

Thursday, November 9, 2017, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Les Arts Florissants
William Christie, *music director and harpsichord*
Sophie Daneman, *stage direction*

PROGRAM

Actéon
by Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643–1704)

<i>Actéon</i>	Reinoud Van Mechelen
<i>Diane</i>	Elodie Fonnard*
<i>Junon</i>	Lea Desandre*
<i>Hyalé</i>	Maud Gnidzaz
<i>Arthébuze</i>	Rachel Redmond*
<i>Daphné</i>	Virginie Thomas
<i>Chasseur</i>	Renato Dolcini*

INTERMISSION

Dido and Aeneas
by Henry Purcell (1659–1695)

<i>Dido</i>	Lea Desandre*
<i>Belinda</i>	Rachel Redmond*
<i>Second Woman</i>	Elodie Fonnard*
<i>Aeneas</i>	Renato Dolcini*
<i>Sorceress</i>	Carlo Vistoli*
<i>First Witch</i>	Maud Gnidzaz
<i>Second Witch</i>	Virginie Thomas
<i>Spirit/Sailor</i>	Reinoud Van Mechelen

* former laureate of *Le Jardin des Voix, Les Arts Florissants'* academy for young singers

Cal Performances dedicates this performance to the memory of Ross E. Armstrong, beloved trustee and longtime subscriber and donor, who passed away on August 29, 2017. Ross, in turn, had dedicated this performance in memory of his spouse and partner of 32 years, Jonas (Jay) K. Stern, who pre-deceased Ross in 2015.

*Major support provided by The Bernard Osher Foundation.
Cal Performances' 2017–18 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.*



Actéon

Within the last few years, Marc-Antoine Charpentier has become the most recorded French composer of the Grand Siècle. Paradoxically, he has remained a rather elusive figure and this “forgotten French composer,” whom Claude Crussard rediscovered in 1945, scarcely emerges from his realm of the “lyrical shades.”

It cannot be denied that this resurrection of Charpentier continues to surprise us. His work, which touches on so many different domains, seems to have survived virtually intact in the celebrated manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris. But the history of these works remains to be uncovered. In fact, apart from a few rare monuments such as the *Médée* or *David et Jonathas*, it is difficult to situate these works now being rescued from oblivion, either in time or place.

Charpentier’s career is linked to three main locations: between 1679–80 he was in charge of the sacred music of the Dauphin, as well as of the music of the Princess de Guise. In 1684 he entered the service of the Jesuits of the Rue St Antoine. When did he write *Actéon*? We do know that certain works of this kind were written for the entertainment of the Princess de Guise, such as the musical idyll *Les Arts Florissants*, which is scored for the instrumental forces maintained by this noble personage (two treble viols, harpsichord, and bass viol). An examination of the score of *Actéon* gives us no immediate reason to reject the idea that it could have been written for the Princess. But

certain things in it incite us to other deductions: for instance, the *Plainte* in the fourth scene mentions “no flutes.” Might one not also imagine two supplementary flutes in the Princess’ ensemble?

Nonetheless, one must continue to assume a small ensemble. Thus, in the chorus of hunters, “quelle ardeur du soleil,” we find small differences in the harpsichord and the viol parts: “The small notes are for the viol, the large ones for the harpsichord.” This mention of “the viol” confirms that *Actéon* was originally intended for a small band. It is this kind of band that the Music Master recommends to Monsieur Jourdain, who aspires to become like “the folk of quality” in *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*: “You will need three voices, a soprano, a countertenor, and a bass, who will be accompanied by a bass viol, a theorbo, and a harpsichord for the basso continuo, and with two treble violins to play the ritornelli.”

Having said this, the dramatic dimensions of *Actéon* make it a work that exceeds the limits of a “private” musical establishment. The performance today is aimed at a larger audience, such as that of the Jesuit College. At the same time, the ensemble avoids all pretensions to larger vocal and instrumental forces. Even the choruses are composed of groups of soloists. All the instrumental sections are limited to a scoring in trio. It is even possible to assume a categorical rejection of all pompous ostentation. The Overture, with its various sections, is quite the opposite of the traditional models.

Les Arts Florissants

William Christie, *music director, founder, harpsichord*
Paul Agnew, *associate music director, associate conductor*

INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE

Emmanuel Resche, Théotime Langlois de Swarte, *violins*
Sophie de Bardonèche, *viola*
Pier Luigi Fabretti, *oboe*

BASSO CONTINUO

Thomas Dunford, *theorbo*
Alix Verzier, *cello*

Musical scores: Les Arts Florissants (Pascal Duc)



Portrait presumed to be of Marc-Antoine Charpentier

What is certainly to be found is a desire for color, which should characterize each scene of this pastorale. The difference between the first two scenes is clearly defined by the use of the keys of D Major and A Major. In the little treatise written for the future Regent, the Duke of Orleans, Charpentier invests keys with certain qualities: D Major is “joyful and warlike,” A Major is “joyful and rural.” This search for color is constant in each of the scenes. The fourth is very curiously composed of a recitative of Actéon (who has just been transformed into a stag) and a long plaint in C minor (“obscur et triste”). The listener will be struck, as well, by the various ways in which Charpentier sets the words to music. There are, in fact, very few true recitatives. On the other hand, one notes the frequency of melodic passages, interestingly constructed ensembles such as Arthebusia’s air alternating with the chorus, Actéon’s long monologue (Scene 3), and the

final chorus with its various expressive facets.

Actéon is a work that employs the most classical devices of the *tragédie en musique* established by Lully. Only here, everything is in miniature: the plot, the vocal and instrumental forces, the length. It is a delicate but powerful little work that testifies to the craftsmanship of a composer preparing for an assault on the absolute summits (like *Médée*).

The action takes place in six scenes:

1. Actéon and the hunters are on the tracks of a large quarry. The whole scene is built around a chorus of hunters, which is used as a refrain. The scene ends with an instrumental “air.”
2. The scene changes to a spring in which Diana and her sisters are bathing. Diana’s recitative is very soon changed into a dance rhythm that is taken up and continued by her sisters. A menuet follows, alternating between the voices and the instruments, and finally Arthebusia’s air (with chorus), modelled after a Gavotte Air.
3. Actéon is tired and takes leave of his companions. He decides to rest in a quiet glade (the traditional “sleep scene” of the *tragédie en musique*). He sings an extended monologue. Perceiving Diana and her sisters, he attempts to conceal himself, but is discovered. A dialogue follows between Actéon and Diana, who refuses to listen to his explanation (“chance and ill fortune are my only offence”). In order to prevent him from boasting about what he has seen, Diana and her sisters decide on his fate.
4. In a recitative, Actéon beholds himself transformed into a stag. A long instrumental plaint evokes his dismay.

5. The hunters burst in as their hounds go after a stag. They look for Actéon, intending to invite him to join the hunt (“come to admire the fury of your hounds setting upon this stag at bay”).
6. Juno announces to the hunters the death of Actéon, who has been changed into a stag and torn to pieces by his hounds. The pastorale ends with a chorus of hunters who express in varying gradations their sorrow and anger.

Dido and Aeneas

Dido and Aeneas is a work unique of its kind, and the summit in the all-too-brief career of the greatest composer England has produced. It is, moreover, the point of departure from a tradition to which all English composers would, for a long time to come, refer, even if they were not always aware of its true greatness. The opera is almost 300 years old, but it still sounds new, imbued with a youthfulness and a daring that are all the more astonishing when one realizes that the towering position once occupied in English music by Purcell was taken over by a foreigner of genius, Handel, whose torrential force swept away everything that had been done before him.

Purcell lived and worked in a country in which all cultural customs had been changed by 10 years of Puritan dictatorship. When Charles II came to the throne in 1660, he found a people who had remained a musical one, but who lacked both trained composers and good practicing musicians. During his exile, the King had acquired a taste for continental fashions, and it was quite natural for him to take Paris and Saint-Germain as the models for the musical institutions of his own Court. As for the Anglican Church, it returned to the practices



Portrait of Henry Purcell by John Closterman

that had prevailed before the disaster; that is, to those of Gibbons and the last veterans of the Golden Age.

It was in these rather incoherent conditions that the task fell to the young Purcell of restoring to his country a voice that would be its own. His musical vocation was obvious from the start. His father and his uncle had worked in the Court of Charles I. From the age of 10 he was admitted to the Children of the Chapel Royal, which was at the time the finest training ground in the country. After that his career proceeded without notable incident. Stage music occupied an important place in his output, but it was either music that intended to enhance a work of literature, or else a kind of semi-opera, that uneasy, vaguely definable descendant of the masque at the beginning of the century, in which choruses, airs, and dances succeeded each other without any clear musical logic. The form was popular, though, and some of Pur-

cell's greatest successes are to be found in this form, such as *King Arthur* and *The Fairy Queen*. When he tried his hand at a real opera in *Dido and Aeneas*, the event went virtually unnoticed.

The work was written to be performed by the girls of a school kept in Chelsea by a certain Josiah Priest, a dancing-master and occasional collaborator of Purcell's. The date of the first performance remains uncertain, but it probably took place in September 1690. It was revived in 1700 and again in 1704. Then it was forgotten for the next 200 years. Purcell, who saw and heard only the first performance, returned to his semi-operas. A few pastorals, the best of which is Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, represent the sum total of the heritage of this forgotten masterpiece.

None of Purcell's contemporaries seems to have been aware of the novelty constituted by an opera that owed as little to Italian influences as to the French lyrical theater, as defined by Lully. One may well ask wherein the exceptional virtues of *Dido* lie. The subject had been treated for the stage a hundred times. Metastasio's *Didone abbandonata* alone was set over 40 times. The music, taken in its isolated sections and numbers, is not superior to what Purcell produced elsewhere. It is undoubtedly by virtue of its dramatic intensity that *Dido* owes the privileged place it occupies in our memories. A short opera that lasts barely an hour (the fashionable spectacles in Paris and Venice could easily go on for hours), it is just as filled with action as a Romantic grand opera. Its conciseness renders necessary the rapidity with which the most varied sentiments are expressed before an audience in a state of permanent amazement. For all its simplicity, the pace of the narrative does not let up for a moment. At the same time, however, everything is done with a delicate touch: yearning, anguish, passion, despair, nothing is ever drawn in strong, heavy tones; a light cloudiness sur-

rounds this well-known tale and its all too predictable emotional states. It is a chamber opera in which Purcell succeeds in avoiding the banal with astonishing mastery by mixing, like a true heir of Shakespeare, the comical with the awe-inspiring. His Witches are there out of necessity to the story, but is their real function not to cause us to forget for a few minutes the love of the Queen of Carthage and the Trojan Prince? The music effortlessly surpasses Nahum Tate's polished libretto. The Witches' songs augur misfortune; but they also represent an interruption of the elegiac mood. The fact that the ranting and raving of these harbingers of the underworld is set to a lively, almost jolly rhythm is unimportant. What matters is the surprise of the listener, who is plunged into a fantastic world the semblances of which are delineated by the timbre of the voices rather than by any formal indication. It may be imagined that the young maidens of Priest's School had great fun in playing the parts of the "fantastical sisters." It is of little interest to know whether their "Ho ho ho" came from Lully's *Isis* or not. These exclamations have a decidedly English—not to say Purcellian—accent that cannot be confused with that of any other music.

Perhaps *Dido and Aeneas* is not a perfect work, but it is much more important to realize that Purcell rejected the pitfalls of the grand operatic spectacle. As she is dying, Dido needs no grand aria. Less than five minutes of a recitative and air of inescapable emotional power are enough. A brief lament follows, ending on "Remember me," a farewell that has no need of melodic seductiveness, in which the emotion is concentrated in a rhythm as simple as a drum-beat. Then the curtain falls on a final chorus as intense as that of a Bach Passion. We are left alone with a memory and an ache that no longer belong to the stage, but to some strange liturgy of death.

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Les Arts Florissants is renowned the world over as an ensemble of singers and instrumentalists specializing in the performance of Baroque music on period instruments. Founded in 1979 by the Franco-American harpsichordist and conductor William Christie, the ensemble, named after a short opera by Marc-Antoine Charpentier, has played a pioneering role in the revival of a Baroque repertoire that had long been neglected (including the rediscovery of countless treasures in the collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France). Today that repertoire is widely performed and admired: not only French music from the reign of Louis XIV, but also, more generally, European music of the 17th and 18th centuries. The ensemble is directed by William Christie who, since 2007, has regularly passed the conductor's baton over to British tenor Paul Agnew.

Since the 1987 production of Lully's *Atys* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris, which was triumphantly revived in May 2011, it has been on the opera stage that Les Arts Florissants has enjoyed its greatest successes. Notable productions include works by Rameau (*Les Indes Galantes*, *Hippolyte et Aricie*, *Les Boréades*, *Les Paladins*, *Platée*), Lully and Charpentier (*Médée*, *David et Jonathas*, *Les Arts Florissants*, *Armide*), Handel (*Orlando*, *Acis and Galatea*, *Semele*, *Alcina*, *Serse*, *Hercules*, *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*), Purcell (*King Arthur*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Fairy Queen*), Mozart (*The Magic Flute*, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*), and Monteverdi (his opera trilogy), but also by composers who are less frequently played, such as Landi (*Il Sant'Alessio*), Cesti (*Il Tito*), Campra (*Les Fêtes vénitienes*), and Hérold (*Zampa*).

For its highly acclaimed theater productions, Les Arts Florissants has called on the talents of some of the greatest stage directors, including Jean-Marie Villégier, Robert Carsen, Adrian Noble, Andrei Serban, Luc Bondy, Deborah Warner, Jérôme Deschamps, and Macha Makeïeff, as well as on renowned choreographers such as Béatrice Massin, Ana Yepes, Jirí Kylián, Blanca Li, Trisha Brown, Robyn Orlin, José Montalvo, Françoise Denieau, and Dominique Hervieu.

Les Arts Florissants enjoys an equally high profile in the concert hall, as illustrated by its many acclaimed concert or semi-staged performances of operas and oratorios (Rameau's *Zoroastre*, *Anacréon*, and *Les Fêtes d'Hébé*; Charpentier's *Actéon* and *La Descente d'Orphée aux Enfers*; Campra's *Idoménée* and Mozart's *Idomeneo*; Montéclair's *Jephthé*; Rossi's *L'Orfeo*; and Handel's *Giulio Cesare*—with Cecilia Bartoli—*Messiah*, *Theodora*, *Susanna*, *Jephtha*, and *Belshazzar*), its secular and sacred chamber music programs (*petits motets* by Lully and Charpentier, madrigals by Monteverdi and Gesualdo, court airs by Lambert, hymns by Purcell, among others), and its approach to large-scale works (particularly the *grands motets* by Rameau, Mondonville, and Campra).

Each season Les Arts Florissants gives around 100 concerts and opera performances in France—at the Philharmonie de Paris, where the group is in residence, the Théâtre de Caen, the Opéra-Comique, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the Château de Versailles, as well as at numerous festivals—and is an active ambassador for French culture abroad, being regularly invited to New York, London, Brussels, Vienna, Madrid, Barcelona, Moscow, and elsewhere.

The ensemble has produced an impressive discography: nearly 100 recordings (CD and DVD) and its own collection in collaboration with Harmonia Mundi, under the batons of William Christie and Paul Agnew.

In recent years, Les Arts Florissants has launched several education programs for young musicians. The most emblematic is the Academy of Le Jardin des Voix: created in 2002, it is held every two years and has already brought a substantial number of new singers into the limelight. The Arts Flo Juniors program, launched in 2007, enables conservatory students to join the orchestra and chorus for the length of a production, from the first day of rehearsals up to the final performance. And then there is the partnership between William Christie, Les Arts Florissants, and New York's Juilliard School, which since 2007 has allowed a fruitful artistic exchange between the US and France.

Les Arts Florissants also organizes numerous events aimed at building new audiences at the Philharmonie de Paris, in the Vendée and throughout in France, and all around the world. Linked to each year's concert program, events are designed for both amateur musicians and non-musicians, and appeal to children as much as adults.

In 2012 William Christie and Les Arts Florissants created the festival *Dans les Jardins de William Christie*, in partnership with the Conseil départemental de la Vendée. An annual event, the festival brings together artists from Les Arts Florissants, pupils from the Juilliard School, and finalists from Le Jardin des Voix for concerts and *promenades musicales* in the gardens created by William Christie at Thiré, in the Vendée. In addition to the festival, Les Arts Florissants is working with the endowment fund *Les Jardins de Musique de William Christie en Vendée* towards the creation of a permanent cultural venue in Thiré. This anchorage strengthened in 2017, through some noteworthy events: the settlement of Le Jardin des Voix in Thiré, the creation of a spring festival (Festival de Printemps) directed by Paul Agnew, and the reward of the national label "Centre culturel de Rencontre" for Les Arts Florissants and *Les Jardins de William Christie*—an award that distinguishes projects associating creation, patrimony, and transmission.

In the 2017–18 season, Les Arts Florissants will present several lyric operas and concerts under the baton of William Christie, including a tour of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Charpentier's *Actéon* on the American continents (Bogota, Los Angeles, Orange County, Sonoma); *An English Garden* with the singers of the 8th Jardin des Voix (Angers, Madrid, Caen, Saragosse, Philharmonie de Paris, Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow); Monteverdi's *Selva Morale e Spirituale* (Philharmonie de Paris, Barbican Centre, Théâtre de Caen, Berliner Philharmonie, Versailles Royal Chapel); a stage production of Handel's *Jephta* at the Opéra national de Paris, directed by Claus Guth; Handel's *Ariodante*, directed by David McVicar at the Vienna Staatsoper, followed by a version in concert (Philharmonie de Paris, Gran Teatre

del Liceu of Barcelona, Pampelune, Teatro Real of Madrid); a new production of *The Beggar's Opera* with director Robert Carsen at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris; and Haydn's *The Creation* (Oviedo, Barcelona, Beaune Festival). In addition to this, remounts of *Rameau, maître à danser* will tour in Korea and *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* in France.

Les Arts Florissants is also fully present in the program of a new event in the Pays de la Loire region, "Au rythme des heures," a musical weekend at the Abbaye de Fontevraud. The group will perform *The Creation* and *Acis and Galatea* at the Meet in Galilee Festival for the France-Israel Year. Another season highlight is William Christie's directing the ensemble in a new production of Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea* at the Salzburg Festival in summer 2018.

Les Arts Florissants will also participate in the Musée de la musique's 20th anniversary during the museum's late-night "Un musée aux bougies" candlelight evening.

Meanwhile, Paul Agnew is wrapping up his concert trilogy tour of Monteverdi's madrigals with *Mantova* (Quebec, Montreal) and *Venezia* (Festival d'Ambronay), in honor of the 450th anniversary of the composer's birth. He is also directing *An English Garden* for its remount at London's Barbican Centre, Bach's *Motets* (Versailles Royal Chapel, Philharmonie de Paris, Wigmore Hall in London) and two programs in collaboration with the Orchestre de Paris and the Ensemble intercontemporain at the Philharmonie de Paris: *Echo-Fragmente* and *Folklore imaginaires*. In April, he will direct the second Festival du Printemps in the churches of South-Vendée, this year focusing on the sacred music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

The season will conclude with the seventh festival *Dans les Jardins de William Christie*, in Thiré, Vendée.

Les Arts Florissants receives financial support from the French Ministry of Culture and Communication, the Department of Vendée, and the Région Pays de la Loire. The ensemble has been in residence at the Philharmonie de Paris since 2015. The Selz Foundation, American



Friends of Les Arts Florissants, and Crédit Agricole Corporate & Investment Bank are Principal Sponsors.

William Christie (*music director and harpsichord*), harpsichordist, conductor, musicologist, and teacher, is the inspiration behind one of the most exciting musical adventures of the last 30 years. A pioneer in the rediscovery of Baroque music, he has introduced the repertoire of 17th- and 18th-century France to a very wide audience across the globe. Born in Buffalo, and educated at Harvard and Yale, Christie has lived in France since 1971. The turning point in his career came in 1979, when he founded Les Arts Florissants.

Directing this vocal and instrumental ensemble, Christie soon made his mark as both a musician and man of the theater, in the concert hall and the opera house, with new interpretations of largely neglected or forgotten works. Major public recognition came in 1987 with the production of Lully's *Atys* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris, which then went on to tour internationally to huge success.

From Charpentier to Rameau, through Couperin, Mondonville, Campra, or Montéclair, William Christie is the uncontested master of *tragédie-lyrique* as well as *opéra-ballet*, and is just as comfortable with the French motet as with music of the court. But his affection for French music does not preclude him from exploring other European repertoires; along with his many acclaimed performances of Italian works (Monteverdi, Rossi, Scarlatti, Landi), he broaches Purcell and Handel with as much success as Mozart or Haydn.

William Christie's particularly busy operatic career has been marked by numerous collaborations with renowned theater and opera directors (including Jean-Marie Villégier, Robert Carsen, Alfredo Arias, Jorge Lavelli, Graham Vick, Adrian Noble, Andrei Serban, Luc Bondy, and Deborah Warner), which are always major events on the music calendar. Among his most recent are two productions at Paris' Opéra-Comique, Rameau's *Platée* in 2014 and Campra's *Les Fêtes vénitienes* in 2015, and Charpentier's *Médée* at the Zürich Opernhaus in 2017.

As a guest conductor, Christie often appears at opera festivals such as Glyndebourne (notably *Hippolyte et Aricie* in the summer of 2013) or at opera houses such as the Metropolitan Opera of New York, the Zurich Opernhaus, or the Opéra National de Lyon. Between 2002 and 2007, he regularly appeared as a guest conductor with the Berlin Philharmonic.

Christie's extensive discography (more than 100 recordings, many of which have won awards and distinctions in France and abroad) with Harmonia Mundi, Warner Classics/Erato, and Virgin Classics reflects the richness of his artistic ventures. His most recent recordings are *Belshazzar*, *Le Jardin de Monsieur Rameau*, featuring the finalists in Le Jardin des Voix 2013; *Music for Queen Caroline*, a program of religious works by Handel; *Bien que l'amour*, an anthology of serious airs and drinking songs; and *La Harpe Reine*, a program evoking music at the court of Marie-Antoinette with harpist Xavier de Maistre.

In a career of over 40 years, Christie has brought to the limelight several generations of singers and instrumentalists. Indeed, most of the conductors of today's French Baroque ensembles began their careers with Les Arts Florissants. A professor at the Paris Conservatory from 1982 to 1995, he was in charge of the early-music class, and he is now often invited to give master classes or lead academies such as those at Aix-en-Provence and Ambronay. Since 2007 he has been in residence at the Juilliard School in New York, where he gives master classes twice a year accompanied by the musicians of Les Arts Florissants.

Wishing to develop further his work as a teacher, in 2002 Christie created, with Les Arts Florissants, a biennial academy for young singers, Le Jardin des Voix, whose finalists take part in an international tour with Les Arts Florissants that acts as a launchpad for their careers. Among the talents discovered by William Christie through Le Jardin des Voix are Sonya Yoncheva, Christophe Dumaux, Emmanuelle de Negri, Marc Mauillon, and Amel Brahimi-Djelloul.

A true garden enthusiast, William Christie launched *Dans les Jardins de William Christie*

in 2012, a music festival that takes place every August in his gardens in the Vendée. It brings together Les Arts Florissants, William Christie's pupils from the Juilliard School, and the finalists in Le Jardin des Voix for concerts and *promenades musicales* in the gardens he created at Thiré, which have been labeled a "Jardin Remarquable" and listed on the French Supplementary Inventory of Historic Monuments.

William Christie acquired French citizenship in 1995. He is a Grand Officier in the Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur, the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, and the Ordre National du Mérite. He is Docteur Honoris Causa of the State University of New York in Buffalo, of the Juilliard School of Music in New York, and of the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. In 2008 Christie was elected to France's Académie des Beaux-Arts; he gave his official inaugural speech under the dome of the Institut de France in 2010. He is also an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music in London.



Sophie Daneman (*stage direction*) studied at the Guildhall School of Music and has established an international reputation in a wide-ranging repertoire. Her opera engagements have included *Rodelinda*

in the Netherlands, Cleopatra in *Giulio Cesare* and Dalila in *Samson* (Göttingen Handel Festival), and an acclaimed *Mélanide* for the Opéra-Comique. She has sung Euridice in *L'Anima del Filosofo* with Opéra de Lausanne, Euridice in *L'Orfeo* and *Dido and Aeneas* with the Bavarian State Opera, and the title role in *Theodora* with William Christie in New York, Paris, and Salzburg. Daneman has toured extensively with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, as well as performing with Sir Neville Marriner, Philippe Herreweghe, and John Eliot Gardiner. She has been featured with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, at the Halle Handel Festival, with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, and the Berlin Philharmonic. Her extensive discography includes a recording with Elizabeth Kenny and Theatre of the Ayre, *Masque of Moments* (Linn

Records), as well as the title role in Handel's *Rodelinda* with Nicholas Kraemer (Virgin Classics), *Theodora* and *Acis and Galatea* (Gramophone Award) with William Christie for Erato, Vivaldi's *Ottone in Villa* with Richard Hickox (Chandos), and three volumes of Mendelssohn lieder with Nathan Berg and Eugene Asti (Hyperion). Daneman recently directed a double bill of Rameau's *La naissance d'Osiris* and *Daphnis et Églé* for Les Arts Florissants, with performances in Caen, Luxembourg, Dijon, London, and Paris.



Lea Desandre (*mezzo-soprano*) won the New Talent First Prize of the Théâtre de Bordeaux in 2013, entered Opera Fuoco Atelier Lyrique in 2014, and continues to study with Sara Mingardo,

Véronique Gens, Vivica Genaux, Malcolm Walker, and Christine Schweitzer. Laureate of Les Arts Florissants' academy for young singers, Le Jardin des Voix, she has performed around the world with William Christie. She has sung Sesto in *Giulio Cesare* and the Second Witch in *Dido and Aeneas* in Shanghai, and Dorabella in *Così fan tutti* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. In 2015, she participated in the Académie du Festival d'Aix-en-Provence as part of the Mozart and Handel residencies. In the 2016–17 season, Desandre made her debut in the title role of *Alcione* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris under Jordi Savall. She also sang *Orfeo* for the first time as the Messaggiera with Les Arts Florissants at the Philharmonie de Paris and in Caen, Vienna, Versailles, and Madrid. Other highlights included the Second Fairy in *The Fairy Queen* with William Christie at the Luxemburg Philharmonic, and Florida in *Eris-mena* at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence. This season she appears in various recitals, including French *mélodie* at the Petit Palais in Paris, French music at the Opéra-Comique, Vivaldi motets at the Théâtre Grévin in Paris, Handel arias with Le Concert d'Astrée at the Opéra de Lille, and cantatas with Les Musiciens du Louvre in Grenoble.



Renato Dolcini (*baritone*) studied vocal performance under Vincenzo Manno and graduated from Pavia University. In 2009 and 2010, he was featured at the Gstaad Vocal Academy with Cecilia Bartoli. In

2014 he was chosen by William Christie to be part of Le Jardin des Voix, Les Arts Florissants' academy for young singers, with which he toured the US, Europe, Russia, Australia, and Asia. Highlights of past seasons include Caldara's *Dafne* in Venice for Teatro La Fenice, a Monteverdi program conducted by John Eliot Gardiner, and the title role in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* with René Jacobs for the Fondation Royaumont. His engagements last season included his debut as Leporello in *Don Giovanni* in Florence (recorded for Warner Classics), Cavalli's *Ipermestra* at the Glyndebourne Festival with William Christie and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at the Opéra de Nantes. Dolcini stars as Orfeo and Apollo in *Stravaganza d'Amore!*, the latest disc by Raphaël Pichon and Ensemble Pygmalion.



Elodie Fonnard (*soprano*) is known on the international Baroque music scene especially for her work with Les Arts Florissants: Lully's *Atys* (Flore), Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* (Belinda), Handel's *Acis*

and Galatea (Galatea), Charpentier's *Actéon* (Diane), Rameau's *Daphnis et Eglé* (Eglé), and Campra's *Les Fêtes Vénitienes* (Iphise and La Fortune). She has performed at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, the Philharmonie de Paris, the Bolshoi in Moscow, Lincoln Center, the Forbidden City Concert Hall of Beijing, and throughout Europe and Latin America. She also performs with William Christie as a harpsichordist. Trained as a pianist, Fonnard studied singing with Luc Coadou and Alain Buet, graduating from the Paris Conservatory in Baroque music and landing her first roles with Le

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Concert d'Astrée and Le Poème Harmonique. Recently invited to the Potsdam Musikfestspiele, she appears in recital at festivals throughout Europe. Her first recording, *Musiques Juives Baroques*, is a tribute to Baroque Jewish music (Buda Musique). She recently recorded songs of Prévert and Kosma (Anima Records), and Destouches and Delalande's opera *Les Éléments* (Ambrotony Editions) with Ensemble Les Surprises. Fonnard debuts in 2018 at the Vienna Konzerthaus, singing lead roles in Campra's *L'Europe galante*.



Maud Gnidzaz (*soprano*) began her musical education by playing the flute. After graduating from the École du Louvre in 2001, she studied opera singing and Baroque performance practice. Her repertoire

extends from medieval to contemporary music, and she is featured with various specialized ensembles, including A Sei Voci, Solistes XXI, Sagittarius, La Capella Reial de Catalunya, La Fenice, Le Concert d'Astrée, and Pygmalion. A regular member of Les Arts Florissants, she has performed in concert halls and at festivals around the world. She has been featured as Jonathas in *David et Jonathas* by Charpentier, Purcell's Anthems, the Angel in Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*, a fairy in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, and many other works. With Les Arts Florissants under Paul Agnew, she has taken part in the complete cycle of Monteverdi's madrigals. In recent seasons, Gnidzaz has given recitals with Leonardo García Alarcón and with Gilbert Bezzina and the Ensemble Baroque de Nice. She has also sung Monteverdi's *Vespers* with Jean Tubery, appeared in *Alcione* (by Marin Marais) at the Opéra-Comique in Paris under the baton of Jordi Savall, and with her ensemble Daleth in court arias, cantatas, and motets.

Rachel Redmond (*soprano*), born in Glasgow, discovered her love of singing with the junior chorus of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. She studied at the Music School of Douglas



Academy and at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, where she was awarded the Florence Veitch Ibler prize. She went on to earn a master's degree at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama

and, in 2011, was a member of the Jardin des Voix, the Academy for young singers of Les Arts Florissants. Her recent performances include Léontine in Campra's *Les Fêtes Venitienes* in Caen, Toulouse, and New York, and the title role in Charpentier's *Caecilia, Virgin and Martyr* in Aix-en-Provence. With Les Arts Florissants she was featured in Charpentier's *Te Deum* at the opening of the new Paris Philharmonie. She has appeared in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* and Rameau's *Pygmalion* with the European Union Baroque Orchestra, Handel's *Messiah* with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, and the *St. John Passion* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. At Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris she has been seen as Loena in Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*. Redmond's future plans include Belinda in *Dido and Aeneas* with William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, *Messiah* with Jordi Savall and the Centre International de Música Antiga, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with Kristian Bezuidenhout and the Dunedin Consort, and *La Descente d'Orfée aux Enfers* with Sébastien Daucé and Ensemble Correspondances.



Virginie Thomas (*soprano*), graduated from the Toulouse Conservatory and sings with various ensembles, including the Les Éléments Chamber Choir, Le Concert d'Astrée, and the Namur Chamber

Choir. She appears on opera and concert stages with conductors such as Jérôme Correas, Joël Suhubiette, Emmanuel Krivine, Jérémie Rhorer, Emmanuelle Haïm, William Christie, Paul Agnew, Claus Peter Flor, Leonardo García Alarcón, and Marc Minkowski. Thomas is also an active member of the Ensemble Marguerite

Louise directed by Gaétan Jarry. With Les Arts Florissants and William Christie, she has performed the roles of Nymphé (in Lully's *Armide*) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées and of Céphise (in Rameau's *Pygmalion*). She has also been featured in *Atys* (Lully) and *David et Jonathas* (Charpentier) at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, and has sung Daphné (in *Actéon*) in Versailles, as well as Thalie (*Platée*) at the Opéra-Comique in Paris and Lincoln Center. Thomas performed the title role in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and sang in *Phaëton* and *Amadis* under the direction of Christophe Rousset. Future projects include several Charpentier works, and she is featured with Les Arts Florissants throughout its current North American tour. She also takes part in *Rameau's Maître à danser* in Korea.



Reinoud Van Mechelen (tenor) graduated in vocal studies from the Royal Conservatory in Brussels and was awarded the Caecilia Prize as Young Musician of the Year by the Belgian music press.

Van Mechelen participated in William Christie and Paul Agnew's Jardin des Voix, Les Arts Florissants' academy for young singers, and subsequently became a regular soloist with the ensemble. With the group he has performed at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, the Edinburgh Festival, the Château de Versailles, the Bolshoi Theatre, Royal Albert Hall and the Barbican Centre in London, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the Philharmonie de Paris and the Opéra-Comique, as well as at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York. Van Mechelen has sung the part of the Evangelist in Bach's *St. John Passion* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the title role in Rameau's *Dardanus* at the Opéra National de Bordeaux, and *Zoroastre* at the Festival Radio-France in Montpellier, the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, the Festival de Beaune, the Théâtre Royal in Versailles, and the Theater an der Wien. This year he

made his Zurich Opera debut as Jason in Charpentier's *Médée*, and he is adding other new roles, including Belmonte in *The Abduction from the Seraglio* with the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris and Gérauld in *Lakmé* with the Munich Radio Orchestra. His first solo CD, of arias by J.S. Bach, was released by Alpha Classics last year and received a Choc award from *Classica* magazine as well as a Caecilia Award for one of the best recordings of 2016.



Carlo Vistoli (countertenor) began training as a countertenor in 2005 and studied Renaissance and Baroque singing in Ferrara and Bologna. Concurrently, he presented recitals throughout Italy with

harpichordist Marco Farolfi. Vistoli worked with ensemble Cappella Musicale di San Giacomo Maggiore in Bologna, performing and recording rare sacred music of the 17th and 18th centuries. In Poitiers and Warsaw, he made his debut with Les Ambassadeurs in the title role of Handel's *Tamerlano*. He debuted as Tolomeo in *Giulio Cesare* with the ensemble Opera Fuoco in Shanghai in 2013, the first performance of a complete Handel opera in China. In 2015 Vistoli enrolled in Le Jardin des Voix, the program for young singers directed by William Christie and Les Arts Florissants, with which he has toured France, Australia, China, and Russia, also appearing at Lincoln Center and the Lucerne Festival. For his performance as Ottone in Handel's *Agrippina* in Brisbane, he was awarded the 2016 Australian Helpmann Award. This season he sings at the Paris Philharmonie in Monteverdi's *Orfeo* with Les Arts Florissants, and he tours with John Eliot Gardiner. At the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, he is featured in the modern premiere of Cavalli's *Erismena*. Vistoli is the recipient of such international honors as the Audience Prize at the International Competition of the city of Bologna, the award as best Baroque singer of the Centro Studi Farinelli, and first prize at the Renata Tebaldi Competition.