



LA FRANCESINA

“Händel’s nightingale”

Sophie Junker
Le Concert de l’Hostel Dieu
Franck-Emmanuel Comte

LA FRANCESINA

Interesting journey that the one of Elisabeth Duparc (? - 1778). Born in France and educated in Italy, she finally found glory in London. The „Francesina“ (The little French) counted as one of Händel’s last muses at this moment when he was progressively abandoning the splendour of the Italian opera for the spiritual elevation of the oratorio. At the time, Duparc is one of the rare French singers never to perform in her mother tongue. Händel wrote for her roles in Italian or English, including Semele, Iole (*Hercules*), Deidamia, Romilda (*Serse*), and Penseroso (*Alle-gro, il Penseroso e il Moderato*). Her contemporaries praised her tone and agility, and the tes-timonies of Mrs Granville - Delany or Charles Burney are spread over the qualities of her “warbling voice“ (the voice of a warbler). Handel mainly composed for her „nigh-tingale“ arias such as “The morning lark“ (*Semele*) or “Nasconde the usignol“ (*Deidamia*).

In this program, the Belgian soprano Sophie Junker pays tribute to La Francesina and celebra-tes the thriving collaboration that bound her to Händel for over a decade. From opera to orato-rio, this recital aims to bring to light both the voice of this singular muse and show how Händel achieves a dramatic transition between Italian opera and English oratorio. Here, Sophie Junker will be the „Nuova Francesina“ echoing Duparc in this lavish repertoire with the same energy.

Pedro-Octavio Diaz, Artistic advisor

DISTRIBUTION

Sophie Junker, *soprano*

Franck-Emmanuel Comte, *direction & harpsichord*

Le Concert de l’Hostel Dieu

On stage : 8-15 artists

PROGRAMME (may be modified)

Duration : 1h50min (including a 20min intermission)

G. F. Handel : *Semele – Overture*
Semele – The Morning Lark
Serse – Nemmen coll’ombre
The Occasional Oratorio – Musette
Hercules – My father
Deidamia – Va’ perfido
Deidamia – Nasconde l’usignol
Saul – In Sweetest Harmony
Belshazzar – A Symphony „Postillons“
Ode to St Cecilia – What Passion cannot Music raise
Alcina – Gavotte e Tamburino
Semele – Myself I shall adore



photo : Jean-Baptiste Millot

Sophie Junker, soprano

Soprano Sophie Junker burst onto the international scene in 2010 by winning the London Handel Competition, consolidating her rapid rise with victory in the 2012 Cesti Competition in Innsbruck.

She now regularly performs with top-flight conductors including Harry Bicket, Laurence Cummings, Christian Curnyn, Richard Egarr, Paul McCreech, Christophe Rousset, Masaaki Suzuki, Stefano Montanari, and Leonardo García Alarcón. On the concert platform, Sophie is a frequent soloist with La Nuova Musica under David Bates, with Vox Luminis, and with Le Concert de la Loge under Julien Chauvin.

This season, Sophie's lithe and sparkling soprano will be heard singing Cunegunda in Vinci's *Gismondo* (Gliwice and Vienna), and Galatea in Handel's *Acis and Galatea* (Utrecht). Sophie will also make her debut with *Elisetta* in *Il Matrimonio segreto* (Opéra royal de Liège Wallonie), *Venere* in Legrenzi's *La divisione del mondo* under Christophe Rousset (Strasbourg, Mulhouse, Colmar, Nancy and Versailles), and *Eurilla* in Handel's *Il Pastor Fido* (Händel-Festspiele Halle). She will also sing concerts with *Le Poème Harmonique* under Vincent Dumestre (Moscou, Versailles), *Arcangelo* under Jonathan Cohen (Hong-Kong), and *Concerto Copenhagen* conducted by Lars Ulrik Mortensen (Copenhagen).



photo : Jean Combier

Franck-Emmanuel Comte, direction and harpsichord

Ever since finishing his studies at the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique in Lyon, Franck-Emmanuel Comte has held key positions and been a guest at opera houses (including Nantes, Lyon and Paris Opera Studio) and also with orchestras (such as the Orchestre des Pays de Savoie, the Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain, the Auckland University Orchestra, the Collegium Musicum Riga, ...).

As artistic director of the Concert de l'Hostel Dieu since its creation, he has conducted the ensemble in more than 1,500 concerts and 20 recordings. A regular guest in European and world capitals (such as Barcelona, Rome, Brussels, Madrid, Riga, Calcutta, Chennai, Beijing, Taiyuan) and several international festivals (including Brezice, Montserrat, Girona, Foligno, Wallonia, Ambronay, La Chaise-Dieu, Opera Rara in Cracovie, London Baroque festival, Händel Festpiel à Halle), Franck Emmanuel Comte is passionate about baroque repertoire and also for transversal or atypical artistic projects.

He is artistic director of the Musicales en Auxois festival in Burgundy and of the Centre musical international J.-S. Bach de Saint Donat.



photo : Jaqueline Pastor

Le Concert de l'Hostel Dieu

The Concert de l'Hostel Dieu consists of a solo vocal ensemble and an orchestra playing on early instruments, who give about sixty concerts annually, which are mainly devoted to the baroque vocal repertoire.

They are frequently invited to perform at international festivals and venues. The performances of the Concert de l'Hostel Dieu are always marked by a modern and dynamic approach to the baroque repertoire. Many of them involve different artistic disciplines.

Innovative forms are developed and interfaces are created between oral traditions and 'classical' repertoire. In short, their artistic choices are bold and original.

As well as creating and performing, the Concert de l'Hostel Dieu also supports young artists at the beginning of their careers and endeavours both to appeal to younger audiences, and to perform in outlying areas, where access to cultural events are often limited.

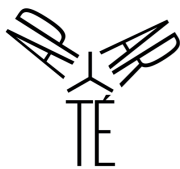
INFORMATION AND BOOKING

Jérémie Lesage
Production manager
jeremie@parnassus.at
+43 (0)1 890 41 51 20, +43 (0)676 375 3589

RECORDING

Recording: June 2019

Release: October 2020



Trailer: <https://youtu.be/Mr7LeEXlIdQ>

PARTNERS

