

Reines

Véronique Gens

Ensemble Les Surprises, orchestra and choir
Louis-Noël Bestion de Camboulas, direction

Arias, dances and chorus from the operas :

Hippolyte et Aricie ; Zoroastre ; Dardanus – Jean-Philippe Rameau

Hercule Mourant ; Canente - Antoine Dauvergne

Le Ballet de la Paix – François Francœur

Armide – Henry Desmarets

Médée et Jason – Joseph-François Salomon

After the project *Passion*, created in 2020 with Véronique Gens and played in plenty halls and festivals (Festival de Saint-Denis, Opéra de Bordeaux, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, Festival d'opéra baroque in Bayreuth, De Bijloke in Gand...), the ensemble Les Surprises wanted to carry on the adventure with this remarkable soloist, with whom we developed a real mentoring network.

Created as an imaginary opera for a soloist, an orchestra and a choir, this concert will pay tribute to the figure of queens in the French opera in the XVIIIth century. These strong and powerful women (Queens, Magicians, Goddesses...) are represented in the baroque opera through huge tragic scenes, lamentation scenes, but also thunderstorm, magic scenes or huge pastoral scenes. A whole sample of emotions holding by Véronique Gens voice and presence, surrounded by the choir and orchestra from the ensemble Les Surprises.

The repertoire will mix known pieces from Jean-Philippe Rameau, as well as unpublished opera pages from André Cardinal Destouches, François Francoeur, Antoine Dauvergne... the crème de la crème from the French XVIIIth century lyric repertoire. A music anchored in the tradition but also opening itself to new colours and announcing the aesthetics (even political) changes in the end of this century.



Véronique Gens is one of France's best loved sopranos, enjoying a distinguished career in opera, concert, recitals and recordings: she is recognised as one of the finest interpreters of Mozart and the French repertoire.

Véronique's recent and upcoming operatic appearances include: Madame Lidoine *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Bayerische Staatsoper and at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the title role of *La Fille de Madame Angot* at the Opéra Comique, Giulietta *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* at the La Fenice, Clitemestre *Iphigénie en Aulide* at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and for the Greek National Opera, the title role of Charpentier's *Médée* with Les Arts Florissants at the Teatro Real in Madrid.

One of the flagship roles of her career, Donna Elvira in the production of *Don Giovanni* by Peter Brook conducted by

Claudio Abbado at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, brought her worldwide recognition. Her repertoire comprises the leading Mozart roles (Contessa Almaviva, Vitellia, Fiordiligi) and the great roles of tragédie lyrique (including *Iphigénie en Tauride*, *Iphigénie en Aulide* and *Alceste*) but also heroines of a later period including: Alice Ford *Falstaff*; Eva *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; Madame Lidoine *Dialogues des Carmélites* and Hanna Glawari *Die Lustige Witwe*. Véronique Gens also gives numerous concerts and recitals in a wide-ranging repertoire all over the world, notably 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 Wiener Staatsoper, the Bayerische Staatsoper, La Monnaie in Brussels, the Liceu in Barcelona, the Teatro Real in Madrid, Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam and the Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg and Glyndebourne festivals.

In 1999, she was voted 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: most recently, her album of French mélodies, *Nèze* won a Gramophone Award in 2016, while *Visions* obtained an International Classical Music Award and an International Opera Award in 2018. Also *La Reine de Chypre* by Halévy obtained a Gramophone Award in 2019, in the Opera category - she also named "Artist of the Year" by Gramophone in 2023 and received the Ehrenpreis 2023 from the Schallplattenkritik.

Véronique Gens has been promoted to the rank of Chevalier in the French order of La Légion d'Honneur as well as Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres and Officier de l'Ordre national du Mérite.

Musical Program Reines

Ouverture (*Scanderberg*) – François Francœur

Air et chœur « prête à porter d'horribles coups » (*Médée et Jason*) – François-Joseph Salomon

Air « Ah ! Ne puis-je savoir » (*Suite d'Armide*) – Henry Desmarests

Air et chœur « Où s'égarent mes pas », Air « Ciel injuste » (*Suite d'Armide*) – Henry Desmarests

Premier air pour les sacrificateurs (*Callirhoë*) André Cadrinal Destouches

Air « Tyrans des cœurs » (*Zaïde*) Pancrace Royer

Deuxième air pour les sacrificateurs (*Callirhoë*) André Cadrinal Destouches

Air « Tu me fuis inconstant » (*Didon*) – Henry Desmarests

Air « Muses, filles du Ciel » (*Le Temple de la Gloire*) – JP Rameau

Air tendre, (*Dardanus*) – JP Rameau

Air « Amour, cruel amour » (*Zoroastre*) – JP Rameau

Menuet (*Acanthe et Céphise*) - JP Rameau

Air très vif (*Dardanus*) – JP Rameau

Rigaudons et Canarie (*Jephté*) – Montéclair

Air « sombre déesse du silence », (*Canente*) – Antoine Dauvergne

Chœur du sommeil – Joseph Valette de Montigny

Air « quel charme me retient », Air « Gouffres qui conduisez... » (*Méléagre*) – Jean-Baptiste Stück

Tremblement de Terre (*Polyxène*) - Antoine Dauvergne

Scène avec chœur « Quelle plainte en ces lieux m'appelle » (*Hippolyte et Aricie*) – Jean-Philippe Rameau

Marche et chœur Funèbre (*Hercule Mourant*) - Antoine Dauvergne

Air et chœur « Dieu, grand dieu sois sensible », (*Hercule Mourant*) - Antoine Dauvergne

Chaconne, (*Le Ballet de la Paix*) - Rebel et Francœur