

The Palazzetto Bru Zane presents



PALAZZETTO  
BRU ZANE  
CENTRE  
DE MUSIQUE  
ROMANTIQUE  
FRANÇAISE

# LA VESTALE

GASPARE SPONTINI (1774-1851)

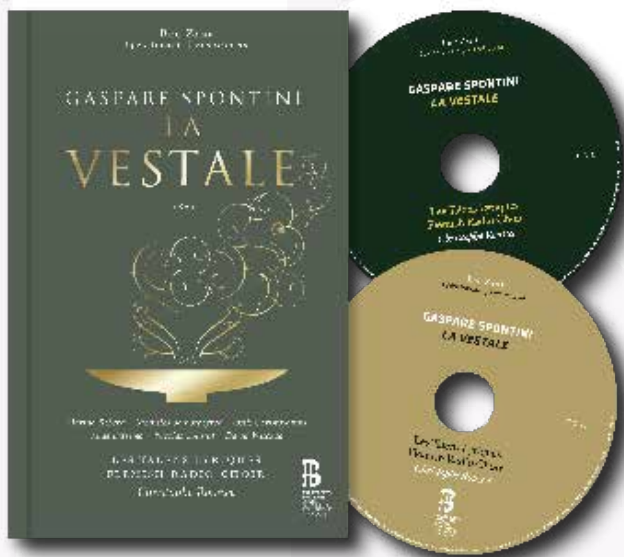
*Tragédie lyrique* in three acts, first performed at the Académie Impériale de Musique (Paris Opéra) on 15 December 1807. Dedicated to the Empress Josephine.

Recording from 17 to 20 June 2022 at the Riffx Studios at the Seine Musicale (Paris)

World premiere recording on period instruments

Critical edition by Federico Agostinelli and Gabriele Gravagna, Ricordi, 1993

**Release date: 5 May 2023**



Christophe Rousset, *conductor*

LES TALENS LYRIQUES

FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR

Marina Rebeka, Stanislas de Barbeyrac,  
Tassis Christoyannis, Aude Extrémo,  
Nicolas Courjal, David Witczak

Essays by Alexandre Dratwicky and  
historic texts by Amar, Hector Berlioz and Étienne de Jouy

2 CD / 154 pages (texts and libretto in French and English)

**Bru Zane Label**

Distribution

**allthere**  
DISTRIBUTION

Recording available for download and streaming on digital platforms with libretto available for download online

BZ 1051

**SPPF**  
les labels indépendants

Guilty of allowing the sacred fire to go out while declaring her love to the general Licinius, the Vestal Virgin Julia is sentenced to be buried alive. But her execution is averted by a divine intervention, which rekindles the altar flame and absolves the victim. The simple plot of Gaspare Spontini's *La Vestale* achieved resounding success in 1807 thanks to the highly skilled treatment of the characters' psychology and the transparency of the political allusions – Licinius is an allegory of Napoleon Bonaparte himself. Yet the work is more than a mere piece of propaganda: it represents one of the links between the *tragédie lyrique* of the Ancien Régime and the future *grand opéra à la française*, even anticipating Bellinian bel canto. The opera's focal point is the character of Julia, which requires an exceptional soprano to do it justice. After the creator, Caroline Branchu – whom Berlioz described as 'operatic tragedy incarnate' – and Maria Callas at La Scala in 1954, Marina Rebeka takes on in masterly fashion a role that seems tailor-made for her impressive vocal resources, supported by the energy and precision of the period instruments of Les Talens Lyriques under Christophe Rousset. The result is genuinely revelatory.

LES TALENS  
LYRIQUES  
CHRISTOPHE  
ROUSSET



# CHRISTOPHE ROUSSET'S INSPIRATIONS FOR LA VESTALE

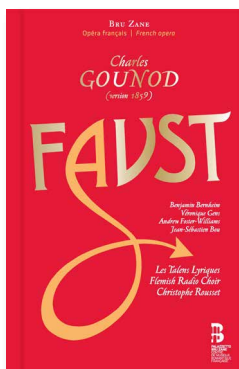
When I approached La Vestale, I avoided listening to the version recorded by Callas: I didn't want to break out in a cold sweat and think it was beyond me. Rather, I searched for ideas in my head and in my own experience: I wanted to try to draw inspiration from painting. When we think of the years around 1807, we're talking about large formats and great historical scenes: The Coronation of Napoleon, Scene from the Retreat from Russia, The Raft of the Medusa, etc. One may say that La Vestale fits perfectly into that aesthetic of grand gestures – something rather grandiloquent, but which at the same time has an extremely powerful emotional effect. Spontini's music really deserves to be looked at more closely, because it's rich music that really opens up new horizons.

Find the complete video-interview on the YouTube channel of the Palazzetto Bru Zane by the end of May

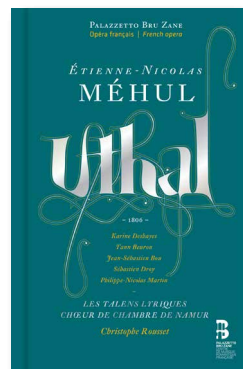
## BRU ZANE LABEL AND LES TALENS LYRIQUES

La Vestale adds a new chapter to the collaboration between the Palazzetto Bru Zane, Christophe Rousset and Les Talens Lyriques following the CD-books *Renaud* by Sacchini (2013), the *Danaïdes* by Salieri (2015), *Uthal* by Méhul (2017) and *Faust* by Gounod (2019), which also involved the Flemish Radio Choir.

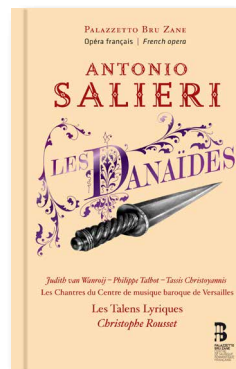
### CD-BOOKS COLLECTION 'FRENCH OPERA' SERIES



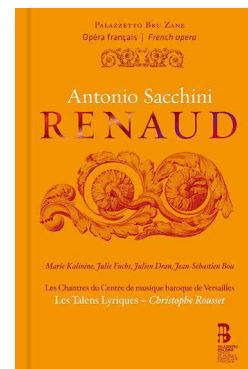
**Charles Gounod**  
*Faust* (1859)  
LES TALENS LYRIQUES  
FLEMISH RADIO CHOIR  
Christophe Rousset conductor  
Vol. 22 – 2019



**Étienne-Nicolas Méhul**  
*Uthal* (1806)  
LES TALENS LYRIQUES  
CHŒUR DE CHAMBRE  
DE NAMUR  
Christophe Rousset conductor  
Vol. 14 – 2017



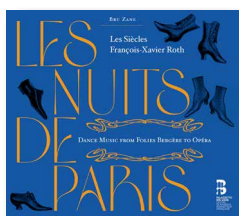
**Antonio Salieri**  
*Les Danaïdes* (1784)  
LES TALENS LYRIQUES  
Christophe Rousset conductor  
LES CHANTRES DU CENTRE  
DE MUSIQUE BAROQUE  
DE VERSAILLES  
Olivier Schneebeli conductor  
Vol. 9 – 2015



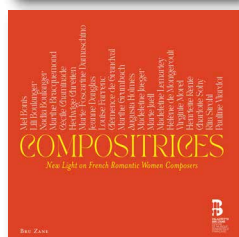
**Antonio Sacchini**  
*Renaud* (1783)  
LES TALENS LYRIQUES  
LES CHANTRES DU CENTRE  
DE MUSIQUE BAROQUE  
DE VERSAILLES  
Christophe Rousset conductor  
Vol. 4 – 2013

## UPCOMING RELEASES

### BRU ZANE LABEL



**Les Nuits de Paris**  
*Dance Music from  
Folies Bergères  
to Opéra*  
LES SIÈCLES  
François-Xavier Roth conductor  
2023



**Compositrices**  
*New light on French  
Romantic Women  
Composers*  
8 CD  
Release date: 10 March 2023

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### LES TALENS LYRIQUES BY APARTÉ



**Pancrace Royer**  
*Surprising Royer  
Orchestral Suites*  
LES TALENS LYRIQUES  
Christophe Rousset conductor  
Release date: 5 May 2023

More information on the French  
Romantic Music database

BRUZANEMEDIABASE.COM

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