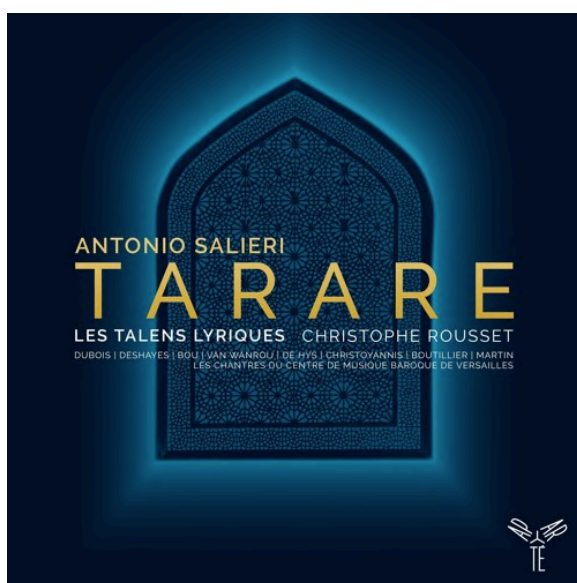


Christophe Rousset & Les Talens Lyriques release Salieri's blood-thirsty *Tarare*, the final recording from the composer's trilogy of French operas

Friday 7 June
3 CDs Aparté AP208



Cyrille Dubois Tarare
Karine Deshayes Astasie
Jean-Sébastien Bou Atar
Judith van Wanroij
Nature, Spinette
Enguerrand de Hys Calpigi
Tassis Christoyannis
Arthénée, the Fire genius
Jérôme Boutillier Urson, a
Slave, a Priest
Philippe-Nicholas Martin
Altamort, a Peasant, a
Eunuch
Christophe Rousset
director
Les Talens Lyriques

***"If Salieri the opera composer needs rehabilitating,
this is the way to do it."***

Radio 3 Record Review on *Les Horaces* CD

Christophe Rousset and Les Talens Lyriques complete Salieri's trilogy of blood-thirsty French operas with the release of *Tarare* on Aparté on 7 June, recorded live following performances in Versailles, Paris, and Vienna. The release of *Tarare* follows high praise for the ensemble's recordings of Salieri's *Les Danaïdes* and *Les Horaces*, and features a starry cast including **Cyrille Dubois** in the titular role and **Karine Deshayes** as Astasie alongside **Jean-Sébastien Bou**, **Judith van Wanroij**, and **Tassis Christoyannis**. All three operas were composed in the looming shadow of the French Revolution, and their gory political intrigues hint at the growing dissidence prior to the Terror.

"Salieri's cause has benefitted greatly from early-music performance styles: the tangy timbres and propulsive phrasing in Rousset's renditions give vibrancy to music that can sound listless on modern instruments—like Mozart without the harmonic jolts."

Alex Ross, New Yorker

Salieri's third and final French-language opera, **Tarare** was written in June 1787, just two years before the French Revolution that the plot unwittingly overshadows. The libretto speaks out against power, church, and king with the chorus singing: "*Mortal whoever you are, prince, priest or soldier, your greatness on his earth is not due to your state but because of your character.*"

Composed to Beaumarchais' only libretto, *Tarare* was a popular triumph to follow the librettist's celebrated adaption of the *Marriage of Figaro*, famously set by Mozart. The plot successfully mixes comedy, tragedy, and the exotic with a strong political message in a revolutionary tale: a world of vice is revealed as the valiant soldier Tarare, seeking to rescue his wife, overthrows the tyrannous Sultan Atar and is proclaimed king by will of the people. Beaumarchais would later claim after the French Revolution that his opera had been a first draft of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and the librettist forbade access to rehearsals, creating such high expectations that over four hundred guards were needed to channel crowds for the 1787 premiere in Paris.



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An Italian composer writing for the French court, **Antonio Salieri** travelled from Vienna to Paris in order to compose the work that became the dazzlingly successful *Les Danaïdes* in 1784. Both *Tarare* and *Les Horaces* were then commissioned for the Académie Royale de Musique (Paris Opéra) under the patronage of Marie-Antoinette, the Queen of France, who would lose her life in the French Revolution just five years later.

Despite the tarnished views of Antonio Salieri perpetuated in popular culture, the composer held the position of official court composer at the Hapsburg Court for nearly forty years. He was a pivotal figure in the development of late 18th-century opera, writing nearly forty such works in three languages, and his work inspired opera composers from Mozart to a young Berlioz.

"I am dazzled by the figure of Salieri! The challenge is most stimulating."
Christophe Rousset

Les Talens Lyriques founder **Christophe Rousset** has acted as a "musical archaeologist" since his acclaimed soundtrack to the film *Farinelli*, and has long championed Salieri's work in an effort to restore the misunderstood composer's works to their rightful place. In 2005 he released a landmark first recording of *La grotta di Trofonio*, and his continued exploration of Salieri's French operas complements Les Talens Lyriques's 2018-2019 season theme: the temptation of Italy.

Reviews: *Tarare* in concert

"Here [Rousset] drew exceptional playing from an expanded Les Talens Lyriques, capturing all the darker drama, occasional exoticism and buffo elements of the score with unflinching felicity."

Opera Magazine

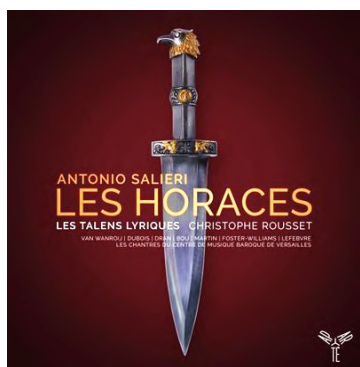
"Rousset and his ensemble Les Talens Lyriques masterfully and cleverly interpreted Salieri's French-Italian music."

Klassik Info

"[Rousset] steered Salieri's music through the evening with energetic energy."

Oper in Wien

Reviews: *Les Horaces* CD (2018)



"Christophe Rousset has embraced Salieri's French operas with the musicianship and thoroughness that have made him the most idiomatic exponent of tragédie lyrique."

Opera Magazine

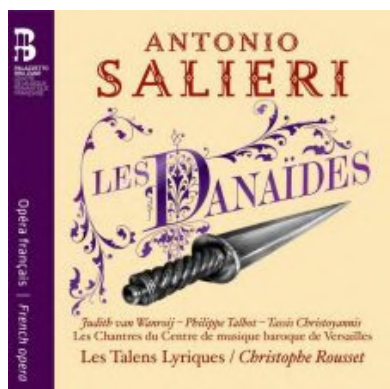
"Rousset's fierce energy and musical intelligence unleashes the fire, colours and grandeur of Salieri's drama."

BBC Music Magazine

Album of the Week: "Soloists and chorus are excellent, and the playing is scintillatingly, even unremittingly, energetic."

The Sunday Times

Reviews: *Les Danaïdes* CD (2017)



"Les Talens Lyriques reveals the splendours in Salieri's writing."

BBC Music Magazine

"Certainly, it all coheres convincingly in this performance under Christophe Rousset, with imposing choral contributions from Les Chantres du Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles, and the usual fiercely involved playing from Les Talens Lyriques."

The Guardian

"The fever pitch atmosphere is wonderfully maintained. Les Talens Lyriques sound dark, baleful and at times startlingly, if appropriately raw."

Gramophone Magazine

Les Talens Lyriques



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Cargocollective_Julien Vermeesch

The ensemble Les Talens Lyriques, which takes its name from the subtitle of Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera *Les Fêtes d'Hébé* (1739), was formed in 1991 by the harpsichordist and conductor Christophe Rousset.

Championing a broad vocal and instrumental repertoire, ranging from early Baroque to the beginnings of Romanticism, the musicians of Les Talens Lyriques aim to throw light on the great masterpieces of musical

history, while providing perspective by presenting rarer or little known works that are important as missing links in the European musical heritage. This musicological and editorial work, which contributes to its renown, is a priority for the ensemble.

Les Talens Lyriques perform to date works by Monteverdi (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*, *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*, *L'Orfeo*), Cavalli (*La Didone*, *La Calisto*), Landi (*La Morte d'Orfeo*), Handel (*Scipione*, *Riccardo Primo*, *Rinaldo*, *Admeto*, *Giulio Cesare*, *Serse*, *Arianna in Creta*, *Tamerlano*, *Ariodante*, *Semele*, *Alcina*), Lully (*Persée*, *Roland*, *Bellérophon*, *Phaéton*, *Amadis*, *Armide*, *Alceste*), Desmarest (*Vénus et Adonis*), Mondonville (*Les Fêtes de Paphos*), Cimarosa (*Il Mercato di Malmantile*, *Il Matrimonio segreto*), Traetta (*Antigona*, *Ippolito ed Aricia*), Jommelli (*Armida abbandonata*), Martín y Soler (*La Capricciosa corretta*, *Il Tutore burlato*), Mozart (*Mitridate*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Così fan tutte*, *Die Zauberflöte*), Salieri (*La Grotta di Trofonio*, *Les Danaïdes*, *Les Horaces*, *Tarare*), Rameau (*Zoroastre*, *Castor et Pollux*, *Les Indes galantes*, *Platée*, *Pygmalion*), Gluck (*Bauci e Filemone*, *Alceste*), Beethoven, Cherubini (*Médée*), García (*Il Califfo di Bagdad*), Berlioz, Massenet, Gounod (*Faust*) and Saint-Saëns.

The re-creation of these works goes hand in hand with close collaboration with stage directors and choreographers such as Pierre Audi, Jean-Marie Villégier, David McVicar, Eric Vigner, Ludovic Lagarde, Mariame Clément, Jean-Pierre Vincent, Macha Makeïeff, Laura Scozzi, Natalie van Parys, Marcial di Fonzo Bo, Claus Guth, Robert Carsen, David Hermann, Christof Loy, Jetske Mijnsen, Alban Richard and David Lescot.

As well as opera, Les Talens Lyriques explore other musical genres: madrigal, cantata, air de cour, symphonies, and the vast corpus of sacred music (masses, motets, oratorios, *Leçons de Ténèbres*, and so on). In formations varying from a handful of musicians to more than sixty, representing every generation, they give performances all over the world.

In 2018-2019 Les Talens Lyriques return to their first love, with a season entitled "The Temptation of Italy". Vocality will be celebrated in works ranging from masterpieces by Monteverdi, Purcell, Handel (*Agrippina*) and

Mozart (*La Betulia liberata*) to rarely heard or unpublished scores by Legrenzi (*La Divisione del mondo*), Salieri (*Tarare*), Leo and Porpora. After celebrating Telemann in 2017, the ensemble will be acting as François Couperin's representative abroad when they take his music to the American continent for the 350th anniversary of the composer's birth. "Couperin Year" will also be celebrated with recordings: *Les Nations* and the *Concerts Royaux* are to be released (in autumn and in December, respectively) on the Aparté label.

Les Talens Lyriques recorded the famous soundtrack for Gérard Corbiau's film *Farinelli* (1994), which sold over a million copies. The ensemble now has a discography comprising some sixty references, on various labels (Erato, Fnac Music, Auvidis, Decca, Naïve, Ambrosia, Virgin Classics, Outhere and Aparté). This season, it will conclude the cycle of French operas by Salieri with the release of *Les Horaces* in September 2018 (Aparté) and the recording of *Tarare* in the autumn (also for Aparté).

Since 2007 the musicians of the ensemble have been working to introduce schoolchildren to music, via a programme of ambitious artistic actions and innovative educational initiatives. They are in residence in schools in Paris and Île-de-France, where they have created a student orchestra with young secondary school pupils and a small choir ("Le petit chœur des Talens"). The three *t@lenschool* educational applications, downloadable free of charge, have met with much enthusiasm and have received several national and international awards.

The ensemble Les Talens Lyriques receives subsidies from the French Ministry of Culture and the City of Paris, and generous support from its Circle of Patrons. The ensemble wishes to thank its principal Patrons, the Annenberg Foundation / GRoW - Gregory and Regina Annenberg Weingarten, Mrs Aline Foriel-Destezet and Mécénat Musical Société Générale.

Since 2011 Les Talens Lyriques have been associate artists, in residence at the Singer-Polignac Foundation in Paris. Les Talens Lyriques are founding members of FEVIS (Federation of Specialised Vocal and Instrumental Ensembles) and of PROFEDIM (Professional Union of Music Producers, Festivals, Ensembles, and Independent Distributors).



Christophe Rousset **Harpichordist, Conductor, Musicologist**



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The founder of the ensemble Les Talens Lyriques and internationally recognised harpsichordist Christophe Rousset is a musician and conductor inspired by a passion for opera and the rediscovery of the European musical heritage.

His studies (harpsichord) with Huguette Dreyfus at the Schola Cantorum in Paris, then with Bob van Asperen at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague (winning the coveted First

Prize in the Seventh Bruges International Harpsichord Competition at the age of twenty-two), followed by the creation of his own ensemble, Les Talens Lyriques, in 1991, have enabled Christophe Rousset to obtain a perfect grasp of the richness and diversity of the Baroque, Classical and pre-Romantic repertoires.

Christophe Rousset is now invited to appear with Les Talens Lyriques all over Europe (Opéra National de Paris, Opéra Comique, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Philharmonie de Paris, Opéra Royal de Versailles, Dutch National Opera, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Lausanne Opéra, Teatro Real Madrid, Vienna Staatsoper and Theater an der Wien, Théâtre Royal de La Monnaie and Bozar in Brussels, London's Wigmore Hall and Barbican Centre, and so on), as well as on tour in other parts of the world (Mexico, New Zealand, Canada, United States, etc.).

At the same time he continues to pursue an active career as a harpsichordist and chamber musician, playing and recording on some of the world's finest period instruments. His recordings of the harpsichord works of Louis and François Couperin, Rameau, D'Anglebert, Royer, Duphy, Forqueray, Balbastre and Scarlatti, and those devoted to J. S. Bach (Partitas, Goldberg Variations, Harpsichord Concertos, English Suites, French Suites, *Klavierbüchlein für Wilhelm Friedemann*, Well-Tempered Clavier) are regarded as references.

Teaching is of paramount importance to Christophe Rousset, who organises and gives many master-classes and academies (Paris Conservatoire CNSM, Ambronay, Fondation Royaumont, Operastudio Vlaanderen-Ghent, OFJ Baroque, Junge Deutsche Philharmonie-Berlin, Accademia Chigiana-Siena, Amici della Musica in Florence, Britten-Pears Orchestra at Snape Maltings) and, together with members of Les Talens Lyriques, plays an active part in introducing young secondary school students in Paris and the Île-de-France to music.

Christophe Rousset also appears regularly as a guest conductor: Liceu Barcelona, San Carlo Naples, La Scala Milan, Opéra Royal de Wallonie, London's Royal Opera House, Orquesta Nacional de España, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Orchestre du Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels,

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, etc.

He is active too in the field of research and writing, through critical editions, the publication of monographs devoted to Jean-Philippe Rameau and François Couperin (Actes Sud, 2007 and 2016, respectively).

2017 saw the publication of a series of interviews by Camille de Rijck in which Christophe Rousset shares his thoughts on music: *L'impression que l'instrument chante*, Éditions de la Cité de la Musique - Philharmonie de Paris (La rue musicale - Entretiens).

Christophe Rousset is a Knight of the French Legion of Honour, a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters, and a Knight of the National Order of Merit.

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