

A photograph of a conductor, Catherine Bolzinger, seen from behind, wearing a dark sequined jacket and a gold glove. She is leading a large choir of men and women in dark robes, all holding sheet music and singing. The setting is a grand, dark cathedral with high vaulted ceilings and intricate architectural details. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the conductor and the choir members.

# Catherine Bolzinger

Conducting  
means listening  
differently



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The human voice is unique, complex,  
instantly recognizable.

It reflects the soul, tells the story of a life.

The one who sings breathes; those who sing listen.

In the most extreme moments,  
singing reveals what is irreducible  
— that intimate pearl which the choir magnifies  
through the power of the collective.

Conducting a choir means sculpting a singing  
body made of faces, impulses, and energies.  
I know little of each singer's life, but I recognize  
their voices, their presence, their inner fire.  
Singing is a form of exposure of which I am  
both the source and the witness.

Whether it is a choir or an orchestra,  
my gesture, my breath, and my musical thinking  
remain the same — driven by breath, nourished  
by emotion, and striving toward a shared vision.  
In a changing world, I search for what endures:  
the beauty of the works, the warmth of encounters,  
the joy of bringing forth a new body — collective  
and vibrant — an augmented humanity.

If, along this path, I have made someone happy,  
then I have carried my share of the world's burden.

*Catherine Bolzinger*

## BACKGROUND

Chief conductor of the Chœur philharmonique de Strasbourg since its founding in 2003, Catherine Bolzinger also leads the Chœur de Haute-Alsace – Orchestre national de Mulhouse since 2023, and she founded the professional vocal quintet Voix de Stras'. Her distinctive journey combines artistic rigor, innovation, and a passion for the human voice in all its forms.

Over two decades of choral conducting, she has gained deep mastery of the choir and orchestra repertoire, regularly collaborating with renowned conductors such as Theodor Guschlbauer, John Nelson, Marc Albrecht, Marko Letonja, Aziz Shokhakimov, and Kirill Karabits.

In 2010, she was invited by Kent Nagano to the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, where she notably prepared Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* and Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

At the podium, she conducts a wide repertoire — from the Renaissance to contemporary premieres — with ensembles such as the Orchestre national de Mulhouse, Les Percussions de Strasbourg, La Follia, and the Orchesterverein Stuttgart. A specialist in contemporary music, she has premiered works by Georges Aperghis, Thierry Escaich, François-Bernard Mâche, Ramon Lazkano, and Clara Olivares, performing them at international festivals (Musica, Classical:NEXT, Compositores de hoje – Brazil) as well as in outreach settings.

With *Voix de Stras'*, she develops a unique *a cappella* repertoire blending transcriptions, arrangements, and new works. Her adaptations for five operatic voices, in the spirit of Clytus Gottwald, reflect her deep sense of vocality and refined knowledge of the repertoire.

In 2024, for the 80th anniversary of Strasbourg's Liberation, she initiated the creation of an original transcription of the final movement of Beethoven's 9th Symphony for choir, organ, and percussion — acclaimed at Strasbourg Cathedral.

Internationally, she has conducted in the United States, Brazil, Austria, Germany, Senegal, Poland, Russia, Armenia, and Bangladesh. She is also the author of the book-CD **Nos chansons dans les rues** (Éd. du Signe, 2019) and **Un chœur à l'ouvrage** (À Cœur Joie, 2024), a reflection on choral practice and collective engagement.

Trained at the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique de Lyon under Bernard Tétu and Nicole Corti, she graduated from the CNSMD of Lyon, was awarded a grant by Société Générale's corporate patronage program, and received the Musical Prize of the Académie des Marches de l'Est.

## CONDUCTED REPERTOIRE

(Selection)

### Early & Baroque Music

Purcell – Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary and other motets  
Caldara – Stabat Mater  
Vivaldi – Gloria, Magnificat  
Zelenka – Missa Votiva  
J.S. Bach – Motets  
Durante – Lamentationes Jeremiae  
Haydn – Nelson Mass  
Mozart – Coronation Mass

### 19th Century & Romanticism

Beethoven – Symphony No. 9, reimagined for choir, soloists, percussion, and grand organ  
Rossini – Petite Messe Solennelle  
Mendelssohn – Psalm 42, motets  
Bruckner – Mass in E minor  
Brahms – Vier Gesänge, Op. 17  
Schubert, Schumann – Works for choir and piano

### 20th Century

Fauré – Requiem  
Bartók, Ravel, Debussy – Vocal and choral works  
Poulenc – A cappella choral works  
Britten – Hymn to St Cecilia, Rejoice in the Lamb, A Ceremony of Carols  
Distler – Choral-Passion  
Messiaen – Cinq Rechants  
Theodorakis – Canto General  
Vasks – Dona Nobis Pacem

### Contemporary Music & Premieres

Steve Reich – Proverb  
Thierry Escaich – Litanies pour un jubilé  
Georges Aperghis – Strasbourg Instantanés  
François-Bernard Mâche – Cassiopée  
Jean-Luc Fauchamps – Printemps  
Arturo Gervasoni – Les saisons se déchainent  
Ramon Lazkano – Maloak euri balira  
Ivan Solano – Ikarus, Kyogen  
Nikolett Burzynska – La féminité, Holub Miru  
Lionel Ginoux – Make Me a Dream, Stabat Mater Speciosa  
Clara Olivares – Nebula, Spectre des nuits  
K. Saariaho, E. Rautavaara, F. Ibarrondo, B. Jolas – A cappella works

### Interdisciplinary Performances

Derrière la Lurette (voice and electronics)  
Nos chansons dans les rues (book and CD, site-specific creation)



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