

LES VENTS FRANÇAIS

Emmanuel Pahud, flute
Francois Leleux, oboe
Paul Meyer, clarinet
Gilbert Audin, bassoon
Radovan Vlatković, horn

Eric Le Sage, piano

The cast list of the ensemble Les Vents Français reads like the „Who’s who“ of the international Wind ensemble’s scene. Five immanent experts of their respective instruments have met to a soloist’s ensemble of top class. This dreamteam is not only “French” as it consists almost exclusively of French musicians, it also devotes itself with a special verve to the music of Maurice Ravel, Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud, Albert Roussel up to André Caplet. According to the repertoire the ensemble performs from two to five musicians and is completed by pianist Eric Le Sage.

The group has been performing in the major concert houses and important festivals throughout Europe and in Japan as lately to Philharmonie Köln and Essen, Konzerthaus Wien, Liszt Academy Budapest, Istanbul Music Festival, Festival de la Grange de Meslay etc. Upcoming performances are scheduled at Tonhalle Düsseldorf, BASF Ludwigshafen, Graf Zeppelin Haus Friedrichshafen, Philharmonic Hall Warsaw among others.

Les Vents Français are working on a continuous expansion of the repertoire for winds by premiering numerous works by contemporary composers such as Thierry Escaich, Thierry Pécou, Guillaume Connesson, Michael Jarrell, Misato Mochizuki, Fuminori Tanada, Donald Waxmann and Qigang Chen.

Warner Classics has released seven highly-acclaimed recordings: *20th Century Wind Quintets*, *Winds & Piano* (Mozart, Beethoven, Poulenc, Roussel, Caplet, Rimsky-Korsakow), *Beethoven Album*, *Concertante!* together with the Munich Chamber Orchestra, *Moderniste* (Philippe Hersant, Thierry Escaich) and *Romantique* (George Onslow, Louis Spohr, August Klughardt) and Paul Hindemith: *Wind Sonatas*.

Their discography includes furthermore the complete chamber music by Francis Poulenc, the album “French Connection” with works for flute, clarinet and piano, the double album “Best of Quintet Music” which combines music for wood winds by French composers with repertoire of the 20th century for RCA Red Seal and EMI.

Season 2023/24

Emmanuel Pahud

The Swiss and French flutist Emmanuel Pahud is one of today's most exciting and adventurous musicians. He graduated from the Paris Conservatory and continued his studies with Aurèle Nicolet. At the age of 22 Emmanuel Pahud was appointed as Principal Flute with the Berlin Philharmonic and appeared with the orchestra performing the flute concertos by Marc-André Dalbavie and Elliott Carter. In addition to his engagements in Berlin Emmanuel Pahud enjoys an extensive career as soloist with orchestras and in chamber music with Eric Le Sage, Yefim Bronfman and Hélène Grimaud. He is committed to expanding the flute repertoire and every year commissions composers such as Elliott Carter, Marc-André Dalbavie, Thierry Escaïch, Toshio Hosokawa, Michaël Jarrell, Philippe Manoury, Matthias Pintscher, Christian Rivet, Eric Montalbeti and Luca Francesconi. Since 1996 Emmanuel Pahud has recorded 40 albums exclusively for EMI / Warner Classics. Together with Paul Meyer and Eric Le Sage he founded the Chamber Music Festival Musique à l'Empéri in Salon-de-Provence.

François Leleux

François Leleux, oboist and conductor, is known for his energetic music making. In the 2020/21 season he is Artist-in-Residence with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Described by many as the best oboist of his generation, François Leleux performs regularly as a soloist with renowned orchestras in the world's leading concert halls including the New York Philharmonic, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Swedish Radio and NHK Symphony Orchestra. His particular interest in contemporary composers led to encounters such as Nicolas Bacri, Thierry Pécou, Gilles Silvestrini, Eric Tanguy, Thierry Escaïch, Giya Kancheli, Michael Jarrell, James MacMillan and Albert Schnelzer. Leleux is a passionate chamber musician and works regularly with Lisa Batiashvili, Eric Le Sage and Emmanuel Strosser. His discography includes recordings for Sony Classical with works by J.S. Bach, Mozart, Richard Strauss, Cimarosa, Bellini, Marcello, Vivaldi, Gluck, Haydn and Hummel.

Paul Meyer

Paul Meyer studied at the Paris Conservatory and in Basel. In 1982 he won the "Concours Eurovision des Jeunes Musiciens Français" and in 1984 the "Young Concert Artists Auditions" in New York. As principal clarinet he worked at the Opera Houses in Lyon and Paris as well as with the Ensemble Intercontemporain.

Today Paul Meyer is regarded as one of the best clarinetists worldwide and performs regularly with the leading orchestras in Europe, USA, Far East and Australia. Paul Meyer is an active performer of contemporary music and many concertos have been composed for him including works by Penderecki, Jarrell, Chen, Berio, Escaïch and Dusapin. In addition he participated in numerous world premieres. His large discography encompasses recordings by Mozart, von Weber, Copland, Busoni, Krommer, Pleyel, Brahms, Schumann, Bernstein, Arnold, Piazzolla, Poulenc, Messiaen for the Labels CBS, Sony, EMI, BMG, DGG, Denon and Erato which were awarded the Diapason d'Or among others.

Gilbert Audin

Gilbert Audin is Principal bassoon at the Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris and teaches at the Paris Conservatory. This ambassador of the French bassoon and its prestigious school is in demand all over the world for master classes and international academies. Chamber music marks a particular interest for him. Gilbert Audin made his musical studies in Nîmes and at the Paris Conservatory with Maurice Allard. The Frenchmen won with 19 international competitions in Geneva and Munich and in consequence he won first prizes in Geneva and Toulon. For RCA Red Seal he recorded works by Haydn («London» trios with Jean-Pierre Rampal), concertos by Jean Françaix and Marcel Landowski, quartets by Rossini, concertos and symphonies by Mozart and all chamber music of Francis Poulenc for RCA Red Seal and Sony.

Radovan Vlatković

Winner of the ARD Competition in Munich in 1983, Radovan Vlatković completed his studies of horn in Zagreb and Detmold. From 1982 to 1990 he was principal horn with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester under Riccardo Chailly and Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Vlatković is one of the leading horn players of his generation and has travelled the globe extensively as soloist and popularising the instrument. Chamber music is an important part of his engagements.

Radovan Vlatković's repertoire includes all music for horn from baroque to contemporary music and first performances of works by Elliott Carter, Heinz Holliger, Krzysztof Penderecki and works of various Croatian composers. His award-winning recordings with orchestra and chamber music for EMI, DECCA, Philips, Deutsche Grammophon and Denon feature the horn concertos by Mozart and Richard Strauss as well as works by Saint-Saëns, Britten and Leopold Mozart. The Croatian musician gives masterclasses and has taught at the University Mozarteum in Salzburg since 1998 as well as at the Escuela Superior Reina Sofia in Madrid since 2000.

Éric Le Sage

Éric Le Sage is established as a representative of the French piano school and is celebrated for his subtle sound, his sense of structure and his poetic phrasing. DIE ZEIT praised his "ideal aesthetics and clarity of the French piano."

Born in Aix en Provence he won several international competitions such as the Robert Schumann Competition in Zwickau and the Leeds International Competition. He give concerts worldwide as a chamber musician and as a soloist with renowned orchestras in Europe, North America, Japan and Australia.

A special focus of his work are the piano works by Francis Poulenc and Robert Schumann which he recorded for Alpha and for which he was awarded the Annual prize of the German Record Critics and the Grand Prix du Disque of the Academy Charles Cros.

Since 2010 Éric Le Sage has been professor for piano at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg.