

Philippe Herreweghe

Philippe Herreweghe was born in Ghent and studied at both the university and music conservatory there, studying piano with Marcel Gazelle. During this period he started conducting and founded *Collegium Vocale Gent* in 1970. He was invited by *Nikolaus Harnoncourt* and *Gustav Leonhardt*, who had noticed his innovative work, to participate in their recordings of the complete cantatas of J.S. Bach.

Herreweghe's energetic, authentic and rhetorical approach to baroque music was soon drawing praise. In 1977 he founded the ensemble *La Chapelle Royale* in Paris, with whom he performed music of the French Golden Age. From 1982 to 2002 he was artistic director of the *Académies Musicales de Saintes*. During this period, he founded several ensembles with whom he made historically appropriate and well-thought-out interpretations of repertoire stretching from the Renaissance to contemporary music. They include the *Ensemble Vocal Européen*, specialised in Renaissance polyphony, and the *Orchestre des Champs Élysées*, founded in 1991 with the aim of playing pre-Romantic and Romantic repertoire on original instruments. Since 2009, Philippe Herreweghe and Collegium Vocale Gent have been actively working on the development of a large European-level symphonic choir. Since 2001 Philippe Herreweghe is artistic director of the *Accademia delle Crete Senesi*, from 2017 onwards known as the *Collegium Vocale Crete Senesi* festival in Tuscany, Italy.

Philippe Herreweghe continually seeks out new musical challenges, and has been very active performing the great symphonic repertoire, from Beethoven to Stravinsky. Since 1997 he is attached to the Antwerp Symphony Orchestra (deFilharmonie)) both as principal and guest conductor. He is also in great demand as a guest conductor with orchestras such as Amsterdam's *Concertgebouw Orchestra*, the *Gewandhaus Orchestra* in Leipzig, the *Scottish Chamber Orchestra* or the *Tonhalle Orchester Zürich*. In past seasons he has been conducting the *Staatkapelle Dresden*, the *Wiener Symphoniker*, the *Basel Kammerorchester* and the *Cleveland Orchestra* on several occasions.

Over the years, Philippe Herreweghe has built up an extensive discography of more than 135 recordings with all these different ensembles, on such labels as Harmonia Mundi France, Virgin Classics and Pentatone. Highlights include the *Lagrima di San Pietro* of Lassus, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, the complete symphonies of Beethoven and Schumann, Mahler's song cycle *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, Bruckner's *Symphony No. 5*, *Pierrot Lunaire* by Schönberg and the *Symphony of Psalms* by Stravinsky. In 2010 he founded together with Outthere Music his own label φ (PHI). Since then over 30 new recordings with music from William Byrd till Igor Stravinsky have become available. Most recent recordings include Beethoven's oratorio *Christus am Ölberge* (LPH 039), Robert Schumann's *First and Third Symphonies* (LPH040) and *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*, a new volume of cantatas by J.S. Bach (LPH041).

Philippe Herreweghe has received numerous European awards for his consistent artistic imagination and commitment. In 1990 the European music press named him "*Musical Personality of the Year*". Herreweghe and Collegium Vocale Gent were appointed "*Cultural Ambassadors of Flanders*" in 1993. A year later he was awarded the Belgian order of *Officier des Arts et Lettres*, and in 1997 he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the Catholic University of Leuven. In 2003 he received the French title *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*. Lastly, in 2010 the city of Leipzig awarded him its *Bach-Medaille* for his great service as a performer of Bach. In 2017 Philippe Herreweghe will receive an honorary doctorate at Ghent University. In 2021 Philippe Herreweghe was the recipient of the Ultima, career prize for general cultural merit granted by the Flemish Government.

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