



Le poète du piano
Alexandre Tharaud

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Alexandre Tharaud is not just a poet of the piano, he is an intrepid musical explorer.

As this collection, *Le Poète du Piano*, demonstrates, few pianists have recorded such a diverse range of music: from French, German and Italian masters of the baroque via the Classical, Romantic and Modern eras (with a salute to the Jazz Age) to cutting-edge composers of today, and from pillars of the repertoire – such as Bach’s Goldberg Variations, Beethoven’s final sonatas and Rachmaninov’s Piano Concerto No 2 – to the film scores of Enrico Morricone, the songs of iconic French chansonnière Barbara and even The Beach Boys.

The three albums that form *Le Poète du Piano* bring together recordings made over a period of nearly 30 years, from 1991 to 2020. The first is devoted to solo repertoire (including Bach, Scarlatti, Rameau, Chopin, Fauré, Satie, Ravel, Rachmaninov, Sibelius and Gershwin), the second to concertos (Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Ravel, Poulenc, Rachmaninov and Abrahamsen), and the third to rarities and surprises (including – in addition to those numbers by Barbara and The Beach Boys – music by Mozart, Grieg, Ravel, Khachaturian, Mompou, Wiener, Ladmiraault, Le Flem and d’Alessio.). The collection features around an hour’s worth of previously unreleased material from both the more distant and the very recent past. Of particular interest are some of Alexandre Tharaud’s own compositions – seven short pieces from his *Corpus volubilis* – his transcriptions for piano of two much-loved orchestral works, the poignant ‘Adagietto’ from Mahler’s Symphony No 5 and Debussy’s sensuous *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune*, and a previously unrecorded miniature by Poulenc, *Valse des Musiques de soie*.

“Recording is a necessity for me, like breathing,” says Tharaud. “It means I can detach myself from the world for a short time – or is it an eternity? – to examine a work and let it examine me, and to bear witness before the microphones. I feel as though I have played my life through my recordings. Each one has constituted an important, if not fundamental step in my development as an artist.” He went into further detail on the process of recording when speaking to Germany’s *VAN Magazin* in 2018: “When you record an album you are pretty much confined to a single space, cut off from the world. You laugh and you scream, you go through a lifetime’s experiences in a week. I like that, because I can delve so deep into the music and into the composer – it’s like a face-to-face conversation.”

The breadth of Tharaud’s capacities as an interpreter were aptly summarised by *The Sunday Times* when reviewing his album of Scarlatti sonatas in 2011: “Tharaud’s choices make for an exhilarating rollercoaster ride between dizzying feats of heady bravura and more gentle moments where introspection and quasi-operatic cantabile playing are required ...The playing and musicianship of this young Frenchman are dazzling throughout.”

Tharaud is, then, a brilliant and sometimes mercurial poet, but he is always driven by a deep passion for music. As he told *Le Monde* in 2018: “Music touches the essence of our being, it ruffles around in our guts, disturbing things that are ancient and unspoken. Music goes further than words. It takes us by surprise, connecting us to

distant, unconscious emotions that cause something to explode within us, whether we are musicians or listeners. There is nothing we can do about it – we cannot defend ourselves against music ... When there is nothing more I can say, when I can't speak, I go to the piano. It is my language. That is my reason for being a pianist."

TRACKLIST CD 1 « Solo » – *Le poète du piano*

1. **Bach** Prelude in C *from* The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1*
2. **Rameau** Les Sauvages
3. **Chopin** Mazurka Op. 63 No. 3
4. **Rachmaninov** Prélude Op. 3 No. 2
5. **Rachmaninov** Élégie
6. **Chabrier** Idylle*
7. **Gluck/Siloti** Ballet des ombres heureuses *from* Orfeo ed Euridice
8. **Mahler/Tharaud** Adagietto *from* Mahler's Symphony No. 5 †
9. **Scarlatti** Sonata in A Major, Kk. 208
10. **Scarlatti** Sonata in D Major, Kk. 29
11. **Sibelius** Valse triste, Op. 44 No. 1
12. **Ravel** Scarbo *from* Gaspard de la nuit, M. 55
13. **Chopin** Ballade No. 2
14. **Satie** Gymnopédie No. 1
15. **Bach/Siloti** Prelude in B minor BWV 855a
16. **Rameau** Le Rappel des oiseaux
17. **Rameau** Tambourin
18. **Bach** Aria *from* Goldberg Variations
19. **Fauré** Romance sans paroles No.3
20. **Gershwin** The Man I Love

TRACKLIST CD 2 « Concertos » – *Le poète du piano*

21. **Rachmaninov** Piano Concerto No. 2: I. Moderato
22. **Haydn** Piano Concerto No. 11 in D Major, Hob. XVIII:11: II. Un poco adagio
23. **Haydn** Piano Concerto No. 11 in D Major, Hob. XVIII:11: III. Rondo all'Ungarese
24. **Bach**. Adagio BWV 974
25. **Ravel** Piano Concerto in G Major, M. 83: III. Presto (*Live*)
26. **Poulenc** Piano Concerto in C sharp minor FP. 146: I. Allegretto (*Live*)
27. **Mozart** Piano Concerto No. 23 in A Major, K. 488: I. Allegro (*Live*)
28. **Mozart** Rondo in A Major, K. 386
29. **Mozart** Piano Concerto No. 9 in E-Flat Major, K. 271 "Jeunehomme": III. Rondo. Presto
30. **Bach** Concerto in A Minor for 4 keyboards, BWV 1065: II. Largo
31. **Bach** Concerto in A Minor for 4 keyboards, BWV 1065: III. Allegro
32. **Abrahamsen** Left, alone (2015): Part 1: I. Very fast (*live*)

TRACKLIST CD 3 « Rare gems » – *Le poète du piano*

33. **Mozart** Piano Sonata No.11 in A K331(300i): III. Alla turca: Allegretto*
 34. **Debussy/Tharaud** Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune, L. 87 †
 35. **Khatchaturian** Andantino Op. 62: No. 1 *from* Children's Album, Book I *
- 36 - 38 **Grieg** Lyric Pieces
36. Book II, Op. 38: No. 7, Waltz. Valse

37. Book III, Op. 43: No. 1, Butterfly
38. Book V, Op. 54: No. 6, Bell Ringing
- 39-40 **Wiener** Histoires sans paroles
39. No. 9 Bucolique
40. No.11 Blues
41. **Morricone** Cinema Paradiso *
42. **Poulenc** Valse *from* Musiques de soie †
- 43-49 **Tharaud** Corpus Volubilis †
43. Sama
44. Rumba
45. Sicilienne
46. Avant-Deux
47. Faune
48. Pavane
49. Vaudou
- 50 - 54 **Le Flem** Chants des genêts
50. Entrée des binious
51. Vers le soir
52. Autour d'un conte
53. Pour bercer
54. Ronde
55. **Ladmirault** Valse triste for 2 pianos, with Eric Le Sage
56. **Barbara** J'ai tué l'Amour, with Dominique A
57. **Wiener** Chansons de Charles Trenet: No. 1, Mes jeunes années †
58. **D'Alessio** India Song
- 59 - 60 **Tharaud** 2 improvisations on the Beach Boys
59. Barbara Ann (Fred FASSERT)
60. Good Vibrations for 3 pianos (Brian WILSON / Michael LOVE)
61. **Mompou** Charmes: II. Pour pénétrer les âmes
62. **Ravel** Prelude in A Minor, M. 65
63. **Ravel** Miroirs, M. 43: I. Noctuelles

Alexandre Tharaud, piano

*New Recording

† World-Premiere Recording