

*“The intention of music is not only to please the ear, but to express sentiments,
stir the imagination,
affect the mind, and direct the emotions.”*

Geminiani, *The Art of Playing on the Violin*, 1751

Les Passions - the Montauban Baroque Orchestra

Les Passions – The Montauban Baroque Orchestra was formed by recorder player Jean-Marc Andrieu in Toulouse in 1986 and is in residency in Montauban.

The ensemble is flexibly-sized and specialises in playing **period instruments**. Its artistic approach reconciles two principles: respect for early playing techniques and dynamic performance of the musical discourse.

Repertoire

Les Passions plays a **broad range of music**. There are small instrumental groups, grand oratorios, historical shows, French, Italian, German and English Baroque music, and blends of traditional and oriental music.

The orchestra provides innovative shows wherein it delights in combining music with film, theatre, literature, dance and even culinary arts !



Musical Collaborations

The Orchestra performs by itself or it accompanies singers under the baton of its artistic director or the choirmaster. It frequently collaborates with Le **Choeur de Chambre Les Eléments** (conducted by Joël Suhubiette) and **Choeur du Capitole** from Toulouse (conducted by Alfonso Caiani).

Regional, National and International Renown

Les Passions was invited by the French Embassy in **Rome** (Palazzo Farnese), by the festival Oudemuziek **Utrecht** (Netherlands), various organisations in **Spain**, including *Música, Historia I Art* in Valencia, *Música Antigua* in Saragossa, **Fes, Amsterdam**, as well as **Morocco, Switzerland, Hungary**, and so on. In 2014, 2016 and 2018 the orchestra was invited by the French Embassies and Alliances Françaises, and, assisted by the French Institute, they went on three tours of **Bolivia, Peru, Chile and Brazil** and recently in **Mexico**.

In France, the orchestra has been invited by such prestigious events as **the Chaise-Dieu Festival** to perform its famous triptych dedicated to Jean Gilles; and other events in Lessay, Sablé-sur-Sarthe, Pontoise, Lanvellec, Sylvanès, Odysud-Blagnac, Conques, Toulouse-les-Orgues, Sorèze, Strasbourg, Radio France Montpellier, Avignon, etc., and on the Island of Reunion.

Since 2011 the orchestra takes part in the festival **Passions Baroques à Montauban** in which **Jean-Marc Andrieu is the artistic director**.

In 2013 and 2014, Jean-Marc Andrieu conducted Les Passions and the Choeur du Capitole at the Théâtre du Capitole in Toulouse, and then at the **Pontoise Baroque Festival** performing Motets Versaillais by Rameau and Mondonville.

Discography

Every CD by Les Passions released by the Ligia label has met with huge success: **Con Voce Festiva** (Scarlatti), **Venitian Vespers** (Porpora/Vivaldi), **Noël Baroque Occitan**, and **Beata est Maria**, a collection of motets for three male voices by Marc-Antoine Charpentier. Since 2008, Jean-Marc Andrieu has endeavoured to showcase the major works of Jean Gilles. Accordingly, there have been three releases which were brought together in a box set in 2013: **Requiem** (2008), **Lamentations** (2010) and **Te Deum, Messe en Ré** (2012). Released in 2014, FolieS! is a purely instrumental CD featuring the favourite instrument of Les Passions's musical director – the recorder. In 2016, **Magnificat à la Chapelle Royale** dedicated to Antoine-Esprit

Blanchard, with three “motets à grand choeur,” two of which have never been released. Recorded in Montpellier in coproduction with Radio France has received rewards such as *Le choix de France Musique*, *5 Diapasons*, *4 Etoiles Classica*, *la Clé du Mois de Resmusica*. In 2018 is released *Vent des Royaumes* in which barocco music is mixed with traditional of Far East. The *Stabat Mater of Pergolesi and Salve Regina of Scarlatti* with the soloists Magali Léger and Paulin Bündgen in a chamber orchestra version is released in September 2019.

Discovering Regional Musical Heritage: The Masters of Southern French Baroque.

By virtue of his in-depth musicological and historical research, and considerable re-creation studies into forgotten or lost scores, Jean-Marc Andrieu has established himself as being **the Jean Gilles specialist**. His recent discoveries have led him to **revive unpublished works by the composer Antoine-Esprit Blanchard**, on stage as on CD.

In 2016, to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Les Passions, under the honorary chairmanship of Gilles Cantagrel, several events has been organized in Montpellier, Toulouse and Montauban, including concerts, academic conferences, exhibitions, lectures and so on.

The last project, in 2022, is dedicated to the revival of a unique Occitan opera of Mondonville : Daphnis et Alcimadure. Concerts and recordings are planned.

Residency and Backing

The Les Passions Orchestra has a residency in Montauban. It is subsidised by the City of Montauban, the Urban Community of Grand Montauban, The General Council of Tarn-et-Garonne and the Occitanie Region and the Ministry of Culture and Communication/Prefect of the Occitanie.

The ensemble regularly receives support for its recordings from Spedidam, the French Institute, CNM and Adami. It is a member of the CNM (Centre National de la Musique), Occitanie en Scène, Profedim and Fevis.

Jean-Marc Andrieu Recorder Player and Conductor



Festival Oudemusiek, Utrecht © J.Vanderfeesten

Jean-Marc Andrieu began his musical studies at the Toulouse National Regional Conservatoire, where he obtained **first prizes in recorder, chamber music and musical theory**. He continued his musicological studies at the same establishment. He developed a passion for early music and honed his recorder playing and performance skills at the **Sweelinck Academy in Amsterdam**. He holds **Certificates of Aptitude in recorder playing, choral conducting and academy direction**. Jean-Marc Andrieu was Director of Montauban Conservatoire from 1991 to 2021.

In 1986 in Toulouse, he formed a Baroque instrumental ensemble which has enjoyed growing renown.

It became known as the Orchestre Baroque de Montauban in 1991, and then **Les Passions** in 2003. In addition to great works and known pieces from the Baroque repertoire, **Jean-Marc Andrieu endeavours to revive works** which have never been released before or have been forgotten. He shows the explorer's spirit, unearthing rare scores for which he carries out extremely important **re-creation research**. His onstage and recorded version of the complete works of Jean Gilles is an international benchmark.

In 2016, he is showcasing Antoine-Esprit Blanchard, adding a further stone to the edifice of Southern French Baroque music.

Jean-Marc Andrieu enthusiastically continues his research into **discovering regional heritage** (Toulouse, Dukes of Aiguillon, Montauban, Provence, Languedoc, and so on).

His dual skills as conductor and choirmaster lead him to take part on a regular basis in programs and recordings of Baroque and opera music both in France and abroad. He is frequently invited to be a member on competition panels.

