



Created in 1986, Akadêmia is a baroque instrumental and vocal ensemble with a unique artistic projet. Its name is a reference to the philosophical school founded by Plato and to the Italian academies, sites of research and experimentation, where musicians, philosophers, poets, people associated with theatre and artists from all horizons met and exchanged ideas.

It also expresses the deeply humanist basis of Françoise Lasserre's approach, as the desire to kindle emotion lies at the heart of her artistic project.

The ensemble's rich discographic production, dedicated to Palestrina, Monteverdi, Landi, Cavalli, Schütz and Bach, has been greatly acclaimed by the critics and has received several awards (Diapason d'or, ffff from Télérama, Choc de Classica, etc.).

In 2016, Akadêmia will be celebrating 30 years of existence and to mark this occasion the ensemble will perform several prestigious concerts, notably Bach's *Magnificat* and *Trauerode* at the Chaise-Dieu Festival, a programme dedicated to Johann Christoph Bach at the Oratoire du Louvre in Paris, and *Orfeo, Crossing the Ganges* at the Arsenal in Metz and at the Reims Opera house.

These three concerts are a good illustration of the direction Françoise Lasserre has been following with Akadêmia over the last few years, deliberately proposing a new reading of the great works that gave the ensemble its reputation for excellence.

Her ambition is to make ancient music resound in the modern world, by building bridges between the artistic disciplines (dance, literature, puppet theatre, video, etc), different eras, and extra-European cultures.

Her interpretations of Schütz and Monteverdi were thus the inspiration for several contemporary dance creations: *Altro Canto* by Jean-Christophe Maillot in 2006 that is still touring the world, *Mea Culpa* and *Mercy* by Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui in 2006 and 2014.

To make the great moments of baroque music more accessible to contemporary audiences, Akadêmia commissioned two texts in French from the poet Jean-Pierre Siméon. In 2010, the focus was on Orfeo and Italian music with *Death is Only Death if Love Survives It*.

Then in 2014-2015, the show *And they will nail me to the tree*, a contemporary, humanist view of the *Saint Matthew's Passion*, offered a new approach to Johann Sebastian Bach's masterpiece.

Since 2013, Akadêmia has been deeply involved in India. *Orfeo, Crossing the Ganges*, based on Claudio Monteverdi's work, was the starting point for an ongoing training and cooperation programme with young Indian artists. This commitment is a continuance of the work Akadêmia does in France, training and accompanying young professionals as they begin their careers.

Akadêmia engages with its audiences to help them discover baroque works and instruments and to allow people to access all the emotion a concert can offer.

The ensemble regularly organises sessions in schools, middle schools and lycées, and creates close partnerships with centres for social work, old-age homes and even associations like Secours Populaire and Cultures du Coeur .

Akademia is hosted in residence in Reims City.

It receives support from the Région Alsace-Champagne-Ardenne-Lorraine, The Département de la Marne, and several sponsors like Mécénat Musical Société Générale (main patron), Champagne Boizel, Plurial Novilia, Best Western Plus Hôtel de la Paix, Cabinet Expertise-Audit-Conseil FCN and X-PM – partner for the international projects.