

## ENSEMBLE K - BIOGRAPHY - 2024

Simone Menezes explores diverse repertoires to establish dialogues with contemporary society and design projects with universal scope. In 2019, she envisioned the creation of an ensemble consisting of a core of 14 soloists, 14 strong and creative artistic personalities, sharing a cosmopolitan and curious vision where each expresses themselves as a soloist, chamber musician, or section leader. Thus, Ensemble K was born.

Traditionally, most ensembles find their identity in specialization (baroque ensemble, contemporary ensemble), while K finds its identity in the sense of its projects. Thanks to the excellence of its musicians, the ensemble can embark on projects with a repertoire ranging from classical to 20th-century or contemporary.

In 2020, K released its first CD "Accents," illustrating this approach, a debut album aiming to show how the seed of classical music sprouted outside of Europe, and how it's possible to interpret this repertoire "without accent," taking into account regional influences, such as the influence of country music on Copland's music.

Her second project in 2021, "Metanoia," is a DVD in which K discusses its essence, how music and art are vectors of transcendence and beauty in dialogue with other forms of artistic expression. "Metanoia," whose very word - means beyond thought; broaden and change the way of seeing. "Metanoia," traverses both time and borders with works by Giacomo Puccini, Arvo Pärt, Alexander Borodin, Johann Sebastian Bach, Heitor Villa-Lobos, and Ennio Morricone, imbued with Puccini's concept, who only wrote one sacred work due to the divine "All-Power" commanding him to write "only for the stage," but also Bach, who had an astonishing ability to bring transcendence to life using the simplest elements, to Pärt, whose ten-year creative crisis gave birth to a new and highly original musical language. With Ensemble K, the choir Sequenza 9.3, and violinist Manon Galy, Simone Menezes travels through Italy and invites us to experience the transcendental aspects of musical thought and discover the personal journeys of "Metanoia" from some of the greatest figures in music and art.

In 2022, with the project "Beauty Will Save the World," K interprets works by Tchaikovsky, Debussy, and Brahms. Also in 2022, with the project "Cosmos," K revisits Gustav Holst's "The Planets" during a live painting performance with the painter Mathias Duhamel.

For K, a concert should not be merely an intellectual experience, but a meeting of intellect, emotions, and spirit. K offers, during its concerts, an experience that takes unconventional paths and encourages unprecedented artistic encounters.

In 2023, K sets music to 'Sheherazade' with an arrangement commissioned to the composition class of the Conservatory of Lille for an orchestration aimed at 14 musicians of Rimsky Korsakov's music, followed by a creation of a text recounting the story of Sheherazade, based on the text of One Thousand and One Nights.

Additionally, K, besides performing in several countries including Belgium, Italy, the United Kingdom, etc., in Hauts-de-France, conducts several mediation workshops with various audiences (school and young audiences, associations, etc.). K is still striving to solidify the vision of an ensemble that opens doors to encounters and the career development of other artists who share our same values.

## SIMONE MENEZES - BIOGRAPHY - 2024

Italian-Brazilian conductor Simone Menezes is a visionary musician renowned for her creativity and innovative spirit, whether as founder and artistic director of Ensemble K, or as guest conductor with the world's leading orchestras. Simone Menezes has conducted orchestras such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Zurich Philharmonia, London Philharmonia, Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Orchestra Santa Cecilia, the Britten Sinfonia, São Paulo Orchestra, Spanish National Orchestra, Osaka Symphony Orchestra, as well as at the Philharmonie de Paris. She has recorded three albums and premiered over 20 works. She has curated various themed projects, including the celebrated *Amazônia*: a collaboration between Simone and the great Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado, highlighting the ever-changing landscapes of the Amazon rainforest and released in September 2023, was performed with more than 10 orchestras all around the world.

Simone Menezes, mentored by Paavo Järvi, studied in Brazil, London and Paris. She started her career as principal conductor of the Brazilian Unicamp Orchestra, she was the second woman to obtain this position in the country. She also closely works with composers like Thomas Ades, Philippe Hersant, Sophie Lacaze and Lera Auerbach. In 2020, she launched her new orchestra, Ensemble K, a flexible ensemble specialising in twentieth-century chamber repertoire.