

CYCLE THE WORLD OF CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-90)

This tutelary figure of French post-Romanticism left a legacy too little known today and a host of fervent disciples including Chausson, d'Indy, Vierne, Ropartz, Tournemire and Bréville.

PRESS RELEASE

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CYCLE THE WORLD OF CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890)

A persistent misconception has left an image of César Franck as an austere organist, torn between mystical devotion and an exclusive interest in taxing instrumental music. This now hackneyed portrait was cultivated by his most faithful pupils, who insisted on his probity, his moral character, his lack of interest in fashion, but also the intellectuality of his creative processes, with a view to sanctifying a French musical movement capable of combating the aesthetics of Wagner and Debussy. Misled by these filters, posterity has retained only a handful of works out of the hundred or so that Franck composed, mainly pieces that seemingly constitute a unique object and give the impression of a genesis devoid of trial and error: ‘the’ Quintet, ‘the’ Sonata, ‘the’ Quartet appear to have no model and no progeny. The same can be said of *Les Béatitudes* – an oratorio of gigantic proportions – and of the Symphony in D minor, whose cyclic structure was elevated to the status of a compositional blueprint. In celebrating the bicentenary of his birth, with the collaboration of the Liège Royal Philharmonic and the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel, the Palazzetto Bru Zane is determined to present Franck in a new light: the complete songs and duets and the first uncut recording of the opera *Hulda* will be among the highlights of this resurrection.

*God will have granted me only
one grace, namely to have set
César Franck upon my path.*

Henri Duparc, 3 December 1903



To celebrate the bicentenary of César Franck's birth, the Palazzetto Bru Zane has joined forces with the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège for a cycle dedicated to the composer.



**CÉSAR
FRANCK**
1822 – 2022

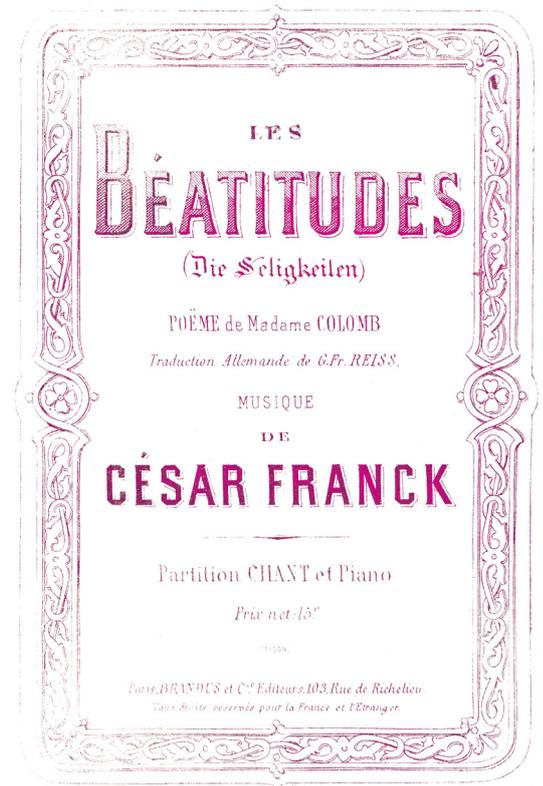
OPRL
Orchestre
Philharmonique
Royal de Liège

A biographical sketch

César Franck was born in Liège in 1822, into a family of music lovers; his father was a bank clerk. It was at the conservatory of his native city that he received his first training, from 1831, in the classes of Jalheau (piano) and Daussoigne (harmony). Four years later, shortly after making his concert debut, he moved to Paris where he studied with Reicha, and then, at the Conservatoire, with Zimmermann (piano), Leborne (counterpoint), Berton (composition) and Benoist (organ). But these promising studies were cut short by his father who, anxious to exploit his son's virtuoso talents, decided to return to Belgium in 1842. On moving back to France three years later, after breaking with his family, Franck held various positions as teacher and organist. This precarious situation did not end until 1859, when he was appointed resident organist at the church of Sainte-Clotilde. A renowned pedagogue, he was appointed professor of organ at the Conservatoire in 1871 and was one of the founding members of the Société Nationale de Musique, of which he became president in 1886. Although little emphasis has been placed on Franck's interest in the voice, it features in almost half of his published works, including *mélodies* and duets with piano, a number of motets, cantatas and oratorios, and four operas whose genesis was as difficult as their creation was problematic: *Stradella*, *Le Valet de ferme*, *Hulda* and *Ghiselle*. Nor should we neglect his output for piano, in which Franck masterfully distinguishes between the technique of the organ and that of the piano.

Key works

- 1878 *Pièce héroïque for organ*
- 1879 Piano Quintet
- 1879 *Les Béatitudes*
- 1884 *Prélude, choral et fugue for piano*
- 1885 *Hulda*
- 1886 Violin Sonata
- 1888 Symphony in D minor
- 1889 String Quartet



The tutelary figure of the French organ

Although trained in Belgium on instruments built in the classical style, Franck followed in the tradition established by the French school of Boëly and Benoist, whose legacy he was to transform. He occupied the position of resident organist at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette (1847), Saint-Jean-Saint-François-du-Marais (1851) and Sainte-Clotilde (1857) successively, and his career as an instrumentalist reached its culmination with the third of these posts, in an organ loft equipped with a brand new instrument by Cavaillé-Coll (1859) that encouraged unlimited creativity. His improvisations at the end of services regularly attracted the most discerning music lovers, while his organ class at the Conservatoire was described as the forum of discussion for modern French music. At both Sainte-Clotilde and the Conservatoire, the instrumentalist gave way to the composer: his improvisations, which gradually took written form, generated a series of masterly works (*Trois Chorals*, *Grande Pièce symphonique*, *Pièce héroïque*), while his organ teaching was subsumed into the more general discourse of a pedagogue whom students came to hear even without being officially enrolled in the class. Throughout his life, Franck published works for his instrument, some of which constitute the most avant-garde portion of his legacy. After him, the French organ school cultivated a harmonic complexity that would be reflected in the works of Gigout, Boëllmann and Widor, leading to the refinements of Vierne and Dupré, and the supreme distortions of Tournemire and Messiaen.



A personal style

Franck's music is distinguished by stylistic hallmarks that affirm his individuality. First of all, there is the immediacy of harmonic formulas founded on dissonances that colour the tensions typical of late Romanticism. These typically Franckian chords can be found in almost all his output, ranging from the most intimate *mélodies* to the grandiose organ pieces and the orchestral repertory. He also shows a predilection for constantly recurring rhythmic motifs, especially the syncopated alternation crotchet-minim-crotchet in 4/4 time. Finally, Franck is rightly regarded as the theorist of cyclic form, which consists in reinforcing the unity of a work through the regular reappearance of a founding theme. This theme helps to bestow a coherent structure on the overarching forms, accompanied by secondary themes specific to each movement. These three hallmarks of his music – individual harmony, recognisable melodic outlines and cyclic form – clearly suggest a proximity between Franck and Wagner, and indeed make him the latter's most obvious French counterpart. However, he stands apart from the German composer both in the genres he covered (Wagner had little interest in pure symphonic discourse, and none at all in chamber or organ music) and in the colouring of his orchestrations: Franck's music owes a great deal to the mixtures made possible by the stops of the large Cavaillé-Coll organs, and few of his works are free of the thickness and density for which he has sometimes been criticised.

I am about to read some Franck: oh, that beautiful soul!

Henri Duparc, 15 June 1903

Students or... disciples

Franck's class was attended by an inconceivable number of young composers, some of whom felt boundless veneration for the man they nicknamed 'le Père Franck'. In addition to atypical figures for the period, such as the female composers Mel Bonis and Augusta Holmès, the Franckist universe took material shape in a constellation of passionately admiring disciples, among them d'Indy, Ropartz, Vierne, Chausson and Tournemire. The influence of the master is reflected in the work of his emulators, but in a range of complementary styles, since he himself required a composer to seek 'expression rather than combination' (d'Indy). The common features of this post-Franckian music are to be found in the density of a discourse featuring constant chromatic shifts, and orchestrations that are the antithesis of the new Symbolist school: his disciples retained Franck's mixtures of timbres, his use of the low registers of the woodwind, and his preference for deploying the strings in unison rather than in diaphanous divided textures. The adulation of his most fervent students has unfortunately cast a long shadow over the posthumous reputation of their teacher, whom they too often presented as a pure, austere spirit, even a sanctimonious zealot or a mystic. The truth is quite different, for Franck lacked neither humour nor a manifest penchant for sensuality, as may be seen in the passionate impulses displayed by the heroines of his operas *Hulda* and *Ghiselle*. When the latter work was left unfinished at the composer's death, d'Indy, Chausson, Bréville, Rousseau and Coquard swiftly joined forces to complete the orchestration, as a final tribute to their revered role model.

FESTIVAL IN VENICE

THE WORLD OF CÉSAR FRANCK (1822-1890)

SEVEN CONCERTS AND A CONFERENCE FROM 2 APRIL TO 27 MAY 2022

THURSDAY 24 MARCH
6 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

INTRODUCTION TO THE FESTIVAL

César FRANCK

Violin and piano Sonata

Manon Galy violin

Jorge González Buajásán piano

*In partnership with the
Lyon International Chamber Music
Competition*

SATURDAY 2 APRIL
7.30 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

YOUTHFUL PIANO TRIOS

César FRANCK

Piano Trio No. 1

in F-sharp minor Op. 1

Cécile CHAMINADE

Piano Trio No. 1

Anna Egholm violin

Ari Evan cello

Frank Braley piano

*In collaboration with the
Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel*

SUNDAY 3 APRIL
5 P.M.
SCUOLA GRANDE
SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA

A MASTERPIECE AND AN UNKNOWN WORK

César FRANCK

Piano Quintet

Rita STROHL

Piano Quintet

Ismaël Margain piano

QUATUOR HANSON

SATURDAY 9 APRIL 
7.30 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

RECOLLECTION

Mémoires by FRANCK

Tassis Christoyannis baritone

Jeff Cohen piano

*The concert will be recorded
and made available for streaming
on Bru Zane Replay.*

THURSDAY 28 APRIL
7.30 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

LEARNING WITH FRANCK

Alexis de CASTILLON

Piano Quartet Op. 7

in G minor

Vincent d'INDY

Piano Quartet op. 7

in A minor

*Instrumentalists of the
Accademia Teatro alla Scala*

*In collaboration with the
Accademia Teatro alla Scala*

THURSDAY 5 MAY 
7.30 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

THE FEMININE SIDE OF THE CELLO

Marie JAËLL

Cello Sonata

Henriette RENIÉ

Cello Sonata

Nadia BOULANGER

Three pieces for cello and piano

Victor Julien-Laferrrière cello

Théo Fouchenneret piano

*The concert will be recorded
and made available for streaming
on Bru Zane Replay.*

TUESDAY 17 MAY
7.30 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

THE PIANO, KING OF INSTRUMENTS

Solo piano pieces by FRANCK

Nathanaël Guoin piano

*In collaboration with the
Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel*

*Programme repeated on the
occasion of Piano City Milano*

FRIDAY 27 MAY
7.30 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

THE SUPREME MODEL

César FRANCK

Violin Sonata

Mel BONIS

Violin Sonata

Lili BOULANGER

Nocturne

Cortège

Maria Milstein violin

Nathalia Milstein piano

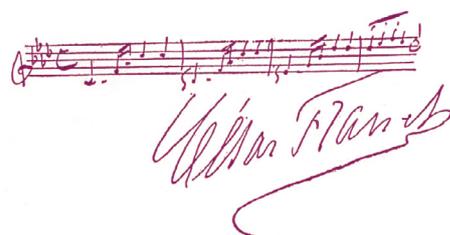
THURSDAY 7 APRIL
6 P.M.
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

LECTURE IN ITALIAN

A Belgian in Paris.

**César Franck, between the sacred
and the secular**

Marica Bottaro



EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD OF CÉSAR FRANCK

LYRICAL AND ORCHESTRAL EVENTS

HULDA BY FRANCK

Opera in four acts and an epilogue by César Franck on a libretto by Charles Grandmougin (based on *Halte-Hulda* by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson), first performed in an abridged and revised version in three acts on 8 March 1894 at the Opéra de Monte-Carlo (Monaco). Complete uncut version.

SUNDAY 15 MAY 4 P.M.

SALLE PHILHARMONIQUE, LIÈGE (BELGIUM)

TUESDAY 17 MAY 8 P.M.

NAMUR CONCERT HALL (GRAND MANÈGE, BELGIUM)

WEDNESDAY 1st JUNE 7.30 P.M.

THÉÂTRE DES CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES, PARIS (FRANCE)

As part of the 9th Festival Palazzetto Bru Zane Paris

LIÈGE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

CHAMBER CHOIR OF NAMUR

Gergely Madaras *direction*

Hulda Jennifer Holloway

Gudrun Véronique Gens

Swanhilde Judith van Wanroij

La Mère de Hulda Marie Karall

Halgerde Marie Gautrot

Thordis Ludivine Gombert

Eiolf Edgaras Montvidas

Gudleik Boris Pinkhasovich

Aslak Matthieu Lécroart

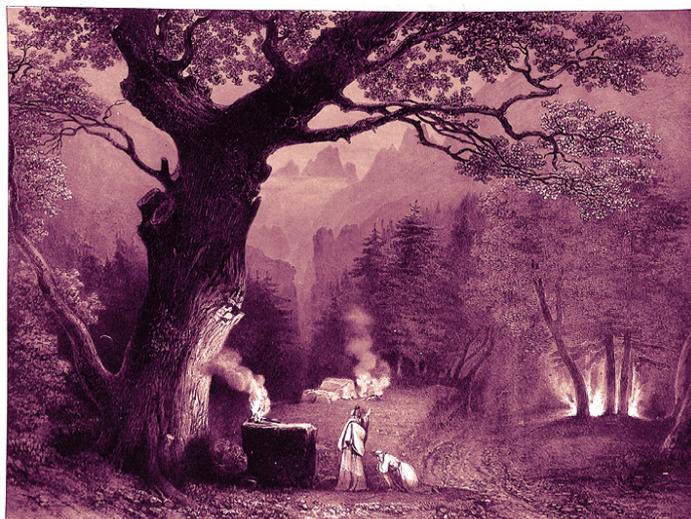
Eyrick Artavazd Sargsyan

Gunnard François Rougier

Eynar Sébastien Droy

Thrond Guilhem Worms

Arne / Un Héraut Matthieu Toulouse



Hulda, composed between 1879 and 1885, was never staged in Franck's lifetime. Inspired by a Norwegian play, this bloody medieval legend recounts its heroine's multiple acts of vengeance against the Aslak clan, which slew her family, and subsequently against her unfaithful lover Eiolf.

Concert performance

Part of the César Franck 1822-2022 bicentenary of the Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège (OPRL)

Co-production Palazzetto Bru Zane / Théâtre des Champs-Élysées / Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège (OPRL) / CAV&MA – Namur Concert Hall

In collaboration with the Opéra Royal de Wallonie-Liège

Éditions Choudens

Recording for the 'French Opera' series of the Bru Zane label

LANCELOT BY JONCIÈRES

Drame lyrique in four acts and six *tableaux* by Victorin Joncières on a libretto by Louis Gallet and Léon Blau, premiered on 7 February 1900 at the Académie Nationale de Musique (Paris).

FRIDAY 6 MAY 8 P.M.

SUNDAY 8 MAY 3 P.M.

TUESDAY 10 MAY 8 P.M.

OPÉRA DE SAINT-ÉTIENNE (FRANCE)

ORCHESTRE SYMPHONIQUE ET CHŒUR LYRIQUE SAINT-ÉTIENNE LOIRE

Hervé Niquet *direction*

Jean-Romain Vesperini *stage direction and costumes*

Bruno De Lavenère *set and costumes designer*

Lancelot Thomas Bettinger

Arthur Tomasz Kumiega

Alain Frédéric Caton

Markoël Philippe Estèphe

Kadio Camille Tresmontant

Guinèvre Anaïk Morel

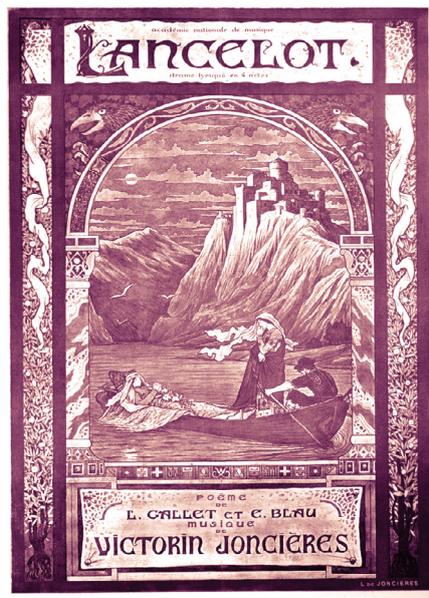
Elaine Olivia Doray

With *Lancelot*, his last opera, Victorin Joncières presented a synthesis of his creative trajectory, combining assimilation of early Wagner and respect for the French operatic tradition. Passion and honour intertwine in this drama of knighthood.

Fully staged production

Co-production Opéra de Saint-Étienne / Palazzetto Bru Zane

Published by Éditions musicales du Palazzetto Bru Zane



FESTIVAL PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE MONTRÉAL

From 2nd to 25 March 2022, César Franck will be the main focus of this third edition of the Palazzetto Bru Zane Festival in partnership with Bourgie Hall at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Between February and March, four chamber music concerts will feature works by César Franck, Ernest Chausson, Maurice Ravel and Louis Vierne.

ONLINE RESOURCES – BRU ZANE MEDIABASE

On the subject of 'The Franckist School', you will find on Bru Zane Mediabase dozens of links to biographies of **César Franck** and his pupils (**Chausson, Duparc, d'Indy, Lekeu, Ropartz, Tournemire, Vierne**, etc.), as well as texts presenting works composed in the tradition of the master's output, in particular the large corpus of pieces adopting his celebrated cyclic form.

THE WORLD OF CÉSAR FRANCK IN THE FESTIVAL PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE PARIS

In line with the major themes of the season, the Ninth Palazzetto Bru Zane Paris Festival will be inaugurated by César Franck's *Hulda*, an opera on a highly dramatic subject given in concert at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. This will be followed by three events devoted to the composer's orchestral music in commemoration of the bicentenary of his birth: a 'César Franck Gala' at the Philharmonie de Paris in collaboration with Les Siècles conducted by François-Xavier Roth and Bertrand Chamayou at the piano, a programme with organ performed by the Orchestre Colonne under the direction of Marc Korovitch at the Basilique Sainte-Clotilde, and 'Paris Romantique' at the Salle Gaveau, featuring the Orchestre Lamoureux under the direction of Adrien Perruchon with Emmanuel Ceysson as harp soloist. The festival will continue with other events on music in the time of Napoleon Bonaparte.

WEDNESDAY 1ST JUNE

7.30 P.M.

THÉÂTRE DES CHAMPS-ÉLYSÉES

HULDA BY CÉSAR FRANCK

LIÈGE ROYAL

PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

CHAMBER CHOIR OF NAMUR

Gergely Madaras *direction*

For more information see page 7

THURSDAY 2 JUNE

8.30 P.M.

GRANDE SALLE PIERRE BOULEZ,

PHILHARMONIE DE PARIS

GALA CÉSAR FRANCK

César FRANCK

Le Chasseur maudit

Les Éolides

Les Djinns

Symphonic Variations

Symphony in D minor

LES SIÈCLES

François-Xavier Roth *direction*

Bertrand Chamayou *piano*

Production Philharmonie de Paris

with the support of

the Palazzetto Bru Zane

WEDNESDAY 15 JUNE

8.30 P.M.

BASILIQUE SAINTE-CLOTILDE

CÉSAR FRANCK IN THE ORGAN LOFT

*Works by REICHA, FRANCK,
LEKEU, PIERNÉ and DUPARC*

ORCHESTRE COLONNE

Marc Korovitch *direction*

Yoann Le Lan *singing*

Olivier Penin *organ*

Production Orchestre Colonne

with the support of

the Palazzetto Bru Zane

SUNDAY 19 JUNE

5 P.M.

SALLE GAVEAU

ROMANTIC PARIS

Giuseppe VERDI

Overture of Les Vêpres siciliennes

Henriette RENIÉ

Harp Concerto

César FRANCK

Psyché et Eros (excerpts)

Théodore DUBOIS

Adonis

Gabriel FAURÉ

Pelléas et Mélisande

ORCHESTRE LAMOUREUX

Adrien Perruchon *direction*

Emmanuel Ceysson *harp*

Production Orchestre Lamoureux

with the support of

the Palazzetto Bru Zane

CÉSAR FRANCK
Musique d'Orchestre

PUBLICATIONS AROUND THE WORLD OF FRANCK

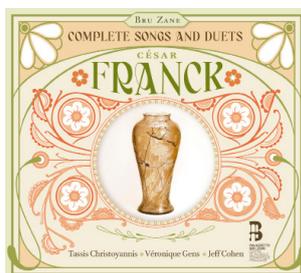
NEW RELEASES

CDs

César Franck Complete chamber music

soloists of the
Chapelle Musicale
Reine Elisabeth

FUGA LIBERA /
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE
Forthcoming in Spring 2022



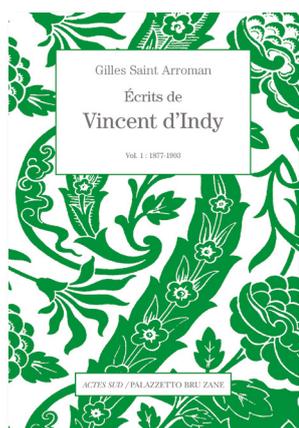
César Franck Complete *mélodies* and duets for voice and piano

Tassis Christoyannis baritone
Véronique Gens soprano
Jeff Cohen piano

2 CDs
BRU ZANE
Forthcoming on 1st April 2022

ALREADY PUBLISHED

BOOKS ACTES SUD / PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

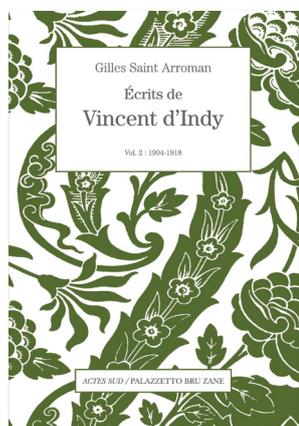


Book in French

Écrits de Vincent d'Indy Vol. 1 : 1877-1903

Edited and annotated by
Gilles Saint Arroman

ACTES SUD / PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE – 2019



Book in French

Écrits de Vincent d'Indy Vol. 2 : 1904-1918

Edited and annotated by
Gilles Saint Arroman

ACTES SUD / PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE 2021

CDs



César Franck Orchestral and concertante works

ORCHESTRE PHILHARMONIQUE
ROYAL DE LIÈGE

François-Xavier Roth direction
Cédric Tiberghien piano

CYPRES with the support of the
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE – 2011

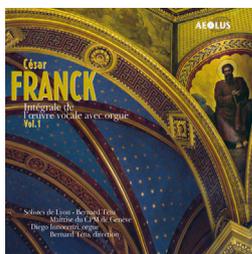


César Franck Orchestral and concertante works

ROYAL SCOTTISH
NATIONAL ORCHESTRA

Stéphane Denève direction
Bertrand Chamayou piano
Olivier Latry harmonium

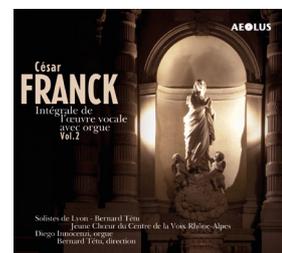
NAÏVE with the support of the
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE – 2010



César Franck Complete vocal works with organ (Volume 1)

SOLISTES DE LYON
Bernard Tétu direction
Diego Innocenzi organ

AEOLUS with the support of the
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE – 2009



César Franck Complete vocal works with organ (Volume 2)

SOLISTES DE LYON
JEUNE CHŒUR DU CENTRE
DE LA VOIX RHÔNE-ALPES
Bernard Tétu direction
Diego Innocenzi organ

AEOLUS with the support of the
PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE – 2009

PALAZZETTO BRU ZANE

CENTRE DE MUSIQUE ROMANTIQUE FRANÇAISE

The vocation of the Palazzetto Bru Zane – Centre de musique romantique française is the rediscovery and international promotion of the French musical heritage of the period 1780-1920. Its interests range from chamber music to the orchestral, sacred and operatic repertoires, not forgetting the lighter genres characteristic of the 'esprit français' (chanson, *opéra-comique*, operetta). The Centre was inaugurated in 2009 and has its headquarters in a Venetian palazzo dating from 1695 specially restored for this purpose. It is an emanation of the Fondation Bru.

The Palazzetto Bru Zane conceives programmes focusing on the French Romantic repertory. It undertakes many complementary activities in fulfilment of its mission:

- The **conception of concerts and staged performances** presented in touring productions or within the framework of its own festivals.
- The production and release on the Bru Zane label of **recordings** that perpetuate the artistic achievement of the projects undertaken, both on individual CD projects and in its series of book + CD sets, 'Prix de Rome', 'Opéra français' and 'Portraits'.
- The coordination of **research projects**.
- The **cataloguing** and **digitisation of documentary collections** and public or private archives relating to its chosen repertory, including those of the Villa Medici, the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris and the Cité de la Musique in Paris.
- The organisation of **conferences** in collaboration with different partners.
- The publication of **scores**.
- A series of **books** in collaboration with Actes Sud.
- The uploading of digital resources via the database **bruzanemediabase.com**.
- A digital platform, **Bru Zane Replay**, uploading filmed stagings and concerts produced or supported by the Palazzetto Bru Zane (bru-zane.com/replay).
- A webradio, **Bru Zane Classical Radio**, streaming twenty-four hours a day.
- **Training sessions**
- Outreach activities aimed at **young audience** through the *Romantici in erba* programme.

The French Romantic
music webradio

BRU ZANE CLASSICAL RADIO

Digital data on the
nineteenth-century French repertory

BRU ZANE MEDIABASE

Videos of concerts
and staged productions

BRU ZANE REPLAY

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