

ARNAUD REBOTINI AND THE DON VAN CLUB PLAY BPM (BEATS PER MINUTE)

The composer Arnaud Rebotini loves to create and collaborate with other artists; for the Festival, he performs the original soundtrack of *BPM (Beats Per Minute)*, for which he won the César for best original soundtrack in 2018. Inspired by different musical movements, including house, which he revisited for Robin Campillo's film, this French master of electro also loves impressionist classical music. An alliance of tastes ready to soar to new heights in the Cour d'honneur, whose heart rate will surely climb over the course of the last evening of the Festival. Accompanied by the Don Van Club, an ensemble of seven instrumentalists –violin, cello, clarinet, flute, percussion, harp and piano–, Arnaud Rebotini and his many synthesizers, true technological extensions of his body, will unleash their intoxicating beats. Come listen to moving compositions that serve as reminders of the actions of *Act Up* and evoke memories of the dance floor, watch *BPM (Beats Per Minute)* in the Cour d'honneur, and feel how music must go on in the face of illness.

ARNAUD REBOTINI

Born in 1970, **Arnaud Rebotini** joined the bustling and inventive electro scene in Paris towards the end of the 1980s. Author, composer, performer, producer and remixer, he is now an emblematic figure in electronic music. His major strength: to remain at the crossroads of genres and to marry them. Under the pseudonym Zend Avesta, he combines chamber orchestra and electronic music on his album *Organique*. With his analog synthesizers, he becomes a central figure on the new international electro scene, marking the return to the use of electronic machines. He also wrote several film soundtracks such as *Eastern Boys*, *Le vent tourne* and *BPM* by Robin Campillo, for which he won the César for best original soundtrack in 2018.

JEAN-LUC LAGARCE

Jean-Luc Lagarce died of AIDS at 38. His work, among the most performed in France, has met with public and critical acclaim. In *Le Bain (The Bath)*, a man tells of his reunion with his lover fallen ill. They'll take a last bath together as a way of saying goodbye.

Le Bain by Jean-Luc Lagarce, published by Les Solitaires Intempestifs, is on sale at the bookshop in the Maison Jean Vilar.

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INTERVIEW WITH ARNAUD REBOTINI AND FRANÇOIS BERREUR

Let's start with a short history lesson about music terminology. What do you call the music you play? Techno? Electro? House?

Arnaud Rebotini : The word electro designates several different musical genres, it's a sort of catch-all term. Originally, it was a genre of electronic music derived from electro-funk. Characteristic of the experimentations of German band Kraftwerk in the early 1980s, in time electro became its own genre, with its own rhythm and sounds. House is disco music played on synthesizers and was born in Chicago warehouses, where this very danceable music was first performed. But it also finds its origins in the creation of home studios, it's a music you can create at home. An entire scene started composing in private places. Techno is partly derived from hip hop. It first appeared in Detroit, based on more industrial music. My work brings together those intersecting genres, even though the term electro is best used to describe my creations, although the music of *BPM (Beats Per Minute)* was heavily influenced by house music...

How did you first encounter those different genres?

Arnaud Rebotini : I was born in 1970; those genres were becoming popular when I was 18 in Paris. I followed the movement thanks to Radio7. I was still a child when hip hop appeared in the early 1980s, but I was hit head on by the arrival of house and techno, and of electronic music in general. This music was also a way for me to break free from the teachings of the conservatory, which I'd tried before and which wasn't for me. I welcomed the diversity of those musical currents in the world of French independent music. Most of them came to us via England. I come from independent music, I was pretty radical at the time. I used to play in a death metal band, and I found the same non-conformist spirit in electronic music. In this world there's two kinds of people: those who come from the mobile disco tradition, and those who come from independent music.

You recorded several albums before working with Robin Campillo on the soundtracks to his films...

Arnaud Rebotini : My first electronic music productions weren't meant for dancefloors, although they're inspired by techno/house. Of course, during my sets as a DJ, I like to receive people's energy, a sort of immediate feedback that's both enjoyable and still rather new to me. But what I like first and foremost is writing music, telling a story—even if you can also do that in a club... When Robin Campillo reached out to me to compose the music for his film *Eastern Boys*, he'd heard my first album, *Organique*, released in 2000 under the name Zend Avesta. A mixture of electronic music and, let's put it that way, of classical music inspired by French composers like Debussy and Ravel. I've always wanted to write "impressionist" music, although I wouldn't claim to compose art music. Then Robin Campillo asked me to write house songs for his new film *BPM*...

Did you make any changes to share the soundtrack of this important film about AIDS with a live audience?

Arnaud Rebotini : Telling the story of Act Up, *BPM* focuses on all those young people who used to go clubbing in the early days of house, a musical genre which became their banner, and whose first hits were just starting to appear in the late 1980s. Those places brought a community together, they allowed for moments of celebration for people going through treatment. I love the way the clubbing scenes are shot, with light from above, the importance given to the bodies and faces... If there remains in our concert something of this atmosphere, we're creating another dimension: I'm here in my name, accompanied by a group of musicians called Don Van Club. Playing the compositions live gives people a new yet faithful perception of those songs, with the possibility of improvisation and the presence of nuances and timbres dear to me which once again echo this alliance between electro and classical inspirations, reinforced by this kind of arrangements.

What's most impressive about *Le Bain (The Bath)* is the bareness of its writing, in a text where the loss of a loved one turns a bath into a rite of passage, water into the Acheron river, and words into an attempt to preserve the other's body... What is your perception of this story within Jean-Luc Lagarce's body of work, in the light of the books in which he faces the illness, his illness?

François Berreur : *Le Bain* was inspired by a few pages from Jean-Luc Lagarce's diary from July 1990. After writing *L'Apprentissage (The Learning)*, a commission, he'd decided to work on several short stories. He saw them as an ensemble, the fragmented narrative of his most recent years. The reader can find recurring places and characters, and of course the presence of illness and work as counterpoints to each other. Contrary to the impression they can give, those stories weren't written in the moment. They're proof of the importance of literary work for Jean-Luc Lagarce, and of his sharpness of mind. The author takes a raw material, his diary, and organises it. Better yet, he sculpts it, and ends up transcending it. If those texts weren't originally meant for the theatre, their dramatic power is undeniable. It is even, in that sense, incredible, as I experienced it when I directed the third, *Le Voyage à La Haye (A Trip to the Hague)*, with Hervé Pierre for the Festival d'Avignon in 2001. The mystery of Jean-Luc Lagarce's writing resides entirely in this power: as soon as actors say his words, theatre appears.

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Interview conducted by Marc Blanchet
and translated by Gaël Schmidt-Cléach