



METADATA

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Abstract

The book contains the texts of a series of lectures given in Paris by pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard, who was awarded the 2009 Chair of Artistic Creation at the College of France. In the lectures, which last more than 16 hours in total, Aimard begins with his thoughts on the role of performers as active artists, the curation of concert programs, and the use of our bodies' potential in relation to the instrument. Continuously playing excerpts on the piano (which are embedded in the text with hyperlinks), he examines works spanning the widest range of the piano repertoire, from François Couperin and J.S. Bach, the Viennese classics and the major representatives of Romanticism, to the 'pillars' of 20th century innovations (Debussy, Schoenberg, Webern, Bartók, Messiaen, Boulez, Stockhausen, Ligeti, Kurtág) and up to the works of Elliot Carter, George Benjamin and Marco

Stroppa. His originality lies in the way he makes a direct connection between compositional technique and interpretation, choosing to unify his observations under a series of themes, representing 'problems' that composers of all times have posed in the process of composing, and to which they have given different solutions in each era. He examines the concept of virtuosity, the perception of musical time, the relationship with the spoken language, the relationships between pitches in different harmonic environments, the pianistic timbre in different styles, the evolution of polyphony and form. The study of these texts and the works to which they refer can trigger in their audience a deeper relationship with the pianistic repertoire, with the connection between compositional and interpretive praxis and with the highest goals of a fascinating pianistic virtuosity.

