

As a talented vocalist, Steve Dugardin (Ostend in 1964) occupies a remarkable position on the music scene. Beginning his musical studies at the age of fifteen with Aimée Thonon, he went on to study singing with Marie-Thérèse Maesen. He graduated first class in singing in the class of Lucienne Van Dijck at the Royal Flemish Conservatory in Antwerp. It was at the latter that he first met Erik Van Nevel who awakened his interest in Early Music. Passionate about his art, Dugardin has continued his studies under the English male alto, Ashley Stafford, Ingrid Voermans, Margreet Honig and John Norris. He is now studying with Catrin Wyn-Davies in Antwerpen.

His exceptional voice did not go unnoticed for long and he was soon taking part in productions conducted by Sigiswald Kuijken, Jos Van Immerseel, Ton Koopman, Gustav Leonhardt, Frans Brüggen and he sang for many years in Philippe Herreweghe's Collegium Vocale Gent.

He is increasingly in demand as a soloist, and has worked with (among others): the Ricercar Consort, the Clemencic Consort, Tragicomedia (Stephen Stubbs), Il Seminario (Gerard Lesne), Les Arts Florissants (William Christie), Il Fondamento (Paul Dombrecht), Huelgas Ensemble (Paul Van Nevel), Choeur de Chambre de Namur, Ex Tempore, La Petite Bande (Sigiswald Kuijken), Musica Antiqua Köln, De Nederlandse Bachvereniging and the Bach-ensemble (Joshua Rifkin). And more recently with Ensemble Clematis and the Capilla Flamenca.

These collaborations have led to the recording of a number of CDs.

Dugardin already has the requisite stage experience, appearing in operas by Scarlatti (with Opera Mobile), Handel (with Transparant) and in Boston and at the Utrecht Music festival in Cavalli's opera, Ercole Amanti. Also the title role in Akhnaten by Philip Glass. Also Orfeo in Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice is one of his roles. He also played Nutrice in L'incoronazione di Poppea in Basel with Konrad Junghanel and in a setting of Nigel Lawry and Il Maggio in Rinaldo, etc...

In Alain Platel's production "lets op Bach" he also came in contact with the dance-scene, and in the theatrical production "Gilles" (written and directed by Hugo Claus), he shared the stage with Jan Declair. Last year he was singing in "Ashes", his third (after "Bâche" and "Import-Export") collaboration with choreograph Koen Augustijnen.

He is now touring with the theatreproduction "Gif" by Ntgent, with songs of John Dowland. And after Huis of Josse De Pauw he will be singing in Kings of War, the new production of Toneelgroep Amsterdam directed by Ivo van Hove and music by Eric Sleichim, Blindman.

He has not been inspired solely by Early Music. His passion for Contemporary Music was the stimulus for the creation of the male quartet "Touchant", specialising in Close Harmony.

He has been teaching at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Liège, and now at the Koninklijk Conservatorium Antwerpen passing his skills and experience on to a new generation of artists. Also a vocal coach he is frequently asked by theatergroups such as Ntgent, LOD, Toneelhuis Antwerpen and Tutti Fratelli.