

This year, the students of the **Le Thoronet Summer Academy of Early Music** will get the chance to work on an exceptional programme: for this 11th edition we have decided to combine the strengths of the Academy with the Gilles Binchois Ensemble in order to perform Monteverdi's masterpiece *Vespers of the Blessed Virgin*.

The Academy, led by Gerd Türk, Aki Noda and myself, has places open for 4 sopranos, 3 altos, 4 tenors and 4 basses. The singers will be selected according to their profile and a submitted audio recording.

These students will be joined by 8 singers and 4 continuists from the Ensemble (organ, theorbo, harp and gamba).

The Academy begins on the 12th of July and will conclude with 2 concerts on the 20th and 21st of July which will open the 27th Le Thoronet International Music Festival.

VESPERS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN
Claudio Monteverdi
for voices and continuo

The Gilles Binchois Ensemble – 11th Le Thoronet Summer Academy of Early Music
Direction : Dominique Vellard

A word from Dominique Vellard

In every musician's life there are projects that one dreams of successfully achieving and whose undertaking feels like a vital necessity. This was what Monteverdi's Vespers of the Blessed Virgin represented for me.

A veritable jewel in the crown of a Renaissance Art which has forged my musical identity, the work combines a luxuriant polyphony with a vocal style that has greatly influenced my own singing aesthetic.

Invigorated by this masterpiece and by the energy it develops, the Gilles Binchois Ensemble has chosen to join the Le Thoronet International Music Festival in order to offer the students of its Summer Academy of Early Music the extraordinary chance to immerse themselves in this unique vocal style, in this immensely generous and profoundly humanist music.