

Insula orchestra continues its series of radical multimedia productions, staging works by Mozart, Beethoven and Schumann

"Whenever one hears of a new Insula evening, there is a feeling of anticipation. These concerts (events, really) are like no other."

Seen and Heard International



Mozart Requiem

London 13 October 2020

Magic Mozart

Paris 13-14 November 2020

Luxembourg 31 December 2020

– 3 January 2021

Mozart Lucio Silla

Paris 22-24 June 2021

Beethoven Pastoral for the Planet with La Fura dels Baus

Brussels 23 March 2021

Schumann Night of Kings

Paris 18-20 May 2021

Hamburg 23 May 2021

"Equilbey's programming and presentation ideas are anything but insular."

The Times

Insula orchestra announce a bewitching **2020-21 season** headlined by radical new multimedia productions of *Magic Mozart* by stage magicians Cie 14:20, and Schumann's *Night of Kings*, culminating in the orchestra's second performance at **Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie**. *Magic Mozart*, the orchestra's new **studio recording** of the arias involved in the production, is released on 18 September 2020 with Warner Classics.

Led by founder and director **Laurence Equilbey**, the period orchestra completes its European tour of Beethoven's '*Pastoral*' Symphony in Brussels, staged by **La Fura dels Baus**, and visits London on tour with Mozart's celebrated *Requiem*.

At home in their new state-of-the-art concert hall **La Seine Musicale**, Insula orchestra revive their 2016 staging of **Mozart's Lucio Silla** with Franco Fagioli. In concert, the orchestra promotes the underrated music of Louise Farrenc, accompanying celebrations for Beethoven in his 250th anniversary year.

Magic Mozart

Insula orchestra herald the New Year in **Luxembourg** with a new production, **Magic Mozart**, staged by **Clément Debailleul** of the stage magic company Cie 14:20, offering a selection of works and musical extracts celebrating the wonder of magical experience in Mozart's music. The bespoke theatrical setting opens at La Seine Musicale in Paris (13-14 November 2020), before arriving in **Luxembourg** (31 December 2020 – 3 January 2021) and touring to **Aix-en-Provence** (16-17 January 2021) and **Colombes** (29 January 2021).



Laurence Equilbey has dreamed up an original musical journey through Mozart's greatest operatic arias, from the bewitching Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte* to his singspiel *Der Stein der Weisen* (*The Philosopher's Stone*). Mozart's genius takes centre stage in the production, which explores tumultuous passions, black magic, and revenge via *Don Giovanni*, *La Finta semplice*, *Bastien und Bastienne*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and *Le nozze di Figaro*.

Through immersive scenography, graphic and calligraphic arts are projected on a monumental scale engaging in a dialogue with dance and the singers, underscoring the music's accents and enchanting the whole stage with flamboyant colours. Inspired by Mozart's deep and joyous music, Cie 14:20 will conjure up magical scenes imbued with illusion and poetry, in a show that harnesses multiple forms of artistic expression.



[Watch the Magic Mozart trailer here](#)

Founded by Clément Debailleul and Raphaël Navarro in 2000, **Cie 14:20** is a pioneer of the New Magic arts movement and interdisciplinary dance company. For 15 years Cie 14:20 has been challenging our sensory equilibrium and sense of reality as a focus for its stage work, postulating magic as a rich and independent language, both popular and of its time.

A **studio CD recording** of the staged programme is released on Warner Classics on 18 September 2020, with the orchestra joined by a number of excellent Mozart interpreters: Sandrine Piau, Jodie Devos, Loïc Félix, Stanislas de Barbeyrac and Florian Sempey.

Insula orchestra previously collaborated with Cie 14:20 on their 2019 production of Weber's *Der Freischütz*, staged with illusions, apparitions, disappearances, and distortions of reality which plunged the spectator into a world of poignant beauty. A **CD & DVD of the production** will be released on Warner Classics in February 2021.



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

Seen and Heard International

"videos, projections in real time and use of multiple digital screens are not leaving the opera house any time soon. And when treated sensitively, as was the case in this production, the effect can be transformative."

Opera Now

Mozart: *Requiem*

On tour to the Barbican Centre, **London** (13 October 2020), Insula orchestra bring a programme centred around a pillar of their repertoire, **Mozart's *Requiem***. The orchestra previously staged the work in an acrobatic production with Yoann Bourgeois in June 2019. Now in a new concert programme, Equilbey pairs the *Requiem* with the composer's *Trauermusik* and Cherubini's anguished *Marche funèbre*, dramatically closer to Berlioz than Beethoven. They are joined by accentus, the choir founded by Equilbey, and soloists Francesca Aspromonte, Giuseppina Bridelli, Jonathan Abernethy, and Andreas Wolf.

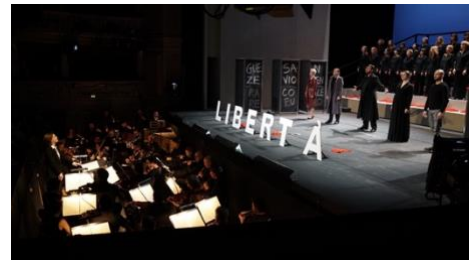
"The period instrument Insula Orchestra presented the score with an impeccable sense of drama, hard-sticked timpani seeming to underline the relentless nature of death itself."

Seen and Heard International

Mozart: *Lucio Silla*

In a **staged production** opening the 2021 **Mozart Maximum Festival** at La Seine Musicale, Insula orchestra and director Rita Cosentino revive their popular 2016 production of **Mozart's *Lucio Silla***. Franco Fagioli stars in Mozart's youthful work, which shakes up the codes of *opera seria*, taking its story from Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix (Alessandro Liberatore), who ruled over Rome from c. 138 to 78 BC, and his infatuation for his enemy's daughter Giunia (Olga Pudova), herself in love with the exiled senator Cecilio (Franco Fagioli).

Director Rita Cosentino comments: "*Lucio Silla is all about human contradictions, the vanity of power versus love and the decisions that make us who we are.*" Within her set she lets the soloists create new spaces by making use of adjustable panels and frames, which are dynamically positioned in various combinations on stage. The production, which appears at La Seine Musicale on 22 and 24 June also appears at the Festival international d'Opéra Baroque et Romantique in **Beaune** on 10 July 2021.



"Insula orchestra played Mozart's intricate score with élan and sensitivity. [...] In the title role, Alessandro Liberatore was a revelation."

Bachtrack

Schumann: *Night of Kings*

Staged for the first time, Insula orchestra champions **Robert Schumann's** underrated choral ballads in a fused psycho-political thriller of kings and queens, love, curses and murders: ***Night of Kings***. Laurence Equilbey regards the ballads as eminently theatrical, no less so than acts from opera: a dramatic link in the chain to Wagner and Mahler.



The new production arrives at **Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie** on 23 May 2021, following performances at La Seine Musicale from 18-20 May 2021. The production is staged by film maker and theatrical producer **Antonin Baudry**, with guest soloists Marie-Adeline Henry, Alexandre Duhamel, Ric Furman and Rachel Frankel.

Schumann wrote only one opera, *Genoveva* in 1848. *Genoveva* deemed a critical failure, he turned to writing

dramatic choral ballads for orchestra, chorus and soloists in concert instead. The production centres around two German Romantic legends by Johann Ludwig Uhland and Emanuel Geibel, *Vom Pagen und der Königstochter* (*The Page and the King's Daughter*) and *Des Sängers Fluch* (*The Minstrel's Curse*). The two choral ballads are sung-through, bookended by Schumann's *Requiem für Mignon* and *Nachtlied*.

Robert Schumann is heard earlier in the season in concert at La Seine Musicale in Paris, as Insula orchestra perform his *Piano Concerto* with soloist **Sunwook Kim** on 27 September 2020, paired with Mendelssohn's *Symphony no. 4*.

Beethoven: *Pastoral for the Planet*

Laurence Equilbey and her Insula orchestra join the Catalan theatre group **La Fura dels Baus** for the culmination of their daring new multimedia production of Beethoven's ***Pastoral for the Planet***, featuring 360° video projections. The final performances takes place at **BOZAR in Brussels** on 23 March 2021, a year after its first performances in Aix-en-Provence and the orchestra's Parisian home, La Seine Musicale.

"The message was clear, and urgent, making the music of the nineteenth century blisteringly relevant."

Seen and Heard International

55 musicians, actors and dancers participate in the interactive project, pairing Beethoven's '*Pastoral*' *Symphony no. 6* with the music of his contemporaries: Anton Reicha, Julius Rietz, Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn, and Carl Maria von Weber creating a tale of the relationship between mankind and the natural world.



Beginning with the story of Prometheus and the creation of mankind, Insula orchestra introduce Julius Rietz's stormy concert overture to *Hero and Leander*, setting the Greek myth that sees Leander drown in a tumultuous storm as he tries to reach his love. Rietz's setting is paired with Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn's scenes of the same story, performed with soprano **Sophie Karthäuser**. From raging storms to human carnage, Insula orchestra travel through the 'Battle Music' from Weber's *Kampf und Sieg* and cover the aftermath in the 'Allegretto' from Beethoven's *Symphony no. 7*. The programme culminates in Beethoven's '*Pastoral*' *Symphony no. 6*, the composer's hymn of nature and peace.

Carlus Padrissa (stage design) from **La Fura dels Baus** and **Mihael Milunovic** (scenography) explore the complicated relationship between man and nature in a staging focusing on the world's finite resources and human choices, set against the natural cycling and recycling of life. The visionary theatre company La Fura dels Baus is renowned for its immersive theatrical experiences. This new production follows their 2017 Insula orchestra collaboration staging Haydn's *Creation*, described as *"a spectacle whose sheer visual novelty cut to the core of what Haydn's work is about: the wonder of creating something new"* in the Financial Times.

Insula orchestra make a first appearance at Musikfest Bremen on 29 August 2020 with a two-set all-Mozart programme. Joined by mezzo-soprano Cecilia Molinari, tenor Alasdair Kent and baritone Armando Noguera, they present an abridged version of their *Magic Mozart* project, staged here by Sonia Bester.

Orchestral Concerts at La Seine Musicale

In concert at La Seine Musicale, Insula orchestra continue to champion women composers. On 4-5 March 2021, they complete a double bill of **Louise Farrenc's Symphonies nos. 1 & 3**, celebrating the remarkable technical mastery of the unjustly forgotten 19th-century composer.

In a supersize concert (3-4 December 2020) concluding the Beethoven anniversary year, Insula orchestra and Equilbey's accentus choir join forces with the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin and the Hamburg Radio Choir for a Franco-German celebratory performance of **Beethoven's Symphony no. 9** at La Seine Musicale. On 31 March and 1 April 2021, Laurence Equilbey conducts her orchestra in **Schubert's 'Tragic' Symphony no. 4 and Mass no. 5**, joined at La Seine Musicale by soloists Louise Kemény, Victoire Bunel, Linard Vrielink, and Konstantin Krimmel.

Selected Listings

Thursday 24 September 2020, 20:30

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Saturday 26 September 2020, 20:30

Cité de la musique et de la danse,
Soissons

Friday 2 October 2020, 20:30

Grand Théâtre, Aix-en-Provence

Mozart *Le nozze di Figaro* overture and arias

Beethoven *Coriolan* overture

Beethoven *Ah! perfido*

Mendelssohn *Symphony no. 4*

With **Vannina Santoni** soprano

Sunday 27 September 2020, 16:00

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Schumann *Piano Concerto*

Mendelssohn *Symphony no. 4*

With **Sunwook Kim** piano

Tuesday 13 October 2020, 19:00

Barbican Centre, London

Mozart *Trauermusik*

Mozart *Requiem*

Cherubini *Marche funèbre*

With

Francesca Aspromonte soprano

Giuseppina Bridelli alto

Jonathan Abernethy tenor

Andreas Wolf bass

3-4 December 2020, 20:30

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Beethoven *Symphony no. 9*

With

Camille Schnoor soprano

Okka van der Damerou alto

Benjamin Bruns tenor

Günther Groissböck bass

NDR Chor & accentus

Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin

& Insula orchestra

Laurence Equilbey director

13-14 November 2020, 16:00, 20:30

La Seine Musicale, Paris *

31 December, 2-3 January 2021, 20:00

Grand Théâtre de la Ville, Luxembourg

Saturday 16 January 2021, 20:00

Sunday 17 January 2021, 17:00

Grand Théâtre, Aix-en-Provence

Friday 29 January 2021, 20:30

Théâtre de Colombes

Magic Mozart

Mozart *Arias*

Including from *Die Zauberflöte*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*

With

Olga Pudova soprano *

Lea Desandre mezzo-soprano *

Alasdair Kent tenor *

Sandrine Piau soprano

Cecilia Molinari mezzo-soprano

Stanislas de Barbeyrac tenor

Armando Noguera baritone

Clément Debailleul – Cie 14:20

staging

Aragorn Boulanger choreography

Sunday 10 January 2021, 11:00

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Mozart *Symphony no. 40*

Mozart *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*,
overture

Mozart *Arias*

From *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*,
Die Zauberflöte

With

Olga Pudova soprano

Cecilia Molinari mezzo-soprano

Alasdair Kent tenor

Mikhail Timoshenko baritone

Sonia Bester staging

Thursday 4 March 2021, 19:00

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Farrenc *Symphony no. 3*

4-5 March 2021, 20:30

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Beethoven *Violin Concerto*

Farrenc *Symphony no. 1*

With **Alexandra Conunova** violin

Tuesday 23 March 2021, 20:00

BOZAR, Brussels

Pastoral for the Planet

Beethoven *The Creatures of*

Prometheus, Introduction: *la Tempesta*

Anton Reicha *Lenore, Storm* (2nd part)

Julius Rietz *Hero und Leander*,

Overture

Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn *Hero und*
Leander

Carl Maria von Weber *Kampf und Sieg*
(*Battle and Victory*) & *Obéron*, Cavatine

Beethoven *Symphony No. 7*, 2nd
movement & *Symphony No. 6* 'Pastoral'

With **Sophie Karthäuser** soprano

La Fura dels Baus

Carlus Padrissa director and video

Mihael Milunovic design and
scenography

Wednesday 31 March 2021, 20:30

Thursday 1 April 2021, 20:30

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Schubert *Symphony no. 4*

Schubert *Messe solennelle en la bémol*

With

Louise Kemény soprano

Victoire Bunel alto

Linard Vrielink tenor

Samuel Hasselhorn bass

18 – 20 May 2021, 20:30

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Sunday 23 May 2021, 20:30

Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg

Night of Kings

Schumann *Vom Pagen und der*
Königstochter

Schumann *Des Sängers Fluch*

Schumann *Requiem für Mignon*

Schumann *Nachtlied*

With

Marie-Adeline Henry Queen

Alexandre Duhamel Harpist

Ric Furman Page

Rachel Frankel Narrator

Antonin Baudry staging

Youness Anzane dramaturgy

Emmanuelle Favre scenography

22, 24 June 2021, 20:00

Festival Mozart Maximum

La Seine Musicale, Paris

Saturday 10 July 2021, 21:00

Beaune Festival

Mozart *Lucio Silla*

With

Olga Pudova Giunna

Franco Fagioli Cecilio

Alessandro Liberatore Lucio Silla

Chiara Skerath Lucio Cinna

Ilse Eerens Celia

Rita Cosentino staging

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 2019/20 season focuses on **Mozart** with new recordings, and staged versions of opera arias. The production of *Magic Mozart* by Clément Debailleul and Raphaël Navarro will tour to the Grand Théâtre de la Ville (Luxembourg), Théâtre de Colombes, Grand Théâtre de Provence.

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:



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