

BIOGRAPHY

The French-Lebanese composer and poet Bechara El-Khoury was born in Beirut on 18th of March 1957.

His artistic debut occurred very early. He started serious music studies, in Beirut, since 1969, under the direction of Hagop Arslanian (piano, harmony, counterpoint, fugue and analysis), while still continuing advanced general studies.

Between 1971 and 1973, he published three volumes of poetry.

In 1973, he was Kapellmeister at the church of Saint Elias in Antelias near Beirut. He devoted himself at that time to composing works for choir and for orchestra.

In 1979, Bechara El-Khoury went to Paris to take advanced lessons in composition with Pierre-Petit (composition and orchestration).

In 1983 the producer Erato released a two-record album exclusively of symphonic and concertante music by Bechara El-Khoury. This recording was made by the Orchestre Colonne conducted by Pierre Dervaux and the American pianist David Lively.

In the same year, a big televised gala concert was organised at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, for the "*Khalil Gibran Centenary*". The Orchestre Colonne and Pierre Dervaux performed, for this occasion, a complete programme of his works.

In 1985, he composed *Symphony opus 37 "Les Ruines de Beyrouth"* as a memorial for Lebanon's war in 1975

In 1994, the Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation International, (L.B.C.I.) the most important television channel in Lebanon, awarded him the "*Prize for Arts and Culture*".

In 1996, the producer Forlane re-released on two CDs the complete recording of his symphonic and concertante music performed by David Lively, Gérard Poulet, Abdel Rahman El Bacha and the Orchestre Colonne conducted by Pierre Dervaux.

In the same year, the first performance of his sextet for violins, commissioned by Shlomo Mintz for his master-classes, was filmed at Tel Aviv and shown publicly in 1997 at the Carnegie Hall in New York.

Since 1979, he is living in Paris. He is jury member for exams in Paris at the École Normale Supérieure de Musique and Radio France.

In 2000, Bechara El-Khoury received the "*Prix Rossini*" of the Académie des Beaux-Arts (Institut de France) and in 2001 the medal "*Knight of the National Order of the Cedar of Lebanon*".

In 2002, he began his discographic collaboration with the label Naxos.

In 2003, in London, he was Finalist in "Masterprize", the International Composing Competition, for his work « *Les Fleuves engloutis* » *op. 64*. This work was performed by the London Symphony Orchestra at Barbican Hall and conducted by Daniel Harding (world premiere 2003). He conducted it again at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées with The Orchestre National de France (2004).

In January 2006, The London Symphony Orchestra recorded a new CD of El-Khoury, dedicated for the Victims of the 9/11 2001, "New York, Tears and Hope". This work will be performed in New York (World premiere) for the 5th anniversary of the tragedy.

His violin concerto opus 62, "*Aux frontières de nulle part*" was performed (World première) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, on 25th May, 2006, by Sarah Nemtanu and the Orchestre National de France conducted by Kurt Masur.

His catalogue includes some seventy works. They have been performed in various venues, such as:

- Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Salle Pleyel, Théâtre du Châtelet, Radio France, Salle Gaveau, Salle Cortot in Paris, Opéra Berlioz/Le Corum at Montpellier...
- Barbican Hall, Leighton House Museum in London...
- Kiev Philharmonia
- Cairo Opera House,
- Grand Sérail, Assembly Hall (American University) in Beirut...
- Noga Theatre and Recanatti Hall of Tel-Aviv, Israel Radio-Television.

Occurred in different countries such: Italy, Germany, Belgium, Romania, USA...

And performed by many orchestras such as:

- The Orchestre National de France,
- The London Symphony Orchestra,
- The Orchestre Colonne,
- The Orchestre National de Montpellier,
- The Orchestre Symphonique Français,
- The Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra,
- The Cairo Symphony Orchestra,
- The Israel Chamber Orchestra,
- The Ukraine National Symphony Orchestra...

Some of his works have been commissioned by Radio France, Musique Nouvelle en Liberté, the Orchestre Symphonique Français, the Master-Classes of Shlomo Mintz, the École Normale de Musique de Paris...

They are published by Editions Max Eschig and Editions Alphonse Leduc.

"His compositions are dominated by symphonic and concertante writings, his works being the expression of humanism based on an underlying Christian spirituality."

AVAILABLE DISCOGRAPHY

August

2002 CD, symphonic works, **Ukraine National Symphony Orchestra, conductor: Vladimir Sirenko** - Ref.8.557043. **NAXOS**

April

2006 CD, symphonic works, **Orchestre Colonne, conductor: Pierre Dervaux** - Ref.8.557691. **NAXOS**

July

2006 CD, concertant works, piano : David Lively, Abdel Rahman El Bacha, Violin : Gérard Poulet, **Orchestre Colonne, conductor : Pierre Dervaux** - Ref. 8.557692. **NAXOS**

September

2006 CD, symphonic works, pianistic works, piano :Dimitiri Vassilakis, Hidéki Nagano (Soloists of the Ensemble Intercontemporain), **London Symphony Orchestra, conductor: Daniel Harding, Martyn Brabbins** - Ref. 8.570134. **NAXOS**

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