
Clément Mao-Takacs

Selected Reviews

'La nature est un temple' - Debussy Festival de Royaumont, September 2018

"The orchestration by C. Mao-Takacs of 'L'Île Joyeuse' gave us a genuinely interesting tour of this piece, so rich in colours written for the piano, and on the contrary, the reduced version of 'La Mer' lost nothing of the power of its content and of its troubled, changing radiance. To be appreciated is the fine, precise direction of the conductor, equally as much as the injected energy, on par with that of larger symphonic forces." – **Classique News**

"With a refreshing, rich and sometimes whimsical approach when the score calls for it, (L'Île Joyeuse), Clément Mao-Takacs supports his orchestra with a conscious and considerate investment... The ensemble radiates with distinct voices. La Mer, arranged by the conductor himself, provides a sensitive interpretation that is full of charm, mystery and a bubbling tension, all sharpened by his acute understanding of the score (...) In the orchestrations, the sound lends itself to the game of metamorphosis in a new variety of colours and timbres, and daring translations (...) and meanwhile to take stock of the arrangements, La Mer, originally written for over 120 musicians, still resonates with reduced forces without however losing in body or in richness of sound." – **Olyrix**

Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire - Kaija Saariaho Nantes, October 2018

"Kaija Saariaho's music explores this progressive agony of Simone Weil through some of the most astonishing sounds that a classical orchestra can possibly make: the crushing and squeaking of brass, violent attacks of drums, a percussive timekeeping of factory machines and thousands of shadowy nuances. The Orchestre national des Pays de la Loire plays admirably under the baton of Clément Mao-Takacs, who conducts with the graceful gestures of a ballet dancer." – **Olyrix**

Stavanger Symphony Orchestra – Saariaho/Wagner September 2018

"The programme of the Saariaho/Wagner concert in Stavanger has an inevitable impact on the concert experience as a whole. The transitions between Wagner and Saariaho, where the pieces were played *attacca*, without delay, give a dramatic countdown... The concert ends with the Tannhäuser Overture. Mao-Takacs does not fight to lure emotions out of the music - he instead makes us believe that they come easily from the music, retaining and using tremendously paced tempo variations and clarity in the playing to create intensity. (...) The tension is shaped both by the natural power of the opening, but at the same time as the rounding off of the entire concert. The orchestra shines with super-disciplined playing, and the ending makes tears flow. We are reminded that we have never heard such a concert program before as this, nor have we ever experienced the Tannhäuser Overture so redemptive. We feel the deep co-understanding between conductor and orchestra." – **Musikkjournalistikk.no**

Praise for Clément Mao-Takacs

"Clément Mao-Takacs delivered an outstanding Mahler 'Symphony No. 1'. From the very first bars, he manages to create an air of mystery which catches the audience's attention. The young conductor guides the musical narrative with an impressive control of tension and release, cleverly teasing out the instrumental colours, from the beginning of the symphony to the triumphant coda."

Les Échos

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"Clément Mao-Takacs is a young conductor with a daringly original vision, and who defends the rare repertoires from yesterday and today alike, always curating intelligent programmes."

Les Échos

"Clément Mao-Takacs excels in conducting La Passion de Simone which reveals his expert knowledge and mastery of Saariaho's music."

Forum-Opéra

"Clément Mao-Takacs finds the right balance between dramaturgy, romantic lyricism and subtle irony, using the whole pallet of orchestral colours at his disposal. He pays attention to every detail, highlighting all the nuances of this complex score, without ever sacrificing the grandeur or architecture of the work. Few young conductors are able to offer this kind of mastery and synthesis."

La Revue du spectacle

"Clément Mao-Takacs has the remarkable ability to draw a large orchestral sound from the 14 musicians playing Saariaho's score (Quatre Instants)."

Forum-Opéra

"The Webern Passacaglia is perfectly conducted, without hurry but with intensity and impressive mastery, by Clément Mao-Takacs."

Concerto.net

"Conductor Clément Mao-Takacs is able to follow the incessant changes of atmosphere, without fragmenting the Mahlerian discourse, passing with ease from an elegiac episode to a dance-like one, from passion to despair. The last movement was perfectly conducted, without excessive pathos, until the radiant final bars."

Concerto.net

"In all the four scores by Vincze, Motsh, Koskinen, Saariaho, one notices the qualities of the orchestra, crafted with extraordinary precision by Clément Mao-Takacs."

Concerto.net