
Thierry Escaich

Thierry Escaich has composed in many genres and forms, always exploring new sound horizons. His catalogue numbers around 100 works which, with their lyrical, rich harmonies and rhythmic energy, have attracted a wide audience. Drawing from the French line of composition of Ravel, Messiaen and Dutilleux, and imbued with references from contemporary, folk and spiritual music, the distinctive sound palette of Escaich's music is anchored by an obsessive rhythmic drive and an overarching sense of architecture.

This very personal style encompasses both intimate works and large-scale pieces, such as Chaconne for orchestra; oratorio *Le Dernier Évangile* and a double concerto for violin and cello, *Miroir d'ombres*. In 2010 Escaich composed a ballet *The Lost Dancer*, premiered by the New York City Ballet, and his first opera *Claude*, on a libretto by Robert Badinter after Victor Hugo's *Claude Gueux*, was premiered at the Opéra de Lyon in March 2013 to great acclaim. Escaich has composed many works for the organ including solo works, two concerti and the symphonic poem *La Barque Solaire* for organ and orchestra. Escaich's Organ Concerto No. 1 has been performed by orchestras such as the Philadelphian Orchestra and the Orchestre National de Lyon, and was selected as a highlight of the organ concerto repertoire in *Gramophone Magazine*: "His concerto exploits the full sonic and colour ranges of orchestra and organ in this thrilling three-movement work, the second movement rising to an awe-inspiring climax only topped by the shattering coda of the finale." *Gramophone*, Sept 2014.

His works are performed by leading orchestras in Europe and North America and by musicians such as Lisa Batiashvili and François Leleux, Valery Gergiev, Lothar Zagrosek, Renaud and Gautier Capuçon, Paul Meyer, John Mark Ainsley and the Quatuor Voce. Escaich has been Composer-in-Residence with the Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestre National de Lille and the Paris Chamber Orchestra and his music has been honoured by three 'Victoires de la Musique' awards (2003, 2006 and 2011). Since 1992, Thierry Escaich has taught composition and improvisation at the Paris Conservatoire, where he himself studied and obtained eight 'premiers prix'. In 2013 he received the honour of being appointed to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Composing highlights of the 2014/15 season include a concerto for the Orchestre de Paris performed at the inauguration of the new Philharmonie de Paris, and a double concerto for Lisa Batiashvili and François Leleux co-commissioned by NDR Sinfonieorchester Hamburg and the New York Philharmonic. The Orchestre de l'Opéra de Rouen gives the world premiere of Escaich's new cello concerto, co-commissioned by the Orchestre de Bretagne and Orchestre de Picardie and future composing highlights include a new work for the Cincinnati Symphony, a chamber work for the Great Mountains Music Festival and a piece for choir, organ and ensemble for Strasbourg Cathedral.

Thierry Escaich's career as a composer is closely linked to his career as an organist, which has led him to be one of the ambassadors of the great French school of improvisation, in the wake of Maurice Duruflé, whom he succeeded as organist of Saint Étienne du Mont in Paris. He appears in recitals internationally, combining repertoire pieces with his own compositions and improvisations. His passion for cinema has led him to perform "cine-concerts",

improvised accompaniments on both the organ and piano for silent films such as *Phantom of the Opera* and *Metropolis*.

As organist, highlights of the 2014/15 season and beyond include concerto performances with the Berlin Philharmonic/Mehta, Mariinsky Orchestra/Gergiev, Orchestre de Paris/Paavo Järvi, Orchestre National de Lille and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Maerkl. In recital he makes his debut at the Royal Festival Hall and continues to perform in major concert halls around the world, including performing improvisations to silent films at the Konzerthaus Berlin, Mariinsky Theatre, Philharmonie de Paris, Auditorium de Lyon, Bratislava Symphony Hall and Maison Symphonique de Montréal.

Many of Escaich's works have been recorded by Accord/Universal. Most recently the disc *Les Nuits hallucinées* (2011), which crowned his residence with the Orchestre National de Lyon, received numerous distinctions, including a 'Choc de l'année' from *Classica* magazine as an outstanding release of the year.

Thierry Escaich is represented by Intermusica.

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