

Biography:

Insula orchestra

Founded by Laurence Equilbey and the Hauts-de-Seine General Council in 2012, **Insula orchestra** is the resident ensemble at the new Parisian arts centre La Seine Musicale. In its short history, appearances at major venues and high-profile festivals throughout France and on the international concert stage have earned the orchestra a reputation for artistic excellence. Recent visits included the Philharmonie of Paris, Theater an der Wien, Salzburg Mozart Week, Stadtcasino Basel and London's Barbican Centre.

Insula orchestra's repertoire ranges from the Classical to the Romantic eras, with Mozart, Schubert and Weber at its core in both symphonic and choral programmes. Performing on period instruments, its playing is adapted to the acoustics of today's large concert halls. The musicians, based around a core of renowned section leaders, also perform chamber music.

In the Hauts-de-Seine department, the orchestra is engaged in a wide range of cultural and educational activities whose aims include increasing the musical awareness of potential audiences and those who are new to classical music, as well as educational and outreach projects involving young people and schools. The orchestra also reconsiders the formats and codes of classical music to create an on-going dialogue between symphonic music and audiences in the spatial dimension of the concert hall and stage.

The orchestra embraces digital art and regularly presents innovative, multi-medial projects: flash-mobs like the arrival at Charles de Gaulle Airport edited on Beethoven's *Eroica*, the Happening musical at the Salle du Jeu de Paume (Versailles) in 2015, and the virtual reality production Mozart 360°.

Insula orchestra pays particular attention to vocal soloists, having worked with artists such as Sandrine Piau, Werner Güra, Franco Fagioli and Ann Hallenberg recently. The orchestra also performs with prestigious soloists on period instruments such as Antoine Tamestit (violinist), Abdel Rahman El Bacha and Kristian Bezuidenhout (pianists).

Insula orchestra's 2017/18 season focuses on Beethoven in Spring with new recordings and a staged version of Goethe's *Egmont* to open the season. This production by Séverine Chavrier will tour to the Theater an der Wien after performances at La Seine Musicale. Another highlight is a staged version of Mozart's *Thamos, King of Egypt* and the ensemble will focus on rediscovering works by female French composers Louise Farrenc, Hélène de Montgeroult and Lili Boulanger with performances in Paris, Aix-en-Provence and London.

Insula orchestra's discography consists of Mozart's *Requiem*, with Sandrine Piau, Sara Mingardo, Werner Güra and Christopher Purves (*Naïve*, 2014), Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* with Franco Fagioli (Deutsche Grammophon, 2015) and Mozart's *Solemn Vespers and Coronation Mass* with Sandrine Piau (Warner Classics Erato, 2017). A recording of Schubert *Lieder* with Stanislas de Barbeyrac and Wiebke Lehmkuhl to be released in October 2017 on the Warner Classics Erato label, with whom two further recordings are planned of works by Beethoven.

Laurence Equilbey

Conductor and musical director of Insula orchestra and accentus, Laurence Equilbey is acknowledged for her demanding, yet open-minded approach to her art. Her exploration of the symphonic repertoire has seen her conducting BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the orchestras of the Hessische Rundfunk, Lyon, Bucharest, Liège, Leipzig, Brussels Philharmonic, Café Zimmermann, Akademie für alte Musik Berlin, Concerto Köln, Camerata Salzburg, Mozarteum-Orchester Salzburg.

In 2012, with support from the Hauts-de-Seine General Council, she founded Insula orchestra, an ensemble devoted to the classical and pre-Romantic repertoire, using period instruments. In April 2017 the period instrument ensemble started their residency at the

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new arts centre La Seine Musicale, where Equilbey is in charge of the classical music programme of the 1.150 seater Auditorium.

With accentus, Laurence Equilbey continues to interpret the great vocal repertoire such as the recent performance with the Orchestra of the Opéra de Rouen of *Comala* by Niels Gade in June 2017. She is an associate artist of the Grand Théâtre de Provence in Aix-en-Provence, a companion of the Philharmonie de Paris and Artistic Director and Director of Education at the Department for Young Singers at the CRR, Regional Conservatoire of Paris. She regularly conducts the Orchestra of the Opéra de Rouen.

Past operatic engagements comprise of Mozart's *Lucio Silla* at the Theater an der Wien, Britten's *Albert Herring* by Britting at Opéra de Rouen and Opéra Comique, the ballet *Sous apparence* at Opéra de Paris, Reynaldo Hahn's *Ciboulette* at the Opéra Comique where Laurence Equilbey will conduct *La Nonne sanglante* by Gounod in June 2018.

On the concert stage recent guest conducting engagements included the Danisch National Choir and Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Frankfurt Radio Symphony (HR Sinfonie Orchester) in Germany, which was broadcast live.

At their new residency, La Seine Musicale, Laurence Equilbey and Insula orchestra plan to record two new Beethoven discs on the Warner Classics Erato label this season and in October 2017 a new CD of Schubert Lieder with Stanislas de Barbeyrac and Wiebke Lehmkuhl was released. Their current discography consists of Mozart's Requiem (Naïve, 2014), Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice (Deutsch Grammophon, 2015), Mozart's *Solemn Vespers and Coronation Mass* (Warner Classics Erato, 2017).

Laurence Equilbey studied music in Paris, Vienna and London, and conducted with Eric Ericson, Denise Ham, Colin Metters and Jorma Panula.

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