

BIOGRAPHY

OLIVIER BAUMONT



Considered one of the major harpsichordists of his generation, Olivier Baumont has for several decades enjoyed a rich career as a performer, teacher and researcher.

At the Conservatoire national supérieur de Musique et de Danse de Paris, juries unanimously awarded him first prizes for harpsichord and chamber music. He benefited from the artistic guidance of Huguette Dreyfus and Kenneth Gilbert, and was occasionally invited by Gustav Leonhardt to attend his interpretation classes in Cologne.

Olivier Baumont's fine qualities as a musician were quickly recognized. Curious, ardent and erudite, he has a keen sense of communication (masterclasses, conferences, radio and television programs), he enjoys being on stage and takes pleasure in sharing his taste for the 17th and 18th centuries with others, making him hailed as an artist with multiple facets, solicited around the world.

Invited by the principal festivals in France and abroad, Olivier Baumont has performed in numerous countries: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Spain, the United States, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Russia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey. In September 2019, he accepted the direction, along with Rosana Lanzelotte, of a new festival in Rio de Janeiro, initiated by the French Embassy: BAROQUE IN RIO.

In addition, he initiates and participates regularly in a large number of radio and television programs (France Musique, France Culture, Radio Suisse-Romande, the BBC, FR3, Muzzik and Mezzo).

Although he primarily performs in solo recitals, Olivier Baumont appreciates his artistic affinities with many singers and instrumentalists, such as Isabelle Druet, Jean-Paul Fouchécourt, Isabelle Poulenard, Julien Chauvin, Christophe Coin, Christine Plubeau, Hugo Reyne... He equally enjoys performing duets for four hands, two harpsichords, with many friends like Béatrice Martin and Davitt Moroney, and also with young and brilliant colleagues like Aurélien Delage, Cristiano Gaudio, Jean-Luc Ho, Justin Taylor...

For the Cité de la Musique in Paris, Olivier Baumont initiated a cycle of 20 concerts devoted to the corpus of harpsichord works by Johann Sebastian Bach. This unique international event took place in March 2014 and was recorded on video. In July 2018, he participated in the performance of Scarlatti's sonatas in their entirety for the Festival of Radio France Montpellier. He is scheduled to collaborate in the performance of all of Bach's concerti for harpsichords in October 2020.

Olivier Baumont's discography, regularly hailed by the international press, includes about 50 recordings. Among the most important are J.P. Rameau's complete works for harpsichord for Accord-Universal; the complete works of F. Couperin, CDs devoted to J.S. Bach, G.F. Handel, H. Purcell, and Russian and American composers in the Age of Enlightenment for the prestigious French label Erato; C. Balbastre's *Noéls*, the complete works of L.C. Daquin, as well as a recital of works from the end of the Ancient Regime for organ and harpsichord, were all released in the series, "Temperaments" by Radio France; and recently, *A Madame*, a CD dedicated to rare Versaillesian music, with Julien Chauvin (violin) for the label Aparté, and *Apothéoses* by F. Couperin, featuring Béatrice Martin (clavecin), for NoMadMusic.

Impassioned for the theatre, Baumont works with such actors as Manuel Blanc, Marcel Bozonnet, Jean-Denis Monory, Denis Podalydès, and Didier Sandre. With actors Nicolas Vaude and Nicolas Marié, he revived the comedy-ballet of Molière and J.B. Lully, *Le Mariage forcé*, the music of which he directed from the harpsichord. The three of them have since adapted *Le Neveu de Rameau* by D. Diderot, which was a triumph at its premiere in 2001 and then in 2002 at the Ranelagh Theatre in Paris. Over the years, its success has never diminished in road productions or in Paris, as full houses testify. He recently conceived a musical show around Henriette d'Angleterre, *Madame se meurt*, with Jeanne Zaepffel (soprano), Marcel Bozonnet (actor and co-author) and himself on harpsichord, performing music by J. C. de Chambonnières, M. Lambert, H. Purcell and T. Pécou. The libretto is drawn from texts by Bossuet, Saint-Simon and A. Cléo-Roubaud. This production met with great success from October 2019 until January 2020 at the *Théâtre de Poche*, Montparnasse (Paris).

Olivier Baumont also composed and performed the music for *Une vie*, a film by Stéphane Brizé, based on the novel of the same name by Guy de Maupassant.

Olivier Baumont has written several published books: *François Couperin, le musicien des rois* (Découvertes-Gallimard), *Antonio Vivaldi* (Gallimard-Jeunesse), *La musique à Versailles* (Actes Sud / Établissement) which obtained a prize in 2008 from the *Syndicat des critiques musicaux français*, *À l'Opéra monsieur !* (Gallimard, L'Infini collection), written in the context of a residence at the Chambord chateau and inspired by "La Musique" in the *Mémoires* of Saint-Simon. A new residence, this time at the l'Abbaye of Fontevraud and again in the Chambord chateau, prefigures the release of a work about Henri d'Effiat de Cinq-Mars, the last favorite of Louis XIII.

An accomplished pedagogue, recognized internationally, Olivier Baumont is the Professor of Harpsichord at the *Conservatoire national supérieur de Musique et de Danse* in Paris. He gives masterclasses regularly all over the world. Consequently, he has formed numerous harpsichordists over a period of 20 years - many of whom figure among the most talented and most active in the current musical scene.

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