



# WORLD of PERCUSSION

Mantovani • Stroppa

Eötvös • Leibowitz

Hersant • Risset

Thierry Miroglio Solo percussion

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### Bruno Mantovani (b. 1974)

Bruno Mantovani was born in Châtillon, Paris, in 1974. He went on to study at the Paris Conservatory, where he was awarded no fewer than five first prizes. After attending the computer music Coursus at L'Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique in Paris (IRCAM), he embarked upon a brilliant international career. His plaudits and awards have been many, and his works have been performed at prestigious international venues including Carnegie Hall, New York, La Scala, Milan and the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam. Mantovani has collaborated with a long list of renowned soloists, conductors, ensembles and orchestras, counting among their number Pierre Boulez, Andrew Davies, Laurence Equilbey and François-Xavier Roth, Accentus and Intercontemporain and the WDR Cologne, Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Varsovia and the RAI National Symphony Orchestra, Turin. He has been the principal of the Paris Conservatory since September 2010.

### Le Grand Jeu for percussion and electronics (1999)

This work juxtaposes seven different sections, unified by certain recurring sound colours (such as low tessitura sound streams and diversely transformed conga patterns), and by easily recognisable articulations such as *run-ups* and projections. Throughout the piece, the dialogue oscillates between a writing style inspired by the electronic universe, (characterised by abrupt and unforeseeable dynamics), and references to popular music such as funk and techno. These startlingly identifiable nuances mark the dramatic climaxes of the work.

The electronic sound palette has been diversified by the use of varied techniques, ranging from the editing of prerecorded elements and the transformation of sounds using different software to frequency modulation during the sound mixing process and the clarification of the sound colours. The SuperCollider software played a

major rôle in the work's composition, particularly in the sections in granular synthesis (a method akin to sampling utilising tiny fragments – or grains – of sound).

The work is dedicated to Philippe Hurel.

Notes compiled from material provided by Bruno Mantovani

### Marco Stroppa (b. 1959)

Composer, researcher and teacher Marco Stroppa was born in Verona and studied music in Italy (piano, choral music and conducting, composition and electronic music) before pursuing further studies at the MIT's Media Laboratory in computer science, cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence.) Between 1980 and 1984 he worked at the Centre for Computational Sonology at Padova University, where he wrote *Traiettorie*, a large work for piano and electronics, which immediately met with considerable success and continues to be performed regularly. In 1982 he was invited by Pierre Boulez to join IRCAM (Paris), and his uninterrupted association with the Institute has been crucial for his musical growth. A highly respected pedagogue, Stroppa founded the composition course at the Bartók Festival in Hungary, where he taught for 13 years. Since 1999 he has taught composition at the Musik Hochschule, Stuttgart, and has also taught at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique, Paris. His first opera *Re Orso* (King Bear), was premièred with great success in May 2012 at the Opéra Comique (Paris).

**Auras** for metallic percussion and chamber electronics (1995, rev. 2004) from *The enormous room*, a cycle of works for solo instrument and chamber electronics

*Aura: according to the Greco-Latin tradition, a breath of air and, according to Buddhism, the magnetic field surrounding the human body.*

*Auras* is the first work of the cycle *The enormous room*, in which the self-coined notion of 'chamber electronics' is explored and a poetic and intimate relationship between an acoustic instrument and other invisible beings (the electronics) is imagined.

Comprising an introduction and six connected movements, *Auras* examines some of the dreamy and ceremonial aspects of percussion. Only metal instruments are used; either hanging or resting on a frame (vibraphone) or two kettle drums, used as a resonating box, and varied according to the movement of the pedal. The electronics, discrete and sometimes almost imperceptible, create an additional 'halo' suspended around the instruments and the musician. This musical halo is not autonomous, but rather expands the instrumental colour without contradicting it.

*Auras* does not pretend to forge a clear path, but instead creates a changing atmosphere; it does not impose, but lets itself be heard; it does not generate any abstract figures, but rather reflect the colours and sentiments of the metals that make up the instruments, symbols of the ancestral relationship with Earth, the planet which welcomed us, but which we are unable to respect.

*Auras* was commissioned by the French government and is dedicated to Thierry Miroglio.

Marco Stroppa

### Peter Eötvös (b. 1944)

Composer, conductor, teacher, the Hungarian Peter Eötvös combines all three functions in one very high-profile career. He has long been considered one of the

most significant and influential personalities on the music scene as both an internationally recognised conductor and a composer of successful operas, orchestral works and concertos, written for well-known artists from all over the world. Eötvös attaches great importance to passing on his extensive knowledge and experiences to others. He taught at the music college in Cologne and Karlsruhe and gives regular masterclasses and seminars throughout Europe. He established his International Eötvös Institute in 1991 and the Eötvös Contemporary Music Foundation in 2004 in Budapest for young composers and conductors. In addition to the rôles listed above, Peter Eötvös regularly appears as a guest conductor with some of the most important orchestras and opera houses.

### Thunder for bass timpano (1995)

There are certain instruments – some of which have been present in an orchestral line-up for centuries – which so far have not had a chance to shine in a solo rôle. One such instrument is the Timpano, or kettle drum. Due to its unique tone, produced by resonance, this instrument is usually employed to provide stability and grounding, as well as suggesting danger in louder passages, and to imply space and distance in other places.

There are several reasons for this under-utilisation as a solo instrument. One of them is mechanical – early timpani were only able to play at a single pitch and although transposition was possible it was relatively complicated and took too long. The 1870s saw the evolution of the pedal timpani, which allowed the player to change pitches faster and more accurately, to within an octave.

*Thunder*, for one bass timpano, was composed to exploit the potential of the pedal timpano and the title indicates the nature of the piece. Whilst in a symphony orchestra there can be anything from two to ten kettle drums, *Thunder* is unique in its quest to explore the solo potential of the timpano.

*Thunder* is dedicated to Isao Nakamura.

Peter Eötvös

### René Leibowitz (1913-1972)

René Leibowitz was a French composer, conductor, music theorist and teacher. After studying composition and orchestration with Maurice Ravel, he was introduced to Arnold Schoenberg's twelve-note technique by E.I. Kahn before going on to study with Anton Webern. He was an historically important figure, significant in promoting serialism, Schoenberg's twelve-tone method of composition, and the 'New Music' in France, writing several books including *Schoenberg and his School* and organizing and conducting numerous concerts.

### Three Caprices, Op. 70 for vibraphone (1966)

Although Leibowitz produced a sizeable body of chamber music, little is known about the *Three Caprices, Op. 70* for solo vibraphone, other than that they were composed in 1966 for Jean-Pierre Drouet. They are not well known works, and are of interest particularly due to their status as one of the very first pieces written for solo vibraphone. Each *Caprice* offers a different character and uses serial musical language.

Thierry Miroglio

### Philippe Hersant (b. 1948)

Philippe Hersant studied composition with André Jolivet at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris. With a varied catalogue of more than one hundred pieces (excluding his film and theatre scores), he has achieved broad recognition on the contemporary music scene and received commissions from such illustrious institutions as the French Ministry of Culture, Radio France (the opera *Le Château des Carpathes*, 1991), Paris Opera (the ballet *Wuthering Heights*, 2002), Leipzig Opera (the opera *Le Moine noir*, 2006), the Orchestre National de Lyon (*Streams*, 2000) and Notre-Dame de Paris (*Les Vêpres de la Vierge*, 2013).

### Trois petites études for timbales (2010)

Each of these three *Études* is written on one musical motif inspired by Goethe's *Faust*.

The first *Étude* is based on *Le roi de Thulé* (The King of Thulé), from Hector Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust*.

The second *Étude, Marguerite au rouet*, is based on *Gretchen am spinnrade* (Marguerite at the Spinning Wheel) by Franz Schubert.

The third *Étude* is based on the *Soldier's Chorus 'Gloire immortelle de nos aïeux'* (Immortal Glory of our Forefathers) by Charles Gounod.

These pieces were commissioned by the Darius Milhaud Conservatory in Paris and are dedicated to Thierry Miroglio, who premièred them on 15th June 2010 in Paris.

Philippe Hersant

### Jean-Claude Risset (b. 1938)

Born in France in 1938, Jean-Claude Risset is a composer and researcher. Together with Max Mathews and John Chowning, he is one of the main pioneers of computer sound synthesis, having worked extensively on trumpet simulation, auditory illusions, the synthesis of new timbres, sonic development processes and a catalogue of synthesised sounds in 1969. He was Head of the Computer Department at IRCAM from 1975 to 1979, and at MIT Media Labs was responsible for the realization of the first *Duet for one pianist* (1989). For his work in computer music and his seventy compositions, he received the first Golden Nica (Ars Electronica Prize, 1987), the Giga-Hertz-Grand-Prize 2009, and the highest French awards in both music (Grand Prix National de la Musique, 1990) and science (Gold Medal, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1999).

### Nature contre Nature: Four rhythmic exercises for percussion and computer (1996-2005)

In this work dedicated to Thierry Miroglio, the percussionist plays in dialogue with sounds generated by a computer. The computer gives examples of paradoxical rhythmic processes, which incite the performer to exercise his skill to do the same.

The first exercise induces rhythmic variations by acting upon the content of the sounds rather than upon the time itself: intensity, pitch or timbral differences give rise to melodic fissions or breaks which create 'illusory' rhythmic figures – a process illustrated by Ligeti in the sixth of his *Études pour piano*. The second exercise consists of accelerating or slowing down while keeping a fixed pulse. The third suggests endless accelerations, (a rhythmic snake biting its tail) or *accelerandi* which end up

slower than the initial tempo. In the fourth exercise, the computer pursues accelerations toward chaos, with a tribute to Xenakis' stochastic forms and Ligeti's delirious machines. The soloist takes part in this wild chase and concludes the work with his own cadenza.

Auditory illusions seem to run counter to the physical nature of sound; they reveal the nature of auditory perception – nature against nature. Rhythm is not mere chronometry. The unusual rhythmic processes heard here have been explored by the composer and also by the researchers Wessel, Van Noorden, Knowlton, Bregman and Arom. The computer sounds have been synthesised or processed with the MusicV program, taking advantage of the acoustic instrumentarium of Thierry Miroglio.

Jean-Claude Risset

**Recorded at Studio GRM (Groupe de Recherches Musicales), Paris, France, on 10th and 11th February, 2014 (track 1), 12th and 13th February, 2014 (track 2), 14th February, 2014 (track 3), 17th February, 2014 (tracks 4-6), 18th February, 2014 (tracks 7-9), and on 19th and 20th February, 2014 (tracks 10-13)**

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## Thierry Miroglio

Photo: Gilles Plagnol



Thierry Miroglio is internationally renowned as a soloist and has been invited to perform in forty countries, at numerous venues and many prestigious festivals. Currently working with a solo repertoire of more than 400 works, Miroglio has collaborated with many distinguished composers including John Cage, Luciano Berio, Kaija Saariaho, Jean-Claude Risset, Marlos Nobre, Edison Denisov, Franco Donatoni, Unsuk Chin, Daniel Teruggi, Zhang Xiaofu, Misato Mochizuki, Ivan Fedele, Manfred Stahnke, Marco Stroppa, Gérard Grisey, Philippe Hersant, Ichiro Nodaira, Philippe Manoury, Betsy Jolas and Hugues Dufourt, often giving premières of works of which he is the dedicatee. With numerous productions for international radio and TV stations and many soloist recordings, he enjoys exploring the boundaries of modern music, and has given performances which link music, the visual arts, electronica, dance and theatre into a homogenous whole. He is currently a Professor at the Darius Milhaud Conservatory in Paris, and frequently travels abroad to give master-classes. He has recently performed concertos with prestigious national orchestras and has recital tours booked in Europe, Asia, Africa, South America and the United States. Thierry Miroglio studied percussion with Jean-Pierre Drouet and Sylvio Gualda at the Conservatoire National de Versailles, where he was awarded First Prize, and later studied Musical Acoustics with Iannis Xenakis at the University of the Sorbonne.



These six world première recordings present one of percussion's greatest masters in a panorama of works by leading composers of our time. This remarkable journey through sound and rhythm includes electronic extensions such as the dramatically funky climaxes to Bruno Mantovani's *Le Grand Jeu*, a dreamy musical halo around metal instruments in Marco Stroppa's *Auras* and Jean-Claude Risset's sound illusions in *Nature contre Nature*. Peter Eötvös's *Thunder* is a unique quest to explore the potential of a single bass timpano, while Philippe Hersant revisits Berlioz, Schubert and Gounod in his *Trois petites études*. René Leibowitz's *Three Caprices* were among the first works written for solo vibraphone.



## THE WORLD OF PERCUSSION



- |   |   |       |  |    |   |       |
|---|---|-------|--|----|---|-------|
| 1 | <b>Bruno Mantovani (b. 1974):</b><br><b>Le Grand Jeu</b> for percussion<br>and electronics (1999)                       | 17:07 |  |    | <b>Philippe Hersant (b. 1948):</b><br><b>Trois petites études</b> for timbales<br>(2010)  | 4:12  |
| 2 | <b>Marco Stroppa (b. 1959):</b><br><b>Auras</b> for metallic percussion<br>and chamber electronics<br>(1995, rev. 2004) | 19:51 |  | 7  | <b>Le roi de Thulé</b>  | 1:52  |
| 3 | <b>Peter Eötvös (b. 1944):</b><br><b>Thunder</b> for bass timpano<br>(1995)   | 5:02  |  | 8  | <b>Marguerite au rouet</b>  | 1:02  |
|   | <b>René Leibowitz (1913-1972):</b><br><b>Three Caprices, Op. 70</b><br>for vibraphone (1966)                            | 2:35  |  | 9  | <b>Gloire immortelle de nos aïeux</b>   | 1:18  |
| 4 | <b>I. Allegro con fantasia</b>  | 0:44  |  |    | <b>Jean-Claude Risset (b. 1938):</b><br><b>Nature contre Nature:</b><br>Four rhythmic exercises<br>for percussion and computer<br>(1996-2005) | 13:10 |
| 5 | <b>II. Più tosto lento</b>  | 0:56  |  | 10 | –   | 3:20  |
| 6 | <b>III. Con moto</b>  | 0:55  |  | 11 | –   | 2:03  |
|   |   |       |  | 12 | –   | 3:42  |
|   |   |       |  | 13 | –   | 4:05  |

### WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS

## Thierry Miroglio, Solo percussion

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Full recording details and publishing credits can be found inside the booklet.

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