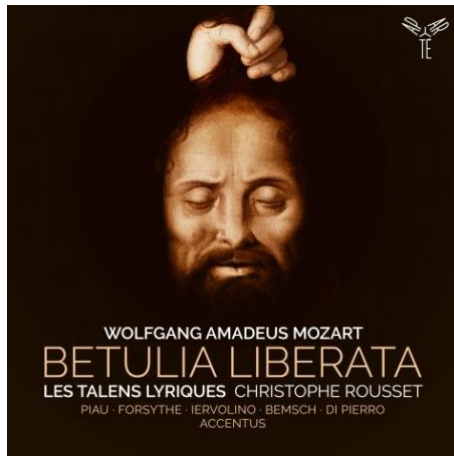


Les Talens Lyriques release two new recordings of Mozart's *Betulia liberata* and Armand-Louis Couperin's harpsichord music



Friday 25 September 2020

Aparté | AP235 & AP236

Mozart *Betulia liberata* | Armand-Louis Couperin Harpsichord works

In **two new discs** released on **Aparté** on **Friday 25 September 2020**, **Les Talens Lyriques** champion Mozart's electrifying *Betulia liberata* on disc while their director **Christophe Rousset** releases a selection of harpsichord works by Armand-Louis Couperin.

Composed in 1771 to a libretto by Metastasio tracing the well-known biblical story of Judith and Holofernes, *Betulia liberata* was Mozart's first oratorio. Often described as a stroke of genius, this recording by Les Talens Lyriques shows the dramatic intensity which he was already capable of at the age of just fifteen, and the influence of his early experiences with opera. The highly virtuosic arias feature **Sandrine Piau**, **Teresa Iervolino**, **Amanda Forsythe**, **Pablo Bensch** and **Nahuel di Pierro**.

A member of the Couperin dynasty, **Armand-Louis Couperin** was renowned for his improvisations on the *Te Deum* and his reputation as a masterful organist in the churches of Paris. His compositions, though little known today, provide us with precious evidence of the brilliance of the French harpsichord school and the skills of one of its most virtuosic representatives. Couperin's wife's family were harpsichord manufacturers and his writing calls for experimental instrumental features allowing dynamics, rarely found in instruments today. Sensuous and very original, his *Pièces de clavecin* – with characterful names such as *Les Cacquetteuses*, *L'Affligée* and *Les Tendres Sentimens* – are played by Christophe Rousset on a period instrument by Goujon, now in the Musée de la musique in Paris.

A busy schedule of **new recordings** by Les Talens Lyriques over the 2020/21 season began in June 2020 with the DVD release of the 2018 Dutch National Opera production of **Stefano Landi's *La morte d'Orfeo***. In January 2021, Les Talens Lyriques continue their championing of the works of Salieri, releasing a new recording of **Salieri's *Armida***, recorded for Aparté in July 2020.

Recent recordings from Les Talens Lyriques have garnered immense success, with their recording of Gounod's *Faust* (Palazzetto Bru Zane, September 2019) named Opus Klassik's "Lyric Recording of the Year" and nominated at the Gramophone and BBC Music Magazine Awards 2020. Lully's *Isis* (Aparté, December 2020) was nominated as Editor's Choice in Gramophone Magazine and Opera Choice in BBC Music Magazine.

Full release details

Friday 25 September 2020

Aparté | AP235

Mozart *Betulia liberata*

Sandrine Piau Amital

Amanda Forsythe Cabri/Carmi

Teresa Iervolino Giuditta

Pablo Bemsch Ozia

Nahuel Di Pierro Achior

Les Talens Lyriques

Christophe Rousset director
accentus

Friday 25 September 2020

Aparté | AP236

Armand-Louis Couperin *Pièces de clavecin*

Christophe Rousset harpsichord

*Recorded on the Goujon-Swanen
harpsichord in the Musée de la musique*

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, spanning the period 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 with 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.

The repertoire of Les Talens Lyriques includes 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*, *Isis*), 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*), Martin 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*), Saint-Saëns, and others.

The re-creation of these works goes hand in hand with close collaboration with stage directors and choreographers: 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, David Lescot.

Les Talens Lyriques explore not only opera, but other genres as well: secular madrigals, cantatas, *airs de cour*, symphonies, and the vast corpus of sacred music (masses, motets,

oratorios, *Leçons de Ténèbres* and so on). Varying in size from just a handful of musicians to over sixty, representing every generation, the ensemble appears all over the world.

Les Talens Lyriques' 2020-2021 season, ELLES, is to be a tribute to women. These various programmes have in common the fact of focusing on a female figure, as the main character in an opera or other work, and at the same time therefore on the female artist portraying that part. The Baroque and Classical periods are rich in strong, single-minded female figures. Courage, loyalty, devotion, unconditional love are virtues embodied by Ilia in Mozart's *Idomeneo* and the Virgin Mary in Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Bach's *St. John's Passion* and Händel's *Messiah*. Armida (*Armida* by A. Salieri) and Venus (*Ballet royal de la naissance de Vénus* by J.B. Lully, *La Naissance de Vénus* by P. Collasse) are among the figures who never ceased to fascinate during the Baroque period with their magnetic charm and the power they wield through their very emancipation and their certainty of overcoming their prey, however warlike.

For this new season, Christophe Rousset calls in remarkable female performers: Ann Hallenberg (*Music for a While*), Sandrine Piau (*Stabat Mater*), Judith van Wanroij (*Idomeneo*) and many others.

The Ensemble's rich discography comprises some sixty references on various labels (Erato, Fnac Music, Auvidis, Decca, Naïve, Ambroisie, Virgin Classics, Ediciones Singulares (Palazzetto Bru Zane), Outhere and Aparté). Les Talens Lyriques recorded the famous soundtrack for Gérard Corbiau's film *Farinelli* (1994), which sold over a million copies. Released in September 2019, Gounod's *Faust* (PBZ) has received numerous awards: Gramophone Choice, *Presto Musical* editor's choice, Diapason d'or, Choc Classica 2019...

In 2020-2021, the Ensemble will be pleased to release recordings of masterpieces such as Mozart's *Betulia liberata* (Aparté), Armand-Louis Couperin's *pièces de clavecin* (Aparté), and Salieri's *Armida* (Aparté).

Since 2007 the musicians of the ensemble have been working on a project aimed at introducing schoolchildren to music through a programme of ambitious artistic actions and innovative educational initiatives. They are in residence in schools in Paris and the Paris region (Île-de-France), where they have created an orchestra class and a small choir, known as "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).



lestalenslyriques.com

Christophe Rousset **Harpsichordist, Conductor, Musicologist**



© Eric Larrayadieu

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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