



Image credit: © Fred Mortagne

AF26 DIGITAL DAYBILL

Monteverdi's *Vespers*

Monday 2 March 2026, 8pm
Tuesday 3 March 2026, 8pm

St Peter's Cathedral

Duration: 1 hour 50 mins, no interval

Pygmalion Choir and Orchestra
Raphaël Pichon Conductor

Generously supported by Friends of South Australian Arts, a sub-fund of Australian Communities Foundation (supported by Foundation SA).



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Experience one of the greatest works of sacred music ever written

Step through time into one of the cultural glories of western civilisation, spending an evening in Saint Mark's Basilica, Venice, at the dawn of the Italian Baroque.

Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* – astonishing for the grandeur of its conception and the opulence of its sound – vividly evokes the splendour and pageantry of Venice's golden age. In his setting of the *Vespers*, Monteverdi drew on centuries of sacred music tradition, but he broke the mould by bringing the theatricality and drama of opera into the church.

Over two special nights, Ensemble Pygmalion revives the spirit of St Mark's Basilica through a spatialised performance of the *Vespers* in the spectacular acoustic of St Peter's Cathedral.

Pygmalion Choir and Orchestra

Raphaël Pichon Conductor

Sopranos: Julie Roset, Maïlys de Villoutreys, Perrine Devillers

Alto: William Shelton

Tenors: Laurence Kilsby, Samuel Boden, Tomáš Král

Bass: Renaud Brès, René Ramos Premier

CHOIR

Sopranos: Camille Allérat, Adèle Carlier, Anne-Emmanuelle Davy, Perrine Devillers, Alice Focroulle, Eugénie de Padirac, Julie Roset, Maïlys de Villoutreys

Altos: Corinne Bahuaud, Lewis Alexander Hammond, Marie Pouchelon, Yann Rolland, William Shelton

Tenors: Davy Cornillot, Samuel Boden, Constantin Goubet, Guillaume Gutierrez, Laurence Kilsby, Randol Rodriguez

Bass: Renaud Brès, Frédéric Bourreau, Tomáš Král, Guillaume Olry, René Ramos Premier, Emmanuel Vistorky

ORCHESTRA (* continuo)

Violins: Sophie Gent, Louis Creac'h

Violoncello: Antoine Touche (*)

Violas da gamba: Julien Léonard (*), Garance Boizot(*), Sarah Van Oudenhove, Hyérine Lassalle

Double bass: Chloé Lucas (*)

Recorders: Julien Martin, Evolène Kiener

Bassoon: Evolène Kiener (*)

Cornetts: Emmanuel Mure, Lambert Colson

Sackbuts: Bart Vroomen, Susanna Defendi, Guy Hanssen

Harp: Angélique Mauillon (*)

Theorbos: Thibaut Roussel (*), Gabrielle Rubio (*)

Organ: Pierre Gallon (*)

Harpsichords: Pierre Gallon (*), Ronan Khalil (*)

Italian Harpsichord after Grimaldi by Carey Beebe, Sydney 1990
Continuo organ by Kenneth Tickell & Company Ltd, Wellingborough UK, Opus 71, courtesy of Pilgrim Uniting Church
Early keyboards prepared for performance by Carey Beebe

Raphaël Pichon

Conductor

'Pichon, in a short time has become *one of the most interesting conductors* in classical music.'
(*New York Times*)

A leader of his generation, Raphaël Pichon develops original and highly personal projects, while drawing on a rich tradition.

Raphaël Pichon began his musical training with the violin, piano, and singing. As a young professional singer, he performed under the direction of Jordi Savall, Gustav Leonhardt, and Ton Koopman, as well as with Geoffroy Jourdain's Les Cris de Paris.

In 2006, he founded Pygmalion, a choir and orchestra performing on period instruments. Notable projects in recent years include: the creation of *Trauernacht*, based on music of Bach and directed by Katie Mitchell (2014); the rediscovery and staging of Rossi's *Orfeo* at the Opéra National de Lorraine and the Opéra Royal de Versailles (2016); the *Vespers* with Pierre Audi (Holland Festival, BBC Proms, Royal Chapel of Versailles, Leipzig Bach Festival); a staged version of *A German Requiem* by Jochen Sandig at the submarine base in Bordeaux; stage productions of *The Magic Flute* by Simon McBurney (2018); Mozart's *Requiem* with Romeo Castellucci (2019); *Samson*, a loose recreation of Rameau's lost opera, with Claus Guth (2024) at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence; and *Lakmé* (2022) and *L'Autre Voyage* with music by Schubert (2024) at the Opéra-Comique.

In 2020, he created the Pulsations festival in Bordeaux. In 2024, in partnership with Arte and France Musique, he embarked on the Les Chemins de Bach project with Pygmalion, a grand journey on foot and by bicycle between Arnstadt and Lübeck.

As a guest conductor, Raphaël Pichon has conducted the Freiburger Barockorchester, Musicaeterna, the Scintilla of the Zurich Opera, the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston, the Mozarteum Orchester, and most recently the Orchestra of St. Luke's at Carnegie Hall. The 2025–2026 season marks his debut at the Paris Opera, as well as with the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra.

His recordings are released on the harmonia mundi label: the imaginary opera *Enfers* with baritone Stéphane Degout (2018), *Libertà!* featuring little-known masterpieces by Mozart, Bach's *Motets* (2020) and *St Matthew Passion* (2022), *Mein Traum* (Schubert, Schumann, Weber—2022), Monteverdi's *Vespers of the Virgin* (2023), Mozart's *Requiem* (2024), Bach's *Mass in B minor* (2025), and Brahms' *A German Requiem* (2025). On 20 March 2026, *St John Passion* will be released.

Raphaël Pichon is an Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters.

Pygmalion

Pygmalion, a choir and period-instrument orchestra founded in 2006 by Raphaël Pichon, explores the filiations that link Bach to Mendelssohn, Schütz to Brahms, Rameau to Gluck and Berlioz.

Alongside the canonical works explored by Pygmalion (Bach's *Passions*, Rameau's lyrical tragedies, Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor*, Mendelssohn's *Elias*, Monteverdi's *Vespers*), the ensemble creates original programs that highlight the links between works while incorporating the spirit of their creation: *Mozart & the Weber Sisters*, *Miranda* (music by Purcell), *Stravaganza d'Amore!* (evoking the birth of opera at the Medici court), *Enfers* (with Stéphane Degout), the cycle *Bach en 7 paroles* (at the Philharmonie de Paris), and *Libertà!* (retracing the beginnings of Mozart's *dramma giocoso*).

Pygmalion has created for itself a singular identity within the international musical landscape, thanks to its critical and popular success with challenging projects that often blend the old and the new.

When performing operas, Pygmalion has collaborated with such directors as Katie Mitchell, Romeo Castellucci, Simon McBurney, Aurélien Bory, Jetske Mijnsen, Pierre Audi, Valérie Lesort and Christian Hecq, Cyril Teste, Clément Cogitore, and Michel Fau.

As the artist-in-residence at the Opéra National de Bordeaux, Pygmalion has for several years offered Kiosque Pygmalion, a season of chamber music concerts and free educational workshops open to all. In 2020, in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, Pygmalion launched the Pulsations festival in Bordeaux.

Pygmalion performs regularly on the biggest stages in France (Philharmonie de Paris, Opéra royal de Versailles, Opéra-Comique, Opéra de Paris, Aix-en-Provence, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, Toulouse, among others) and internationally (Vienna, Salzburg, Amsterdam, Brussels, London, Hamburg, Dortmund, Berlin, Frankfurt, Essen, Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Milan, Naples, Beijing, Hong Kong, and other cities).

Pygmalion has been recording for harmonia mundi since 2014.

Among the awards the ensemble has received: Gramophone Classical Music Awards (United Kingdom), OPER! Awards 2025 and Preis der Schallplattenkritik (Germany), Edison Klassiek Award (Netherlands), Diapason d'Or of the Year, Choc de Classica and Victoire de la Musique Classique (France).

Pygmalion is artist-in-residence at the Opéra National de Bordeaux. It enjoys the support of the Direction régionale des affaires culturelles de Nouvelle-Aquitaine, Ville de Bordeaux, Département de la Gironde, région Nouvelle-Aquitaine and Centre national de la musique. Ensemble associated with the Opéra-Comique (2023–2027), Pygmalion receives support from Château Haut-Bailly, the ensemble's honorary patron. Pygmalion is artist-in-residence at Fondation Singer-Polignac as an associate artist and is a member of the Fédération des Ensembles Vocaux et Instrumentaux Spécialisés (FEVIS), Scène Ensemble, and Rézo MUSA. Fondation d'entreprise Société Générale and Eren Groupe are patrons of Pygmalion.

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