



# BIOGRAPHY

JULIEN MARCHAL

In a richness that let the silence shout, “Insight” is the aside of an era influenced by some epileptic *boom boom* and exasperating voices. **Julien Marchal** purifies the too-often exaggerated effects to keep the essence of music: the harmony. He bares it, pure and sensual, to expose its exquisite nude. We can hear subtle notes moving on their mechanic, we imagine hammers making the wave on taut strings of a gutted upright piano. This simplicity is a cure for excitement, an aid to contemplation. With this object devoided of all artifice, the Bordeaux-based composer invents what may be the musical naturism.

*“Since my teens, I’ve wanted to compose, but I was more attracted to technical feats of music. Later, at university, I would say that the silence in the Arvo Pärt’s piece “Für Alina” transcended me. I remembered being in such a state of ecstasy and hearing tasting.”* Then, he started to interest himself in composers such as Philip Glass, Charles Yves or Erik Satie, which put him in the same obsession: the search for ecstasy in classical music, the one of excelling, of the loosening in the sensorial evasion. Irresistible ‘master of none’, his musical minimalism is influenced by a far different register: the electronic. Julien then listens to Jon Hopkins, Burial, Múm and particularly to Boards of Canada for which he has a considerable esteem.

Graduated in musicology and from the Conservatoire de Bordeaux, he swings between different homes as a piano teacher to pass down his passion. But when he sinks in the den of his piano, everything disappears. Everything becomes futile, light, unimportant. He feeds himself with sounds, notes and scores written in carbon. Shaky at his piano and his pedals, he lives in self-sufficiency. It’s almost like a whole musical ecosystem that he has developed in his tiny studio, where he ran through the first ranges of Roman numbers.

*“The numbers are here not to influence the mental images: everybody is therefore able to create his own inner journey. [...] My records are not concept albums, they are piano solo tunes that can be read alone, upside down.”* From I to XIII, Julien Marchal released his first “**Insight**” in 2015, a collection of contemplative and downy pieces, dissected with a deep respect for classical art. Besotted in the movement of the minimalist and experimental movements, including the modern classical, the composer avoids any sound and common additions in order to be more focused on the essential: *“What influences me the most in writing is the music itself. Sometimes, I start with a melody, but most of the time I think ‘harmony’ (succession of chords). Do I want something flat, monotonous, or do I want something sunny? These are the questions I wonder.”* Simple questions, but full of sense, that led him to work with **Robot Roch**, a Berliner musician and producer settled down in LA and who animates himself around organic and ambient sounds. Together, Julien and Robot composed “**Eclipse**” and “**Care**” from the album “**Hypermoment**”. “Eclipse” music video, directed by Mickaël Le Goff, got the Best Music Video Award 2016 at KRAF Festival (Croatia); and was also

be nominated for the Berlin Music Video Awards 2016, placing in second place in the rankings.

In May 2016, Julien released “**Insight II**” and heightens his space-time. This second opus is the obvious result of the abandon to his art. With open arms, the rhythm embraces the harmonies: *“I’ve listened to lots of electronic and folk music, and also devised many rhythmic exercises for many months; this must have certainly influenced me somehow. I am one of those who think that everything that surrounds us affects our creation process. What’s beautiful is the inscription of the moment. I like the imperfections, the small cracks and the notes that don’t come out because of the damper pedal, the stool, the atmosphere, the mood, the tiredness, the digestion, etc.”* This organic way of seeing things leads the composer to essential resonances and closer to the musical experience. Listeners are therefore advised to listen to the opus with their eyes closed, *“in the dark and with the headphones, lengthened if possible, creating a vacuum and letting go.”* A guideline that led him to appear among the 100 best albums of 2016 according to the magazine *The Quietus*.

Julien’s work is like impusled under the kinetic energy, a projection of images and thoughts that conditions the fiction. Apropos, his song “**INSIGHT XVIII**” features in the very last episode of the season 4 of the US show **Ray Donovan**, created by Ann Biderman. A placement of synchronisation that feeds his dearest wishes. The so obvious step to his route as a composer that the images are vowed to dance between the mesh of his scores, but also to satiate a certain workaholism: *“I see my life like a thing that constantly moves. I struggle with steadfastness. For the moment, I really fancy composing for films, but I would especially like to work with a team, or with a film director, giving him some suggestions, bringing an additional value to the picture, reconsidering it, communicating, trying. Finally, I would like to write a sonorous story with all the steps associated with it.”*

Projects, wishes, dreams – Julien Marchal keeps moving as much as he can to thus answer the concerns about the human being conditions. *“In my job, I’d like to share untouched, natural and simple emotions. By making music, I am able to answer one essential question in life: what am I doing here?”* His music is a devotion to art, to the love that surrounds him, but above all to his instrument, true epicenter of his life: *“The piano is so beautiful. I don’t know how to explain... You can do everything with it. It’s monstrous, infinite, and at the same time it’s nothing. It’s abstract.”* But still really concrete and certainly well enshrined in the feelings, with which Julien Marchal likes to draw his inspiration and to fully breathe.