



© Sylvie Schröder

Sei Solo.

Bach.

Sei Solo.



***Revealing a Hidden Music within the Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin
by Johann Sebastian Bach***

Radboud OOMENS – Violon
Johan RIPHAGEN – Arrangement & bass
Géraldine JEANNOT – Soprano
Maximin MARCHAND – Countertenor
François ISSEREL-SAVARY – Tenor

Why five performers to interpret the Sonatas and Partitas? Because a German musicologist discovered that these pieces for solo violin — a formidable challenge for any self-respecting violinist — conceal a hidden music, inaudible to the untrained ear. Thus, it takes a violinist accompanied by four seasoned singers to reveal what is unwritten, to hear what is hidden.

And because it takes five of us to bring forth the intangible.

« I imagine Johann Sebastian Bach at his keyboard. In his mind, the majestic sounds of the polyphonic cathedrals built by his predecessors. He searches, he finds. Under his fingers, the multicoloured fabric of a wonderfully constructed fugue unfolds and fills the space like a prayer, like a sculpture. And suddenly, the thought: why not do the same with a single violin — to build cathedrals of sound, ad majorem Dei gloriam.

So he takes his violin. He searches and finds : Sei solo a violino senza basso accompagnato »

J.Riphagen

The Project

Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed.

Though it may seem surprising to call on Lavoisier to introduce a project on J.S. Bach, it is by immersing ourselves in it that the clarity of this maxim reveals itself to us: we lose nothing, we add nothing, and yet, in doing so, we transform everything.

But let us begin at the beginning: Helga Thoene, violinist and musicologist, has examined, like many of her colleagues, the Sonatas and Partitas BWV 1001-1006, which are among the most analysed of Bach's works. The complexity of the compositions, the virtuosity required, the meticulousness of their conception... We do not even know the reason they were written. Many performers have the intuition of something beyond beauty and inventiveness, a "something" that, like a mysterious message, touches and challenges us, whether one plays or listens to this music. Some highlight its architecture, of a finesse and solidity rarely achieved elsewhere. Others see in it numerological messages.

One of Thoene's conclusions is that Bach may have wished to give a religious context to this cycle of works by associating it with the three principal Christian feasts: Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. To support her hypothesis, she relies on numbers (of bars, of notes) and on gematria – the science that transposes notes into letters and figures, indeed! Another decisive argument: simple melodic lines, concealed within the broader phrasing of the violin, which refer to chorale melodies whose text, once identified, can indicate a connection to one of these feasts. It is these lines that we strive to identify and to make audible.

While one may always speculate about such discoveries, it is undeniable that bringing out the underlying melodic structures of the work by singing them adds a powerful further dimension: hearing what is hidden. What we invite you to discover here is, in a sense, the reverse side of the work: the bringing to light of the currents that run through it, the mystical sap that flows beneath the bow.

Thus we lose nothing, we add nothing, and yet, in doing so, we transform everything.



The team



Géraldine Jeannot *Soprano*

trained in lyrical singing and early music at the conservatoires of Avignon and Aix. With a particular fondness for early music, she has refined her art through numerous masterclasses with artists such as Philippe Jaroussky, Claire Lefiliâtre and Stéphane Fuget. She has been heard in various roles on opera stages (Avignon, Clermont-Ferrand, Aix) and is regularly invited as a soloist by the various choirs of the PACA region. She is also part of the show *Marseille mes Amours*, of the *Ad fontes* choir, and of the medieval singing ensemble *Mora Vocis*. In 2020 she co-founded the Ensemble *Musica ex Anima*, specialising in baroque and renaissance music.

François Isserel-Savary *Tenor*

began his musical training at the age of four with the piano. A self-taught singer, he was first a choral singer and became familiar very early with vocal technique within vocal ensembles in Brest, Paris and Provence, before specialising in his range as a light tenor / haute-contre. In 2015 he joined the baroque singing class of Monique Zanetti in Aix-en-Provence, where he deepened his mastery of this repertoire, and since 2016 he has been professionalising his practice of lyrical singing with the soprano Brigitte Peyré in Manosque, thus broadening his repertoire to classical, modern and more contemporary music.



Johan Riphagen *Arrangement & bass*

is a conductor and composer. He studied in the Netherlands (The Hague) with Ed Spanjaard, in Barcelona with Antoni Ros-Marbá and in Munich with Sergiu Celibidache. After beginning his career in the Netherlands, he settled in Provence and became musical director of the Choeur du Luberon. He has a particular affinity with the music of J.S. Bach, many of whose compositions he has performed in concert. He studied Helga Thoene's research and made the arrangements for the project according to her proposals. As a composer he has collaborated on various film and theatre projects, written for various symphonic and choral ensembles as well as chamber music. Some works are recorded and released on Emergo Classics.



Maximin Marchand *Countertenor*

An actor and graduate of the ERACM, Maximin is also a countertenor trained at the Aix-en-Provence conservatoire in the class of Monique Zanetti. In 2022, after *Le Cid* and *Ruy Blas*, he joined the company of *Tartuffe* directed by Yves Beaunesne. In 2023 came a *Vivaldi Gloria* with the Opera of Avignon and a series of concerts with *Les Voix Animées*, a renaissance polyphonic vocal ensemble. The year 2024 saw the beginning of a collaboration with the chamber choir *Les Éléments*. He also collaborates, in ensembles or as a soloist, with, among others, the ensembles *Musica Ex Anima*, *L'Archivolte*, *le Songe du Roi*, *les Offrandes Musicales*, the *Asmara* chamber choir, the *Maîtrise des Bouches du Rhône*, the *Choeur du Luberon* and the composer *Camille Rocailleux* – notably for the music of the film *Un autre monde* by Stéphane Brizé and the radio drama *La reine Margot* by Laure Egoroff for France Culture.

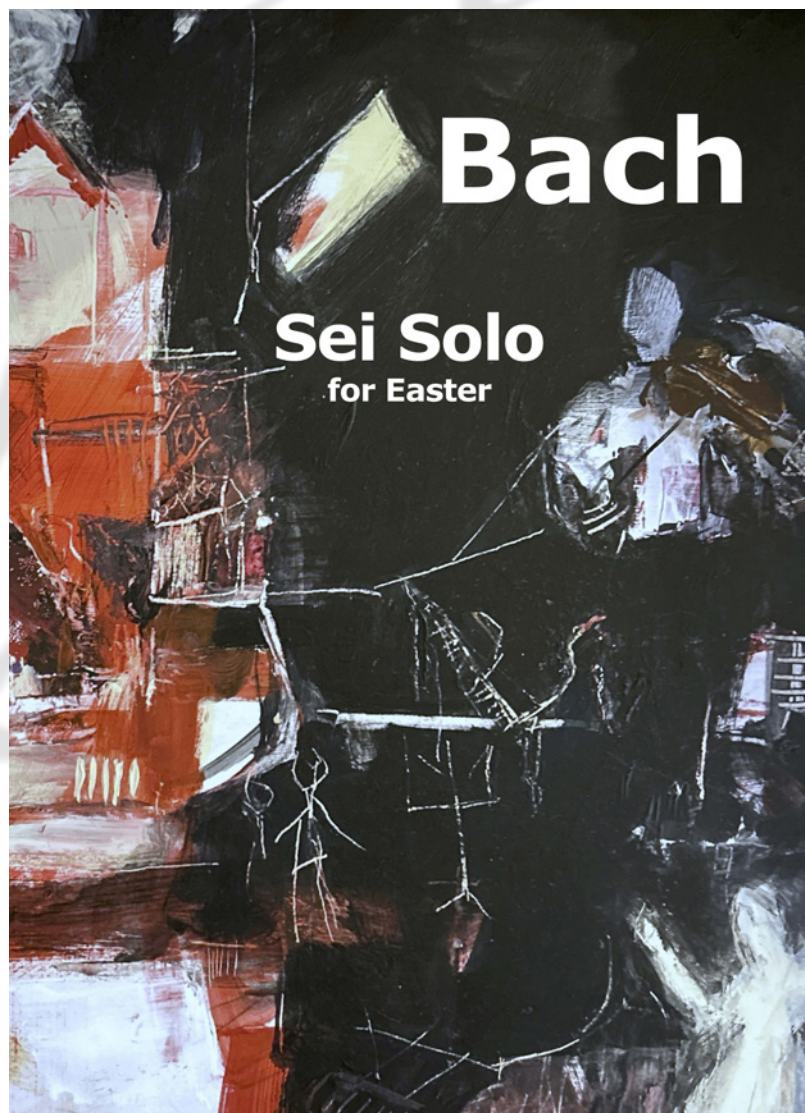


Radboud Oomens *Violon*

A pupil of the famous Dutch violinist Herman Krebbers, and a multiple prize-winner at international competitions, he became, at the age of 19, first violin for the orchestras of Arnhem in the Netherlands and Hamburg in Germany, and over the course of his career became a renowned chamber musician. It was Helga Thoene who inspired in him the project of playing the sonatas for solo violin accompanied by singers, the famous "*Sei solo a violino*," which he has studied for many years. Radboud played for many years on a Nicola Amati violin (1650), which he finally made available to young talents. He currently plays an Alain Carbonare violin made in 2017 in Mirecourt.



The programs



Choral

Christ lag in Todesbanden / BWV 278

Christ lay in the bonds of death

Motet

Nimm, was dein ist und gehe hin / BWV 144

Take what is yours and go

Chorales

Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir / BWV 38

From deep distress I cry to you

Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder / BWV 135

Oh Lord, me poor sinner

Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut / BWV 133

Lord Jesus Christ, you highest good

Sonate in A minor / BWV 1003

Grave / Fuga / Andante / Allegro

Mass

Christe, du Lamm Gottes / BWV 233

Christ, you Lamb of God – Kyrie

Confiteor / BWV 232

Partita in D minor / BWV 1004

Ciaccona



Choral

Von Himmel hoch da komm ich her
From heaven high I come

Motet

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden / BWV 230
Praise the Lord, all heathens

Choral

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme / BWV 140
Awake, the voice calls us

Motet

Jesu, meine Freude / BWV 227
Jesus, my joy

1. « Jesu meine Freude »

7. « Weg mit allen Schätzen »

8. « So aber Christus in euch ist »

Sonate in C major / BWV 1005

Adagio / Fuga / Largo / Allegro assai

Motet

Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg / BWV 4
It was a strange war

Choral

Auf meine lieben Gott / BWV 136
My dear God

Partita in D minor / BWV 1004

Ciaccona



Choral

Wie soll ich dich empfangen / BWV 248

How shall I receive you?

Chorale Motet

Du stellste, mein Jesu, selber dich / BWV 77

You yourself, my Jesus, set yourself

Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe / BWV 248

Glory be to God in the highest

Motet

Herr, gehe nicht ins gericht mit deinem Knecht / BWV 105

Lord, do not enter into judgment with your servant

Choral

Herr Jesu Christ, du höchstes Gut / BWV 133

Lord Jesus Christ, you highest good

Chorale Motet

Ach Herr, vergib all'unser Schuld / BWV 127

O Lord, forgive all our sins

Alles was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn / BWV 225

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord

Sonate in G minor / BWV 1001

Adagio / Fuga / Siciliana / Presto

Motet

Christ lag in Todesbanden / BWV 4

Christ lay in the bonds of death

Partita in D minor / BWV 1004

Ciaccona



Chorales

Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan (BWV 12)

What God Ordains Is Always Good

O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden (BWV 244)

O sacred head, now wounded

Beweis dein Macht, Herr Jesu Christ (BWV 6)

Show forth thy might, Lord Jesus Christ

Vocal Partita

Jesu, deine Passion ist mir lauter Freude (BWV 182)

Jesus, thy passion is pure joy to me

Wenn aber jener, der Geist der Wahrheit, kommen wird (BWV 108)

But when the Spirit of truth is come

Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden (BWV 6)

Abide with us, for evening is drawing near

Himmelskönig, sei willkommen (BWV 182)

King of Heaven, welcome

Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen (BWV 12)

Weeping, lamenting, worrying, fearing

Choral

Dein Geist, den Gott vom Himmel giebt (BWV 108)

Thy Spirit, whom God gives from heaven

Partita in D minor (BWV 1004)

Allemanda

Corrente

Sarabanda

Giga

Ciaccona

Hosting Conditions

Booking fee + travel, accommodation, and catering expenses (for 6 people). - ***Please contact us***

Duration of each program : 1h15

Venue availability required : minimum 2h before the concert begins

Venue : indoor, good humidity levels, heated in winter (ideally from 20°C)

*In the case of a cycle, programs are slightly modified to avoid repetitions.

Contacts :

Artistic direction :

Johan Riphagen & Radboud Oomens

Distribution :

bachseisolo@gmail.com - Pauline Cantin : +33 6 74 63 69 65

Photo credits: © Jean-Paul Villegas
Painting: © «Der Geiger,» Sylvie Schröder, 2014



Media :

bachseisolo.eu



Ensemble Sei Solo - Non-profit association (French Law of 1901)
RNA W131019911 – Siret 103 193 488 00014