



bachtrack



Watch with Mother (Goose): Child's play with Les Siècles

★★★★☆ ?

Par Mark Pullinger, 03 novembre 2016

Games of various types pirouetted in and out of [Les Siècles'](#) Gallic programme last night, from Debussy's play of the waves in *La Mer* to the shenanigans of a distinctly adult game of tennis in his ballet *Jeux*. There was even the playful sparkle of a fountain in *Jeux d'eau* as [Jean-Efflam Bavouzet's](#) encore. None of these are remotely associated with childhood though. For that, Ravel's *Mother Goose* fitted the bill, especially when accompanied by Grégoire Pont's live animations to keep the young at heart in the audience entertained.



François-Xavier Roth and Les Siècles in rehearsal

© Nick Rutter

Debussy's *Jeux* was premiered in May 1913, just a fortnight before the riotous first performance of *The Rite of Spring*, both taking place at Paris' Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, both conducted by Pierre Monteux and both presented by Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. Described as a *poème dansé*, its libretto concerns two girls and a boy searching for a lost tennis ball, leading to various liaisons and games of hide-and-seek among the bushes. Diaphanous strings and perfumed woodwinds wove in and out the bosky shadows of Debussy's erotically

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“Undulating double basses and a flatulent contrabassoon, riper than Roquefort, set the scene”

Critique faite à **Royal Festival Hall, Londres, le 2 novembre 2016**

PROGRAMME

[Debussy](#), *Jeux*, poème dansé

[Ravel](#), Concerto pour piano en ré majeur pour la main gauche

[Ravel](#), *Jeux d'eau*

[Ravel](#), *Ma mère l'oye*- ballet complet (with animation)

[Debussy](#), *La Mer*

ARTISTES

Les Siècles

François-Xavier Roth, *Direction*

Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, *Piano*

Grégoire Pont, *Vidéographie*

EN CE MOMENT

[TROUVER CONCERTS](#)

[MAINTENANT](#)

NOVEMBRE 2016

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charged score, sensually moulded by [François-Xavier Roth](#)'s batonless hands. Vibrato was applied with taste. The final string sigh – as a tennis ball is tossed limply to the stage, causing the startled trio to scatter – was deliciously done.

The performance of *Ma mère l'Oye* (*Mother Goose*) wouldn't have been to all tastes. Donning a single white glove, Grégoire Pont took up his position behind the first violins as 'soloist', opening up his laptop to provide live drawings and programmed animations to illustrate Ravel's ballet, projected onto a large screen. His doodles had a certain French whimsy about them as diminutive Tom Thumb was taken on a tour of a fairytale land, over a whirring spinning wheel, tiptoeing past Sleeping Beauty. There was a nod towards the Minotaur and Ariadne in "Les entretiens de la belle et de la bête" and a Chinese Dragon loomed in "Laideronnette, impératrice des pagodes", cued by an ominous gong. Did they add to or subtract from Les Siècles' enchanting performance? Those who preferred to supply their own pictures could just close their eyes.



Les Siècles in rehearsal

© Nick Rutter

No illustrations were required in Debussy's *La Mer*, Roth ushering in the gentlest of dawns and the lithe cello octet revelling in the spray and spume as we set off on our voyage. Period brass meant that the strings were never swamped and the delicate ring of a particularly shapely 19th-century triangle contributed to the glittering "Jeux de vagues". A fruity trumpet solo helped whip up stormy seas – no wonder the woodwinds felt a little queasy, intonation-wise, at times. Although the work was started in France, Debussy completed it on this side of La Manche, at the Grand Hotel in Eastbourne, perhaps explaining the greyer skies in the finale.

The highlight of the evening, though, was a star turn by an elegant, elderly *grand-mère* in the form of a gorgeous 1892 Pleyel, coaxed into colourful voice by Bavouzet in Ravel's *Piano Concerto for left hand*. The instrument's period tang ranged from a sonorous, almost hollow low chime to brilliant clarity in the upper

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Soirée

Matinée

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CONCERT

"Vive Berlioz" à la Philharmonie

Denis Peyrat, 22nd June

Près de cinq cent exécutants amateurs et professionnels (dont deux cent cinquante enfants) étaient rassemblés sous la direction de François-Xavier Roth le 20 juin à la Philharmonie pour le colossal *Te Deum*, qui s'est révélé une vraie fête de la musique de Berlioz.

★★★★☆

[PLUS D'INFOS](#)

Un *Roméo et Juliette* allégé

Gilles Lesur, 18th March

Une représentation de la symphonie dramatique *Roméo et Juliette* qui est enthousiasmante par certains côtés, mais aussi décevante par beaucoup d'autres : triomphe du chœur *Aedes*.

★★★★☆

[PLUS D'INFOS](#)

Découverte du Nouveau Monde

Julie Jozwiak, 16th December

A l'Opéra royal de Versailles, l'ode-symphonie *Christophe Colomb* de Félicien David se voyait ressuscitée par Les Siècles sous la baguette de François-Xavier Roth. Un voyage dépaysant, passionnant, mené d'une main de maître et servi par des interprètes convaincus.

★★★★☆

[PLUS D'INFOS](#)

Les étoiles de demain

Julie Jozwiak, 4th December

Mardi 2 décembre à la Cité de la Musique, un concert réunissait deux lauréates HSBC du Festival d'Aix-en-Provence : Sabine Devieille et Andreea Soare, deux très belles voix,

register. Undulating double basses and a flatulent contrabassoon, riper than Roquefort, set the scene for an incredibly characterful rendition. Jaunty strings, slinky bassoon and sassy trombone helped this old lady strut her stuff in Ravel's jazz-infused score, Bavouzet's dramatic glissando bounding up the Pleyel's keyboard full of glee. His encore tickled and sparkled, earning the old girl an appreciative pat. Grandmothers tell the best stories of all.

 0 COMMENTAIRES

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accompagnées par Les Siècles sous l'excellente direction de François-Xavier Roth.

★★★★☆

[PLUS D'INFOS](#)

Tricentenaire de l'Opéra Comique

Julie Jozwiak, 17th November

Cette saison, l'Opéra Comique fête ses 300 ans. Intitulé « Si l'Opéra Comique m'était conté », le gala célébrant le tricentenaire de l'institution retraçait son histoire en donnant un aperçu des créations emblématiques du lieu. Une frise chronologique efficace et très bien servie.

★★★★☆

[PLUS D'INFOS](#)

PLUS DE CRITIQUES...



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