



Weber's Der Freischütz Insula orchestra

Monday 4 November 2019 7.00pm, Hall

Weber Der Freischütz (concert performance)

There will be one interval of 20 minutes between Act 2 and Act 3

Stanislas de Barbeyrac Max
Johanni van Oostrum Agathe
Chiara Skerath Ännchen
Vladimir Baykov Kaspar
Christian Immler Hermit/Voice of Samiel
Thorsten Grömbel Kuno
Samuel Hasselhorn Ottokar
Anas Séguin Kilian
Clément Dazin Samiel
Adrien La Marca solo viola
accentus
Insula orchestra
Laurence Equilbey conductor

Olivier Fredj spatial installation

Siegrid Petit-Imbert costumes

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Programme produced by Harriet Smith;
advertising by Cabbell (tel 020 3603 7930)

Welcome

A warm welcome to tonight's performance of Weber's groundbreaking and brilliantly original opera *Der Freischütz* – to some the earliest true example of German Romantic opera.

A wonderful solo cast joins the choir accentus and Insula orchestra, conducted by Laurence Equilbey.

This is part of an extended tour of *Der Freischütz* given by the musicians and next year they're set to record it. As ever, Equilbey aims to offer a fresh perspective on a well-known masterpiece, and the

supernatural, magical element of Weber's masterpiece is very much to the fore, even in tonight's concert performance. And while that may be most evident in the famous Wolf's Glen scene, in which the composer conjures the most extraordinarily dark colours – even foreshadowing Wagner – just as potent is the interaction between Max and his beloved Agathe, sung this evening by Stanislas de Barbeyrac and Johanni van Oostrum.

It promises to be a wonderful evening. I hope you enjoy it.

Huw Humphreys, Head of Music, Barbican

Der Freischütz: synopsis

Synopsis

Act 1

The villagers hail the success of the well-heeled peasant Kilian in a shooting competition and mock the failure of assistant forester Max. The two men almost come to blows but are separated by Kuno, the head forester. When Kaspar (Max's jealous colleague, who has sold his soul to Samiel, the 'Black Huntsman') suggests that Max's gun is cursed and he needs help from the dark powers Kuno reproves him and reminds Max that if he fails in the shooting competition the next day he will forfeit his chance of marrying Kuno's daughter Agathe and, in time, of becoming Head Forester. After a trio ('Oh, diese Sonne') and a hunting chorus the villagers depart.

Max ponders his bad luck but is persuaded by Kaspar to drink with him. Having been handed one of Kaspar's magic bullets (*eine Freikugel*), Max shoots a bird from the sky at an impossible distance. Kaspar suggests that if Max will join him at the Wolf's Glen at midnight they can cast seven more bullets. His plan is to offer Max instead of himself as a victim to the evil Samiel. As Max leaves, Kaspar relishes the young man's coming damnation ('Schweig, schweig').

Act 2

Just as Max has fired the magic bullet, a picture of one of Kuno's ancestors has fallen from the wall and injured Agathe. Her companion Ännchen is rehanging it (Duet: 'Schelm, halt' fest!'). After an early morning visit to the local Hermit Agathe is in a pensive mood ('Wie nahe mir der Schlummer ... Leise, leise'). She is cheered by Max's arrival but anxious when he tells her that he must collect a dead stag from near the Wolf's Glen (Trio: 'Wie? Was? Entsetzen!').

As midnight strikes in the distance Kaspar summons up Samiel in the Wolf's Glen. Kaspar will be reprieved for another three years if he can find someone to take his place. A terrified Max arrives, shocked by visions of his dead mother and Agathe. He and Kaspar begin to cast the bullets while all round them there is

thunder and lightning and supernatural horrors shrieking and howling. They fall unconscious as the clock strikes one and calm returns.

interval 20 minutes

Act 3

A short entr'acte with hunting-horn calls heralds the arrival of Max who has been shooting like a true professional. He has just one magic bullet left. It is the *Freikugel* that belongs to Samiel and which is destined for his victim.

Agathe is in her wedding dress. She puts her trust in a benign God ('Und ob die Wolke'). She recounts a nightmare in which she was a white dove shot by Max which transformed itself into a bleeding black bird when it fell at her feet. Ännchen tries to comfort her ('Einst träumte') and her bridesmaids arrive and sing a folk song ('Wir winden dir den Jungfernkranz'). The ancestor's picture has fallen from the wall again and when Ännchen opens a box she has brought they find a funeral wreath. A new chaplet is quickly made from roses given to Agathe by the Hermit. Then the huntsmen's chorus crashes in ('Was gleich wohl auf Erden').

Prince Ottokar and his followers are ready to watch the shooting contest. Kuno insists that it should take place before his daughter arrives. And the Prince chooses a white dove as the target. As Max takes aim Agathe runs in, demanding that he stop. The Hermit chases the dove away to another tree where Kaspar is hiding. Max shoots. It is Samiel's bullet and both Agathe and Kaspar fall to the ground. Agathe is unhurt but Kaspar is mortally wounded. Samiel appears to collect his reward as the dying man curses heaven and hell. Max now confesses what has happened and the Prince banishes him. However, the Hermit intercedes and his sentence is commuted to a probationary year after which Ottokar himself will officiate at the wedding of Max and Agathe. The opera concludes with everyone celebrating God's mercy.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)

Der Freischütz (1817–20)

No Weber, no Wagner? Perhaps. Like Wagner after him Weber worked tirelessly through his short life to create German operas. He too subscribed to the ideal *Gesamtkunstwerk* in which music, poetry, dance and the visual style of a production all blended harmoniously into one. He understood the power of musical leitmotifs. And surely the Wolf's Glen where Max is egged on to forge the magic bullets is just a step away from the cave in *Siegfried* where Fafner guards the ill-gotten gains of the Nibelung. More than that, Alberich's theft of the gold from its home at the bottom of the Rhine at the beginning of *The Ring* is just as much a sin against nature as Kaspar and Max's night in the Wolf's Glen.

Wagner's debt to Weber is clear, but too often the earlier composer has been cast as a John the Baptist figure heralding the achievements of the Bayreuth sorcerer. However, that is to look through the German cultural telescope the wrong way. Weber never needs to lean on Wagner. With *Der Freischütz* he creates one of the greatest of all German Romantic operas and a work that crystallises the cultural, political and philosophical concerns of a German generation who came to maturity in the years after Bonaparte's political experiments with their territories had ended with his exile to St Helena and the restoration of the old European autocracies. It is no accident that *Der Freischütz* is set in the period of the Thirty Years War, that earlier disaster for the German people in which so much of the country was devastated by foreign incursions.

Weber began work in earnest on the history of Max and Agathe in 1819 in Dresden where he had been hired to create German opera to rival the Saxon taste for Italian works. (The King, no less, had declared that his horse

could sing a better aria than a German prima donna!) Unsurprisingly then, the opera was not commissioned by Saxony but by Berlin for performance in the newly rebuilt Schauspielhaus, and for a city that was much more interested in new cultural opportunities than the deeply conservative Kingdom of Saxony.

This story of the young ranger who allies himself to demonic forces to make the magic bullets that will allow him to win the hand of the woman he loves in a shooting competition would have been familiar to many Germans. Weber and his contemporaries had read it in the *Gespenssterbuch*, five volumes of old German folk stories collected and rewritten by Johann August Apel and Friedrich Laun and published between 1811 and 1815. *Der Freischütz* had already been extracted from the collection and turned into a stage work with music on three previous occasions and Weber's close contemporary Louis Spohr only relinquished his plans for an opera when he discovered that Weber and his librettist Johann Friedrich Kind were already at work on it.

It took Weber just over 10 weeks to complete his score, making changes to Kind's libretto as he went. And on 13 May 1820 he wrote: 'Overture to *Die Jägersbraut* finished and with it the whole opera. God be praised and to him all honour.' At this stage the piece was called *The Hunter's Bride*, which suggests that Agathe was more important than the dark forces that threaten her ordered rural community with its peasants and huntsmen presided over by a benign Prince.

The revised title, *Der Freischütz*, throws the emphasis back on Max and also on Kaspar, who has sold his soul to the satanic Samiel and the dark world embodied by the Wolf's Glen. Indeed

that scene becomes the pivot on which the whole opera turns, dramatically and musically. Here is that central Romantic conceit that Mankind's fall from grace is the consequence of setting itself up in opposition to Nature, which is not a distant prospect but a moral presence in our lives. As Wordsworth wrote in his long narrative poem *The Prelude*, which he described as 'the poem on the growth of my own mind': 'To every natural form, rock, fruit or flower,/Even the loose stones that cover the highway,/I gave a moral life. I saw them feel,/Or linked them to some feeling: the great mass/Lay bedded in a quickening soul, and all/That I beheld, respired with inward meaning.'

Weber shared Wordsworth's ideas about a living, breathing Nature. 'The contemplation of a landscape is to me the performance of a piece of music. I feel the effect of the whole, without dwelling on the details which produce it ... But good heavens when Nature is gradually unrolled before my eyes, how the funeral marches and rondos and furiosos and pastorales somersault after each other.'

For German Romantics Nature held a special meaning as they struggled against the autocratic political system which had stifled their hopes of liberty. True national identity was not to be found in the princelings' palaces and castles but in the fields and meadows and, above all, those woods and forests that cast a shadow over so much German 19th-century art, from the landscapes of Caspar David Friedrich to Richard Wagner's forests in *Siegfried*, a school for his hero, and from Goethe's lyric poems composed – we are told – on the wooded hills above Weimar to Richard Strauss's exquisite setting of Richard Dehmel's *Waldseligkeit*.

The politics of this Nature worship were nurtured by the conflict between Napoleon's France and many of the German states. France proposed itself as the acme of civilisation, which for German thinkers was manmade and artificial and so stood in opposition to true culture, which was rooted in Nature and the idea of the natural. So at the end of *Der Freischütz* the corpse of the evil Kaspar who has been perverting nature with his magic bullets is to be thrown into the Wolf's Glen and Max, thanks

in part to the timely appearance of a Hermit – that traditional operatic *deus ex machina* – is restored to a state of grace within nature. But we should remember what a close-run thing it has been: the target chosen by Prince Ottokar for the shooting contest at the beginning of the last act is a pure white dove that is identified with Agathe (the girl Max hopes to marry) who, for a terrible moment, appears to have been shot.

The celebration of Nature by German Romantics such as Weber was just one thread in an attempt to weave a new national political and cultural identity that might transcend the haphazard political geography of what remained of the Holy Roman Empire, with Germany divided and subdivided into so many kingdoms, states, dukedoms and free cities. There was a new passion for celebrating an older popular German history of the kind to be found in folk tales and poetry: the Brothers Grimm's *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Des Knaben Wunderhorn traditional poems gathered by Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano and Apel and Laun's *Gespersterbuch*, the source of the opera, are all intended to present a lost German identity.

This identity is exemplified by life in the small medieval towns that were supposed to have criss-crossed Germany. Wagner's Nuremberg in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* is one such place where the citizens rule their own lives and a knight, Walther von Stolzing, must become a 'bürgerlich' resident if he's to win the song competition and get the girl.

If these towns are often imaginary rather than real, the same is true of that other site of a lost German identity, the countryside. Weber's *Der Freischütz* is a paradigm of this idealised version of German identity. We have peasants living in harmony with those rural aristocrats the forest rangers, whose ranks Max aspires to join when he marries the daughter of the head forester Kuno. And in the final act we have Prince Ottokar presiding over a rural shooting competition that will demonstrate the foresters' skills. Here is a simple social hierarchy where everyone knows and accepts their position. And when it is threatened by Kaspar it is the community's collective goodness that causes

his undoing and thus restores traditional values – with a little help from the Hermit. But then as a professional outsider living in the woods he too has his role in this ordered society.

Weber knew exactly what he was doing and it's all there in the score. At its heart there is an opposition between homely comforting normative C major and the darker and anxious C minor for Kaspar and his devilry. So the duality between good and evil that Weber told a friend was at the heart of his opera is composed deep into the score. As for Samiel, he has the closest thing to a fully developed leitmotif, a chilling diminished seventh chord which first appears in the Overture and then seems to gnaw its way into the heart of the opera.

Equally significant are the echoes of traditional folk songs that run through *Der Freischütz*: the refrain of the Bridesmaids' Chorus in Act 3, for example, or the village march, or the Huntsmen's Chorus place the opera firmly within the context of an ideal Germany in which culture is more important than civilisation. Most telling of all is Agathe's great aria 'Leise, leise', with its

haunting introduction from the flute and quiet sense of reflection underpinned by anxiety but which rises to unalloyed joy when Max enters, to be completed by a heartfelt prayer.

We may be surprised that there is no love duet for Max and Agathe, but it is the conflict between good and evil that interests Weber: the journey of the opera is, as one commentator has noted, 'a curve downwards into darkness and up into light again ... [in fact] half the opera plays in darkness.' It is goodness that triumphs, not love!

Weber's *Der Freischütz* is a great German opera – one which trumps Italian and to an extent French ones for those living East of the Rhine, and which certainly moves away from the *Singspiel* tradition where spoken German dialogue alternated with musical numbers. The composer's more thoughtful contemporaries knew what he had achieved, even if traditionalists carped. Notably Therese aus dem Winkel continued to carp. But then Weber had already had the last word about her: 'This lady has a regrettable disease: she can't hold her ink.'

Synopsis & programme note © Christopher Cook

About the performers

Olivier Borde



Laurence Equilbey

Laurence Equilbey conductor

Laurence Equilbey is conductor and musical director of Insula orchestra and accentus and is acknowledged for her demanding yet open-minded approach to her art.

She has conducted the orchestras of Lyon, Bucharest, Liège and Leipzig, the Brussels Philharmonic, Hesse Radio Orchestra, Café Zimmermann, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Akademie für alte Musik Berlin, Concerto Köln, Camerata Salzburg, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, among others.

In 2012, with support from the Département des Hauts-de-Seine, she founded the period-instrument Insula orchestra, an ensemble devoted to the Classical and early Romantic repertoire. The orchestra is in residence in a new artistic venue, La Seine Musicale, on the Île Seguin, close to Paris, and is in charge of selecting part of the programme for the 1,150-seater Auditorium.

She has recently conducted Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* staged by La Fura dels Baus (Grand Théâtre de Provence, La Seine Musicale, Theater an der Wien, Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele,

Elbphilharmonie and the Lincoln Center); Gounod's *La nonne sanglante* (Opéra Comique); and *Der Freischütz* in a staging by Cie 14:20 (Théâtre de Caen, Grand Théâtre de Provence, BOZAR in Brussels, Theater an der Wien, Ludwigsburg Festival, Grand Théâtre de Luxembourg and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées). She directed Mozart's Requiem in a staging by Yoann Bourgeois in June 2019 and this season presents new stagings based around Beethoven's Symphony No 6, 'Pastoral', Cocteau's ballet *Le jeune homme et la Mort* with Marie-Agnès Gillot and another Mozart collaboration with Cie 14:20. She is an associate artist of the Grand Théâtre de Provence in Aix-en-Provence and has a close relationship with the Paris Philharmonie.

Under Laurence Equilbey's artistic direction, accentus interprets great vocal repertoire, ranging from a *cappella* works to fully staged productions and from Baroque to contemporary periods. In July 2019 she and accentus presented a programme of music by Pascal Dusapin and Sofia Gubaidulina in Salzburg with Camerata Salzburg and the Austrian Ensemble for New Music. Laurence Equilbey supports contemporary creation too. She is also Artistic Director and Director of Education at the Department for Young Singers at the Paris Conservatoire.

Laurence Equilbey and Insula orchestra recently released two discs of Beethoven, the first featuring Nicholas Angelich, the second one with accentus, Bertrand Chamayou, Alexandra Conunova, Natalie Clein and David Kadouch. Next year Laurence Equilbey will record *Der Freischütz* and a disc dedicated to Mozart's operas.

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



Stanislas de Barbeyrac

Stanislas de Barbeyrac Max

Stanislas de Barbeyrac is one of the most exciting tenors to emerge in recent seasons, having already performed to acclaim at leading operatic venues, including the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Opéra National de Paris, Staatsoper Berlin, Bayerische Staatsoper, Dutch National Opera and Geneva's Grand Théâtre.

Highlights of last season include his debut at the Metropolitan Opera as Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), a role which he subsequently performed in Munich, Paris and Orange. He also made his debut at the Semperoper Dresden as Alfredo (*La traviata*), sang his first Piquillo (*La Pêrichole*) in Bordeaux and returned to Dutch National Opera as Tamino (*The Magic Flute*). On the concert platform he sang in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with the Orchestre National de Lyon and Ravel's *L'heure espagnole* with the London Symphony Orchestra.

In earlier seasons he made significant debuts at the Zurich Opera House, La Monnaie in Brussels, Opéra National de Paris and Opéra National de Bordeaux, Bologna's Teatro Comunale and the Aix-en-Provence Festival. His repertoire ranges from operas by Mozart and Gluck via *Bénédict* (*Béatrice et Bénédict*) and Macduff (*Macbeth*) to Narraboth (*Salome*), Pelléas (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) and Le Chevalier (*Dialogues des Carmélites*).

He made his North American debut during the 2016–17 season, singing Don Ottavio for San Francisco Opera. That season he also sang Renaud (*Armide*) for the Vienna State Opera and made a number of appearances at the Opéra National de Paris.

Other roles in his repertoire include Cassio (*Otello*) and Walther von der Vogelweide (*Tannhäuser*). He has also performed with orchestras in numerous works, including Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, and Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ* and *Te Deum*.

Stanislas de Barbeyrac completed his musical education at the Bordeaux Conservatoire, where he first studied with his current vocal mentor Lionel Sarazzin. He has won numerous prestigious vocal competitions in France and was also a prizewinner at the Queen Elisabeth International Competition in Brussels in 2011. In 2014 he was named 'Révélation Artiste Lyrique' in the prestigious French competition Victoires de la Musique.



Johanni van Oostrum

Johanni van Oostrum Agathe

South African soprano Johanni van Oostrum is in demand as interpreter of leading roles in operas by Mozart, Wagner, Janáček and Richard Strauss. She has performed under conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle, Ivor Bolton, Massimo Zanetti, Henrik Nánási, Stefan Solyom, Gianluca Marciano and Jan Willem de Vriend, and worked with directors such as Harry Kupfer, Barrie Kosky, Tobias Kratzer, Florentine Klepper and Vera Nemirova.

Last season featured three major role debuts: the title-role in a new production of *Salome* at Oper Graz, Marietta (*Die tote Stadt*) with Opéra de Limoges, and the role she reprises tonight – Agathe (*Der Freischütz*) – at Théâtre de Caen, Aix-en-Provence, BOZAR in Brussels, Theater an der Wien and the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele. She also returned to the Komische Oper Berlin as the Marschallin

(*Der Rosenkavalier*) and to Theater Bonn as Chrysothemis (*Elektra*) and Elsa (*Lohengrin*).

The 2017–18 season saw her North American debut with the Minnesota Opera in one of her signature roles, the Countess (*The Marriage of Figaro*), which she also performed at Theater Bonn. She made her debut with Cape Town Opera as Senta in a new production of *The Flying Dutchman*, for which she won a Fleur du Cap Theatre Award, and with Staatstheater Braunschweig in her role debut as Chrysothemis in a new production of *Elektra*. She concluded the season with her house debuts at Konzert Theater Bern, singing the title-role in a new production of *Katya Kabanova*, at the Royal Swedish Opera as the Marschallin conducted by Alan Gilbert, and at the Festspielhaus Baden-Baden in performances as the First Lady in *The Magic Flute* under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

As a concert artist she regularly appears in Beethoven's *Symphony No 9*, Bach's *St John* and *St Matthew Passions*, Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Pergolesi's *Stabat mater*, the Requiems of Mozart and Verdi, Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*, Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

To mark the 150th anniversary of Richard Strauss's birth, she sang orchestral songs under the baton of Stefan Solyom with the Staatskapelle Weimar. She also performed Strauss's *Four Last Songs*, conducted by Gianluca Marciano, at the Al Bustan Festival in Beirut, as well as in Bayreuth under the baton of Martin Hoff.

Johanni van Oostrum is a graduate of the University of Pretoria. She received vocal training from Mimi Coertse and was a member of the Black Tie Opera. She won the Erna Spoorenberg Dutch Vocal Competition in 2005 and the Ruth Lopin Nash Award from the Oratorio Society of New York at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in 2009.



Capucine de Chocqueuse

Chiara Skerath

Chiara Skerath Ännchen

Swiss-Belgian lyric soprano Chiara Skerath has been praised for her combination of effortless technique and velvety timbre, and recently made acclaimed debuts as *Mélimande* (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) at the Opéra de Bordeaux and in the title-role of *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at Opéra de Nantes, as well as appearing in multiple productions at the Opéra National de Paris.

She has had success at several international competitions, including the Audience Prize at the 2014 Queen Elisabeth International Competition; the Grand Prix de Duo Chant-Piano at the 2013 International Nadia & Lili Boulanger Competition and the Emmerich Smola Prize in 2012. She also received the Migros Culture Scholarship in both 2011 and 2012.

She has built a strong Mozartian repertoire, including Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) at Opéra de Versailles and the Drottningholm Festival; Despina (*Così fan tutte*) at Oper Frankfurt and Stadttheater Bern; Servilia (*La clemenza di Tito*) at the Opéra du Rhin; Ninetta (*La finta semplice*) at the Queen Elizabeth Hall; Cinna (*Lucio Silla*) at Theater an der Wien, Opéra de Versailles and the Philharmonie de Paris; Pamina (*The Magic Flute*) at Opéra de Saint-Étienne; and Barbarina and Susanna (*The Marriage of Figaro*) at the Opéra Royal de Wallonie and Operklosterneuburg.

Her eclectic repertoire also includes acclaimed performances as Eurydice and Amour (*Orphée et Eurydice*), Adina (*L'elisir d'amore*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Rosalinde (*Die Fledermaus*), the Italian Singer (*Capriccio*) and Eliza Doolittle (*My Fair Lady*).

She has performed under the batons of such eminent conductors as Christian Thielemann, Marc Minkowski, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Ingo Metzmacher and Laurence Equilbey.

She is also in demand for her performances of German Lieder and French *mélodies*, which she studied with Ruben Lifschitz at the Fondation Royaumont; she regularly gives recitals across Europe with pianist Antoine Pallac. She continues to study at the Paris Conservatoire in Glenn Chambers's class and now works regularly with Annick Massis.

Chiara Skerath's current and future projects include First Lady (*The Magic Flute*) and Clorinda (*La Cenerentola*) at Opéra National de Paris, as well as the current European tour as Ännchen with the Insula orchestra.



Vladimir Baykov

Vladimir Baykov Kaspar

Vladimir Baykov was born in Moscow and initially studied chemistry before pursuing singing at the Moscow Conservatoire. He has won prizes at several competitions, including the Bella Voce in Moscow, Mirjam Helin in Helsinki, Neue Stimmen in Gütersloh, Maria Callas in Athens, Belvedere in Vienna, as well as Queen Sonja in Oslo and Queen Elisabeth in Brussels.

His earliest operatic appearances were in Moscow, in works by Mussorgsky, Mozart and Tchaikovsky.

Internationally, he appeared in *Boris Godunov* at La Monnaie in Brussels, Handel's *Sosarme* in Lisbon and at the Spoleto Festival, Spohr's *Die letzten Dinge* in Cologne, *Salome* and *The Queen of Spades* in Turin and *Turandot* in Malmö.

He has also sung Haydn's *Die Schöpfung* in Tampere; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in Mannheim; *The Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, *Norma* and *Don Giovanni* in St Gallen; and *Sorochinsky Fair*, *The Queen of Spades* and *Faust* in Bonn. He has sung the role of Ruprecht (*The Fiery Angel*) at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw under Leif Segerstam; Salieri (*Mozart and Salieri*) with the RAI Orchestra in Lugano and Turin; Mephisto (*Faust*) in Warsaw; and Pimen and Varlaam (*Boris Godunov*) at Turin's Teatro Regio.

Other recent highlights include the title-role in *The Flying Dutchman* in Magdeburg; Narbal (*Les Troyens*), Prince Igor, Gessler (*William Tell*), Kaspar (*Der Freischütz*), Klingsor (*Parsifal*), Wotan (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*) and Mephisto (*Faust*) in Hamburg; Wotan (*Die Walküre*) in Erl; and both the latter role and Vodnik (*Rusalka*) in Leipzig.

Recent concert engagements have included Beethoven's *Symphony No 9* in Munich, Frankfurt and Berlin under Justus Frantz; and Verdi's *Requiem* in Berlin and Frankfurt under Enoch zu Guttenberg. Other conductors with whom he has worked include Antonello Allemandi, Alan Curtis, Gianandrea Noseda, Woldemar Nelsson, Kazushi Ono, Stefan Soltesz and Gennady Rozhdestvensky.



Marcus Borggreve

Christian Immler

Christian Immler Hermit/Voice of Samiel

German baritone Christian Immler began his career as a boy alto in the Tölz Boys' Choir and then studied at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama with Rudolf Piernay. His adult career was launched when he won the International Nadia & Lili Boulanger Competition in Paris in 2001.

He is renowned for his interpretations of Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Mahler, but equally central

is the music of J S Bach. Having first sung the B minor Mass and the *St John* and *St Matthew Passions* with Marc Minkowski and Les Musiciens du Louvre, he has since performed these works with Philippe Herreweghe, Daniel Harding, Michel Corboz, Jos van Veldhoven, Daniel Reuss, Leonardo García Alarcón (receiving a *Diapason d'Or* for their disc of Bach and Böhm, *Music for Weddings*) and Ensemble Pygmalion (Bach Masses, BWV233 and 236). He also works regularly with Masaaki Suzuki and Bach Collegium Japan, most recently singing *Elijah* at the Leipzig Gewandhaus and the *St Matthew Passion* in Tokyo and Singapore, as well as appearing as bass soloist on the group's critically acclaimed recording of Mozart's C minor Mass.

Other recent projects include concerts and recordings at the Boston Early Music Festival, Bach cantatas and the *St John Passion* with Ensemble Pygmalion, *Messiah* at the Kennedy Center, Washington with the National Symphony Orchestra, the *St Matthew Passion* with the Spanish National Orchestra and the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Mozart's *Requiem* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and Beethoven's Mass in C with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

As a recitalist he has a particular interest in 20th-century émigré composers such as Zemlinsky, Korngold, Eisler, Schreker and Gál. He has presented their works – as well as core Lieder repertoire by Schubert, Schumann and Wolf – in leading recital venues, such as the Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, the Frick Collection in New York and the Salzburg Mozarteum, the latter with pianist Helmut Deutsch. Their CD *Modern Times* was awarded the *Diamant d'Opéra* and the prestigious *Diapason Découverte*. His other recordings have received multiple awards, including a 2016 Grammy nomination.

Christian Immler's operatic career has also continued to flourish. Recent projects include the Speaker (*The Magic Flute*) at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and also with Les Talens Lyriques under Christophe Rousset in Dijon, Limoges and at the Paris Philharmonie (where he has also appeared in recital with Kristian Bezuidenhout). His other recent roles have included Antinoo (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*), Seneca (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*), Consalvo (Handel's *Almira*) and Tiresia (Niobe) for the Boston Early Music Festival; and Dodo/Frog Footman/Mock Turtle in Unsuk Chin's *Alice in Wonderland* in Geneva. He has also sung the Forester (*The Cunning Little Vixen*) for the Wiener Kammeroper, Ubalde (*Armide*) for Israeli

Opera, Achis (*David et Jonathas*, conducted by William Christie) and Pharnaces (Zemlinsky's *King Kandaules*) at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

Current and future projects include performances of Mozart's *Requiem* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with Bach Collegium Japan and a run of performances as the Hermit in France, Belgium, Austria and here at the Barbican.



Max Brumert

Thorsten Grömbel

Thorsten Grömbel Kuno

The German bass Thorsten Grömbel studied at the Hochschule für Musik Detmold and at the Musikhochschule Lübeck.

Following engagements in Düsseldorf (Deutsche Oper am Rhein) and Frankfurt Opera House he joined the ensemble of Deutsche Oper am Rhein in 2012.

Guest performances have taken him to Dortmund, Essen, Freiburg, Kiel, Leipzig, Cologne, Frankfurt, Prague National Opera, Taipei National Theatre, the state opera houses of Wiesbaden, Nuremberg, Hanover and Munich, the Semperoper Dresden, Komische Oper Berlin, Opéra National de Paris (Bastille), Opernhaus Zurich, Teatro del Liceu, Barcelona, Royal Opera of Stockholm, Theater Basel, Grand Théâtre de Genève and to opera festivals including Mézières, Montreux, Strasbourg and Savonlinna.

His repertoire includes Antinoo (*Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria*), Osmin (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), the title-roles in *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Don Pasquale*, the Commendatore (*Don Giovanni*), Sarastro (*The Magic Flute*), Narbal (*Les Troyens*), Sir John Falstaff (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*), Banco (*Macbeth*), Zaccaria (*Nabucco*), Count Walter (*Luisa*

Miller), Fiesco (*Simon Boccanegra*), Sparafucile (*Rigoletto*), Philippe II (*Don Carlos*), the King of Egypt (*Aida*), Daland (*The Flying Dutchman*), Hermann (*Tannhäuser*), Heinrich (*Lohengrin*), Fasolt (*Das Rheingold*), Hunding (*Die Walküre*), Fafner (*Siegfried*), King Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*), Gurnemanz (*Parsifal*), Gremin (*Eugene Onegin*), Water Goblin (*Rusalka*), Colline (*La bohème*), Peneios (*Daphne*), La Roche (*Capriccio*), Pommersfelden (*Mathis der Maler*), Count Waldner (*Arabella*) and Ochs (*Rosenkavalier*).

Recent and current highlights include King Heinrich (*Lohengrin*) at Vlaamse Opera, Antwerp; Martin Schmall in a concert version of Weber's *Peter Schmall* at the Theater an der Wien; Hunding (First Act of *Die Walküre*) with the Belgrade Philharmonic and Insula orchestra; and the role of Kuno in France, Belgium, Austria and here at the Barbican.

In the concert hall Thorsten Grömbel has performed with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and the WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln. His repertoire in concert includes *Messiah*, Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, Haydn's *Die Schöpfung*, Mozart's *Masses* and *Requiem*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Verdi's *Requiem*.



Samuel Hasselhorn

Samuel Hasselhorn Ottokar

German baritone Samuel Hasselhorn has won many significant prizes, including First Prize at the 2018 Queen Elisabeth International Competition, the 2018 Emmerich Smola Prize, First Prize at the 2017 Das Lied International Song Competition in Heidelberg, First Prize at the 2015 Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York and First Prize at the 2013 International

Schubert Competition in Dortmund. He was also a prizewinner at the Wigmore Hall Song Competition, Hugo Wolf Competition and the Nadia & Lili Boulanger Competition in Paris.

At the start of last season he joined the ensemble of the Vienna State Opera. Other recent highlights include appearances at BOZAR in Brussels, the Luxembourg Philharmonie, Theater an der Wien, DeSingel in Antwerp, and in the Camerata Musica concert series in Cambridge. Partners include pianists Malcolm Martineau, Graham Johnson and Justus Zeyen.

Previous highlights have included debuts at Munich Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, Frankfurt's Hessischen Rundfunk, the Schubertiade Vilabertran in Barcelona, the Auditorio Nacional de Música Madrid, Zurich Tonhalle and the Grand Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire.

Samuel Hasselhorn was a fellow at the 2017 Marlboro Festival, the year he also made recital debuts in Washington DC and New York City, at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston and with the Buffalo Chamber Music Society.

His discography includes a recital disc of songs by Schubert, Pfitzner and Aribert Reimann and Schumann's *Dichterliebe* with pianist Boris Kusnezow.

Samuel Hasselhorn studied at Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media with Marina Sandel and at the Paris Conservatoire with Malcolm Walker. He also attended masterclasses with Kiri Te Kanawa, Kevin Murphy, Thomas Quasthoff, Helen Donath, Annette Dasch, Susan Manoff, Jan-Philip Schulze, Anne Le Bozec and Martin Brauss. He currently holds the Lindemann Vocal Chair of Young Concert Artists in NYC and works regularly with his teacher Patricia McCaffrey.

Elise de Bendelac



Anas Séguin

Anas Séguin Kilian

Anas Séguin was Adam's 'Révélation Artiste Lyrique' in 2014. He studied with Sophie Hervé, before going onto the Paris Conservatoire, where honed his art with Malcolm Walker, completing his studies at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel with José van Dam. He has been an award winner at several national and international competitions, notably in the Toulouse International Singing Competition in 2016 and the Voix Nouvelles competition in 2018.

In concert his repertoire includes Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Donizetti's *Missa di Gloria*, Fauré's *Requiem* and Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin*. In March 2016 he was invited by Raymond Duffaut to the Opéra Grand Avignon for the Jeune Tremplin concert, under the direction of Nadine Duffaut. He was also invited to be Gaëlle Le Gallic's guest in the Génération Jeunes Interprètes radio programme on France Musique.

On stage his roles have included Papageno (*The Magic Flute*), the title-roles in *Aleko* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, Arlequin (Honegger and Iber's *L'Aiglon*), Florestan (*Fidelio*), Rodomonte (*Orlando paladino*), Figaro (*The Barber of Seville*), Moralès (*Carmen*) and Wagner (*Faust*). He made his debut at the Festival de Radio France in Montpellier in Delibes's unfinished opera *Kassya*.

Last season he returned to the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in *La traviata* under Jérémie Rhorer, directed by Deborah Warner; made his debut at the Opéra de Bordeaux as Figaro (*The Barber of Seville*) under Marc Minkowski, directed by Laurent Pelly; sang the Count (*The Marriage of Figaro*) at Massy Opera and appeared in *Rigoletto* at Marseilles

Opera. He also participated in the laureate concerts of the Concours Voix Nouvelles in Paris, Toulon, Montpellier, Limoges, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Lille, Compiègne, Reims and Nice.



Clément Dazin

Clément Dazin Samiel

Clément Dazin was born in 1982 in Roubaix and from an early age was fascinated by movement, starting gymnastics at the age of 6. He turned toward circus, and juggling in particular, at 16 as a member of the Point Bar company, where he discovered the joy of creation. He furthered his learning with hip-hop dance and theatre classes and by practising juggling and acrobatics in a variety of different settings.

In 2008 he joined the Lyon Circus School and, the following year, the National Centre of Circus (CNAC). There, he met artists such as Philippe Genty, Aragorn Boulanger, Fatou Traoré, Johanne Saunier, Julien Clément and Bruno Dizien, all of whom influenced his work. He has since explored the links between contemporary dance, hip-hop and juggling.

In 2012 he toured as part of the *This is the End* production with CNAC. The following year he created the solo *Bruit de couloir*, which has now been seen all over the world.

In 2016 he founded the company La Main de l'Homme. Together they created *Humanoptère*, which was premiered in 2017 at the Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf. It has since toured to more than 20 cities in Europe, where it has been seen by more than 8,000 people.

Clément Dazin is supported by La Brèche, PNAC Normandy and House Juggling, SC La Courneuve.



Adrien La Marca

Adrien La Marca viola

Adrien La Marca's playing is characterised by a depth of expression, sense of individuality and technical mastery, alongside an ability to create an emotional connection with his audience.

Last season he made debuts with the Orchestre National de France, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France, Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Toulouse Capitole Orchestra and Les Siècles, as well as being Artist-in-Residence with the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège.

Highlights this season include a return to the Orchestre National de France with Walton's Viola Concerto, and a tour of Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* with Les Siècles. He appears as a recitalist and chamber musician at the Salzburg Festival, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Hohenens Schubertiade, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Auditorium du Louvre and at the Aix-en-Provence Spring Festival.

He won the Newcomer Award at the 2014 Victoires de la Musique and has since performed at prestigious venues, including the Paris Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Berlin Konzerthaus, Vienna Musikverein, Auditorium du Louvre, Schloss Elmau, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Théâtre de la Ville de Paris and Salle Gaveau.

His first album, *English Delight*, was critically acclaimed. Current and forthcoming recording projects include Walton's Viola Concerto with the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège, the world premiere of Gwenaël Mario Grisi's Viola Concerto, especially written for him, and Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* in a new arrangement for solo viola and orchestra.

He was born in France in 1989 into a family of musicians and began playing piano and viola at the age of 4 in Aix-en-Provence. He entered the Paris Conservatoire at 16 and studied with Jean Sulem, later studying in Leipzig with Tatjana Masurenko and in Berlin with Tabea Zimmermann. He has been the recipient of many awards both in France and internationally.

Adrien La Marca plays a viola by Nicola Bergonzi made in Cremona in 1780, on generous loan from the BOUBO Music Foundation.

accentus

accentus is a professional choir founded more than 26 years ago by its current artistic director Laurence Equilbey. It is dedicated to the performance of major *cappella* works, as well as to contemporary repertoire, oratorio and opera.

The choir performs at leading French and international concert venues and festivals, including La Seine Musicale, the Salzburg Mozart Week, the Essen Philharmonie, the Grand Théâtre de Provence in Aix-en-Provence, the Royal Opera and Royal Chapel in Versailles, Vienna's Theater an der Wien, the Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and the Lincoln Center in New York.

accentus enjoys a close partnership with the Philharmonie de Paris and is currently resident choir at the Opéra de Rouen. Christophe Grapperon has been associate principal conductor of the ensemble since 2013.

The choir regularly collaborates with prestigious conductors, including Andris Nelsons, Eric Ericson, Christoph Eschenbach, Sir Simon Rattle, Philippe Jordan, Simone Young and Yannick Nézet-Seguin. Orchestras with which it has worked include the Orchestre de Paris, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Concerto Köln, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Berlin Philharmonic and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

It has participated in a variety of operatic productions, including the creation of Ondrej Adámek's *Seven Stones* at the Aix-en-Provence Festival as well as Gounod's *La nonne sanglante* at the Opéra Comique and the current tour of *Der Freischütz* with Cie 14:20. Sigvards Klava

recently conducted *accentus* in a *cappella* works by Poulenc, Pascal Dusapin and Rachmaninov.

All *accentus*'s recordings have received widespread critical acclaim. The CD *Transcriptions* was nominated for a Grammy, in addition to receiving a *Disque d'or* in 2008. To celebrate Beethoven's 250th anniversary, the choir recorded the Choral Fantasy with Insula orchestra under Equilbey. Next year it records *Der Freischütz* with Insula orchestra and Equilbey and *La Betulia liberata* with Les Talens Lyriques and Christophe Rousset. *accentus* won the Ensemble of the Year award in the classical section of France's prestigious Victoires de la musique in 2002, 2005 and 2008.

In 2017 *accentus* inaugurated a Paris-based resources centre with physical media and digital content, designed to promote choral singing and share the working documents and expertise gathered since the choir's foundation. Last year saw the launch of its Vocal Art National Center (Paris Île-de-France, Normandie), whose aim is to further its artistic and academic principles and ambitions.

accentus – national center of art vocal Paris Île-de-France – Normandie – receives aid from the Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles d'Île-de-France of the French Ministry of Culture, is subsidised by the City of Paris and the Île-de-France Region, and also receives support from SACEM. accentus is in residence at the Opéra de Rouen Normandie. Concerts and cultural activities in the Département receive the support of the Département des Hauts-de-Seine. The Fondation Bettencourt Schueller supports accentus. accio, the circle of friends of accentus and Insula orchestra, supports educational and artistic initiatives set in motion by Laurence Equilbey.

Insula orchestra

Insula orchestra was founded in 2012 by Laurence Equilbey with local government support from the Département des Hauts-de-Seine and is in residence in a new artistic venue, La Seine Musicale, designed by architects Shigeru Ban and Jean de Gastines on the Île Seguin, an island in the River Seine just a few miles downstream from Paris. The orchestra is in charge of selecting part of the programme for its 1,150-seat Auditorium.

Insula orchestra also performs at other major French and international venues and leading festivals. Since its foundation, it has played at

the Philharmonies of Paris, Hamburg, Cologne, Essen and Warsaw, Salzburg's Mozart Week, the Opéra Comique in Paris, Basel Stadtcasino, Louvre Abu Dhabi and the Lincoln Center in New York. Over the past two seasons the orchestra has been conducted by Leonardo García Alarcón, Christian Zacharias and, this season, Speranza Scappucci and Duncan Ward.

The orchestra performs on period instruments. Its repertoire focuses on the Classical and Romantic eras, with Mozart, Schubert and Weber forming a core. It performs both purely symphonic programmes and others featuring chorus and soloists.

The orchestra has developed a wide-ranging and innovative programme of cultural and educational initiatives across its home base in the Hauts-de-Seine department. It also reconsiders the formats of classical music with the aims of drawing in new audiences and creating an ongoing dialogue between symphonic music, the spatial dimensions of the venue and the stage. It pitches its performance format midway between traditional concert versions and fully staged opera, exploiting the potential of leading international music venues. It also embraces new technology as a means of communication, using videos and online content to expand the artistic impact of any given project.

The season is focused on three major projects: the resumption of *Der Freischütz* in a staging by Cie 14:20; a new staging based around Beethoven's Symphony No 6, 'Pastoral' (Grand Théâtre de Provence, La Seine Musicale, Dortmund Konzerthaus and Shanghai Concert Hall) and another Mozart collaboration with Cie 14:20 (Grande Seine at La Seine Musicale).

Last season Laurence Equilbey and Insula orchestra released two Beethoven albums. This season it's the turn of Mozart, with a disc of opera excerpts featuring Sandrine Piau, Jodie Devos, Lea Desandre, Stanislas de Barbeyrac and Florian Sempey, and next year they will record *Der Freischütz*.

Insula orchestra receives support from the Département des Hauts-de-Seine and is in residence at La Seine Musicale. It has two new Funding Partners: Fondation d'Entreprise Michelin and Grant Thornton. accio, the circle of friends of accentus and Insula orchestra, supports educational and artistic initiatives set in motion by Laurence Equilbey. Insula orchestra is part of the FEVIS and the SPPE.

accentus

Chief Conductor

Nicolaï Maslenko

Répétiteur

Marion Julien

German coach

Johannes Kegel-Dorfs

Soprano

Emilie Brégeon *

Ellen Giaccone

Laurence Favier

Durand

Céline Boucard

Edwige Parat

Zulma Ramirez

Kristina Vahrenkamp *

Charlotte Plasse

Pauline Feracci *

Marie Serri

Alto

Caroline Chassany

Violaine Lucas

Geneviève Cirasse *

Valérie Rio

Florence Barreau

Emilie Nicot

Emmanuelle Biscara

Thi-Lien Truong

Tenor

Sébastien d'Oriano

Mathieu Montagne

Julien Drevet-Santique

Maurizio Rossano

Thomas Barnier

Maciej Kotlarski

Jean-François Chiamia

Nicolas Maire

Camillo Angarita

Mathieu Chapuis

Pierre Ribémont

Bass

Pierre Corbel

Nicolas Rouault

Laurent Slaars

Pierre Jeannot

Cyrille Gautreau

Jean-Christophe

Jacques

Mathieu Heim

Frédéric Bourreau

Vincent Eveno

Sébastien Brohier

* Bridesmaids

Insula orchestra

Violin 1

Stéphanie Paulet

leader

Aude Caulé-Lefèvre

Catherine Ambach

Roldán Bernabé

Carrión

Cécile Garcia

Karine Gillette

Bénédicte Pernet

Louis-Jean Perreau

Martin Reimann

Byron Wallis

Violin 2

Pablo Gutiérrez Ruiz

Nathalie Cannistraro

Maximilienne

Caravassilis

Adrien Carré

François Costa

Cécile Kubik

Laure Massoni

Michał Piotrowski

Viola

Brigitte Clément

Dahlia Adamopoulos

Lika Laloum

Benjamin Lescoat

Chloé Parisot

Laurent Gaspard

Cello

Nils Dupont

de Dinechin

Florent Audibert

Pablo Garrido

Claire Gratton

Double Bass

Roberto Fernández

de Larrinoa

Luc Devanne

Clotilde Guyon

Charlotte Testu

Flute

Jocelyn Daubigney

Morgane Eouzan

Piccolo

Giulia Barbini

Sophie Gourlet

Oboe

Jean-Marc Philippe

Anne Chamussy

Clarinet

Vincenzo Casale

Ana Melo

Bassoon

Philippe Miqueu

Emmanuel Vigneron

Horn

Georg Koehler

Gilbert Cami-Farras

Yannick Maillet

Pierre Rougerie

Trumpet

Serge Tizac

Emmanuel Alemany

Trombone

Fabien Cyprien

Frédéric Lucchi

Cyril Bernhard

Timpani

Koen Plaetinck