



Francesco Tristano

Island Nation:
Free Piano Concerto (2016)
I Bel Ombre
II The Islanders
III Opa!

finnjun edition

Island Nation: Free piano concerto

World premiere on March 5, 2016

Gewandhaus Leipzig, DE

Francesco Tristano & MDR symphony orchestra, conducted by Kristjan Järvi

Drawing inspiration from a recent trip to an unnamed island nation, FT's free piano concerto is free inasmuch as the piano part is only written down in part and leaves considerable space open for improvisation.

The piano takes on the identity of a free island nation surrounded by the ocean - the orchestra - which in turn provides the laws, harmonic and rhythmic, that rule the structure and evolution of the three movements. This is FT's first composition for large orchestra since 1997.



Francesco Tristano is an artist of many talents: Pianist, Composer, DJ, Techno and Jazz musician who combines eras, genres and styles in his music. Almost everything he does illustrates his refusal to accept borders and limits in music, he knows the conventions that have shaped generations of classical pianists – and has chosen to side step them.

Francesco has become a key reference in a new movement which explores the creative intersection between classical and electronic music, homogenising it in a natural way which unites audiences from various worlds in to his own universe. He is always bringing something new, as NY Times describes, “Francesco Tristano had rhythmic bite and color galore, while bringing engaging impetuosity to the music.”

Born in 1981, Tristano discovered the piano at the age of five and studied at New York’s Juilliard School for five years. It was in New York that he started to work with electronic and club music as well as completing a master class with Rosalyn Tureck. In 2004, he won the first prize at the International piano competition for contemporary music in Orléans, France. He presented his compositions from an early age and is focusing increasingly on his work as a composer after recent successes such as 'A Soft Shell Groove', among others as well as Symphonic works for orchestra and Strings orchestra pieces. The Guardian described his recent works based on Stravinsky “ ...Ravel – Tristano’s own, very skilful, very witty two-piano version of Boléro, which drives to its climax in a wild torrent of clusters and glissandi, and the composer’s own arrangement of La Valse, ... (a) kind of demonic music ”

As a chamber musician, Tristano is very active: he founded his own ensemble, The New Bach Players, which he also conducts, he also has a Jazz Trio, KST with fellow musicians Bachar Khalifé and Pascal Schumacher, and often collaborates with important names in different genres such as Derrick May, Carl Craig, the Quatuor Modigliani, Michel Portal as well as an exquisite dance project with Saburo Teshiawagara to name a few.

To date Tristano has released 12 albums, among them recordings of Bach’s Goldberg Variations and complete keyboard concertos, Luciano Berio’s complete piano works, and Girolamo Frescobaldi’s Toccatas. ‘Not for Piano’ (inFine, 2007), presented his own compositions as well as versions of techno classics at the piano and ‘Idiosynkrasia’ (inFine, 2010), recorded at Carl Craig’s Planet E-communications in Detroit, which was released to critical acclaim. As a Deutsche Grammophon artist he released ‘BachCage’, produced by Moritz von Oswald, in 2011, ‘The Long Walk’ (Buxehetude/ Bach/ Tristano) in 2012 and now, having recently released his third album ‘Scandale’ with Alice Sara Ott in 2014, he is working on his fourth solo album to be released in 2017 mixing electronic and classical music as well as a pure electronics in album p:ianorig*.

As well as premieres of his symphonic and chamber orchestra compositions, upcoming projects include The Goldberg Variations with an urbanisation visual theme and p:ianorig* a pioneering design rig for his electronic projects in 2016/7.

Recent and upcoming engagements (recitals and orchestral) include - Theatre du Chatelet, Alter Oper Frankfurt, Orchestre de Lille, Spanish National orchestra, a residency with the Manchester Camerata, Audi SommerFest, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Frankfurt Radio Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique Luxembourg, Frankfurt Alter Oper, La Folle Journee, Sonar, Arsenal Metz, Sala São Paulo, Cervantino Festival Mexico and Auditorio Nacional Madrid as well as various tours in China and Japan.

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