



MAJA LISAC BARROSO (CH/SI) and QUATUOR HABANERA (F)

Christian Wirth, soprano saxophone

Maja Lisac Barroso, soprano saxophone

Sylvain Malezieux, alto saxophone

Fabrizio Mancuso, baritone saxophone

Gilles Tressos, baritone saxophone

"SCHUBERT QUINTET IN C-MAJOR"

IN A UNIQUE ARRANGEMENT FOR 5 SAXOPHONES

In celebration of their thirtieth anniversary, Maja Lisac Barroso presented the quatuor Habanera with a formidable yet captivating challenge. She had spent two years meticulously listening to Schubert's string quintet C Major, D. 956 (Op. post. 163), researching and arranging it for saxophones. The result? A remarkable performance that demonstrated the seemingly impossible: playing this extensive classical work on saxophones.

This chamber work, originally composed for two violins, a viola, and two cellos, was rearranged for an unconventional ensemble of instruments: two soprano saxophones, an alto saxophone, and two baritone saxophones. The arrangement was crafted by Maja Lisac Barroso, a Slovenian saxophonist born in Basel, Switzerland and 2nd soprano saxophonist of this program. Notably, the first violin part, known for its extreme heights, is masterfully performed by Christian Wirth on the soprano saxophone. Sylvain Malezieux takes on the role of the viola playing the alto saxophone, while Fabrizio Mancuso on the first baritone saxophone and Gilles Tressos on the second baritone saxophone emulate the role of two cellos.

"All members of the saxophone quintet are constantly subjected to many tests: infinitely

long singing phrases, extremely high extreme tones, balancing individual voices - because they are all equal, imitating the articulation of strings, etc. Their performance is outstanding- all the performers are excellent", as mentioned in the concert review by Larisa Marjanovic in 2023.

Schubert's String Quintet in C Major is revered as one of the greatest chamber works of all time. Its nearly hour-long duration unfolds with epic proportions, weaving a dramatic narrative of duality. The constant oscillation between sublime lyricism and dark, haunting anguish perhaps mirrors the opposition of life and death. Remarkably, Schubert completed this quintet just two months before his own passing, making it a poignant swan song in his short life.

An interpretation with saxophones offers a refreshing and novel perspective on this monumental work. The album, recorded in 2023 in the radio and television studio in Slovenia and to be published and presented in 2024, will be the world's first recording of the Schubert String Quintet in C major arranged for five saxophones.

FRANCAIS:

Pour célébrer leur trentième anniversaire, Maja Lisac Barroso a présenté au quatuor Habanera un défi exigeant mais captivant. Elle avait passé deux ans à rechercher et à arranger le quintette à cordes de Schubert en ut majeur, D. 956 (Op. post. 163) pour saxophones. Le résultat ? Une performance remarquable qui a démontré l'apparement impossible : jouer cette œuvre classique étendue sur des saxophones.

Cette œuvre de chambre, initialement composée pour deux violons, une alto et deux violoncelles, a été réarrangée pour un ensemble d'instruments non conventionnel : deux saxophones soprano, un saxophone alto et deux saxophones barytons. L'arrangement a été réalisé par Maja Lisac Barroso, saxophoniste slovène née à Bâle, Suisse et deuxième saxophoniste soprano de ce programme. Notamment, la partie du premier violon, connue pour ses hauteurs extrêmes, est magistralement interprétée par Christian Wirth au saxophone soprano. Sylvain Malezieux endosse le rôle de l'alto avec le saxophone alto, tandis que Fabrizio Mancuso joue le premier saxophone baryton et Gilles Tressos le deuxième saxophone baryton, émulant le rôle de deux violoncelles.

Tous les membres du quintette de saxophones sont constamment soumis à de nombreux tests (phrases chantées infiniment longues, notes extrêmement aiguës, équilibre des voix individuelles - car elles sont toutes égales, imitation de l'articulation des cordes, etc.). Leur performance est exceptionnelle.

Le Quintette à cordes de Schubert en ut majeur est considéré comme l'une des plus grandes œuvres de musique de chambre de tous les temps. Sa durée d'environ une heure se déploie avec des proportions épiques, tissant un récit dramatique de dualité. L'oscillation constante entre le lyrisme sublime et l'angoisse sombre et obsédante reflète peut-être l'opposition entre la vie et la mort. Fait remarquable, Schubert a achevé ce quintette seulement deux mois avant sa mort, en faisant ainsi un poignant chant du cygne dans sa courte vie.

Cette interprétation avec des saxophones offre une perspective rafraîchissante et nouvelle sur cette œuvre monumentale.

L'album, enregistré en 2023 dans le studio de radio et de télévision en Slovénie et destiné à

être publié et présenté en 2024, sera la première enregistrement mondial du Quintette à cordes de Schubert en ut majeur, arrangé pour cinq saxophones.

PROGRAMME:

Franz Schubert (1797—1828):

Arrangement for five saxophones: Maja Lisac Barroso

String Quartet in C minor, Op. D 956

1. Allegro ma non troppo

2. Adagio

3. Scherzo. Presto –Trio. Andante sosten

4. Allegretto – più allegro – più presto

PROJECT LINK FOR CONCERT PROMOTERS:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=himTU-MXFlw>

QUARTET HABANERA

The members of the French saxophone Quartet Habanera are Christian Wirth, soprano saxophone, Sylvain Malezieux, alto saxophone, Fabrizio Mancuso, baritone saxophone and Gilles Tressos, baritone saxophone.

Enthusiasts of rarely visited musical territories travel across a variety of musical stages, from contemporary creations to unusual repertoires and transcriptions, from world music to improvised music. After studying at the Paris Conservatoire (Conservatoire national Supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris – CNSMDP), where the Habanera Quartet won the first prize for chamber music, the ensemble has arguably created a unique record of eight first international chamber music prizes (Bordeaux, Sanguinetto, Düsseldorf, Osaka). Since their inception, they have recorded for Alpha Productions – for their albums and soundtracks such as “Mysterious morning” (Alpha 010), “Glazounov, Grieg, Dvořák” (Alpha 041) and recordings of contemporary works (Ligeti, Xenakis, Donatoni, etc.) for which they

have received numerous awards (Golden Diapason, Classica and Répertoire recommendations). The Habanera Quartet is becoming increasingly popular year after year in France (Théâtre de la Ville, Opera comique, "Folles journées" in Nantes, "Festival de l'Épau", IRCAM, Radio France, "Académie Bach"...) and all over the world (Japan, China, USA, Canada, Europe). Classical musicians "without a tailcoat" aim to blur the boundaries of classical concerts by bringing together Bach, Reich, Dvořák and Ligeti on stage in one evening. Louis Sclavis, Dave Liebman, Richard Galliano, Michel Portal and David Krakauer are famous for having fused their improvisations into the tightly knit framework of a saxophone quartet. In 2023, the Habanera Quartet celebrates its 30 years of existence, marking this special anniversary by touring around the world.

www.quatuorhabanera.com

MAJA LISAC BARROSO (CH/SI)

Maja Lisac Barroso is a Slovenian-Swiss saxophonist, music university professor and arranger, born in Basel in 1980. After her classical studies in Vienna and Basel, she has been invited to perform as a soloist in numerous European countries, Africa, Mexico and Australia. Maja Lisac gives masterclasses and is a jury member at international competitions. Her music arrangements are performed by various ensembles, for example the U.S. Navy Band in Washington. At home in various musical genres, Maja Lisac tours with several groups: she is a founder of the ZURE saxophone quartet, a member of the tango duo with bandoneonist Marcelo Nisinman, plays in a classical duo with pianist Andriy Dragan, in a jazz duo with Julio Azcano and as a soloist with the Basel String Quartet. Maja Lisac received awards from Novartis, the canton Basel-Land and the Friedl Wald foundation. In 2008, Maja Lisac was elected for a one year residency at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris, where she collaborated with Slovenian composers and performed world premieres of their compositions. In 2009, Maja Lisac became an assistant professor of prof. Marcus Weiss at the Music University in Basel. From 2020-2023, Maja Lisac teaches her own classical international saxophone class for Bachelor, Master and Doctorate studies at the University for Musik Freiburg im Breisgau. She teaches also at the Jazzcampus Basel. Maja Lisac performed twice in duo with US saxophonist Branford Marsalis. In 2021, she recorded several CDs for the label Solomusica/Sony and for Prospero Classical, and was broadcasted by the Slovenian national television, radio ARS and Swiss Public Radio SRF.

www.majalisac.com

CONCERT REVIEW 2023:

On the first festival evening, in the hall of Kromberk Castle, we had the immense honor of being able to listen to the famous saxophone quartet HABANERA from France together with MAJA LISAC BARROSO. A unique evening of chamber classical music was marked by Schubert's famous string quintet for two violins, viola and two cellos in C major, D. 956 (op. post. 163) arranged for two soprano saxophones, alto saxophone and two baritone

saxophones.

As the director of the Cultural Center mentioned in her opening greeting to the audience, we witnessed the first performance of an adaptation of this large-scale chamber work for this unconventional ensemble of instruments. The composition was arranged by a Slovenian saxophonist born in Basel (Switzerland) – Maja Lisac Barroso, who played the part of the second soprano saxophone at the concert. The most difficult part (due to the extreme heights of the first violin) was played by Christian Wirth on the soprano saxophone. Sylvain Malezieux took over the role of viola on alto saxophone, Fabrizio Mancuso on first baritone saxophone and Gilles Tressos on second baritone saxophone on cello. Schubert's String Quintet in C Major, D. 965 ranks among the handful of greatest chamber works of all time. The epic proportions of the nearly hour-long work are reflected in the dramatic narrative of duality.

The constant oscillation between two opposite poles (sublime lyricism on the one hand and dark, haunting anguish on the other) perhaps suggests the opposition of life and death. Franz Schubert completed the string quintet in C major only two months before his death.

The first movement *Allegro ma non troppo* is the longest movement of the composition. As Metka Sulič wrote in the foreword of the program sheet, Schubert "uses unusual tonal relationships, and the tonal plan has bold transitions".

The second movement is the magnificent *Adagio*, where the opening floating serenity is disturbed by the turbulent-intense central part. The lively third movement of the *Scherzo* (*Presto*) turns again into a complete diametrical opposite in the intermediate *Trio* - the calm *Andante sostenuto*. The concluding *Allegretto*, written in rondo form, is the shortest of the four movements. Here, too, the composer "places a rustic dance in a contrasting relationship with a more refined note and passes into a state of transcendental vision," Suličeva wrote.

Arrangements of string works are definitely a tough nut to crack for saxophonists, which also applies to the arrangement of Schubert's string quintet. All members of the saxophone quintet were constantly subjected to many tests (infinitely long singing phrases, extremely high extreme tones, balancing individual voices - because they are all equal, imitating the articulation of strings, etc.). Their performance was outstanding - all the performers were excellent.

Dealing with such an extensive literature was certainly not an easy feat even for such experienced musicians as the HABANERA quartet, which is celebrating its thirtieth anniversary this year. MAJA LISAC BARROSO faced them with a demanding but at the same time extremely interesting challenge on the occasion of the jubilee. At the end of the concert, she said that for two years she had been frantically listening to this work every day, researching and arranging how this string quintet could also be played on saxophones. Together, the five proved that the impossible is possible.

To the great joy of the organizers and performers, the Kromberk Castle Hall was bursting at the seams - there were so many listeners that it was necessary to bring extra chairs. At the end of the evening, the performers entertained the enthusiastic audience with an addition - Maja Lisac Barroso's adaptation of *Humoresque* op. 101 (B. 187) by Antonin Dvořák.

