

## Vox Luminis

From its very first notes in 2004, early music ensemble Vox Luminis has claimed the international spotlight with its unique sound. Founder, artistic director, and bass Lionel Meunier composed the ensemble in such a way that each voice can shine solo as well as merge into one luminous fabric of sound.

Depending on the repertoire, this core of vocalists is flanked by an extensive continuo, solo instruments, or its full orchestra. That repertoire comprises mainly English, Italian, and German music from the 17th and early 18th century, from virtuoso masterpieces to yet untouched gems that are given full scope both at some 70 concerts a year and in recordings.

Vox Luminis' mission is clear: to bring vocal music to a wide audience, with excellence as its guiding principle and touchstone. Concerts, recordings, workshops with audiences around the world and a rigorous working method are means to this end.

The magic of Vox Luminis has not escaped the international music scene and press. In 2012, the ensemble won the Baroque Vocal Award and the prestigious Recording of the Year at the Gramophone Classical Music Awards for Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien*. Seven years later, the Choral Award from the same professional magazine for the recording *Buxtehude: Abendmusiken* followed. Meanwhile, the trophy cabinet filled up with awards such as 'Klara Ensemble of the Year 2018', a 2018 BBC Music Magazine Award in the category 'Choral', numerous Diapasons d'Or, the 2020 Caecilia Prize and the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik, the last one being awarded even several times.

Vox Luminis is artist in residence at Concertgebouw Brugge and at the Abbaye Musicale de Malonne (Namur). In 2021, it started a structural and lasting partnership with the prestigious Freiburger Barockorchester and the Freiburger BarockConsort for several projects per year.

The ensemble is also a welcome guest at major concert halls and festivals worldwide, including Bozar and Flagey in Brussels, De Singel Antwerp, Auditorio Nacional en Teatro Real Madrid, L'Auditori and Palau de la Musica Barcelona, Salle Gaveau and Auditorium de Radio France in Paris, Wigmore Hall London, Philharmonie Berlin and Cologne, Laeiszhalle and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Konzerthaus Dortmund, Lincoln Center New York, Jordan Hall Boston, Zaryadye Hall Moscow, Festival van Vlaanderen, Festival de Wallonie, Festival de Saintes, Festival Oude Muziek Utrecht, Musikfest Bremen, Bachfest Leipzig, Klangvokal Dortmund, the Salzburger Festspiele, Aldeburgh Festival et Boston Early Music Festival, amongst others.

In the season 2023-2024, Vox Luminis will celebrate its 20th anniversary.

Vox Luminis enjoys the valued support of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (FWB) and Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI).

## Lionel Meunier

Internationally renowned as the founder and artistic director of the award-winning Belgian vocal ensemble Vox Luminis, French conductor and bass Lionel Meunier is widely regarded as one of the most dynamic and highly acclaimed artistic leaders in the fields of historical performance and choral music active today. Praised for his

detailed yet spirited interpretative approach, he is now increasingly in demand as a guest conductor and artistic director with choirs, ensembles, and orchestras worldwide.

Lionel's international breakthrough came in 2012 with Vox Luminis' Gramophone Recording of the Year award for their recording of Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien*. Under his leadership, Vox Luminis has since embarked on extensive concert tours throughout Europe, North America, and Asia; established multi-season artistic residencies at Wigmore Hall, Aldeburgh Festival, Utrecht Early Music Festival, and Concertgebouw Bruges; and recorded over a dozen critically acclaimed albums. Their recording of Buxtehude won them their second Gramophone Award, for 2019 Choral Recording of the Year.

As a guest conductor, Lionel has worked with Netherlands Bach Society, Danish National Vocal Ensemble, Netherlands Chamber Choir, Salzburg Bach Choir, and the Boston Early Music Festival Collegium and has led projects with Vox Luminis in collaboration with Orchestra B'Rock, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, and L'Achéron, among many others. Lionel maintains a close relationship with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and Consort, returning regularly to lead collaborative projects with Vox Luminis that cover a wide repertoire.

Highlights of the 2022/2023 season included a residency at Juilliard culminating in a highly acclaimed performance of Purcell's *King Arthur* in Alice Tully Hall; and a three-week European tour with Vox Luminis and Freiburg Baroque Orchestra with Bach's *St Matthew Passion* to major venues including Berlin Philharmonie, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, and Palau de la Musica, Barcelona. 2023/2024 includes performances all over Europe and North America with Vox Luminis and a residency at CNSMD Paris where Lionel will conduct performances of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and *St. John Passion*. He is also guest conductor at the Conservatorium Amsterdam for a series of concerts around Henry Purcell's *Ode to St. Cecilia*.

Born in France, Lionel was trained as a singer and recorder player and began his career as a bass in renowned ensembles such as Collegium Vocale Ghent, Amsterdam Baroque Choir, and Capella Pratensis. In 2013, he was awarded the title of Namurois de l'Année (Namur Citizen of the Year) for culture in the Belgian town of Namur, where he lives with his family.