

François-Bernard Mâche: Cent opus et leurs échos (2012)

This work represents a highly original initiative: a chronological panorama of François-Bernard Mâche's first hundred works, viewed through the lens of their reception. (This number has since been surpassed, as Mâche has remained active as a composer.) From his *Duo* for violin and piano, written in December 1956, through to *Promeneur solitaire*, an electronic work composed in 2010, each successive entry contains basic factual information on the work in question (instrumentation; context of its composition or commission; date, place, and performers of the premiere; publisher; duration); the original program note; retrospective commentary by Mâche; and an array of reviews, positive or negative, from the time of the premiere and from subsequent performances and recordings. The choice of reviews depended only upon whether the original periodicals in which they appeared gave permission or not. To these are occasionally added commentaries of a more musicological nature.

By adhering to chronological order (as opposed to ordering the works by repertoire or by theme, either of which would have been possible), the succession of views of these works at different moments over their destiny is akin to a "mirror" placed alongside the trajectory of Mâche's career, reflecting the evolution of his thinking and his compositional praxis. One witnesses the development of Mâche's famed "third way", freed at once from experimental tendencies (Schaefferian *musique concrète*) and formalist ones (whether that of Boulez or of Xenakis).

The intended readers are quite varied: music-lovers, musicians curious to take on forgotten works, and musicologists interested in the reception of new music from the last seventy years will all find something of interest in this original publication. The absence of an index, however, makes quick research difficult, and one is required to scan through the table of contents, which is somewhat redundant given the book's chronological organization.

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