Interview by Émilie Delorme, Marie-Laure Favier and Louis Geisler

## THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

*The violinist Mohamed Bouslama discovered the life of a symphonic ensemble by taking part in the summer sessions of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra in Aix-en-Provence. This experience deeply marked his career and his way of considering the Tunisian musical landscape.*

# Mohamed Bouslama

## VIOLINIST, MEMBER OF THE QUATUOR CADENCES (TUNISIA)

- » Participant in the MYO symphonic session (2011, 2012)
- » Participant in the chamber music residency (2015)
- » Participant in the Outreach skills Workshop (2015 to 2017)
- » Apprenticeship with the Béla Quartet (since 2016)

*You took part in 2011 and 2012 in the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra, which proposes training sessions to instrumentalists auditioned in the countries of the Mediterranean basin. Tell us about this adventure and its place in your career.*

I began the violin at eight years of age, which is rather early in Tunisia. After my baccalaureate in 2007, I went to the Higher Musical Education Institute in Tunis (l'Institut supérieur de musique de Tunis), with as my speciality « Western violin ». Every year, I saw posters on the walls of the establishment announcing the auditions for the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra and I decided to apply following the advice of one of my professors. I was selected to participate in the symphonic session of 2011 which was directed by François-Xavier Roth in Aix-en-Provence. At that time, I had not yet left Tunisia very often to go to a foreign country. During my training at the Higher Musical Education Institute in Tunis, I had had the opportunity of taking part in several concerts at the end of the year, but these were not with permanent ensembles. I was well prepared technically, but it was the first time that I had been part of a real orchestra. I was quite intimidated at the beginning of the session: it is rather impressive to find yourself in the middle of a hundred musicians who tune together! After the first working sessions, this feeling very quickly disappeared. I realised that my desk partners were not there to judge me. Quite on the contrary. We were brought together in order that each one of us learns from the other with the objective of preparing a

beautiful concert. Very strong ties developed between us, not only musical but amicable. I have fantastic memories of this experience: I was plunged into a cosmopolitan world devoted to classical music, with young people of a very high level, under the direction of a great conductor and tutored by musicians of the London Symphony Orchestra. When the Académie du Festival d'Aix proposed to me to come back to Aix the following summer for a new session, it was one of the most beautiful days in my life! I still follow the activities of the orchestra. For example, in 2015, I was able to attend an MYO concert at the El Jem Festival I was very proud to say to myself that I too, had been part of this ensemble.

*What has been the impact of this experience on your career?*

Just after having been with the MYO I had the opportunity of playing in some ensembles for a few concerts in France. When I got back to Tunisia, I had only one thing in mind: become a musician in a classical orchestra. It must be said that this profession is far from being a lucrative one in Tunisia. You have to be passionate in order to go into it. I decided to create my own ensemble, the Quatuor Cadences, with Akram Ben Romdhane (violin), Afif Bouslama (viola) and Farouk S'habou (cello). We tried to find professors in Tunisia, funders and concert possibilities, but it was very hard. Without discouraging ourselves, in 2014 we applied for the chamber music residency at the Académie du Festival d'Aix. We clearly did not have the required level, but we were offered the opportunity to come to Aix to have some



lessons with David Alberman and the Quatuor Modigliani on the fringe of the residency. It was during this time that the Académie put us in contact with the Quatuor Béla. We developed a very strong and singular contact with them. For three years now, they have never ceased to accompany us, to help us and propose scores to us. In 2016 they came to Tunis. We were very proud to welcome them. It was like inviting the Académie du Festival d'Aix to Tunis. They shared their experience with the students of Higher Musical Education Institute in Tunis and even prepared the students for the auditions for the MYO. Two years later these young people still live with the souvenir of that encounter: the majority of them had never seen a quartet on stage, if only on internet. We played with them the *two pieces for string octet* by Shostakovich. It remains for me an absolutely magical memory.

*Your story with the Académie also took place in the domain of pedagogy and mediation.*

Absolutely. The Académie asked me to take part in the Outreach skills Workshop which trains artists to pass on their knowledge not only to very young amateur instrumentalists but also to children without any particular musical training. It is a very enriching experience: you learn to give, to mount projects, to confront yourself "in the field" with unknown persons, manage groups... Following this training, I led workshops in schools in Aix based on the discovery of traditional Tunisian music, for a project given in February 2018 at the Grand Théâtre de Provence, and in which the Quatuor Béla participated.

*Your ties to the Festival d'Aix have profoundly marked your artistic and professional development. Do you think that the activities of the Académie and the MYO have a concrete impact notably in the domain of training in Tunisia?*

I can only speak in the light of my experience, but I think that these initiatives really do have an impact. Every student at the Higher Musical Education Institute in Tunis who takes part in the MYO sessions comes back enthusiastic and encourages their comrades to audition to attempt the adventure. Next to my career as a musician I am currently working as production manager for the Cité de la Culture de Tunis. It is an absolutely magnificent venue, in an ideal environment

for working and creating. I am trying to inspire myself with the Académie in order to develop similar training projects there. I dream for example of creating a residency

devoted to string quartets. Tunisia proposes today a great variety of concerts and performances, but we need now to develop a real training policy fed by a long-term strategy.



*Ouverture[s] with the Béla and Cadences Quartet, 2016*



# TRAIN ARTISTS OF TOMORROW

34

*Hidden in Plain Sight, 2016*





Every year tens of artists come to Aix-en-Provence, invited to follow the different programmes. They come from everywhere and practice chamber music, singing or composition at the highest level. Others cross each other on the Mediterranean routes and come together to intensify their orchestral work or attempt to find their way to creation and improvisation. They all benefit from a personalised excellent artistic accompaniment. These young artists make the most of the Académie du Festival d'Aix's privileged artistic environment on account of its artistic reputation, but also for its professional integration dimension.

For the career of an artist today, talent, brio, instrumental or vocal virtuosity, the mastering of classical repertoires and creation are at the heart of the profession of being a musician and must necessarily be completed by other more trivial, but so very necessary skills! This concerns aspects of communication, organisation and the structuring of artistic activity, knowledge of the professional environment and the capacity to integrate networks: all of this is the embodiment of the skills linked to the conception and organisation of artistic and cultural projects which are viable pertinent and diversified.

Whatever their discipline, the young musicians are assisted in their reflection upon their professional development strategy in accordance with at least three parameters. The first concerns the very essence of their artistic career which, characterised by uncertainty, makes success as well as failure difficult to predict, followed by the high level of competition on the limited employment market and finally the economic climate which is characterised by a weakening of public subsidy for culture. We can therefore understand the importance and the interest for musicians to make the most not only of the creative and experimental opportunities proposed by the Académie, of the possibility to perform in public, of coming across numerous actors from the music profession who are present during the Festival, but also beginning to reflect upon their future and their role as a musician in society.

These needs and these professional realities are being increasingly identified by artists. It is in this sense that they approach the mediation workshops of which multiple propositions are emerging at every level of artistic action.

These are also moments of exchange on the elaboration of their professional project, their communication tools, their sales and networking strategy, which take place in the form of workshops or individual interviews.

The question of integration and the professionalisation of musicians is a theme central to the training courses proposed at the media library of the Philharmonie de Paris. When

the Académie approached us in order to determine the methodology with the residents, we replied with enthusiasm and humility. The variety and the richness of the profiles – string quartets, composers, improvisers, singers from different geographic origins, career paths and motivations, without forgetting the absence of "magic formulas" as far as artistic careers are concerned, necessitate listening attentively, the adaptation of information, resources and possible courses of action for everybody. Most importantly perhaps was to establish the link between all the professional openings created by this privileged moment: to become aware of the paramount importance of legitimisation networks, the stages of the elaboration and the communication of an identity for the artist, the importance of the audience and the mediation work, encounters with other artists and creators and the perspectives which come out of this, and above all that the artistic work is firmly set in the reality of the world. As Franz Liszt wrote "the arts are the surest means of avoiding the world; they are also the surest means of being united with it."

# Christiane Louis

CAREER DEVELOPMENT COACH (FRANCE)

- » Coach for the chamber music residency and to the intercultural creation sessions of the MYO since 2016
- » Coach for the Pinocchio residency (2017)

## INTERVIEW WITH SUSANNA EKEN

Interview by Louis Geisler

# WHY MOZART?

*For more than twenty-five years Susanna Eken has taught singing at the Royal Danish Conservatory to young artists from all over the world and gives numerous conferences and master classes throughout Europe. She has been in charge of the Mozart Residency at the Académie du Festival d'Aix for ten years, where she assists young singers in becoming skilled singers thanks to the works of the Austrian composer.*

## Susanna Eken

SINGING PROFESSOR  
(DENMARK)

» Professor at the Mozart residency  
(2008 – 2018)

*You have taught Mozartian vocal music to young singers and pianists-vocal coaches from the Académie du Festival d'Aix every summer since 2008. How did this exemplary loyalty to the Festival d'Aix come about?*

I began running the Mozart residency of the Académie du Festival d'Aix at the invitation of Bernard Foccroulle, shortly after his appointment as head of the Festival. We had met in Brussels when he was the Director of La Monnaie. He had proposed to me there to give about ten master classes per year to young artists from the opera studio. Coming to Aix was a little bit like continuing the work I had begun in Belgium.

*During your career you built up a singular approach to the voice and to pedagogy, based on psychological and physiological principles that you developed in your work The Human Voice. Can you explain to us the broad principles of your teaching method?*

I try to individually analyse the singers in order to give them satisfactory advice in accordance with their skills, their needs and their level. The body is the singer's instrument. Every voice is unique and depends directly on the physiological constitution and muscular configuration of the individual. My work is based on a joint analysis of the voice and of the morphology, which enables the guidance of the singer in the construction of their instrument. My advice varies from one artist to another, even if there do exist certain typologies. Certain singers have a body and a voice which are

very flexible, others are more stiff and tight, but it is crucial to adjust your teaching to each individual.

*If the Académie regularly proposes singing residencies, devoted to lieder, French melody or contemporary music, the Mozart residency is one of its indispensable training programmes, proposed every summer since 1998. Is this only a result of the Festival's Mozartian tradition?*

The Mozartian repertoire as much in its forms as in its content, is very important for young singers, because it allows an approach to all aspects of vocal music. It helps them build their instrument, develop a voice capable of singing operatic music, whatever the repertoires towards which they may wish to turn to. In Mozart's time, orchestras were of a reasonable size. His works, whilst being demanding, allowed young singers to work on their basic technique without forcing or having to sing too loudly. You have to be a good musician to sing Mozart!

*The singing residencies of the Académie are relatively short – about 12 days – but intensive, punctuated with individual and group work, public master classes and concerts. What do you want to bring to the young singers who take part in them?*

I actually would like them to become good Mozartians and that they learn even more about legato, coloratura, phrasing and how it works with the German or Italian language, melodically as well as harmonically.



*What is the impact of the Festival environment on the young singers and pianists of the Académie during their stay in Aix?*

There are an awful lot of programmes for young artists in Europe and in the United States during the summer. What is unique in Aix, is the profusion of artistic propositions, between the concerts, the rehearsals, the operas in exciting stagings, without mentioning the musical level of the orchestras and

the guest singers. It is a singular experience and stimulating for these young singers. And they adore it!

*You have eleven times directed the Mozart residency. What is the event which stands out for you the most during all these years?*

There have been so many of them... At this moment in time I remember a final concert of the 2014 residency. It was the first time

that we had proposed a programme in the form of a "collage", combining airs from the last act of *Don Giovanni* with extracts from Mozart's *Requiem*. The reaction of the spectators was very forceful, some of them even wept. It is fascinating to observe that we can create something different and new with works from the repertoire which are so well known.



Master class by Susanna Eken, 2017

## LEAH HAUSMAN'S EXPERIENCE

# MUSICAL, DRAMATIC AND THEATRICAL MARATHON

*The British choreographer Leah Hausman teaches the techniques of gesture, deportment and movement in several British conservatories and opera studios. Since 2012 she is regularly invited to intervene with the soloists of the Mozart residency of the Académie du Festival d'Aix, for whom she creates a semi-staged final concert each summer.*

**T**he Mozart residency is an event which generates within me a great deal of enthusiasm and a little bit of apprehension. It is impossible to know with what this two week adventure, veritable musical dramatic and theatrical marathon is going to end up. Mozart plays the role of a springboard for a group of young promising singers and pianists. One thing is for sure: each one of them is going to be transformed by the experience he/she is going to live. This metamorphosis is, I believe, positive for the most part. I take as proof the numerous participants that I come across later on, all over the world as part of my professional activity. As a matter of fact I am currently working in Germany with a young Russian tenor, who, four years ago, was in residence at the Académie. Isn't that marvellous?

All of my work with singers is articulated around movement. My approach forms a perfect alliance with that of Susanna Eken for whom the dynamic between thought, breath control projection is rightly so primordial. Nothing escapes her observation of the singers. The vocal difficulties that they can come across are closely scrutinised through physicality, which is so very often a mirror of the voice. I am amazed by the keenness of her observation which goes over and above the evaluation of vocal technique. It reveals to her the very essence of what a singer is projecting, his inimitable vocal identity. Both of us,

we are passionately in search of openness and clarity which we like to spice up with a soupçon of mischief!

In Aix, training and creative process should be synonymous – and it is this synergy which makes me come back to the Festival every summer. This is why our two weeks of residency culminate in a short semi-staged show that we imagine over a few afternoons under a scorching sun, in the magic setting of the courtyard of the Hôtel Maynier d'Oppède, accompanied by an exceptional technical team. Coaching, vocal training and movement master classes, everything is put to one side in order to merge into the impromptu creation of a brief dramatic spectacle composed of opera airs and ensembles following a narrative storyline. A marvelous moment which sums up the

## Leah Hausman

### CHOREOGRAPHER (UNITED KINGDOM)

- » Movement Coach in *La clemenza di Tito* (2011) and *The Rake's Progress* (2017)
- » Coach on the Mozart residencies (since 2013, except in 2017) and *Melody & Creation* (2016)
- » Coach in the Opera Creation Workshop (2015), in the symphonic session of the MYO (2016) and in the chamber music residency (2016)

very spirit of the Académie. No sets, or costumes of any sort, nothing but our magnificent young artists, a public keen to listen to them, the cry of the swallows at sunset and a shared desire to elevate ourselves through music.

Final concert of the Mozart Residency, 2014

39





## INTERVIEW WITH MARK WITHERS AND GENEVIÈVE SORIN

Interview by Émilie Delorme and Louis Geisler

# OUTREACH SKILLS-ARTISTS

## THE FORCE OF JOY

*Since 2011, the Outreach Skills Workshop of the Académie du Festival d'Aix proposes to future professional singers and musicians who show a sensitivity to pedagogy to benefit from a training course relating to questions of mediation and of initiation to music for the young and audiences which do not have access to it..*

## Mark Withers

CLARINETIST, HEAD OF PEDAGOGICAL  
AND PARTICIPATIVE PROJECTS  
(UNITED KINGDOM)

- » Artistic and Pedagogical Coordinator of Outreach skills programme (since 2011)
- » Musical Director of *Boras* (2013) and of *The Musical Journey Ouverture[s]* (2016)
- » Coach of Orchestras in School
- » Tutor in chamber music residencies (2014 – 2017 – 2018), *Pinocchio* (2017), *The Art of the recital* (2018) and the MYO Symphonic sessions (2017 – 2018)

*What is your vision of the Outreach Skills programme?*

**Mark Withers:** I took part in the creation of the Outreach Skills Workshop, which was organised on the occasion of a four-year residency of the London Symphony Orchestra at the Festival d'Aix. From the offset the idea was to work with young talented musicians, motivated to take part in the activities of the educational and socio-artistic services of the Festival. It is a privilege to work with these young artists. Each one of them brings in extremely varied contributions: some of them already have

an experience of teaching, others sing, play or compose magnificently.

**Geneviève Sorin:** My participation in the Outreach Skills Workshop is more recent. I began three years ago, for a workshop with Raphaël Imbert, before working with Mark. It is a programme of great diversity and transversality. Each Coach has his own field of mediation: as for me, I work on body language, Mark and Raphaël on musical creation, each of us has a special feature but we have established a very rich collaboration, in which all the domains follow a logical sequence. All the artists who participate in the programme, whatever their musical level, take an enormous pleasure in sharing. They demonstrate a good deal of openness and goodwill. I have seldom come across such a level of commitment.

*What do you want to pass on to the young artists who take part in the Outreach Skills programme?*

**Mark Withers:** I try to share my experience. However, my aim is not to teach them a skill or a technique, but to guide them in their own development and teach them how to avoid the pitfalls. Each one of them has ideas, personalities and different talents. I encourage them to consider a multitude of approaches. It is a question of opening up the field of possibilities. It is up to them to find the path which suits them best to be able to communicate. There are an enormous number of ways for an artist to make contact with an audience, from the traditional form of the concert up to the more intimate form of an artist playing in

in a hospital bedroom. Our role is to open up the entire range of possibilities. The true apprenticeship by the way takes place thanks to the experience in the field. These young artists learn an enormous amount during the in-situ sessions in which they have a direct contact with the audiences. They then feel that they have to achieve. It is one of the specific features which the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence proposes.

**Geneviève Sorin:** Mark is right. We have to propose the right tools to them, but it is up to them to take hold of them. I try to make them be conscious of their body, and the manner in which their body intervenes in all relations. Precision and discipline are important, but it is also necessary to be open.

**Mark Withers:** I have always been struck by the spirit with which Geneviève works with these young artists. She knows how to create a framework which is both very serious and very joyful. This mix is vital. We must never forget the force of joy in all of our actions.

*What does the presence of artists from different cultures bring to these training sessions?*

**Mark Withers:** This has transformed our way of working. Beyond the obvious contribution to the group by the presence of improvisors, everybody brings in his own vision of work and the diversity of approaches, states of mind, artistic experiences open up the possibilities for all the participants. They therefore get out of their everyday world. Actually, it would be very interesting and

passionate to pursue this opening in the direction of all the disciplines in opera: composition, set design, costume design etc. It would also be fantastic for the development of a new artistic form with the "senior" Outreach artists who have acquired over all these years a great deal of experience. Why not present a show on stage at the Théâtre de l'Archevêché?

*Is there a memory which stands out particularly for you?*

**Geneviève Sorin:** I remember the participative event *Ouverture[s]* which took place in the Jas de Bouffan neighbourhood in 2016. During the final concert, Mark was in the centre of the different groups in the middle of conducting all over the place. I had the impression that he was multi-tentacular. It was very beautiful. The richness of the encounters on this project remains within me.

**Mark Withers:** Yes, this event did mark us a great deal. During the rehearsals, we went past an infants' school whilst playing: all the children stopped what they were doing and looked at us. It was obvious that every one of them at that precise moment wanted to make music. On the following days, we made sure that every time we went past that school we played music. I must also mention *Boras*, a project which involved three outreach skills artists in an exceptional project on which we collaborated with the choreographer Thierry Thieû Niang and an intergenerational group of Comorian origin. It was an opportunity to go further into something artistic. What is incredible is that all these activities are at the heart of the Festival and of its programming.

# Geneviève Sorin

CHOREOGRAPHER (FRANCE)

- » Pedagogical Tutor of Outreach skills programme (since 2015)
- » Space design of *The Musical Journey Ouverture[s]* (2016)
- » Tutor of Creation and Innovation Workshops (2016 – 2017)

## ÉMILIE DELORME

**Director of the Académie du Festival d'Aix, of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra and enoa and Medinea networks.**

The residency of the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) at the Festival d'Aix opened up incredible possibilities for artistic participative projects in which the LSO musicians played a determining role. Very rapidly a question was posed: how to pursue this work once the LSO residency was finished? We therefore decided to train artists from the Académie du Festival d'Aix in the methods used by the LSO. This is why as early as 2010 the musicians of the Mediterranean Youth Orchestra (MYO) were included in the artistic educational projects. These musicians were the intermediaries between the musicians of the LSO and our audiences. The results of this first experience had clearly shown the necessity to give structure to a training course in order to provide the necessary tools to supervise the children or the amateurs and to conceive mediation projects.

As early as 2011 Mark Withers, artistic and pedagogical coordinator of the LSO's Discovery Programme began training young artists from the Festival d'Aix who were able to put into practice what they learnt in the projects organised by Passerelles, the educational and socio-artistic service of the Festival. Year after year the training course became structured and now includes several modules allowing artists to acquire the techniques for managing a group, the tools for developing their own mediation projects based on artistic practice and an accompanied experience with different types of audience. Others coaches intervened to enrich this training course with a bodily and theatrical dimension such as Geneviève Sorin and Sybille Wilson, and opened it up to other cultures and to improvisation, with Raphaël Imbert.

The specific feature of these training courses is also based on the participation of artists from all disciplines and from all musical cultures: singers, chamber music ensembles, orchestral musicians, improvisers, the recruitment being largely propagated by the enoa and Medinea. Finally, initiation modules have been put in place for the majority of the Académie residencies to enable a first approach.

Every artist participating in this programme has therefore the opportunity to discover how the encounter with new audiences can stimulate his/her own creativity and enrich his/her performances.

## FABIENNE VERDIER'S EXPERIENCE

# SONIC AND PICTORIAL VIBRATIONS

**In 2017, Bernard Foccroulle invited the painter Fabienne Verdier to come and experiment with the quartets of the Académie du Festival d'Aix a new form of creative process, in which music and painting come face to face to exchange. An unheard of and striking encounter for the artist and the young musicians.**

**W**hen I spoke to Bernard Foccroulle about my first exploratory experiences between a sound line and a painted line which took place in New York at the Juilliard School, he asked me if I would accept to come to the Académie du Festival d'Aix and take my research on further, this time working with one of the most emblematic of chamber music formations: the string quartet.

The Festival d'Aix and the city of Aix made available to me the Chapelle de la Visitation, rue Mignet for the whole summer. The Académie teams wish was for me to study, with four young quartets from amongst the most talented of their generation, how the specific writing for every musical work, composed for the vibration of sixteen strings, could bring out, through the paint brush, structures, voids and forms which would make these works be heard in a new way. The apparatus which I imagined consisted of painting on translucent polyester films, in conjunction with the music. Four cameras set up on a glass-topped table recorded the lines, the forms and the impacts which came to life out of the exchanges between the two violinists the violist and the cellist, who were themselves placed in the middle of four screens which reproduced simultaneously the brush strokes filmed under the table. Four works were at the heart of the experiment: *Lo que no' contamo'* (string quartet n°2) composed by Ondřej Adámek in 2010 ; *Officium breve* (op. 28) composed by György Kurtág in 1989 ; *Ainsi la nuit*, string quartet composed by Henri Dutilleul in 1971 ; and *Quartet in d minor op. 76 n°2* composed by Joseph Haydn in 1797.

In the chapel, transformed into a laboratory, the exchanges no longer took place by means of speech, but directly by the sharing of moving sonic and pictorial architectures. The daily work sessions enabled us to see and to hear for each work,

a texture in which each element variates becomes tangled either continually or discontinually, and where the unforeseen is essential in a mobile composition, never ceasing to be renewed. Our gestures seemed to anticipate the brain impulses in a sort of intuitive spontaneity, predicting the notes and forms to come.

I had to learn how to « un-paint » or more precisely to suggest forms and volumes by the removal of matter from the paintbrush. Grasp the sonic constructions by taking off as much paint as possible in order to be able to see the almost immaterial structure of the musical waves in their suspensions. The musicians in the middle of these moving forms experimented new rhythmic structures, vibrations and waves which encouraged them in the direction of a form of expanded playing. The video installation which resulted from this workshop-laboratory was then conceived in order that the visitor be able to immerse himself in the process of sonic

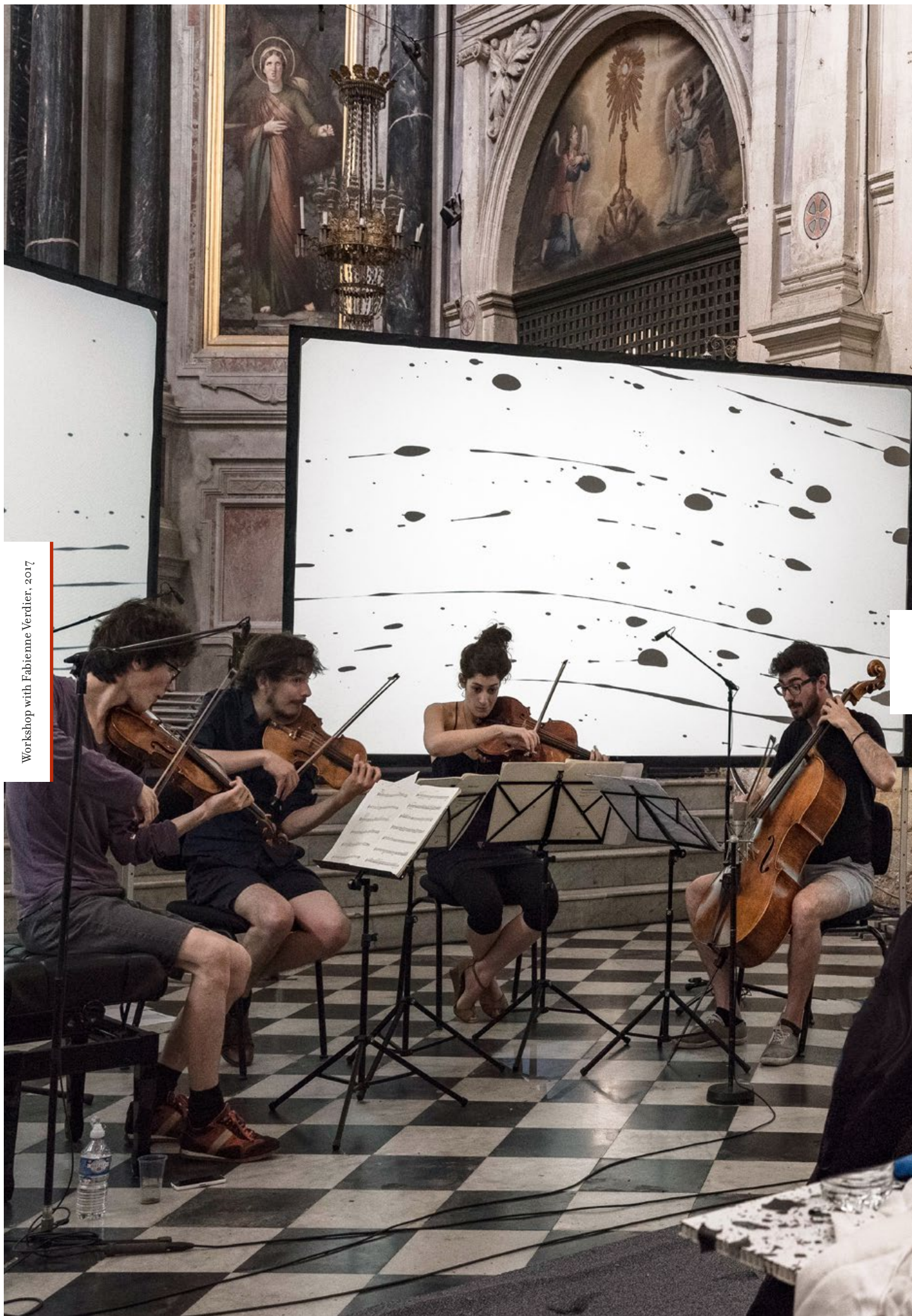
## Fabienne Verdier

### PAINTER (FRANCE)

- » Coach in a chamber music residency for an artistic experiment with string quartets (2017)
- » Creation of the season's visual for the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence 2017, *Nuit d'opéra*

and pictorial creation which emerges before your eyes. The spectator, plunged in between immediateness and duration, devises his own points of reference and explores new fields of perception. I believe that the experiments carried out by the Académie allow contemporary music to be perceived in all its force and inventiveness. The sharing of knowledge and emotions henceforth immediate, requires us as artists to react and to inter-react with a spontaneity and a complexity which is completely new. By reuniting music and painting, the Académie has encouraged us to explore unheard of in-teractive exchanges in order to enable one day perhaps new forms of concert.





Workshop with Fabienne Verdier, 2017





Jakub Józef Orlinski, *Orimeno in Erismena*, 2017

PAUL BRIOTTET'S TRIBUNE

# THE HSBC LAUREATES OF THE ACADEMIE

## A FRUITFUL AND LASTING PARTNERSHIP SERVING YOUNG TALENT

*In 2017, the Académie du Festival d'Aix and HSBC France celebrated the tenth year of a partnership devoted to the accompaniment and the promotion of young artists. The label born of this alliance, the HSBC Laureates of the Académie du Festival d'Aix has never ceased to assert its notoriety. Today, HSBC France plays a major role in the influence of the Académie and has confirmed more than ever its commitment to young artists.*

In line with the Académie's action in the realm of professional integration, this partnership, year after year, contributes to the recognition of the singers, pianists vocal coaches and chamber music ensembles who have benefitted from the Académie programmes which notably encourage their encounter with the audience. The label HSBC Laureates of the Académie du Festival d'Aix is the result of a collaboration founded on mutual confidence with the artists and professionals.

The HSBC Laureates are chosen by an artistic committee from the Festival who recognises the talent, the personality, the enthusiasm and the open-mindedness of these artists. Far from creating a climate of competition, this nomination enhances all of these new generations of performers. The HSBC Laureates of the Académie are the proud ambassadors of the Festival: when on tour, they reflect and defend its image of excellence and modernity as well as that of openness and sharing.

In over ten years, the label has been built up, refined, developed and confirmed, obtaining today a real professional recognition. The pool of new talents that the Académie represents benefits thanks to it from a visibility which, beyond France and its neighbouring countries, is exported abroad. With ten to fifteen concerts per year and an annual recording released on the Alpha Classics label, the HSBC Laureates label has found first rate partners with whom an

artistic confidence continues to thrive: the Lille Opera, les Art'Scènes (Nantes), the National Sawdust (New York), The Philharmonie de Paris, les Grands Interprètes (Toulouse), The French May (Hong Kong), le Teatro de Lago (Frutillar in Chili) and also the Silencio (Paris). The Festival d'Aix, proud of its talents, naturally offer them a prominent place at the heart of the concert programme.

Driven by the Académie's artistic exigency as much as by its desire to go beyond classical codes by renewing the form of the recital, equally encouraged by the visionary dynamic and sincere love for the arts that is Joy Henderiks\*, the HSBC Laureates concerts have become over the years rich and diversified programmes and conceived with a real dramaturgical

## Paul Briottet

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE ACADEMIE DU FESTIVAL D'AIX

idea. Lieder cycle with narrator, string quartet concert with video, world premieres: these programmes enable us to hear and see a known and less known repertoire, going from the baroque to the music of today, in the image of the diversity of the Festival's programme.

The current renown of the Académie and its international standing owe a great deal to this partnership, built upon quality exchanges and common values, of which the young artists welcomed benefit from every summer and all through the year.

\*Director of Exterior Relations and Fundraising at the heart of HSBC from 2005 to 2017





Van Kwijk Quartet

## EXPERIENCES

# FEEDBACK FROM THE HSBC LAUREATES

## BEATE MORDAL • SOPRANO (NORWAY)

2015 HSBC Laureate

- » Participant in the 2015 Voice and Creation residency
- » *Life Story* Concert (2017)
- » Role of Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (2018)

I had the chance of participating in the Voice and Creation residency's Académie in 2015. It was there that I met the pianist Nicolas Royez with whom I immediately wanted to work with in a duo. When the Académie asked us to become HSBC Laureates, we could hardly believe it. It was a dream opportunity to conceive a recital programme together. Nicolas and I wanted a new and stimulating programme with music which said something to us. It was thus that our concert *Life Story*, which we performed in several cities in France and Norway was born. We had chosen French and English cabaret songs. The title of the recital came from the final piece on the programme, composed by Thomas Adès on a poem by Tennessee Williams. It was perhaps the most difficult repertoire that I had had to learn, but everything is possible with desire and a pianist like Nicolas. The very nature of this programme is rather theatrical, and we wanted to interpret it theatrically. Paul Briottet – the Deputy Director of the Académie du Festival d'Aix – had the brilliant idea of contacting the English choreographer Joseph W. Alford, who helped us find ideas to imagine a semi-staging both melancholic – like in a real cabaret – and funny. Nicolas and I found a little bit of ourselves in this story and it was amusing to play with this dimension. I also very much liked the idea of forming a duo both musical and theatrical. It is not every day that a pianist becomes an actor!

I am extremely grateful for all the opportunities that the Festival offered me at the beginning of my career. I felt free to express all my musicality, even if it covers several genres. This enabled me to develop a better confidence in myself, as an artist and as a person, and to determine the direction in which I wanted to develop professionally. I am very impatient to return to Aix this summer for *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Théâtre de l'Archevêché. I will also sing next season in *Wonderful Town* by Bernstein at the National Opera of Denmark. I think that this would never have happened if I hadn't dared to be different and done what I really wanted to do. The Académie and the Festival d'Aix believed in me and shook up the beginning of my career.

## ALPHONSE CEMIN • PIANIST (FRANCE)

2010 HSBC Laureate

- » Participant in the Lied and contemporary repertoire residencies (2010)
- » Pianist-vocal coach at the Rossini residency (2014)
- » *Grieg, Wolf, Strauss, Grøndahl* recording with Mari Eriksmoen (2015, Alpha-Outhere Music)
- » Concerts at the Festival d'Aix (2014 – 2015 – 2017 – 2018)
- » Rehearsal Pianist for *Written on Skin* (2012), *Elektra* (2013), *Die Zauberflöte* (2018) and *Ariadne auf Naxos* (2018)
- » Gabriel Dussurget Prize (2017)

I took part in the Académie du Festival d'Aix in 2010. It was a residency in two parts, devoted to contemporary music and to lieder. It was there that I met Emmanuel Olivier, an excellent musician and pedagogue, of the type that help you to understand what sort of musician you are and Helmut Deutsch. The encounter with the second particularly struck me. He had chosen to work on *Myrthen op. 25* by Robert Schumann for all of the young singers and pianists and had given us the essential information to enable us to find our way around this prolific work. I remember having played a great deal in concert during those ten days in Aix but also in the surrounding towns on stages mounted for the occasion. A musician whatever his age, needs to play in order to make progress and for this, the Académie made me advance enormously. I think that I have never played so many concerts in so little time! One of the essential characteristics of the Académie is its relation to the Festival itself. It is like a small festival within a large one, independent but nevertheless intimately linked. The interest which the Festival's artistic direction has for the Académie and its participants is the key to its success. Numerous artists, musicians but also dramaturges, who have developed strong bonds with the Festival which have been decisive for their careers. I had the chance of being invited as early as the following summer to take part in the world premiere of *Written on Skin* by George Benjamin and Martin Crimp. Every year around the emblematic Mozart residency, the residences follow on from each other but do not resemble each other, the artists invited to teach and the themes change giving the opportunity to young musicians with different profiles to participate in them.



**RUPERT CHARLESWORTH • TENOR (UNITED KINGDOM)****2011 HSBC Laureate**

- » Damon in *Acis and Galatea* (2011), Tenor in *Trauernacht* (2014), Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2015), Ein Tanzmeister in *Ariadne auf Naxos* (2018)
- » Concerts in the Festival (2012, 2016)
- » *Nocturnes* recording (2015, Outhere Music)

My first participation in the Académie du Festival d'Aix goes back to 2011. I was given a role in *Acis and Galatea* by Handel, presented in the magnificent setting of the Grand Saint-Jean. It was an exceptional opportunity: my first professional opera production, even before my going up to the Royal Academy Opera in London. I was therefore able to experience an environment which was both demanding and truly formative. The lessons learnt turned out to be infinitely precious, not only during my studies, but also at the beginning of my career. This first engagement also marked the beginning of a great relationship with the Festival d'Aix which welcomed me back this summer for a fourth opera production. At the end of the performances of *Acis and Galatea*, I was appointed HSBC Laureate. This distinction enabled me to make a recording, *Nocturnes*, bringing together the most beautiful repertoire of melodies and lieder that I had ever sung. It was an immense pleasure performing this repertoire in concert, in Aix-en-Provence and in numerous other exceptional places throughout France, accompanied by my friend and long term musical partner the pianist Edwige Herchenroder. This tour was not only enriching from a musical point of view, but it also helped me become better known in France which is of invaluable help to build a career on a solid base. It was also a wonderful opportunity to pursue my work with Edwige on a more intimate repertoire, different to my opera roles. It is impossible to describe everything that the Académie and the HSBC Laureates label have done for me. The Festival teams have always believed in me. Without their support, my career would probably not be what it is today.

**VAN KUIJK QUARTET (FRANCE)****2014 HSBC Laureate****Nicolas Van Kuijk and Sylvain Favre-Bulle, (violinists)****Emmanuel François, (violist)****François Robin, (cellist)**

- » Participant in the chamber music residencies (2014 – 2015)
- » Concerts at the Festival d'Aix (2015 – 2016 – 2017 – 2018)
- » *Mozart* recording (2016, co-production Festival d'Aix – Alpha Classics)
- » World premiere of *Requiem* by Matthew Herbert (2017)

For us the Académie du Festival d'Aix is an indispensable centre of chamber music. It was a major stage of our musical advancement and the development of our young ensemble.

In 2014 and 2015 in Aix, we benefitted from teaching from prestigious professors in ideal residency conditions. This privileged, intense, summery, hard-working setting, allowed us to work to the best of our ability in order every week to be able to reproduce the fruit of our work for the master classes, which attracted large audiences, who were both warm and demanding.

When we were appointed HSBC Laureates in 2014 the accompaniment of the Académie's team intensified with numerous concert propositions within the Festival and the promotion of our ensemble. It also enabled us to develop strong and lasting relations with other institutions during our tours, such as the Lille Opera, the Gunter Caspar Foundation in Zurich and also the French May in Hong Kong where we made our Asian debut in 2016. The Académie also co-produced our first recording devoted to Mozart. This wonderful experience is at the origin of our encounter with our exclusive record label Alpha Classics.

We were able to have unbelievable musical adventures in Aix, notably with Matthew Herbert, a well-known personality in the domain of electronic music, who – quite literally – attacked a Beethoven string quartet.

Our collaboration with the Académie allows us today to invest in even more ambitious projects and to look towards creation.



Beate Mordal in *Life Story*, 2017

# WE SUPPORT L'ACADÉMIE



ART MENTOR FOUNDATION LUCERNE



Co-funded by the  
Creative Europe Programme  
of the European Union

50

## THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF THE FESTIVAL DONATE TO THE ACADEMIE DU FESTIVAL D'AIX.

Since 2014, businesses choose to allocate a part or all of their apprenticeship tax  
to the Académie du Festival d'Aix.

The Académie du Festival d'Aix is a member of Label Campus Eco.

### PHOTO CREDITS

© Vincent Beaume except:

pages 6, 7 and 21: © Élisabeth Carecchio

page 9: © Pascal Victor

Don Giovanni

Conductor: Jérémie Rhorer

Stage director: Jean-François Sivadier

page 13: © Astrid Ackermann

page 14: © Patrick Berger

Trauernacht (rehearsal)

Conductor: Raphaël Pichon

Stage director: Katie Mitchell

page 34: © Jean-Claude Carbonne

page 43: © Philippe Chancel

page 44: © Pascal Victor

Erismena

Conductor: Leonardo García Alarcón

Stage director: Jean Bellorini

### PUBLICATION TEAM

**Editorial Coordination:** Louis Geisler, Cécile Robert

**Editorial Team:** Émilie Delorme, Louis Geisler, Paul Briottet, Marie-Laure Favier, Pauline Chaigne, Catherine Roques, Cécile Robert

**Publication coordination:** Cécile Robert

**Graphic Conception:** Tansen Bel

**Printer:** Print Concept

**English Translation:** Christopher Bayton

© Festival d'Aix-en-Provence

**Head Office:**

Palais de l'Ancien Archevêché - 13100 Aix-en-Provence

**N° de Licences entrepreneur de spectacles:**

1- 1085 612 / 2- 1000 275 / 3- 1000 276





