

LIONEL BRINGUIER APPOINTED MUSIC DIRECTOR OF THE LIÈGE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (OPRL) FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2025

The 37-year-old French conductor will take over from Gergely Madaras, marking the end of six years of fruitful and dynamic collaboration. Lionel Bringuier has been appointed for a four-year term.



On 4 December 2023, at the suggestion of the Executive Director, Aline Sam-Giao, the Board of the Liège Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (OPRL) appointed Lionel Bringuier to the role of Music Director, starting on 1 September 2025 for a duration of four years. The French conductor, who trained with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and has conducted in the world's leading venues for 20 years, will become the tenth Music Director of the OPRL, which was founded in 1960.

Lionel Bringuier's first three collaborations with the OPRL (beginning in 2021) immediately revealed a very strong musical affinity, in particular a shared passion for early-twentieth-century French music (Ravel, Debussy, Roussel, Poulenc...) and its influence (Stravinsky), romantic repertoire (including Rimski-Korsakov), contemporary music, and little-known repertoires. Together with Aline Sam-Giao and the musicians, who have welcomed him enthusiastically, Lionel Bringuier has ambitious plans, both in terms of the performance

repertoire of the OPRL and its relationship with audiences and of developing its national and international reputation. World-class concert halls such as the Philharmonie de Paris, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the Kölner Philharmonie have already signalled their interest in hosting the OPRL conducted by its future Music Director. The Festival de Pâques d'Aix-en-Provence has also expressed an interest, and Outhere Music (and its labels Alpha Classics and Fuga Libera) will be the first to record them together.

Lionel Bringuier's career has been defined by his precocious talent: at the age of 13, he entered the Conservatoire de Paris and at 19, he won the International Competition for Young Conductors in Besançon, which quickly led to collaborations with some of the world's greatest ensembles, particularly the Los Angeles Philharmonic, with which he worked for six years alongside Esa-Pekka Salonen and later Gustavo Dudamel (2007–2013). He has been a guest conductor of, among others, the orchestras of Philadelphia, Boston, Montreal, New York, Vienna, Berlin, Amsterdam, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Tokyo

Symphony Orchestra, and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Lionel Bringuier has been Music Director of the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich (2014–2018) and of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León (Valladolid) (2009–2012). Since 2019, he has been an associate artist of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice in his hometown and was recently appointed its principal conductor for the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 seasons. He collaborates regularly with numerous outstanding soloists and works with the leading labels and concert venues.

The six years served by Gergely Madaras as Music Director (2019–2025), two

three-year terms) and his work with Daniel Weissmann (General Manager until 2023) have undeniably allowed the international reputation of the OPRL to flourish. Under his charismatic direction, the OPRL has strengthened its musical capabilities, developed new formulas for concerts, expanded its audiences, successfully completed a number of recording projects (Boesmans, Franck, and soon the complete works of Liszt and Dohnányi), and celebrated the bicentenary of César Franck. The OPRL's prestige is reflected in its strong audiovisual presence on the biggest classical music platforms. Gergely Madaras will return to the OPRL as a guest conductor in 2026–2027.

« I am looking forward to building the future of the OPRL with Lionel Bringuier and I am certain that he will succeed in taking the musicians of Liège far, as I have been able to appreciate his experience, his talent, his dedication, and his undeniable personal qualities. »

Aline Sam-Giao, Executive Director of the OPRL



« I am very proud and moved to be appointed Music Director of the Liège Royal Philharmonic Orchestra!

Since my first encounter, in February 2021, with the admirable musicians who make up this ensemble, I have been amazed by their exceptional musical abilities and human qualities. It has been a real joy, and I am thrilled that I will be joining the wonderful OPRL family and planning the future together in collaboration with the entire administrative team.

I am excited about working with Aline Sam-Giao. Since we first met in Lyons, I have admired her cultural breadth, her generosity, and her enthusiasm for exploring innovative ideas.

I salute the magnificent work done by Gergely Madaras, and it is a pleasure to take up the torch and write a new chapter in the story of the Liège Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. »

Lionel Bringuier, Music Director designate of the OPRL (2025–2029)



« Although nearly a quarter of our time together with the orchestra is still ahead of us, which I am greatly looking forward to, I would like to warmly welcome Lionel Bringuier to the OPRL family as my successor. After each visit of him as a guest conductor, it was clear that there was a special chemistry between him and the musicians, which for me is the most important factor in such a relationship. Lionel is an experienced and internationally recognized conductor, and I am reassured to know that our esteemed institution, our musicians and our public will be in - and will benefit from a great pair of hands. »

Gergely Madaras, Music Director of the OPRL (2019–2025)