SEASON 2024 I 2025

INSULA ORCHESTRA

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PERIOD INSTRUMENTS
DIRECTION ARTISTIQUE ET MUSICALE LAURENCE EQUILBEY





SCHUBERT / MAYER

ROMANTIC PHENOMENA II

DIFFUSION

MARCH 6 - 11 2025

insulaorchestra.fr

SCHUBERT / MAYER

ROMANTIC PHENOMENA II

Emilie Mayer (1812 - 1883)
Piano Concerto

Franz Schubert (1797 - 1828)
Symphony n°9 « The Great »

David Fray, *piano*
Insula orchestra
Laurence Equilbey, *conductor*

Warner classics recording

Duration: 1h45 with intermission

Numbers: 51 musicians, 1 conductor

Diffusion: March 6 - 11 2025

Returning to their "Schubert/Mayer: Phenomenal Romantics" cycle, Insula orchestra and Laurence Equilbey **pursue their exploration of the work of Emilie Mayer (1812-1883), the unjustly neglected German composer**, who shares a tantalizing stylistic and poetic kinship with that of Franz Schubert.



This second programme in the series showcases two works that illustrate the insurmountable challenges and choices they had to address, confronting two musical geniuses, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Ludwig van Beethoven, and the solutions they found. Reputed and acknowledged as a talented symphonist (who left a corpus of no fewer than eight symphonies and fifteen overtures!), Emilie Mayer was also an accomplished pianist, whose expressive qualities were praised by contemporary critics. For her sole Concerto for piano, probably written in the 1850s, **she is indebted to her two illustrious predecessors.** The work is nonetheless eminently personal and striking for its melodic inventiveness and the elegance of its instrumentation. **To perform it, Laurence Equilbey and Insula orchestra reunite with David Fray, a long-time artistic partner who has accompanied them in numerous projects.**

Schubert's last completed symphony, the 9th, marks the end of **a period of existential but creative crisis through which the composer came of age**, freed at last from the overbearing shadow of Beethoven. He found, in his own words, "the path towards the Great Symphony". Known as "The Great", it more than makes up for the aborted 8th Symphony, the "Unfinished". Vigorous and sparkling, with a rarely equalled expressive intensity, the Great is unquestionably one of the composer's most celebrated works.

Nathan Magrecki

TO SEE / TO LISTEN

Insula orchestra, Laurence Equilbey
Louise Farrenc - Symphony n°3, final

Insula orchestra, Laurence Equilbey
Franz Schubert - Symphony n°4, Allegro

IN THE PRESS

About the recording of Farrenc's symphonies No. 1 and No. 3 on Warner Classics:

« Laurence Equilbey restores it with a militant energy and a sense of the stage that will be less appropriate in the Third Symphony, created in 1849, more classical than romantic. Lightness is the order of the day, especially in a Mendelssohnian scherzo, as well as a colorful sensibility. From this point of view, the present recording has an important asset with the use of period instruments, emblematic of the Insula Orchestra. »
***Pierre Gervasoni, Le Monde,* September 21 2021**

« Rarely can Farrenc's music have spoken with so much power and so much eloquence; rarely can her genius have shone through so brightly »
***Colin Clarke, Classical Explorer,* July 2021**

« Laurence Equilbey plays with the fruity colors of the Insula Orchestra's «period» woodwinds, which sing in concert with the strings in a framework whose tension does not let up. »
***Gérard Condé, Diapason,* September 2021**

« Unlike Johannes Goritzki (CPO, 1997) and Christoph König (Naxos, 2017), who recorded these two works, Laurence Equilbey works on period instruments. The result will not surprise those who know the formidable work done by the Insula Orchestra since its creation: raw sonorities, energetic but not brutal direction, and the structure of the orchestral fabric is always clear. The pulse leaps in the fast movements, and the slow movements offer moments of delicate poetry. Above all, the wind sections do justice to the composer's instrumental imagination. »
***Jacques Bonnaure, Classica,* September 2021**



DAVID FRAY

David Fray performs regularly with the most important orchestras, such as the Orchestre Métropolitain du Grand Montréal, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National de l'Opéra national de Paris, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Orchestre National de Lyon, Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Deutsche Sinfonie-Orchester, Jerusalem Symphony, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Bayerische Rundfunk Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Cleveland, San Francisco, Boston Symphony, NHK, Chicago Symphony, Dallas Symphony, New York Philharmonic, London Philharmonic, Salzburg Mozarteum Orchester, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Rome Santa Cecilia Orchestra, l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, etc. .. He has collaborated with world-renowned conductors such as Marin Alsop, John Axelrod, Semyon Bychkov, Christoph Eschenbach, Andrew Davis, Paavo Jarvi, Kurt Masur, Riccardo Muti, Yannick Nézet-Seguin, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Michael Sanderling, Jaap van Zweden.

In recital, he performs on several prestigious stages, such as the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, the Wigmore Hall, the Carnegie Hall, the Musikverein in Vienna, as well as at the festivals of La Roque d'Anthéron, the BBC Proms, the Menton Festival, the Grange de Meslay, the Easter Festival in Aix-en-Provence, the Piano aux Jacobins (Toulouse), the Megève Festival, the Schubertiades in Hohenems, the Prague Spring Festival, and the Gstaad Musical Summits. David Fray regularly performs in recital with the violinist Renaud Capuçon, with whom he plays Bach and Beethoven sonatas for violin and keyboard.

« He is an artist we need to hear more from. »
The New York Times



DISCOGRAPHY



FARRENC
SYMPHONIES N°1 & 3

Insula orchestra /
Laurence Equilbey

Warner Classics
july 2021



SCHUBERT
NACHT & TRAÜME

Stanislas de Barbeyrac
/ Wiebke Lehmkuhl
/ accentus / Insula
orchestra / Laurence
Equilbey

Warner Classics
november 2017

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