

# Passion

**Véronique Gens**

**Ensemble Les Surprises | Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas, direction**

**Airs, dances and choirs from operas by Jean-Baptiste Lully, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, Henry Desmarets...**

Conceive in the manner of an opera for a soloist, an orchestra and a choir, this concert honors French music : that of Jean-Baptiste Lully, the great composer of Louis XIV, that of his students and successors : Henry Desmarets, Pascal Collasse, Marin Marais ; as well as that of his great rival Marc-Antoine Charpentier.

Véronique Gens, a great internationally recognized soloist, wished to sign a return to the French baroque repertoire, a repertoire that is dear to her and in which she made her debut. A first concert at the Ambronay festival in 2018 allowed Véronique Gens and the ensemble Les Surprises to meet. It then seemed obvious to continue this collaboration with a new program, through pages sometimes known but often unpublished.

We have chosen to place this opera from the point of view of a famous singer : Marie Le Rochois. Great star of the time discovered by Lully, she created all the great roles of this one (Armide, Galatée...) as well as the roles of her successors : Médée de Charpentier, Juno in Achille and Polixène de Collasse... In addition to having been the great soloist of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, she then founded a singing school in which she trained the soloists who created the roles of Campra, Rameau ...

It also seemed very interesting to us to probe this particular period of Lully's death, which then left the possibility for many composers to express themselves in opera and to prove their worth, since previously the great Superintendent had a privilege to the performance of dramatic works in Paris. This is how Charpentier had to wait until the end of his life to create and have his masterpiece Medea performed, but also Collasse (pupil of Lully) was able to emerge from his anonymity.

This creation resulted in a recording in November 2020 at the Arsenal in Metz for a release on the Alpha Classics label.

**Coproduction Centre de musique baroque de Versailles - Festival Sinfonia en Périgord - Ensemble Les Surprises as part of the cross residencies set up by the Centre de musique baroque de Versailles.**

**Scores produced by the Centre de musique baroque de Versailles**

**Mécénat Musical Société Générale is the main sponsor of the Back to Lully program.**

## **Program**

### **ACTE I : Malheureuse mère**

Ouverture - *Persée* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Air « Désirs, transports » - *Cirée* (Henry Desmarests)

Deuxième air – *Proserpine* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Entrée des Bretons, passepied – *Ballet du Temple de la Paix* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Air et chœur « Ô malheureuse mère... » - *Proserpine* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Air et chœur « Que tout se ressente de la fureur que je sens » - *Proserpine* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

### **ACTE II : Armide abandonnée**

Air « Enfin il est en ma puissance » - *Armide* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Plainte d'Armide : « Ah ! Rinaldo, e dove sei ?... » - *Les Amours déguisés* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Sarabande Dieux des Enfers – *Ballet de la naissance de Vénus* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Canaries – *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Air « Espoir si cher et si doux » - *Atys* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

### **ACTE III : l'appel des enfers**

Air « Toi qui dans ce tombeau... » - *Amadis* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Prélude – *Amadis* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Air « Calme tes déplaisirs » - *Achille et Polyxène* (Pascal Collasse)

Tempête – *Thétis et Pélée* (Pascal Collasse)

## **ENTRACTE**

### **ACTE IV : Tranquille Sommeil, funeste Mort**

Air de La Nuit : « Voici le favorable temps... » - *Le Triomphe de l'Amour* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Chœur du Sommeil – *La Diane de Fontainebleau* (Henry Desmarests)

Pompe Funèbre – *Alceste* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

Air et chœur « La mort, la mort barbare... » - *Alceste* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)

### **ACTE V : Médée furieuse**

Air « Quel prix de mon amour » - *Médée* (Marc-Antoine Charpentier)

Air et chœur « Noires filles du styx » - *Médée* (Marc-Antoine Charpentier)

Air pour l'entrée de Borée et des vents – *Le triomphe de l'Amour* (Jean-Baptiste Lully)



After her domination on the baroque scene for more than a decade, Véronique Gens went on to establish a solid international reputation and is now considered as one of the finest interpreters of Mozart and the french repertoire. One of the flagship roles of her career, Donna Elvira in the production of Don Giovanni by Peter Brook and Claudio Abbado at the festival d'Aix-en-Provence brought her worldwide recognition.

Her repertoire comprises the leading Mozart roles (Donna Elvira, Countess, Citellia, Fiordiligi etc.) and the great roles of tragédie lyrique (including *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Iphigénie en Aulide* and *Alceste*) but also heroines of a later period such as Alice Ford (*Falstaff*), Ava (*Die meistersinger von nürnberg*), Madame Lidoine (*Dialogues des Carmélites*) and Missia (*La*

*Veuve Joyeuse*).

Véronique Gens also gives numerous concerts and recitals in a wide-ranging repertoire all over the world, especially in Paris, Dresden, Berlin, Beijing, Vienna, Prague, London, Tanglewood, Stockholm, Moscow, Geneva and Edinburgh. She has performed on the world's foremost operatic stages, among them the Opéra National de Paris, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, the Vienna Staatsoper, the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, la Monnaie in Brussels, the Liceu in Barcelona, the Teatro Real in Madrid, de Nederlandse Opera in Amsterdam and the Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg and Glyndebourne festivals.

In 1999, she was elected vocal artist of the year at the Victoires de la musique classique. Her many recordings (more than eighty cds and dvds) have received several international prizes (Gramophone Awards, International Classic Music Award, International Opera Award, Diapason d'Or, Diapason de l'année, choc de Classica...).

Véronique Gens is a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres.



## **Ensemble Les Surprises** – artistic direction, Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas

« Les Surprises have ideas, talents, a repertoire to explore. An ensemble that gives, and promises even more. »  
(*Muse Baroque*).

The ensemble Les Surprises is a baroque and multifaceted ensemble, founded in 2010 on the initiative of Juliette Guignard, violist, and Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas, organist and harpsichordist.

In borrowing its name from the opera ballet *Les Surprises de l'Amour* by Jean-Philippe Rameau, the group has placed its destiny under the lucky star of this composer, with the aim of exploring operatic music in all its shapes and forms !

By taking the ensemble artistic direction, Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas wishes to participate to the baroque repertoire rediscovery and its improvement with new interpretations but also to explore the sounds richness offered by a baroque instrumentarium.

The work of the ensemble is anchored in a process of musicological and historical research. Indeed Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas endeavour to highlight scores that have never been released since the 18th century, thanks to music libraries such as Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) or Bibliothèque de l'Opéra de Paris. The latest records *Passion* with Véronique Gens and *Rameau chez la Pompadour* are good examples of this will.

In 2014, Les Surprises received the “Révélation musicale” (new discovery) prize awarded by the French critic's circle for the performing arts (“Syndicat professionnel de la critique de théâtre, musique et danse”).

Les Surprises recorded six discs for the Ambronay Editions label. All have received warm praises from international and national press. The ensemble also begun a partnership with the Alpha Classics label in 2020 (*Purcell-Tyrannic Love*, *Passion* with Véronique Gens, *Rameau chez la Pompadour*, *Nuit à Venise*), the next record *Te Deum*, dedicated to Charpentier and Desmarets, will be released in 2024. All have received warm praises from international and national press.

Since the beginning of its activities, the ensemble performed on multiple stages and festivals all over Europe and worldwide : Opéra royal de Versailles, Opéra de Massy, Auditorium de Radio France, Opéra de Montpellier, festival d'Ambronay, festival Sinfonia en Périgord, festival de Saintes, Rencontres Musicales de Vézelay, festival Sanssouci (Potsdam – Allemagne), saison des Bozar (Bruxelles – Belgique), Saint John's Smith Square (Londres – UK), Salle Bourgie (Montréal), Beirut Chants Festival (Beirut – Liban), Singapour...

Team : **Juliette GUIGNARD** – general direction  
**Delphine NAISSANT** – administration  
**Eléonore MINOT** – production

The ensemble Les Surprises is supported by Fondation Société Générale C'est vous l'avenir. The ensemble benefits from the support of the Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication – Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles de Nouvelle Aquitaine, the Conseil Régional de Nouvelle Aquitaine, the cities of Bordeaux and Poitiers and the Conseil Départemental de la Gironde. It occasionally receive the support of the Centre National de la Musique, ADAMI, SPEDIDAM, Institut Français, Centre de Musique Baroque de Versailles and Office Artistique de la région Nouvelle Aquitaine.  
The ensemble is a member of the FEVIS (Fédération des Ensembles Vocaux et Instrumentaux Spécialisés) and PROFEDIM.

[www.les-surprises.fr](http://www.les-surprises.fr)

[www.facebook.com/lessurprises/](https://www.facebook.com/lessurprises/)

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Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas studied the organ, the harpsichord, chamber music and conducting at the Paris and Lyon conservatoires (cnsmd). Among his teachers were Louis Robilliard, Jan-Willem Jansen, Michel Bourcier, Nicolas Brochot, François Espinasse, Yves Rechsteiner, Olivier Baumont and Blandine Rannou.

He has won prizes at several international organ competitions, including the Grand prix d'orgue Jean-Louis Florentz of the Académie des Beaux-arts, first prize at the Gottfried Silbermann organ competition in

Freiberg (Germany) and, in 2013, first prize at the prestigious Xavier Darasse competition in Toulouse, thus becoming 'echo-organist of the year'.

Louis-Noël has given solo recitals in Europe, in such venues as la Madeleine in Paris, the Auditorium de Radio France, the Toulouse les orgues festival, Berlin cathedral and the Monaco festival, in Alkmaar (Netherlands) and in Switzerland and Italy. As a soloist, he has recorded *Bach and friends* on organ and harpsichord, followed by *Visages impressionnistes* (choc de *Classica*). His cd *Soleils couchants* was released on the Harmonia mundi label in 2019. Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas was in residence at the Royaumont foundation from 2015 to 2018 as organist of the Cavaillé-Coll organ.

He directs the ensemble Les Surprises, which specialises in the vocal and instrumental repertory of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Louis-Noël performs with the ensemble in numerous venues and festivals throughout Europe and the world.

He has also worked with such conductors as Hervé Niquet, Arie van Beek and Roberto Forés Veses. His research on the composers François Rebel and François Francœur was recognised by the Fondation de France with the award of the Déclics jeunes scholarship.

In 2018 Louis-Noël conducted the modern premiere of the opera *Issé* by André Cardinal Destouches, including performances at the Opéra royal de Versailles and the opéra de Montpellier.

He is also invited to conduct orchestral projects at the Conservatoires supérieurs de Paris and Lyon (cnsmdp, cnsmdl).

Following a commission from Radio France, he has produced and performed a solo organ transcription of Henri Dutilleux's symphony no.1.