VIVA ITALIA!

PERFORMANCE PERIOD

SEPTEMBER 21 - OCTOBER 4 2020

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VIVA ITALIA!

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Overture in the Italian style

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)
Ah ! Perfido, concert aria

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
Infelice, concert aria
Symphonie n° 4 «The Italian»

Patricia Petibon, soprano
Insula orchestra
Laurence Equilbey, direction

Laurence Equilbey and her Insula orchestra, on period instruments, invite us to join the animated journeys through Italy undertaken by Schubert, Beethoven and Mendelssohn.

With Vienna acting as a cultural interface, Italian music became a lasting feature of German-speaking Europe-an taste. Originally written for soprano Josepha Dussek, a friend of Mozart, Ah perfido fits perfectly into the bravura tradition of show-stopping Italian arias. The 26-year old Beethoven used the libretto by the celebrated Metas-tase to paint a moving portrait of a forsaken woman, as intense as Armida and Alcina, heroines of the opera seria. Twenty years later, Vienna was swept away by “Rossini mania”. In its wake, Schubert composed two overtures in which his friends seem to have recognised an “Italian” style. Though inspired by Rossini, Schubert steered clear of the pitfall of pastiche, and his Overture in D, D.590 bears witness to a grace and a melodic skill as wor-thy of the Italians as of the Austrian composer himself. Mendelssohn crossed the Alps in 1840. Though he was disappointed by the Eternal City, the Italian country-side provided fresh inspiration. He later wrote: “I didn’t find the music in the art itself, but in the ruins, the landscapes, and the gaiety of nature itself.” His memories of his journey fostered several masterpieces, includ-ing the lively and colourful “Italian Symphony”, op.90, and a concert aria, Infelice.

Length: 1h40 with an interval
Personnel:
Soprano solo, 45 musicians
Concert in the Auditorium of the Seine Musicale
September 25 and 26 2020
Performance period:
September 21 - October 4 2020
PRESS REVIEW

« Insula orchestra has demonstrated just how vibrantly mature it has become. This symphonic ‘genesis’ has not been built in a day, and owes much to the leadership of conductor Laurence Equilbey, an intelligent servant of this music, at once intimate and grandiose. Her sense of colour, dramaturgical sensibility, precision, and musical gesture have gained in suppleness, and grown upwards and outwards.”

Marie-Aude Roux, Le Monde, March 16 2017

“Schubert’s 9th, long and serene like an ocean-bound musical river, in which each iridescence is allowed to sparkle, each reflection to twinkle. We hear each note, each detail picked out in the lie of the musical land.”

“Insula orchestra is all strings with flawless attack, agile, precise fingering and gold-tinted nimble woodwinds.”

Patrick de Maria, La Marseillaise, December 2 2017

“The magic is there from the opening bars. Over the last few years, Insula Orchestra has carved out a place for itself as one of the leading period instrument ensembles. Trimmed down to its essential components on stage, it operates wonderfully. Fully revealed is Beethoven, the Humanist, the grandeur of whose language is more than ever timeless. (...) The strings speak with a single voice, almost Insula Orchestra’s signature, such has it become a constant feature of its playing. At the helm, Laurence Equilbey seems possessed, capable of instantaneous creativity at every turn.”

Florence Michel, ResMusica, October 18 2016

SUPPORTERS

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