

# PRELUDE

Ramon Lazkano / Ensemble Cairn

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## *In brief*

Rewriting, reimagining and reinventing: these three lines of work have been very dear to Ensemble Cairn for the past few years. The ensemble strives to interrogate the relationship between contemporary composers and their history, the musical practices they take inspiration from, which they deconstruct or choose to oppose...

For this project, Ensemble Cairn invites the composer Ramon Lazkano to work from **Chopin's piano** Preludes, commissioning a series of short preludes for eight instruments. Cairn also solicits the pianist **Maroussia Gentet**, winner of the Orléans International Piano Competition, to join this project. On stage, divided into two distinct spaces, the soloist will respond to Ensemble Cairn's instrumentalists, as if today's music responded to that of the past. By throwing the piano Prelude into an alien instrumental environment, Ramon Lazkano interrogates this form of composing and builds the spine of a composite path of listening.

Confronting Chopin's and Lazkano's works, antagonistic yet drawing force from one another, will create an altered, heterogeneous and rich universe, swaying between past and present realities.

## Composer's statement of intent

The cycle, comprising thirteen to seventeen pieces, will be inspired by Chopin's piano Preludes op. 28 and op. 45. It will last about thirty minutes, and will include the following instruments: flute, clarinet, accordion, guitar, piano, violin, viola and solo piano. This new piece will comprise a series of fragments, whose profiles are inspired by Chopin's preludes, but propelled in a foreign instrumental universe. This will create an altered, heterogeneous, corroded sound and atmosphere.

Two possibilities are being studied for the organization of the concert: the first one, somewhat traditional, would be to play the op.45 Prelude in opening of the concert, then play my piece *Preludes (Shapes)* and lastly, conclude with the op.28 Preludes. The second option, which I believe richer, would be to combine Chopin's preludes to my own preludes for instrument ensemble, creating an intertwined network where both works meet as antagonistic mirrors. The music played, grouped in asymmetrical sections, would nevertheless maintain the order of Chopin's cycle of works intact – being so subtle and refined in its tonal and motivic implications that it would suffer from an unusual layout.

The concert would thus be articulated by the alternative swaying of both worlds: the intimate piano of Chopin's ephemeral music, preludes to a void – themselves replacing what they should have preceded – and the ensemble music, creating a shimmer between Chopin's shadows and figures.

I would like to take into account this swinging of past worlds in the scenic disposition, separating the solo piano and the ensemble musicians in space. The tenuous light would leave in the dark the musicians remaining silent. The piano soloist would stand on one side, the keyboard and his hands clearly visible to the public. The ensemble, on the other side of the scene, would be grouped around the conductor, who would also have to be as discreet as possible.

## Artistic team

Solo piano: Maroussia Gentet  
Conductor: Guillaume Bourgogne  
Flute: Cédric Jullion  
Clarinet: Ayumi Mori  
Accordion: Fanny Vicens

Guitar: Christelle Séry  
Piano: Caroline Cren  
Violin: Léo Marillier  
Viola: Cécile Brossard  
Cello: Frédéric Baldassare

## Duration of the concert

Approximately 1 hour and a half

## Program

<i>24 Preludes op.28</i> , Frédéric Chopin	40'
<i>Prélude</i> , Ramon Lazkano	30'

## Ramon Lazkano

Ramon Lazkano (Donostia-San Sebastián, 1968) studied composition in San Sebastian, Paris and Montreal. He was awarded a First Prize of Composition at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique of Paris and received a DEA degree in 20th Century Music and Musicology from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales. He received the Prince Pierre de Monaco Foundation Prize and the Georges Bizet Prize from the French Academy of Fine Arts, among other awards. He was in residence with the Joven Orquesta Nacional de España, at the Musica Festival in Strasburg and with the Ensemble 2e2m in Paris.



His residences in Rome (at the Royal Academy of Spain and at the Academy of France Villa Medici) allowed him to carry out a reflection on composition and its meaning, focusing mainly on intertextuality, silence and the experience of sound, all of which gave birth to emblematic pieces as *Ilunkor* (commissioned by the Euskadiko Orkestra Sinfonikoa), *Hauskor* (a commission by the Orquesta de la Comunidad de Madrid) and *Ortzji Isilak* (commissioned by the Orquesta Nacional de España). In June 2012, Peter Eötvös conducted *Ilunkor* with the Bayerischer Rundfunk Symphonieorchester at the Munich Musica Viva series, while the Venice Biennale programmed *Ortzji Isilak* with Shizuyo Oka and the Basque National Orchestra conducted by José Ramón Encinar in 2014. Kairos Music published a cd with these three orchestral works (*Ilunkor*, *Ortzji Isilak*, *Hauskor*).

Between 2001 and 2011, Ramon Lazkano worked on *Igeltsoen Laborategia (Chalk Laboratory)*, a large collection of chamber music pieces divided into various cycles, which echo sculptor Jorge Oteiza's "experimental laboratory" and more particularly the concept of chalk as a matter of inscription, erosion and memory linked to childhood. The aesthetic purpose of the Laboratory led to *Mugarri* (2010), commissioned by the Spanish Association of Symphony Orchestras and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Navarra. The pieces of the Laboratory were premiered in Austria, Germany, Poland, Mexico, France and Spain; the ensemble recherche in Frankfurt, Ensemble 2e2m in Paris, Ars Musica in Brussels and Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles programmed portrait concerts of the *Laboratory*, and two monography cd's were recorded by ensemble recherche and Smash ensemble.

After the *Laboratory*, a new focus on architecture and duration is shown in his most recent works, such as *Lurralde (Territory)* for string quartet, written for the Diotima quartet and a vocal diptych with Edmond Jabès's poems taken from his book *La mémoire et la main: Main Surplombe*, premiered in March 2013 at Ars Musica Brussels and *Ceux à Qui*, commissioned by the Coupleux-Lassalle Foundation, premiered by the Neue Vocalsolisten with the Ensemble L'Instant Donné at the Éclat Festival in Stuttgart in February 2015 and with the Talea Ensemble in New York on 2016. The Ensemble Musikfabrik conducted by Peter Rundel premiered *Erlantz*, commissioned by the Siemens Foundation and the Goethe Institut, in June 2015.

In 2016, the Festival d'Automne à Paris offered a portrait in three concerts, including the commission and the premiere of Ravel (*Scènes*), as well as pieces from the *Laboratory of Chalks* by the Ensemble Intercontemporain and Matthias Pintscher. The festival Présences at Radio France completed this portrait in 2017 with the premiere of *Etzze* by the Quatuor Diotima and the *Diptyque Jabès*. The Printemps des Arts de Monte-Carlo commissioned *Hondar* for orchestra, premiered that same year and recorded with the Monte-Carlo Philharmonic conducted by Pierre-André Valade. In 2019, the Ensemble Intercontemporain conducted by Matthias Pintscher will premiere *Ziaboga* for large ensemble, a commission of the ensemble, this work summarising Lazkano's ideas on flow and continuity, trajectory and unveiling of the matter.

Ramon Lazkano currently teaches orchestration at the Higher Music Academy of the Basque Country Musikene.

## Maroussia Gentet

Maroussia Gentet is laureate of the First Prize Blanche Selva at the 13th International piano competition of Orleans.

After studying at the CNSMD in Lyon, her hometown, she attended Rena Shereshevskaya's classes at the Ecole Normale de Paris – Alfred Cortot, where she obtained her Concert Diploma in 2015 and was honored with a Classical Artist Diploma and an Artist Diploma specialty Contemporary repertoire and creation (3rd cycle) at CNSMD in Paris, notably with Claire Désert and Florent Boffard. In love with literature and the classical and contemporary chamber music repertoire, she then completed a Master of Vocal Accompaniment with Anne Le Bozec at CNSMD in Paris.



Through her Doctorate research and practice, currently in progress at the CNSMDP and in partnership with the Paris Sorbonne University, she works on the perceptive presence in the scenic construction of the pianist's action and focuses part of her research on the articulation of the gesture of the musician and on that of the body mime. Passionate about sharing her art, she thrives in her collaborations with composers, in the transmission to the youngest – which leads her to hold the Certificate of Aptitude to Teaching – and of course on stage in chamber music and within multidisciplinary projects. Her career has developed through numerous festivals and seasons in France (Roque d'Anthéron, Folles Journées de Nantes, Radio France Festival in Montpellier, etc.), in Germany (Steinway Festival – Philharmonies of Hamburg, Düsseldorf ...), Italy, Spain, Bulgaria, Russia...

She is committed to a variety of repertoires, as evidenced by her projects for the 2019-20 season, including Poulenc's Concerto with the Radio France Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Mikko Frank, as well as the participation in the complete Beethoven Sonatas at the Maison de la Radio under the leadership of François-Frédéric Guy. After several concerts around Henri Dutilleul, especially during the commemoration of 100 years of the birth of the composer at the Auditorium of the Maison de la Radio in Paris, she devoted her first record – released in October 2016 at Passavant Music label with the support of the association Assophie – to the piano music of the French composer and the one of Karol Szymanowski, Polish composer. Her album *Invocations*, recorded on Stephen Paulello's *opus 102* piano and dedicated to the invocation of the forces of nature around the *Mirrors* of Maurice Ravel, comes out in November 2019 at the B Records label.

## Ensemble Cairn

A cairn is a small pile of stones found in the mountains. It serves as a signpost or path for those who venture there, and each passerby adds his or her stone to the pile. This was probably our own wish, too: to create the feeling, in our concerts, of a listening path, juxtapose different types of music, to allow audiences to hear the cohesion among the members of the Cairn ensemble, and to put together programs that are like objects themselves, like musical compositions.

Cairn Ensemble was founded in 1998. Jérôme Combiér is its artistic director, and Guillaume Bourgogne its musical director. Cairn Ensemble's ambition is to create high-quality contemporary music concerts. Some of Cairn's concerts confront other art forms, such as the plastic arts, photography and video, as well as other types of music such as jazz, improvisation and traditional music. The Cairn Ensemble strives to be a group with conductor as well as a group that gives rigorous performances of chamber music.

Actually Cairn is based in Région-Centre Val de Loire and in residency at the National Theater of Orléans. It is supported by the Regional Department for Cultural Affairs (DRAC) and the Regional Council as a National and International Ensemble. From 2006 to 2009 Cairn was in residency at the Royaumont Abbey, Cairn has been the guest of famous festivals including Manifeste (IRCAM), Musica (Strasbourg), Archipel (Geneva), Festival d'Automne



à Paris, Tage für Neue Musik (Zurich), Darmstadt Ferienkurse (Germany), Borealis (Norway), Ars Musica (Belgium) as well as the Villa Médicis (Italy).

Cairn has worked with many composers and given many world premieres. Gérard Pesson, Tristan Murail, Philippe Leroux, Thierry Blondeau, Raphaël Cendo, Jean-Luc Hervé, Francesco Filidei, Noriko Baba, Franck Bedrossian, Philippe Schöeller, Marc Ducret, John Hollenbeck, Cristina Branco, Alban Richard, Pierre Nouvel are examples of important relations for the Ensemble. Cairn has recorded works by Olivier Schneller (Wergo) and by Thierry Blondeau, Raphaël Cendo for the Æon label, and was awarded the Grand Prix du Disque de l'Académie Charles Cros for its recording of Jérôme Combier's cycle *Vies silencieuses*.



*Ensemble Cairn – ©Philippe Stirnweis*

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