aedes

LETTRES OUVERTES
OPEN LETTERS

An imaginary dialogue between Anne Sylvestre and Léo Ferré

2027 | 2028 programme

LETTRES OUVERTES

An imaginary dialogue between Anne Sylvestre and Léo Ferré

“ *Lettres ouvertes* imagines a meeting between two iconic figures of *la chanson française,* Anne Sylvestre and Léo Ferré, brought together in a place untouched by time. Their conversation flows freely – sometimes humorous, often profound – as they reflect on their convictions, their doubts, and their view of the world.

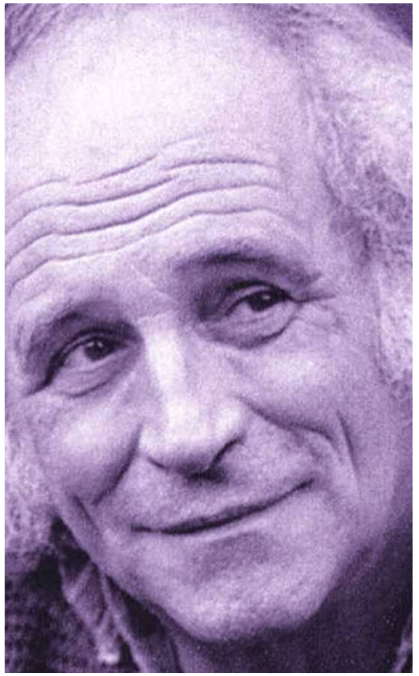
This dialogue is brought to life by members of the choir, who embody the two voices through readings of texts imagined by writer Francine Gautier-Cheney. The result is a living conversation, in which ideas and emotions flow in equal measure.

As the dialogue unfolds, the songs become powerful statements, giving voice to social struggles, fraternity and sorority, freedom, relations between women and men, poetry as a form of resistance, and the difficulty of living in this world. While their works find common ground in their deep humanity, there are also divergences. Rather than trying to erase them, the concert embraces these, seeing them as the very substance of a lively, respectful, and fertile exchange.

For this programme, ten composers have created new a cappella choral transcriptions of the artists’ songs. These polyphonic arrangements cast a new light on these iconic texts, revealing their full poetic and dramatic power, as if they had always been intended for a choir.

Guided by the voices of Aedes, the audience is invited to listen to two minds in dialogue, to embrace both their harmonies and their dissonances, and to dream that it is still possible – through poetry – to restore a heart to a heartless world.





Far from being simply a tribute to Anne Sylvestre and Léo Ferré, Lettres ouvertes is a collective choral project that illuminates the vital role of today’s composers.

Mathieu Romano

Programme

Programme selected from the following works

Léo Ferré (arr. Manuel Peskine)
La Chambre

Léo Ferré (arr. Frédérique Lory)
Les Poètes

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Fabien Touchard)
Les Gens qui doutent

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Manuel Peskine)
Mon Mystère

Léo Ferré (arr. Manuel Peskine)
L'homme

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Héloïse Werner)
Bergère

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Aurélien Dumont)
Le Centre du motif

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Vincent Manac'h)
Rien qu'une fois faire des vagues

Léo Ferré (arr. Fabien Touchard)
Ni dieu ni maître

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Manuel Peskine)
Mon Mari est parti

Léo Ferré (arr. Franck Krawczyk)
Tu n'en reviendras pas

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Lise Borel)
Juste une femme

Léo Ferré (arr. Fabien Touchard)
Avec le temps

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Nigji Sanges)
La Chambre d'or

Léo Ferré (arr. Vincent Manac'h)
Je te donne

Anne Sylvestre (arr. Vincent Bouchot)
Les Années qui cognent

Léo Ferré (arr. Vincent Bouchot)
Comme à Ostende

Léo Ferré (arr. Lise Borel)
Art poétique

1h25 with no interval

Aedes
17 singers

Mathieu Romano
conductor

Mathieu Romano &
Tido Visser
conception

Francine Gautier-Cheney
letters and correspondence

Nolwenn Delcamp-Risse
light designer

Technical information

Total number of people on tour: 20 people

Artistic staff

17 singers
1 conductor

Technical staff

1 light designer
1 production manager

Estimated planning

The day of the concert
1 technical service (lighting)
1 rehearsal
1 performance


Christelle Bazin © Département de la Somme


© Christelle Bazin

As with Brel et Barbara *a cappella* a few years ago, our primary ambition is to bring choral art into dialogue with the grand tradition of French chanson, taking the listener on a journey through creative worlds as uniquely diverse as those of Anne Sylvestre and Léo Ferré.

Each commissioned composer took up one or more songs, infusing them with a distinctive creative voice. While some favoured almost direct transcription, others embraced immense freedom, venturing into true “recompositions” that harness the full potential of the ensemble’s seventeen voices.

Repertoire assignments were guided by my knowledge of each composer’s varied style. Aedes had already collaborated closely with several of them, including Fabien Touchard, Aurélien Dumont, Manuel Peskine, Vincent Manac’h, Lise Borel, and Vincent Bouchot.

While drawing upon the expressive wealth of choral singing, the composers expressed themselves freely in their own musical language in deep respect of the original texts, which offer a profound reflection on the human and social challenges of our time.

Mathieu Romano



Sylvain Gripoix © Aedes 2026

Mathieu Romano

At the heart of Mathieu Romano's conducting lies a commitment to expressiveness and connection – bringing musicians together in a shared emotional experience in order to communicate deeply with the audience.
Drawing on historical research while focusing on a lively, intense interpretation, his approach consistently highlights the meaning and emotional power of the musical texts. He works both with singers and with orchestras, and his versatility, deep understanding of the human voice, precise gestures, and acute listening skills make him just as at home on the concert platform as he is in the opera pit.
A dynamic artist constantly on the lookout for new experiences, his repertoire ranges from music of the Baroque period to contemporary works. He also regularly takes on cross-disciplinary projects: real-time electronic music, film concerts, musical theatre, site-specific performances…

In recent seasons, he has worked with many distinguished orchestras and ensembles including Les Siècles, the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, L'Itinéraire, the Orchestre National de Lille, the Yellow Socks Orchestra, the Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire, the Orchestra of Teatro Carlo Felice Genova, the Orchestre de la Garde républicaine, Les Frivolités Parisiennes, the Chœur de Radio France, the RIAS Kammerchor, and the Nederlands Kamerkoor.
In the field of opera, he has conducted, amongst other works, *Breaking the Waves* (Mazzoli) at the Opéra-Comique and *Don Giovanni* (Mozart) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. This season he will be conducting *Orphée aux enfers* (Offenbach) at the Paris Conservatoire (CNSMD) and *Noye's Fludde* (Britten) at the Atelier Lyrique de Tourcoing with Les Siècles.
He is the founder and artistic director of Aedes. Together they take part in some of the most prestigious musical seasons. The ensemble and its many recordings are highly acclaimed by audiences and critics alike.

In recognition of his artistic achievements, Mathieu Romano was awarded the honorary distinction of Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters *(Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres)* by the French Ministry of Culture in 2020.

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Regarded as “one of the finest choirs in France” *(Le Figaro),* capable of “doing everything – singing and performing – to perfection” *(Le Monde),* Aedes ranks among Europe’s leading ensembles, acclaimed for the purity and intensity of its performances.

Founded in 2005 by Mathieu Romano, this seventeen-voice ensemble has forged a unique sound under his direction that is at once precise, sensuous, and strong, with a vibrant energy that goes straight to the heart.

With a repertoire ranging from Baroque to contemporary works, with forays into other artistic spheres, Aedes loves to surprise, innovate, and blur boundaries: dance, theatre and the visual arts interact with singing, constantly opening up new horizons. Every Aedes concert is also a sensory experience.

A regular guest on the major French and European stages, Aedes also partners with prestigious orchestras to perform masterpieces of the choral repertoire. The ensemble’s extensive discography, devoted primarily to music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, has reaped numerous awards.

Based in the Somme region and in residence at the Atelier Lyrique de Tourcoing, Aedes places transmission at the heart of its commitment by training future choral conductors, performing for a wide range of audiences, and raising awareness of choral singing among pupils and teachers.

In September 2026, Aedes launches a new festival – “Vibrations”, at the Royal Abbey of Saint-Riquier – dedicated to the art of choral singing.

During the 2026–2027 season, Aedes will take to France’s premier stages with three major productions showcasing its skills: *Le Chant du Sabre,* in collaboration with martial artist Masato Matsuura, *Dans l’oubli,* with actor Denis Podalydès, and *Mozart’s Requiem,* performed alongside Les Siècles and under the baton of Mathieu Romano.



Sylvain Gripoix © Aedes 2026

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