

Elaine interviews: Mariannick Bond-Madiot, singer, singing teacher and conductor of Corlay choir

Elaine So Mariannick, welcome to Spotlight's headquarters here in central Brittany, in Gouarec. Um. First of all, before we talk about your forthcoming plans, um can we just have a little bit of a back story from you as to where you're from and how you got into singing.

Mariannick Um. I am from er Brittany, from Morbihan. My father er was from Morbihan and er all the family er er was in Morbihan. But I have spent a lot of er part of my er childhood in Loire-Atlantique. I should say my childhood till er the age of 30. But it's always a long childhood. And um, and nowadays, um gone back with um with the jobs, with the and also the proximity of the Conservatoire. I am more and more er in Bretagne now.

Elaine So you were working as, I believe, a a commercial assistant?

Mariannick Yes, yes. I worked

Elaine When you discovered your singing.

Mariannick Yes. Commercial assistant. And er then I saw that er what was more important in my life was the time of my singing lessons than rather my planning for working. So I decided to stop everything and to er try to pass a test to begin er other studies um in the Rennes University, in music and er carried on, also on the parallel of the singing lessons. So er I got er a a professional Diploma of education in music er in 2000 and also I got my er another final um called DEM er musical er diploma.

Elaine Diploma yes yes

Mariannick Diplôme d'études musicales in singing lessons. So it is the highest after

Elaine I think that was when you were, you mentioned about 36. It was a turning point in your life.

Mariannick Yes, yes. That I decided to put everything in the music.



Elaine The veil came away.

Mariannick Yes, yes, and to be a professional ??? because I couldn't imagine it was possible for me to be a professional musician and a professional singer. And one day, I have decided, no, it's er, there is more pleasure in singing than in anything. Um. Yes, it's my priority, and that's why I er I have begun to I've begun to sing. I have begun in giving singing lessons also and er and working also um as a musician in primary schools. And er so er having improved and passed my exams, I er I carry on, carried on on being a yes er professional er singer, professional teacher.

Elaine Teacher too.

Mariannick Yes.

Elaine Well, the teaching would help with bringing in, as we say, funds too, isn't it?

Mariannick Yes?

Elaine Financial side.

Mariannick Yes. And also, er what is paradoxical when, during your singing lessons, study your singing course, your own ones, it helps you to be also a teacher. So you can't be a very big teacher, but teaching lessons helps you to understand what's happening also for you. And um er so it has er given me er a lot of tools for teaching and for singing, and singing has given me tools for of course teaching.

Elaine Do you sing, tend to sing more solo or with, with er a duo, duet or or in a choir?

Mariannick Um I have done two things. So I was er er, I was in the choir of singing opera of Rennes er and er as a professional. Before that, as a semi-professional, I sang also a lot of with the orchestra of Pays de Loire in Nantes. And er could er, I think I have begun, yes, being a chorist with a second symphony of Mahler. So it was a

Elaine Ah

Mariannick Something very, very

Elaine Oh, wow, yes, that is my that is literally up there with one of my favourite symphonies of all, I think

Mariannick Yes

Elaine The Mahler Symphony number 2, absolutely beautiful.

Mariannick Er I had the opportunity to sing with very, very er well known soloists in European or world soloist. So that's very, very good. And then after as a professional er I've sung, I sing in choirs like so opera, choirs in Rennes, but also er in more reduced er number with Mélisme, the vocal that is actually um also around. We could we have sung er just without musicians, but we have been part of er a lot of concerts with Matheus orchestra in Paris, Toulouse, er Brest and er in Bretagne, of course. Also and in parallel, I have er always tried to sing also in soloist and the duetist

Elaine As a duo yes

Mariannick And yes to make um different, I should say, in different categories of songs, so opera, but also the songs er.

Elaine So very wide ranging.

Mariannick Yes, yes.

Elaine You're not just focusing

Mariannick Yes

Elaine On er the

Mariannick No



Elaine The sort of, let's say more historic opera, but but open. Because I think you mentioned, when we were talking before that, er Bernstein.

Mariannick Yes, oh yes, I like Bernstein.

Elaine Is one of you favourites.

Mariannick It's um fabulous, it's a a good remember also at the in Rennes, because we er, I sang in *Candide*, but everything in in Bernstein is er, is joyful and not very easy. Sometimes. I think he has written, what is *The Good Kitchen* well, he has written a nice melody called *I Hate Musical* also, so that I like this sort of

Elaine Oh, very wide ranging.

Mariannick Yes.

Elaine Yes, incredible. So now talking about what is coming up, when and where is this going to happen, and and why perhaps this event in Corlay.

Mariannick Ah, yes, in Corlay um because in Corlay I am conducting the choir. I have been conducting for um 4, 5 years. You know, with the Covid, we lose the memory of years.

Elaine Two years disappeared.

Mariannick And um there were a lot of er, there were some people um I have taught already, long time ago in Mur de Bretagne and was saying, "Oh, we would like to have er another course. We would like to sing again er, er but in a little groups." And um so we are beginning this year a group of er Technique Vocale, so singing lessons, but with er 4, 5, 6 er people together or more, if they are. But to er try to work, to learn, sorry, all the technique, really, to try to improve the voice, to to feel better. And er so we are beginning er end of September.

Elaineum This September yes



Mariannick And um it will be er one hour a week, and try to

Elaine Will that be in the evenings?

Mariannick Yes, yes. It's er after er from eight to nine, possibly um for everybody to have the opportunity to come after works. And it's more

Elaine So it will be open to anybody. You don't have to be a a singer or

Mariannick No, it's open to anybody. You come

Elaine Right

Mariannick How you are.

Elaine Yes

Mariannick You come with er what you know. If you don't know it's it's not a problem. You just because sometimes they don't, people don't know that they can sing.

Elaine No. It's a benefit, isn't it? So many benefits to singing to your health.

Mariannick Ah.It's totally a benefit. Because er it's um if we put apart of the fact that, "No, I don't dare singing with other people with me". If we can say already that you can sing, everybody can sing, and we don't laugh at anybody, it will help your with your self confidence and things. But in a way, er if you imagine that er er in the vocal technique, all what you need is all what we need to stand to, to breathe properly, to have er a good balance with the muscles we have. Yes, everything in, I should say, in physiology, of the singing is good for the health and after it's good, also for er the mood and for er

Elaine Mentally

Mariannick Mentally it's good

Elaine It's the psychology and physiology

Mariannick Yes

Elaine All coming together.

Mariannick And you must think that a good breathing is a good er er a assembling. It's the perfect things for the good health first, so. Um. No, and it's the pleasure also sometimes to sing, first to sing, even alone, but to sing with other people, to meet people, to er to discuss, to hear, to discover his voice, so we we discover also that we can hear. The singers, we are the only people who can er hear from the inside, because the musicians with an instrument he hears by the outside of the of their ear. So we have um, we can er hear ourself for ourself, for from the inside. It's er yes, it's fantastic. And um listening to people also singing, um we know that there are some um soff, you know, the mirror neurons. If you hear somebody who is singing very well, you have the impression of singing yourself. And there is a connection with the the brain and with the pleasure and er and the progress and the improvement. So

Elaine And will the, when people have attended, you know, they've been do doing the course with you? Will you be performing it somewhere? Or will it be, just be sort of in the meeting every week to sing together.

Mariannick Oh, we need to, we need to perform somewhere. It's er sometimes it's very difficult. I have, I have had some er groups of people, er five, four people of "Oh, no, no, no. I don't want to sing. I don't want to perform". No problem. You will be on the back, and finally, on the back, thinking nobody is is listening. This person is singing very well and very loudly. And er no, it's, I think it's important. Of course, it's not. It's very dangerous to provoke. To say, "Ah you are afraid?" No. So you go, no. It's not that. You mustn't shock people. But it's helping them to, yes, to be heard and to, so first thing they must er get self confidence, confidence with their own voice and the pleasure of singing er outside. But I think it's good to have er it's a good way of improving. Sometimes I say, we do the concert and then we will do the repetition, the rehearsal.

Elaine Other way round.

Mariannick Because in the concert also that we improve.

Elaine Yes. Excellent. Well, your enthusiasm is so catching. It's so there Mariannick. Um so how can we find out more about this particular course, that's going to start end of September? Will it be advertised in the local magazines? Or do you have a internet connection?

Mariannick Um. It is. I think it will be on the internet connection of Graines de Musique in Corlay, and um they are on Facebook, possibly on Instagram, but also, I think they will er, er because I am not organising. I am not in the administration, but I think

Elaine Oh no, no. Well you have got enough to do.

Mariannick We have already um a presentation on the newspaper. All the local newspapers will be

Elaine Which is where I discovered it.

Mariannick Yes, and I can write it on Facebook too, because I am er more on the as my my son says, Facebook, for old people, you are very good. But

Elaine Excellent

Mariannick So I think it's a good way of giving those sort of news.

Elaine Well, I look forward to hearing more about it, and er maybe I'll turn up too one day.

Mariannick Ah. You're welcome. That's the what is the expression? I remember that. Um because it's sometimes difficult to get the usual English, British expressions, English, but the more the merrier.

Elaine The more the merrier, absolutely. Well, I'm sure it will be the more and very merry indeed.

Mariannick Yes.

Elaine Thank you very much Mariannick, it's been lovely talking to you.

Mariannick Ah. Thank you.