

**Marking International Women's Day,
pioneering conductor Laurence Equilbey
and her Insula orchestra
celebrates Louise Farrenc's symphonic masterpiece
alongside Beethoven's joyous Triple Concerto**



Thursday 8 March 2018

Barbican Centre, London

Beethoven *Triple Concerto*
Farrenc *Symphony no. 3*

Alexandra Conunova *violin*
Natalie Clein *cello*
Alice Sara Ott *piano*
Insula orchestra
Laurence Equilbey *conductor*

Insula orchestra and its pioneering conductor Laurence Equilbey, whose new concert hall opened in Paris last spring, return to the Barbican on Thursday 8 March to celebrate International Women's Day. Equilbey dedicates the programme to the rarely-performed music of Louise Farrenc (1804-1875), pairing her *Symphony no.3* with Beethoven's *Triple Concerto* with violinist Alexandra Conunova, cellist Natalie Clein and pianist Alice Sara Ott.

Following piano tuition with Hummel and later composition with Anton Reicha (a friend of Beethoven's), Louise Farrenc gained considerable fame as a performer. Only after seven years as Professor of Piano at the Paris Conservatoire did Farrenc receive the same pay as her male counterparts. She held the post for 30 years becoming one of the most successful and sought-after piano pedagogues of her time.

The majority of Farrenc's compositions were for solo piano but her chamber music compositions are probably considered some of her finest works. She also composed two overtures and three symphonies, the third of which Guardian journalist Tom Service enthused about: "My own favourite movement is the finale, in which, after an implacable unison opening, there's one of the most memorable tunes anyone ever wrote in a symphonic finale; later on, Farrenc makes a

passage of contrapuntal rectitude burn with a diabolical ferocity before a dark, uncompromisingly minor-key coda.”



Part of Female/Male Weekend
16-18 February – La Seine Musicale

Including chamber music by French female composers H el ene de Montgeroult, Lili Boulanger and Louise Farrenc and a guest performance by Natalie Stutzmann who sings and leads her ensemble Orfeo55 in works by Vivaldi, Cavalli, Scarlatti.

For the Female vs. Male weekend at La Seine Musicale on 16-18 February with music by Louise Farrenc, Equilbey has programmed a wind trio and sextet on the Friday followed by an orchestral concert on the Saturday evening coupling Farrenc’s Third Symphony with Beethoven’s Triple Concerto.

The programme is also performed at the Grand Th eatre, Aix-en-Provence on Tuesday 15 February and in the Orchestra’s home, La Seine Musicale, on the 17 February, in which Insula Orchestra will record the programme for their fourth CD on Warners to be released in Spring 2019, following their most recent Schubert Nacht & Tr aume album.

Tuesday 13 February 2018
Grand Th eatre, Aix-en-Provence

Beethoven *Triple Concerto*
Farrenc *Symphony no. 3*

Saturday 17 February 2018
La Seine Musicale, Paris

Alexandra Conunova *violin*
Natalie Clein *cello*
David Kadouch *piano*
Insula orchestra
Laurence Equilbey *conductor*

INSULA ORCHESTRA AT HOME, ON TOUR AND ON CD

In September, Laurence Equilbey opened Insula orchestra’s first season at their critically-acclaimed new home La Seine Musicale celebrating the multi-media capabilities of their Shigeru Ban-designed concert hall to their full potential. Opened in spring, Insula orchestra’s 1,150-seater concert hall at La Seine Musicale was met with enthusiasm by audiences and press. Equilbey’s mission is to reform the entire experience of classical music with bite-size, multi-media concerts, flash-mobs and themed weekends with Insula orchestra and by programming guest performances.



[Watch Insula Orchestra at their new home La Seine Musicale](#)

Neue Züricher Zeitung's reaction to "the promised *This is the future*" was "it was difficult to contradict, but in the south-west of Paris there was not only another fabulous concert hall, but the first evening demonstrated with a lightness of touch how good old classical music can look like today." (Christian Berzins)

"I couldn't be happier having arrived at La Seine Musicale last spring and embarked on our first full season at our new home. It offers a safe haven to develop innovative music concepts, explore forgotten repertoire and direct outreach projects in all confidence, beyond limits and with all of those who support us.

– Laurence Equilbey

Insula orchestra is now in demand across the globe, having recently opened the new Abu Dhabi Louvre complex. Laurence Equilbey and Insula orchestra have toured Poland with two of the great symphonies; Mozart's Symphony no.41 Jupiter and Schubert's Symphony no.9 La Grande - the last two symphonies written by the respective composers. They will continue to tour with the revival of Haydn's Creation directed by Fura dels Baus'. The production was a textbook exercise in presenting an 18th-Century oratorio with the visual magic of the natural world (while Adam and Eve frolicked in a water pool) while still capturing the naivety of Haydn's era. New dates to be announced.



[Watch Insula Orchestra at the inauguration of Abu Dhabi's Louvre here](#)

FORTHCOMING RECORDINGS

Beethoven Piano Concert N. 4 & 5

Nicholas Angelich, Insula orchestra, Laurence Equilbey
Warner Classics Erato – Autumn 2018

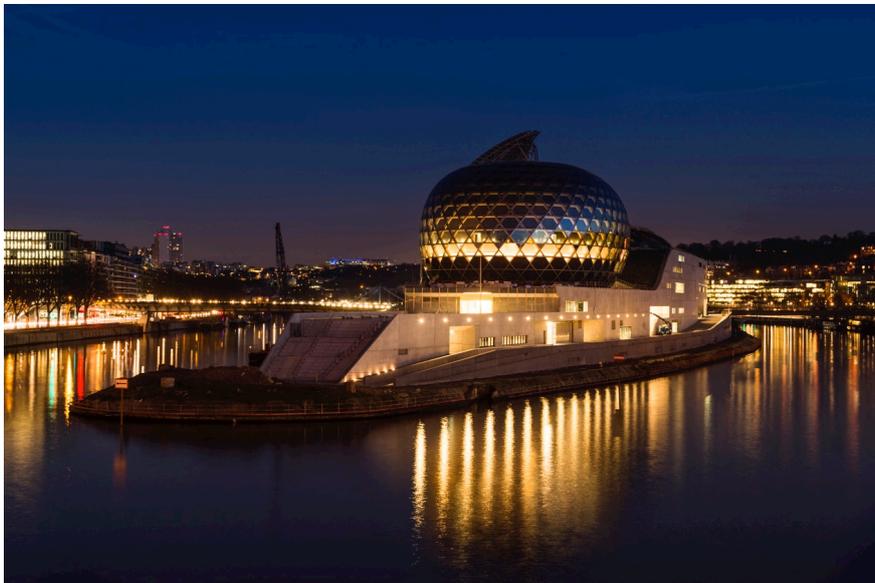
Beethoven Triple Concerto, Choral Fantasy

Bertrand Chamayou, Alexandra Conunova, Natalie Clein, David Kadouch,
accentus, Insula orchestra, Laurence Equilbey
Warner Classics Erato – Spring 2019

LA SEINE MUSICALE

Since its opening in April 2017 Insula orchestra has become the vibrant resident ensemble of the new concert venue in Paris on the ile Seguin: La Seine Musicale. Commissioned by the Departement des Hauts-de-Seine, the former Renault factory was transformed into a carbon neutral arts centre as part of an on-going transformation of the industrial site into a vibrant residential, cultural and commercial quarter. The multi-purpose music venue boasts two concert halls – a 1.150-seater auditorium and an arena allowing up to 6.000 visitors – four recording studios, restaurants and retail spaces, which will be at the heart of the cultural revitalisation of the area.

Architects **Shigeru Ban** and **Jean de Gastines** have conceived a structure like a boat floating on the Seine using the latest innovations in environmental technology and in sync with the days and the season. An adaptable sail constructed of solar panels moves around the central dome to maximize energy and to provide shade inside the building. The wood and glass dome - evocative of a nest - is repeated on the inside with overlapping wooden panels and suspended honey-comb panels to optimize acoustics. The acoustics have been honed by **Nagata Acoustics and Lamoureux**, world leaders in their field who recently completed the Philharmonie in Paris.



© Olivier Ravoire

"Equilbey's programming and presentation ideas are anything but insular. The orchestra is a period-instrument ensemble, but she compensates for its limitations in repertoire by spanning the art forms, with cinema, theatre and dance elements integrated into the concerts."

The Times

"the faces at the Mozart weekend I attend are undeniably fresher. [...]while Insula continues to deliver a high standard of period-instrument performance, you feel that Equilbey's openness to experimentation will likely land on the right formula."

Cusp Magazine

"Instead of etiquette it is all about experiencing music. Insula orchestra has outreach all written over it. There are community projects, flash-mobs and events for children. La Seine Musicale should be an open house for all people."

Badische Zeitung

"Hardly 100 days after the opening of the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg, Paris counters with La Seine Musicale and shows how easy it is to bring Mozart and DJ's under one roof."

Kultur Tipp

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 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.

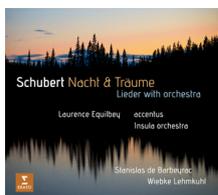
Past operatic engagements comprise of Mozart's *Lucio Silla* at the Theater an der Wien, Britten's *Albert Herring* by Britting at Opéra de Rouen and Opéra Comique, the ballet *Sous apparence* at Opéra de Paris, Reynaldo Hahn's *Ciboulette* at the Opéra Comique where Laurence Equilbey will conduct *La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

DISCOGRAPHY



SCHUBERT *Lieder with orchestra* - 2017

Stanislas de Barbeyrac, Wiebke Lehmkuhl, accentus, Insula orchestra, conducted by Laurence Equilbey
Label Warner Classics Erato



MOZART *Solemn Vespers, Coronation Mass* - 2017

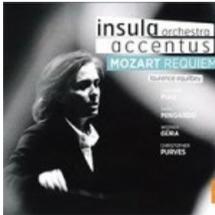
Sandrine Piau, Renata Pokupic, Benjamin Bruns, Andreas Wolf, accentus, Insula orchestra, Laurence Equilbey
Label Warner Classics Erato



GLUCK Orfeo ed Euridice - 2015

original version (Vienna 1762), including highlights of Vienna and Paris versions (1774) with Franco Fagioli, Malin Hartelius, Emmanuelle de Negri, accentus, Insula orchestra, conducted by Laurence Equilbey
Label Archiv Produktion, 0289 479 531593

"Equilbey and the Insula Orchestra [sic] are painstaking in their re-creation of Gluck's original sound world" Gramophone Magazine, Tim Ashley



MOZART Requiem - 2014

Sandrine Piau, Sara Mingardo, Werner Gura, Christopher Purves, accentus, Insula orchestra, conducted by Laurence Equilbey
Label Naïve, EAN 822186053706

"The wiry Insula orchestra is softened by basset horns and bassoons, while the accentus Choir has a light European texture".
The Observer, Nicholas Kenyon

Insula orchestra receives the support of:



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Le cercle des amis d'accentus et d'Insula orchestra

www.insulaorchestra.fr/en

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