



LAURENT PETITGIRARD

(www.petitgirard.com)

Biography updated August 2024 (photo: Marc Chesneau)

Born in 1950, Laurent Petitgirard studied piano with Serge Petitgirard and composition with Alain Kremski.

An eclectic musician, his career as a composer of symphonic music, operas, chamber music and film music is coupled with a significant conducting activity.

Musical Director of the Orchestre Symphonique Français from 1989 to 1996, he was elected Musical Director by the musicians of the Orchestre Colonne in 2005, a position he held until 2018.

Laurent Petitgirard's first opera, ***Joseph Merrick dit Elephant Man***, with libretto by Eric Nonn, was recorded with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Nathalie Stutzmann, Sophie Koch, Nicolas Rivenq (Naxos, CD of the Month by Gramophon and Classica). Premiered in February 2002 at the Prague State Opera, directed by Daniel Mesguich, the opera was revived at the Prague Spring Festival and at the Opéra de Nice in December 2002 (DVD Marco Polo).

A new production, directed by Doug Varone, was presented in May 2006 by the Minneapolis Opera under the baton of Antony Walker.

His second opera, ***Guru*** (about mental manipulation and sectarian aberrations), with libretto by Xavier Maurel, was recorded in Budapest in October 2010 for the Naxos label, with Hubert Claessens (bass-baritone) and Sonia Petrovna (actress) in the two lead roles (Choc du mois de Classica September 2011). The resulting opera suite ***Guru et Marie*** premiered in 2014 in Neubrandenburg (Germany), in March 2016 at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, in October 2017 in Poland and in March 2018 in Jerusalem.

The complete opera premiered under the composer's direction from September 28 to October 2, 2018 and March 13-14, 2019 at Castle Opera in Szczecin, stage direction by Damian Cruden with Hubert Claessens, Paul Gaugler and Sonia Petrovna.

A new production directed by Muriel Mayette-Holtz was presented in February 2024 at the Opéra de Nice under the composer's direction, with Armando Noguera, Anaïs Constans and Sonia Petrovna.

For Naxos, Laurent Petitgirard has also recorded three symphonic poems ***Les Douze Gardiens du Temple, Euphonia, Poème for large string orchestra***, three concertos ***Dialogue for viola and orchestra*** (Gérard Caussé), ***Concerto for cello and orchestra***, (Gary Hoffman) ***Le Légendaire*** for violin choir and orchestra, (Augustin Dumay) and a CD devoted to The ***Little Prince***, original music for the show conceived and directed by Sonia Petrovna.

His penultimate CD (Naxos) released in December 2019 includes "***Etats d'âme***" for alto saxophone and orchestra and three symphonic poems ***Solitaire, Le Marathon, Flaine***.

His concerto for Flute, Harp and String Orchestra "***Dilemma***" was premiered in June 2019 under the direction of Cristian Macelaru by Emmanuel Pahud and Marie-Pierre Langlamet at the Dresden Philharmonic.

Laurent Petitgirard has composed a ballet ***SI YEYOU KI - The Journey to the West*** (2019-2020) for Chinese choreographer Yabin Wang. Recorded in October 2021 in Budapest, the complete recording was released in April 2023 on the Naxos label.

The ballet's premiere in Beijing by The Yabin Dance Company on April 29, 2024 was followed by a tour of 40 performances in China and then in France in December 2024.

His concerto for oboe and orchestra entitled *Souen Wou K'ong (He who penetrated the Void)* was premiered in March 2022 in Edinburgh and Glasgow by François Leleux and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

His trio "*La Croisée des Arts*" was premiered on October 30, 2024 in Madrid by the Trio Wanderer.

In 2024, Laurent Petitgirard began composing his 3th opera "*Houdini*", based on a libretto by Tristan Petitgirard.

Laurent Petitgirard is an active guest conductor (Orchestre de l'Opéra de Paris, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National de Lyon, Bordeaux, Strasbourg, Lille, Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice, Bamberger Sinfoniker, Berliner Symphoniker, Orchestres de la Suisse Romande, Tonhalle, Fenice, BBC, Utah Symphonic Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, KBS and Korean Symphony Orchestras, Bratislava Orchestra, Spanish National Orchestra, Moscow State Orchestra, Chinese National Orchestra, Beijing NCPA Orchestra.....).

He has made some thirty recordings, including Honegger's "*Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher*", "*Gaspard de la Nuit*" (Ravel-Constant), whose premiere he directed, and Maurice Ravel's "*Daphnis et Chloé*".

Laurent Petitgirard received the SACD Young Composer Award in 1987, the Grand Prix Lycéen des Compositeurs in 2000 and the Prix Musique 2001 from the SACD for his first opera Joseph Merrick dit Elephant Man.

On February 1^{er} 2017, he was elected Secrétaire perpétuel of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, where he has served since 2000.

Laurent Petitgirard is an Officer in the National Order of the Legion of Honor, an Officer in the Order of Merit and a Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters.

He is married to actress Sonia Petrovna and has a son, Tristan Petitgirard, author, director and actor.