

Laurence Equilbey and Insula orchestra tour a new phantasmagorical production of *Der Freischütz*, concluding at the Barbican Centre on 4 November



Monday 4 November, 19:00
Weber *Der Freischütz* (semi-staged)
Barbican Centre, London

a staging of incredible insight in tandem with a powerful, intense performance garlanded by a chorus of the highest level"

Colin Clarke, Seen and Heard International

17 March Brussels (concert)
22 March Vienna (concert)

12 & 14 July Ludwigsburg
19, 21, 23 October Paris

"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

Laurence Equilbey and **Insula orchestra** introduce a phantasmagorical new semi-staged performance of **Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz***, the famous tale of dark magic and the spectacular, at the **Barbican Centre** in London on **4 November**, following a fully-staged tour to Caen, Aix-en-Provence, Ludwigsburg and Paris, with



concert performances in Brussels and Vienna. The orchestra return to London for the first time since performing the music of **Louise Farrenc** on **International Women's Day** in 2018.

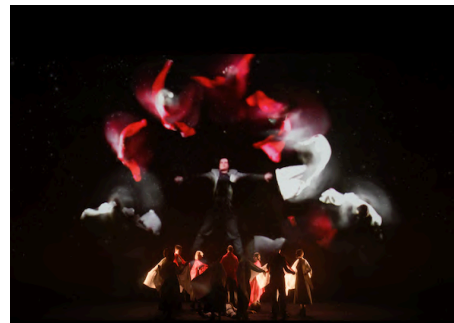


*"For me, *Der Freischütz* is one of the most fascinating operas from the early Romantic period. A glittering Singspiel, what appeals to me is its mixing of lively, unstable and dark language with more poetic and profound phrases."*

– Laurence Equilbey

Der Freischütz is based on the German legend of the marksman who has entered into a contract with the devil so as to obtain bullets that hit their target without fail. Weber's opera tells a hopeful version: a young forester, Max, attempts to win the hand of Agathe by winning a marksmanship contest. Caspar, the devil's adjunct, convinces him to take seven magic bullets, the last of which is controlled by the forces of Evil. By the start of the contest, it is only this last bullet that is left, and Max will have no control over who it hits.

With a libretto by Friedrich Kind, Weber's opera premiered in 1821 and is considered the first truly 'German' Romantic opera, with roots in Singspiel, German folklore and a Germanic national identity: the fantastical evil specific to German literature, as illustrated by Goethe or Hoffmann. Weber's writing is noted for its brassy fanfares for the huntsmen, but also for the sensual musical colours, particularly in the supernatural Wolf's Glen scene.



Der Freischütz is directed by **Clément Debailleul** and **Raphaël Navarro** from **Cie 14:20**, an interdisciplinary dance company focusing on magical realism. As the period orchestra restores the music with historical authenticity, Debailleul and Navarro use astonishing illusions to recreate the bewitching attractions of the original Romantic production.



Employing stupendous illusions to complement the rich musical imagery, Cie 14:20 employ modern visual trickery of their own to restore the magic of the theatre to this 'theatre of magic'. The suspension of disbelief being a product of the phantasmagorical Romantic imagination, the modern

acrobatics of Cie 14:20 maintain the ethos of the work and allow today's viewer to be equally bewitched.

Founded by Clément Debailleul and Raphaël Navarro in 2000, Cie 14:20 affirms magic as an autonomous, contemporary, and popular language, investigating the imbalance of the senses and the division of reality at its heart. Following a production of Goethe's *Faust* last year, Insula orchestra's *Der Freischütz* is the first opera staged with the company. Illusions, apparitions, disappearances, and distortions of reality plunge the spectator into a world of poignant beauty.

"In this unique opera, the visual universe, the characters and the Faustian pact of the libretto allow us to offer a staging where magic, through its permanent presence, leaves the door open to a world beyond the tangible, both a liberating escape and an active form of resistance."

- Raphaël Navarro



Watch the trailer for Der Freischütz here: <https://youtu.be/l1c3BKsO8VY>

The full production tours Europe visits **Ludwigsburg** on **12 & 14 July**, and the **Théâtre des Champs-Élysées** next season. Concert versions of the opera are given at **BOZAR, Brussels** on **17 March** and **Theater an der Wien** on **22 March**.

Listings

17 March, 19:00

BOZAR, Brussels (concert version)

22 March, 19:00

Theater an der Wien, Vienna (concert version)

12 & 14 July, 20:00

Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, Ludwigsburg

19, 21, 23 October

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris

4 November, 19:00

Barbican, London (semi-staged)

Carl Maria von Weber *Der Freischütz*

Tuomas Katajala *Max* (18-19)

Stanislas de Barbeyrac *Max*
(19-20)
Johanni van Oostrum *Agathe*
Chiara Skerath *Ánnchen*
Vladimir Baykov *Kaspar* (18-19)
Steven Humes *Kaspar* (19-20)
Christian Immler *Eremit*
Thorsten Grümbel *Kuno*
Samuel Hasselhorn *Ottokar*
Anas Séguin *Kilian*

Insula orchestra
accentus
Laurence Equilbey musical
director

Clément Debailleul artistic
director and video creation
**Clément Debailleul, Raphaël
Navarro** directors

Valentine Losseau dramaturgy
Émilie Rault assistant director
Elsa Revol lighting
Aragorn Boulanger
choreography
Siegrid Petit-Imbert costumes
**Johanna Ehlert, Christian
Hecq, Valérie Lessort,** puppetry
**Sébastien Marc, Solange
Dinard** assistants

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 de Paris, Theater an der Wien, London's Barbican Centre, New York's Lincoln Center, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, and Essen's Philharmonie.

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 ongoing dialogue between symphonic music and audiences in the spatial dimension of the concert hall and stage.

Insula orchestra works in particular with celebrated vocal soloists, recently including artists such as Sandrine Piau, Werner Güra, Franco Fagioli and Ann Hallenberg. The orchestra also performs with prestigious period

instruments soloists such as Antoine Tamestit (violinist), Abdel Rahman El Bacha and Kristian Bezuidenhout (pianists).

Insula orchestra's 2018/19 season focuses on **Beethoven in Spring** with new recordings, and staged versions of Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz* and Mozart's *Requiem*. The production of Weber's *Der Freischütz* by Clément Debailleul and Raphaël Navarro will tour to the Théâtre de Caen, Grand Théâtre de Provence, BOZAR, Theater an der Wien and Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele.



Insula orchestra's discography includes 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), Mozart's *Solemn Vespers* and *Coronation Mass* with Sandrine Piau (Warner Classics Erato, 2017) and Schubert's *Lieder With Orchestra* with Stanislas de Barbeyrac and Wiebke Lehmkuhl (Warner Classics Erato, 2017). Two further recordings of Beethoven are planned with Warner Classics Erato label.

Laurence Equilbey



The conductor and musical director of Insula orchestra and its partner choir, **accentus**, **Laurence Equilbey** is acknowledged for her demanding yet open-minded approach to her art. Her exploration of 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, CamerataSalzburg, Mozarteum-orchester Salzburg.

In 2012, with support from the Hauts-de-Seine General Council, she founded Insula orchestra, an ensemble devoted to performing classical and pre-Romantic repertoire on period instruments. In April 2017 the orchestra started their residency at the new arts centre La Seine Musicale, where Equilbey is in charge of the classical music programme for the 1,150-seat auditorium.

With **accentus**, Laurence Equilbey continues to interpret large-scale 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* at Opéra de Rouen and Opéra Comique, the ballet *Sous apparence* at Opéra de Paris, and Reynaldo Hahn's *Ciboulette* at the Opéra Comique, where Equilbey also conducted *La Nonne sanglante* by Gounod in June 2018.

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

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

Insula orchestra receives the support of:



www.insulaorchestra.fr/en

For more information on any of the above, please contact:

Nicky Thomas Media

101 Bell Street, London NW1 6TL

+44 (0)20 3714 7594 | +44 (0)20 7258 0909

info@nickythomasmedia.com

www.nickythomasmedia.com