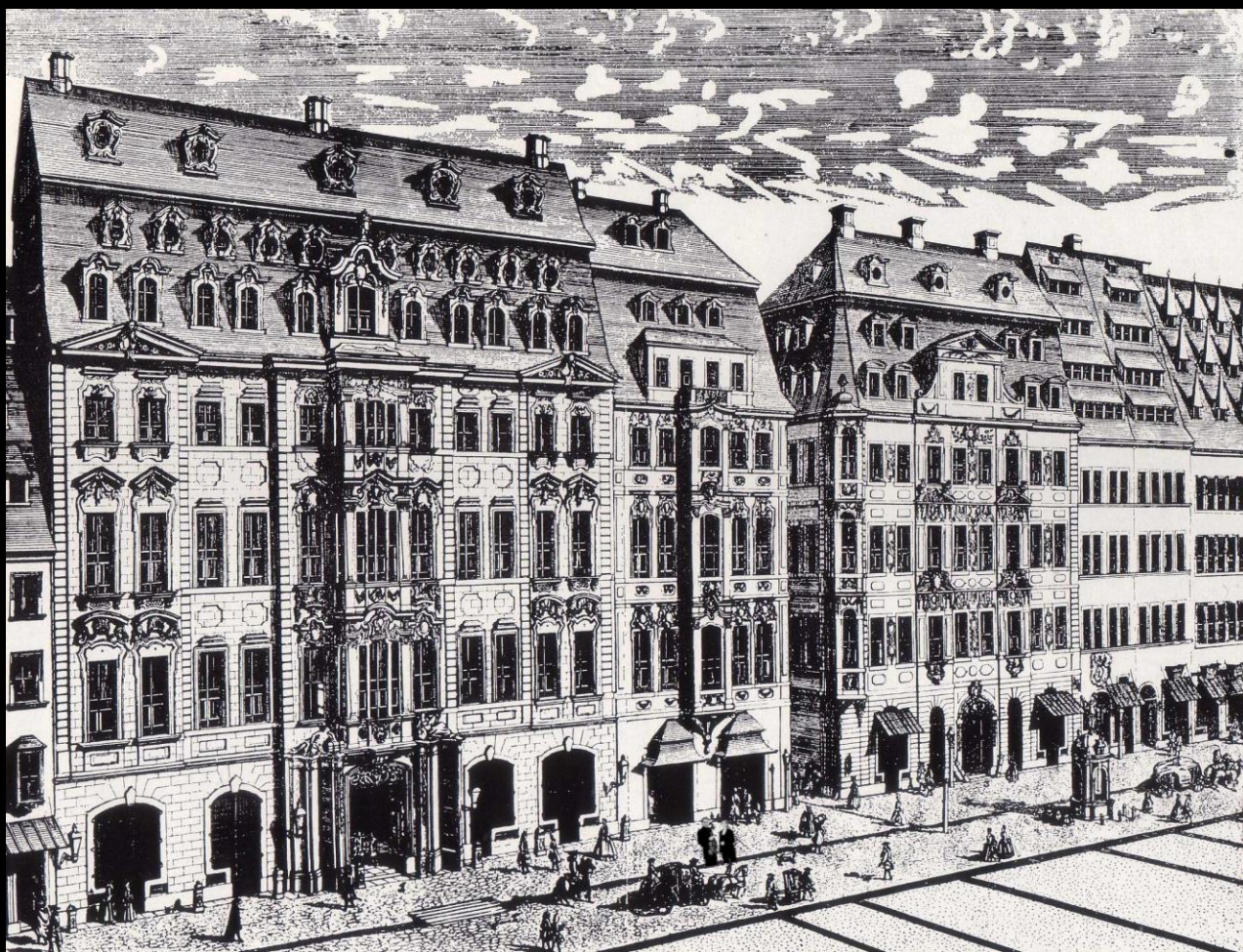


Arion
— Baroque Orchestra —

ARION AT CAFÉ ZIMMERMANN



SATURDAY JANUARY 18, 2025, 7:30 PM

SUNDAY JANUARY 19, 2025, 2:30 PM

BOURGIE HALL OF THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

PROGRAMME

Johann Friedrich Fasch (1688-1758)

Ouverture (from Orchestral Suite in D Minor, FaWV K:d4)

Johann Friedrich Fasch

Bassoon Concerto in C Major, FaWV L:C2

Allegro

Largo

Allegro

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)

Concerto for Two Oboes and Bassoon in C Major, “a la Francese,” TWV 53:C1

Avec douceur

Tres viste

Tendrement

Vivement

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Violin Concerto in A Minor, BWV 1041

[Allegro]

Andante

Allegro assai

INTERMISSION

Wilhelm Friedemann Bach (1710-1784)

Sinfonia in F Major, F. 67

Vivace

Andante

Allegro

Menuetto 1 & 2

Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788)

Harpsichord Concerto in A Major, Wq. 29, H. 437*

Allegro

Largo. Mesto

Allegro assai

*Performing parts based on the critical edition Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: The Complete Works (www.cpebach.org) were made available by the publisher, the Packard Humanities Institute of Los Altos, California.

DIRECTION

Pablo Valetti, violin

SOLOISTS

Céline Frisch, harpsichord

Mathieu Lussier, bassoon

THE ORCHESTRA

FIRST VIOLINS

Jessy Dubé

Sari Tsuji

Louella Alatiit

SECOND VIOLINS

Julie Rivest

Mélanie de Bonville

Sarah Douglass

Simon Alexandre

VIOLAS

Jacques-André Houle

Namgon Lee

CELLOS

Amanda Keesmaat

Andrea Stewart

DOUBLE BASS

Francis Palma-Pelletier

ARCHLUTE

Sylvain Bergeron

OBOES

Matthew Jennejohn

Karim Nasr

PABLO



O VALETTI

Born in Argentina, Pablo Valetti held a violin position at the orchestra of the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires prior to discovering the world of early instruments and historically informed performance practice. He then studied early music at the Schola Cantorum in Basel, Switzerland.

He regularly performs as a soloist or concertmaster with prestigious baroque ensembles and international orchestras such as Les Arts Florissants, Le Concert des Nations, Concerto Köln and Hesperion XXI. He is regularly invited to lead the Orquesta Barroca de Sevilla, in addition to his career as a teacher at the Escola Superior de Musica de Catalunya in Barcelona and at the Conservatoire de Nice in France.

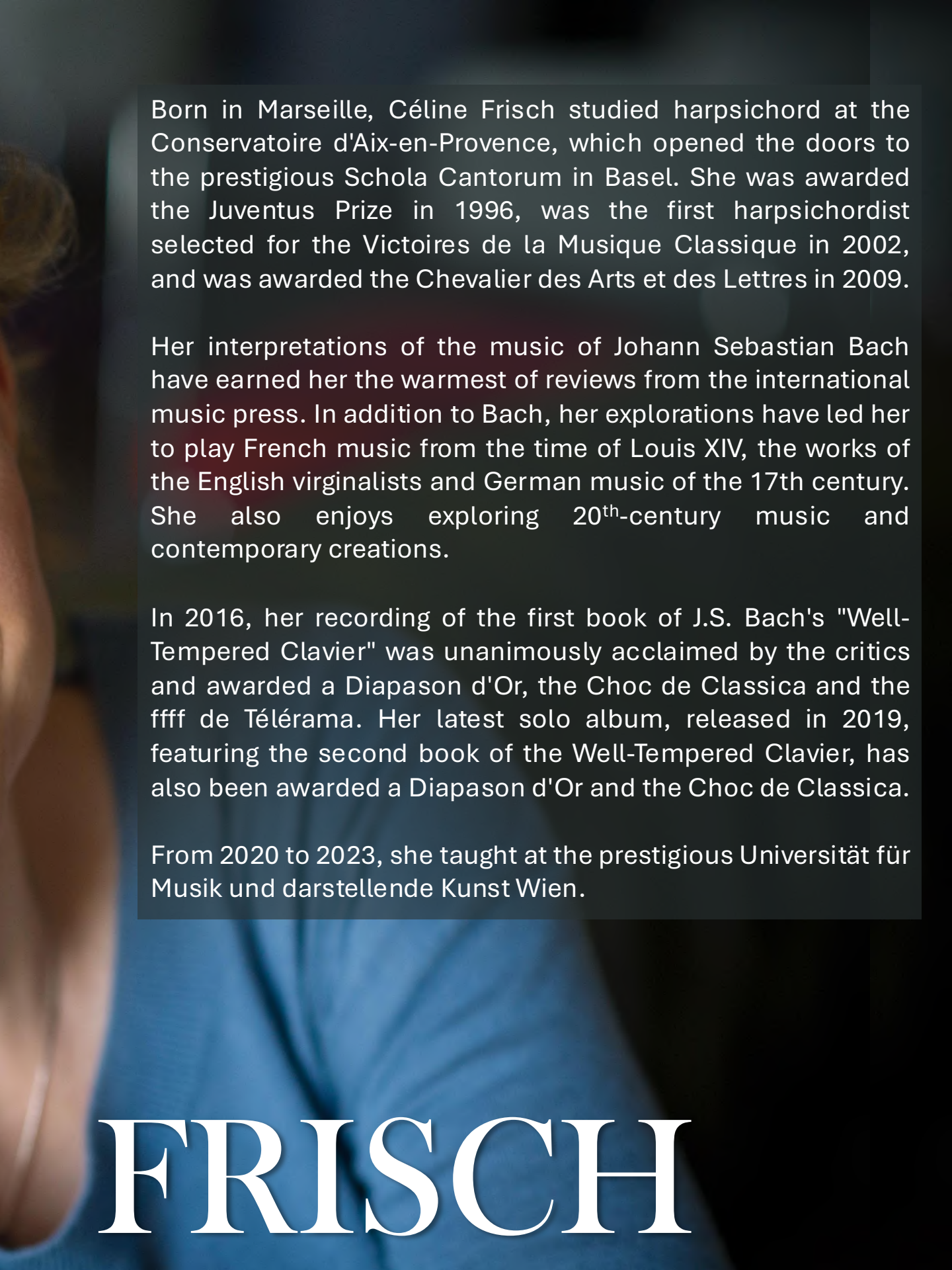
Since the creation of the ensemble Café Zimmermann in 1999 with Céline Frisch, he remains principally invested in the development of the group.

He plays a 1758 Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin.



Photo credit: Jean-Baptiste Millot

CÉLINE



Born in Marseille, Céline Frisch studied harpsichord at the Conservatoire d'Aix-en-Provence, which opened the doors to the prestigious Schola Cantorum in Basel. She was awarded the Juventus Prize in 1996, was the first harpsichordist selected for the Victoires de la Musique Classique in 2002, and was awarded the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in 2009.

Her interpretations of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach have earned her the warmest of reviews from the international music press. In addition to Bach, her explorations have led her to play French music from the time of Louis XIV, the works of the English virginalists and German music of the 17th century. She also enjoys exploring 20th-century music and contemporary creations.

In 2016, her recording of the first book of J.S. Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavier" was unanimously acclaimed by the critics and awarded a Diapason d'Or, the Choc de Classica and the ffff de Télérama. Her latest solo album, released in 2019, featuring the second book of the Well-Tempered Clavier, has also been awarded a Diapason d'Or and the Choc de Classica.

From 2020 to 2023, she taught at the prestigious Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Wien.

FRISCH

MATHEU



LUSSIER

Artistic Director of Arion Baroque Orchestra since June 2019, and Artistic Director of Domaine Forget de Charlevoix since 2022, Mathieu Lussier has energetically and passionately promoted the modern and baroque bassoon as solo instruments for more than two decades throughout North America, South America, and Europe. He also devotes considerable time to chamber music as a member of the ensemble Pentaèdre and is Associate Professor at the Music Faculty of the Université de Montréal.

Previous appointments include Associate Conductor of Les Violons du Roy from 2012 to 2018, where Lussier led the orchestra in over 100 concerts in Quebec and on tour in greater Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Brazil, collaborating with artists such as Marc-André Hamelin, Philippe Jarry, Alexandre Tharaud, Jeremy Denk, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Julia Lezhneva, Anthony Marwood, and Karina Gauvin. From 2008 to 2014 he served as Artistic Director and Conductor of the Lamèque International Baroque Music Festival, and has also conducted many other Canadian ensembles such as the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, the Orchestre symphonique de Québec, the Orchestre symphonique de Trois-Rivières, the Orchestre symphonique de Drummondville, the Orchestre symphonique de Sherbrooke, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Orchestra, I Musici de Montréal, Symphony Nova Scotia, and the Manitoba Chamber Orchestra.

His numerous solo recordings include over a dozen bassoon concertos (Mozart, Vivaldi, Fasch, Graupner, Telemann, and Corrette), a CD of bassoon sonatas by Boismortier, several CDs of music for solo bassoon by François Devienne, Étienne Ozi, and Eugène Jancourt, and two CDs of wind music by Gossec and Méhul.



ARION

At the heart of Montreal's musical life for over forty years, Arion Orchestre Baroque is a pioneer in Quebec and Canada in the world of early music on period instruments. Under the artistic direction of conductor and bassoonist Mathieu Lussier since 2019, Arion presents a concert series featuring internationally renowned guest conductors and soloists.

Founded in Montreal in 1981 by Claire Guimond, Chantal Rémillard, Betsy MacMillan and Hank Knox, Arion has performed throughout Quebec, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Asia and Europe.



The clarity and freshness of Arion's interpretations of Baroque and Classical works are underpinned by a discography of over thirty critically acclaimed and award-winning titles.

Committed to the creation and dissemination of youth and educational projects, and a partner of renowned institutions such as Université de Montréal, McGill University, the Arte Musica Foundation, the Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, the Centre de musique baroque de Versailles and SAMS, Arion is a key player on the Canadian musical scene.

PROGRAMME NOTES

Welcome to Zimmermann's Coffee-house

At the beginning of the 18th century, Leipzig was a prosperous city whose bourgeoisie was flourishing thanks to commercial and cultural exchanges made possible by the many trade fairs and by visiting artists attracted by its local musical institutions. Among these, the churches, of course, were brimming with musical activity, but there were also private institutions where amateurs, students, and professionals would meet.

One of these, among the many with the same name throughout Germany, was the Collegium musicum founded in 1702 at Leipzig by a young Georg Philipp Telemann who was studying Law at the university there. This 'musical club' was mostly made up of university students, but could also include professional church musicians as well as any visiting instrumentalist or singer who wished to perform. It could count on as many as 40 musicians and it offered several weekly concerts. After Telemann left Leipzig in 1705, his Collegium musicum passed through a number of hands before Johann Sebastian Bach became its director in 1729, remaining (with some gaps) until around 1741. This was the period of the Collegium musicum's heyday, when its concerts were held at Gottfried Zimmermann's famous coffee-house on the Katherinenstrasse, a fashionable street just by the central market square.

Coffee, a very exotic drink back then, was all the rage. Its drop in price had attracted new aficionados from outside aristocratic circles, from the ordinary *bourgeois* to the insomniac student and all those young people in search of liquid mirth. Bach's famous *Coffee Cantata*, BWV 211 is eloquent and amusing proof to this.

It is possible to imagine, though, that patrons of Zimmermann's Coffee-house did not only talk about coffee. As has been said, these were merchants, students, and artists who, in the words of musicologist Burkhard Schwalbach, were in "an environment in which musical expertise and the intellectual exchange of ideas played a [...] significant role." It is also worth noting women were admitted.

Such were Bach's surroundings when he was able to take up instrumental music anew, and in particular the concerto genre, having abandoned it in his first years in Leipzig, when he was occupied with supplying new cantatas for every Sunday and important Church feast. So, Bach reverted to the instrumental concertos he had composed in Cöthen – of which some are lost in these original versions – and transcribed them for one or more harpsichords. Now that his sons Wilhelm Friedemann and Carl Philipp Emanuel were of age to play the harpsichord in public, it is probable that the three of them performed together in the premieres of these concertos. Although no printed programme survives from these concerts at Zimmermann's Coffee-house, it is more than probable that Bach had the three "authentic" violin concertos from Cöthen performed, including the *Concerto in A minor*, BWV 1041.

As **Johann Sebastian Bach's** other concertos, this one owes much to the Italian concerto style. Bach first strove to grasp the Italian concerto style in 1713 while working for Duke Wilhelm Ernst of Weimar. This is when he purportedly transcribed for solo keyboard numerous concertos in the Italian style, among which six violin concertos by Vivaldi. From this work emerged a major component of Bach's own concerto style, as heard in the concerto BWV 1041, in his manner of rendering the contrasts between solo lines and orchestral ritornellos by opposing or blending the drive of the musical figuration and the contrapuntal density of the various instrumental lines. The *cantabile* of the slow movements also relies on a generally denser accompaniment than its Italian models, in addition to more rhythmic variety in the melody, thus allowing for moments of contemplation, serenity, and rapture. As a matter of course, the final movements are enlivened by the momentum of the dance.

Wilhelm Friedemann was Bach's eldest son, for whom he harbored the highest hopes. He quickly became his father's assistant, helping him copy parts for his concerts as well as taking on some of his students. Poor Wilhelm Friedemann then jumped from one organist's post to another, first in Dresden (1733-1746), then in Halle, never seeming to get along with his employers. It is said he had an irascible, capricious character. As of 1764, he lived the precarious life of an independent musician, eventually even losing, through intrigue, the support of his last patron. After having sold off many of his father's manuscripts, he ended his life in poverty. Yet his works, especially his instrumental ones, are often bold and original, pouncing between aesthetic styles, from extreme sensitivity and personal feeling, like in the opening movement in French overture style of our *Sinfonia in F Major*, composed in Dresden, to more rigorous counterpoint, as illustrated by the canon of the second minuet. Sadly, though, in comparison to the other better-known Bachs, Wilhelm Friedemann's oeuvre, for all its quality, is more disparate and dissipated and fails to choose with conviction a deliberate aesthetic path to follow.

That was definitely not the case with his younger brother **Carl Philipp Emanuel**, Johann Sebastian's second son. During his years of employ to Frederick the Great of Prussia, from 1738 to 1765, Carl Philipp Emanuel composed some three dozen keyboard concertos. Those were the years during which he forged his highly personal style, tending strongly toward a heightened sensitivity known as *Empfindsamkeit*. Even at the end of the century, his concertos were still considered as models of the genre, having their opposition of solo and tutti passages likened "to the dramatic effect achieved by the ancient tragedians in alternating individuals with the chorus" (Daniel Heartz). The slow movement of the *Keyboard Concerto in A Major*, Wq. 29, in the style of a poignant operatic aria, is a good example. Earlier versions of the concerto exist for cello and for flute, which C.P.E. Bach transcribed for keyboard in 1753.

Johann Friedrich Fasch was also schooled at the University of Leipzig, and it is in that city that, like all his fellow musicians, he familiarized himself with the music of Vivaldi. After studying with Kuhnau and Graupner, among others, he accepted in 1722 the post of Kapellmeister in Zerbst and attempted that same year, but in vain, to obtain the post of Cantor at St. Thomas of Leipzig – which was eventually filled by J.S. Bach. Fasch composed church cantatas, concertos for a wide variety of instruments, and chamber music, but also more than 90 *Ouvertures* (or orchestral suites). Bach admired these enough to perform a number of them, in transcription, at his Leipzig Collegium musicum. In the *Ouverture* to the *Orchestral Suite in D minor*, which opens our program, we can only admire the vigorous gestures and full, varied, and colorful sonorities. As for the virtuoso, playful *Bassoon Concerto in C major*, composed in 1740, it has no reason to envy its Vivaldian models, entralling us with the eloquent *cantabile* of its Largo.

A proponent of the fusion of European musical tastes, **Georg Philipp Telemann** offers us a delightful *Concerto “a la Francese”* for two oboes and bassoon. The choice of solo instruments and the names of the movements – four in number, like the Italian church sonata – amply justify the composer’s title. Its music, full of grace and vivacity, is perfectly suited to a congenial concert such as could have been presented by the Collegium musicum (founded by Telemann, lest one forget) at Zimmermann’s Coffee-house. And here we agree with the Telemann biographer Richard Petzoldt when he writes, “When Telemann’s works are deprecatingly referred to as ‘coffee-house music,’ we only need to remind ourselves of what fortunate times these were when his music served as everyday entertainment.”

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UPCOMING CONCERTS CHEZ ARION

Les Fantômes d'Hamlet

SALLE
BOURGIE

8 MARS 2025
19H30

9 MARS 2025
14H30

Arion reçoit Thomas Dunford

SALLE
BOURGIE

5 AVRIL 2025
19H30

6 AVRIL 2025
14H30

L'Amant jaloux

SALLE
BOURGIE

17 MAI 2025
19H30

18 MAI 2025
14H30

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