

Valentine Michaud

Artist in residence – saxophonist

Winner of the 2020 Credit Suisse Young Artist Award, Valentine Michaud perfectly combines musical finesse and impeccable technique with an extraordinary artistic vision. Her drive to push boundaries and explore new horizons has established Valentine Michaud a unique place in the ever-evolving world of classical music.

Born in Paris in 1993, Valentine Michaud studied saxophone and piano in Nantes before moving to Switzerland at the age of 16, where she obtained a bachelor's degree in saxophone from the Haute École de Musique de Lausanne in Pierre-Stéphane Meugé's class, alongside a bachelor's degree in musicology from the Sorbonne University in Paris. Then, after obtaining an initial master's degree in instrumental pedagogy, she continued her training with a second master's degree as a soloist at the Zurich University of the Arts under Professor Lars Mlekusch. Valentine now teaches saxophone at the Conservatoire populaire de musique de Genève. She will perform in September 2024 with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Daniel Harding.

As the first saxophonist to appear as soloist with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Valentine Michaud made her debut under the baton of Esa-Pekka Salonen at the Lucerne Festival in 2022 where she premiered Anders Hillborg's *Peacock Tales*. Other recent guest appearances include performances with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the United States Navy Band, the Sinfonia Varsovia and the Philharmonie Zuidnederlands, with whom she recorded the *Peacock Tales* for Outhere Music.

Valentine also played a pivotal role in establishing SIBJA, an artists' collective characterised by its interdisciplinary collaborations and commitment to creating innovative concert experiences. Together with her brother Emmanuel Michaud, Valentine Michaud takes on the role of artistic director, as well as participates as a performer and designs costumes. SIBJA's performances merge painters, dancers, musicians and live electronic music in a variety of unique settings, such as the *Waiting for Amon* trilogy (Nico Kaufman Prize 2018) and short film *Le Dialogue de l'Ombre Double*.

Eager to expand the saxophone's expressive range, Valentine Michaud has commissioned several compositions in collaboration with pianist Akvilė Sileikaitė. The pair have performed globally under the name of the Akmi duo, appearing at venues such as KKL Luzern, Wigmore Hall, la Cappella St. Petersburg, and Wiener Musikverein. In 2023, the Akmi duo produced the album *Beyond the Wall*, and released it under Avie Records. In 2022, Valentine Michaud also formed a duo with her brother and percussionist Gabriel Michaud. They are currently working on their debut album *Oiseaux de Paradis*, which is slated for release in 2024 by Mirare and are set to perform for the first time as a duo at the Folle Journée festival in both Tokyo and Warsaw.