

Centre de documentation de la musique contemporaine (cdmc)
Address: 16 place de la Fontaine-aux-Lions
City: Paris (75019)
Phone Nr: +33 1 47 15 49 86
Fax Nr: +33 1 47 15 49 89
E-mail: cdmc@cdmc.asso.fr
URL: www.cdmc.asso.fr
General manager: Laure MARCEL-BERLIOZ
IAMIC Contact person : Corinne MONCEAU

Bibliographic Details



Composer

PECOU Thierry (1965) French

Email: tpecou@free.fr, Web : <http://www.emepublish.com/english/eme11B.htm>

TITLE

L'oiseau innumérable

Year of composition

2006

Instrumentation

Piano and orchestra

Duration

20 min.

Place of premiere performance

Paris, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Date of premiere performance

2006 -10-17

PERFORMERS

Alexandre THARAUD, piano ; Ensemble Orchestral de Paris ; Andrea Quinn, conductor

SCORE

Publisher: Editions Musicales Européennes (E.M.E.)

127, rue Amelot 75011 PARIS - FRANCE

URL: <http://www.emepublish.com>

E-mail: info@emepublish.com

Edition-No.: E.M.E. - 062534

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RECORDING

Record company: Harmonia Mundi

Le Mas de Vert, Petite route de Saint-Gilles

13631 ARLES Cedex, France

URL: www.harmoniamundi.com

E-mail: info.arles@harmoniamundi.com

Edition-No.: HMC 901974

Performers: Alexandre THARAUD, piano ; Ensemble Orchestral de Paris ; Andrea Quinn, conductor

Price: 24 €

Motivation

This piece, written by one of his generation french gifted composer is full of joy and colours. Its orchestration reminds a kind of shimmering exotism. It is a balanced piece, with a great maturity in its composition.

L'Oiseau innumérable was awarded as 2006-07 ' Best Musical Creation' by the French Grand Prix de la Critique

IAMIC Annual List of Works 2009

Programme note

L'Oiseau innumérable for piano and orchestra, dedicated to Alexandre Tharaud

Premiere: Paris, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, October 2007, by Alexandre Tharaud and the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris conducted by Andrea Quinn. Commissioned by Musique Nouvelle en Liberté

Awarded as 2006-07 ' Best Musical Creation' by the French Grand Prix de la Critique

Thierry Pécou: 'When the project of composing a concerto for piano and orchestra emerged, my first thought was: Mozart rather than Brahms, Ravel rather than Rachmaninoff. For I spontaneously imagined a light, limpid style of piano writing, with no more than one note in each hand at a time, and a buoyant, transparent, airy orchestra. A piano floating above or colliding with the orchestral textures, which are sometimes smooth, sometimes rugged.

' The orchestra is matter, the piano line; the piano draws, traces the sinuous contours of a swirling melody, clinging here and there, like a great free bird, to the discourse of soloists within the orchestra.

' But only the first movement truly bears the stamp of this initial impulse towards a homage to the Mozartian concerto. From the brief second movement onwards, the piano writing grows denser and, borne on an implacable, telluric, pulsing progression, the piano, left on its own, unfolds a great crescendo in concentric form.

"The thought of trembling bursts forth everywhere ... it extends infinitely like an innumerable bird, its wings sown with the black salt of the earth";* echoing the chaos theory dear to the poet Edouard Glissant, the slow movement which follows adopts the structure of the model known as "Cantor dust", transposed onto the curve of time. A segment of durations contains itself on different, ever-decreasing scales, as when one looks at oneself between two mirrors. Here the piano intervenes in minimalist touches, going so far as to transform its traditional voice into effects of noise, seen as the smallest unit of sonority.

'The periodicities that govern this movement of time-stretching recur in a quite different dimension and spirit at the work's conclusion, returning to the trembling of the movement-cadenza which preceded it.

"The thought of trembling bursts forth everywhere ... It is the Utopia which never settles down and which opens tomorrow : like a shared sun or fruit."**

(*) quotations from Édouard Glissant

Biography

For Thierry Pécou, to live is to travel, and to travel is to write, as if composing were both plunging into another universe, taking emotional possession of the places, and above all, stepping back; voluntarily becoming marginalized in relation to one's everyday cultural milieu.

Born in 1965 in Paris, Thierry Pécou began studying the piano at the age of nine and continued his studies at the Paris Conservatoire Supérieur, where he won First Prizes in Orchestration and Composition. Regularly appointed for residencies around the world, Pécou has had a long-standing relationship with the Banff Center in Canada where he has often been in residence. He was also a member of the Casa de Velazquez in Madrid and in residence in Russia, as part of the Villa Médicis Hors Les Murs Prize, and has made his extensive travel a source of inspiration for his music.

He wrote over 80 performed works, most often commissions of highly prestigious institutions, are interpreted by world-class soloists and orchestras (e.g. Kronos Quartet, pianist Alexandre Tharaud, BBC Symphony Orchestra), furthermore played at well-renowned concerts' seasons and festivals; such as the Radio-France' festivals Présences, Gaudeamus Music-Week in Amsterdam, Autumn in Moscow, New Music Concerts Toronto, Foro Internacional de Musica Nueva de Mexico, Festival d'Ambronay, Tampere Choir Festival (Finland), Auditorium de Nagasaki, Théâtre de la Ville and des Champs Elysées in Paris, Octobre en Normandie.

His composition awards have included, Thierry Pécou's *Stabat Mater* received a special mention at UNESCO's International Rostrum of Composers in 1990.

He also won the Prix Nouveau Talent SACD in 1999, the Prix Georges Enesco as well as the Prix des Jeunes Compositeurs SACEM in 1993 and 2004. His work *Brèves du Jaguar* was recommended at the International Rostrum of Composers in 2004. In the same year, Thierry Pécou was awarded a grant by the Banque Populaire Foundation. He was furthermore nominated for the Victoires de la Musique 2005 (Cannes - January 26, 2005) in the Composer of the year's category, for his piece - *Outre-Mémoire* (Editions Musicales Européennes). He is currently working on a new piece involving Chinese traditional instruments, commissioned by the GRAME, to be premiered at the World Exposition in Shanghai in 2010, and completing the opera *L'Amour Coupable*, based upon Beaumarchais' *la Mère coupable*, on a libretto by Eugene Green, commissioned by the Rouen Opera.

Prominent amongst his works are:

Les Machines désirantes, for piano and five instruments, premiered in February 2009 at the Radio-France Festival *Présences*, with, Thierry Pécou - piano and the Ensemble Zellig

L'Oiseau innumérable, concerto for piano and orchestra, premiered in October 2006 with Alexandre Tharaud, piano and the Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, cond. Andrea Quinn; *Les Sacrifiées*, opera for three solo voices, choir and chamber orchestra, the premiere of which was held in January 2008 - libretto by Laurent Gaudé, with Arcal and the ensemble TM+. Christian Gangneron, stage director; *Vague de pierre* for orchestra, premiered with the Philharmonic Orchestra of Radio-France at the Radio-France Festival *Présences* 2007; *Passeurs d'eau* for female voices, Amerindian voice and instruments, and three instruments, premiered in 2004 at the Abbey of Sylvanès and the 'Musica' and 'Voix et routes romanes' festivals in Strasbourg by Mora Vocis With Yaki Kandru and the ensemble Zellig, in a staging by Christine Mananzar; *Symphonie du Jaguar* for five female voices, clarinet, trombone, violin, and cello soloists, and large orchestra. Premiered at the Radio-France Festival *Présences* 2003; *Les Filles du feu* for oboe or clarinet and instrumental ensemble, premiered at the Auditorio Nacional de Madrid in May 1998; *A Circle in the sand* for violin solo and double chamber chorus, commissioned by the Bath International Music Festival; *Nawpa* for solo violin and string orchestra, premiered at Radio France in September 1999

à Alexandre Tharaud

L'OISEAU INNUMÉRABLE

pour piano et orchestre

Thierry PÉCOU

- I -

Allegro (♩ = 96-100)

Fl. 1
Fl. 2
Ob. 1
Ob. 2
Cl. (s.) 1
Cl. (s.) 2
Ba. 1
Ba. 2
Cor. (s.) 1
Cor. (s.) 2
Tpt. 1
Tpt. 2
Tromb. 1
Tromb. 2
Pno solo
VI. I
VI. II (div. en 4)
AR. (div. en 2)
Vcl.
Cb.