

Alexandre Tissier

A composer of the present time

Alexandre Tissier is a **composer**.

For ten years, through his work, he has been looking for an integration of the music to its own historical **dimension**.

It is a **solitary** way, not always an encouraged one.

But a **necessary one**.

On an evening of 1985, Pierre Boulez was celebrating his 60 years birthday. With the Ensemble Intercontemporain, he was directing several of his own pieces - among them, *Éclat-Multiples* -, and others by Donatoni. In the hall, a young boy, who was first time attending a concert from the composer, was astonished, overwhelmed, fascinated. Alexandre Tissier had just been discovering contemporary music in his highschool's recreation hall, where Boulez, Xenakis or Ohana were giving the subject of passionated arguments. Until there, Alexandre Tissier had been educated by an ex Alfred Cortot student in Paris Fifth Arrondissement Conservatoire, named Florence Delaage. He had of course made a few walks into the after-Chopin area, but as far as contemporary music was concerned, he was facing a great mystery. He had to aim for solving it : « I remember that at that time, all this music semt to me extremely confused, some kind of a magma. The ear could not feel the structures of it, neither at least only follow the musical course of it. And I thought that an education of the ear was something attainable, just the same as an education of sensitivity was made possible, within the tonal music, by listening. » Alexandre Tissier, still a teenager yet but a compulsive score reader, got diving, especially with the complete piano works by Schoenberg, into this unknown and disturbing music.

From that moment, his aesthetical landscape has been determined, that is not going to change : neither will his independence. Because the way he has chosen, the writing of contemporary pieces, he does not find it in the academic structures that he is experiencing, or could experience : « Immediately, there was such a dichotomy between my class lessons and the teaching that I was, as an autodidact, receiving from the music I was listening to, that making a link, whatever it was, between the two of them, has been appearing to me extremely uncertain. »

Then he consequently didn't see any other way than taking care of his own teaching, by approaching not anymore structures, but directly individuals from whom he aimed to receive teaching.

That is why he got in touch with composers Claude Bailif, Allain Gaussin, Emmanuel Nunès, and has attended their courses in the several schools they were teaching in, as well as he went listening to Boulez ones at the Collège de France, and practice classes at IRCAM and GRM (Musical Research Group), and at the Ateliers UPIC Xénakis had founded : Polyagodic and Data processing Unity, at the Cemamu, Center of Musical Mathematics and Automatics.

The relationship between a master and a disciple is being considered as essential to the education of a composer by Alexandre Tossier, but he has to admit that it is not the whole of it : « At a time I used to think that only by consorting with masters, there would be such an intensity of communication, that it would enable me to set up a musical conception. But the more things go, and the more I know that you don't only have to be very careful, but also, on your own side, to have a musical conscience, educated enough to cross the first limits of the area of music and of composition, unless you will constantly stay out of it, and you can spend your life without knowing where you walk in, neither what makes the heart and blood of music. »

That is why, still today, even keeping working with Hacène Larbi, director of the Entretemps Ensemble, with which several projects are being conceived, Alexandre Tossier composes apart from the institutions when it has to be so, alone, but being haunted by all of this century of the history of music. « I feel like being carried by some sort of a flow, an energizing dimension that doesn't come from me, but belongs to the music itself : to what it has been, not only under the formal and structural aspect, but until its physical shape. »

Accepting the role of a composer, according to Alexandre Tossier, is responding to the duty of taking the flame back, of answering the challenge of taking charge, not only individually but also collectively, of the historical dimension of the music : and if not, to sink into neoclassicism.

Eventhough, today, he must admit that the supremacy of an individualist way of things to go, creates a certain apathy, and he regrets it.

Such a context makes supporting certainties rare, and wondering about the future of music, as well as doubts, are surely part of a composer's work.

When he tries to figure out the musical landscape of the next century, Alexandre Tossier may sometimes be worried, and this is why he does not make a lot of dreams.

He works. He seeks for the answer of this mystery of music, that has touched him, on an evening of 1985, for ever.

He's not trying, until now, he says, to make a music that would be resembling to him. However, he also speaks of his travels, in Russia, by train, landscapes and faces, and friends on the way.

And of the act of creation, as an offering to all of this all, and to all of those.

Of the russian music also, that inspires him, and of which he can feel the expressivity, and this power that probably belongs to something above the music.

Of a paradise lost, that has become a support to the musician, a breath of air, an encouragement.