

## Mark Andre, Composer

### Biography

*Mark Andre reaches with such intensity for a stillness that almost bursts your eardrums.* Berliner Zeitung, 23/1/2018

Mark Andre, born in Paris in 1964, creates musical-existential experiences for the listener characterised by subtle, minutely worked-out processes of transformation. Central to his work is the question of disappearance, which shapes his approach to sound, form, and subject. The practicing Protestant is a sensitive explorer of sound, both in his delicate and concentrated chamber works as well as in his orchestral and music theatre pieces.

After his studies in France, including those at the Paris Conservatory with Claude Ballif and Gérard Grisey, Mark Andre found a new musical home in Germany. He describes his encounter with the music of Helmut Lachenmann, whose piano concerto score *Ausklang* he happened to stumble across, as having been a revelation. He subsequently went through extensive composition studies with Lachenmann in Stuttgart and studied musical electronics with André Richard at the experimental studio of Southwest German Radio, in the meantime shifting the focus of his life from France to Germany. Here, he soon received grants and prizes, such as the Kranichsteiner Music Prize at the Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music (1996), first prize at the Stuttgart International Composers Competition (1997), and the composition prize from Frankfurt Opera (2001). Since 1998 he has taught regularly at the Darmstadt Summer Courses. In 2002 he received the Advancement Award from the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation, and in 2005 he travelled to Berlin as a participant of the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Programme, where he has lived ever since.

Particular interest was aroused by the 2004 premiere of Mark Andre's tripartite music theatre work *...22, 13...* at the Munich Biennale. This work's title refers to a passage in the Apocalypse of St John. His orchestral triptych *...auf...*, which he completed in 2007, similarly references religious themes. Here, Mark Andre explored aspects of transition as relates to Christ's Resurrection. Mark Andre has a soft spot for German prepositions, grammatical elements with the function of transition, as illustrated in numerous other work titles such as those of the chamber music works written between 2001 and 2005: *...durch...*, *...zu...*, *...in...*, and *...als...*. Mark Andre's first opera, *wunderzaichen*, under Sylvain Cambreling's baton, became a highlight of the 2013/14 Stuttgart Opera season and was reprised there in 2018 in a revised version.

One of Mark Andre's most important works of the last decade is the clarinet concerto *über* written for Jörg Widmann and the SWR Symphony Orchestra, which won the Orchestral Prize at the Donaueschingen Festival. The violin concerto *an* was premiered in 2016 at the Acht Brücken festival in Cologne, followed by the work *...hin...* for harp and chamber orchestra in 2018. Another significant work of recent years is the *Riss* trilogy for ensemble, with individual parts written for the Ensemble Modern, the Ensemble Musikfabrik and the Ensemble intercontemporain. His work for organ *iv15 himmelfahrt* was performed for the first time in October 2018 in Munich in the version for electronic stop action, before being performed with mechanical stop action in Bad Frankenhausen in 2019. In 2018/19 he was also commissioned by the Berlin Scharoun Ensemble to write *Drei Stücke für Ensemble*, which were performed at the Berlin Philharmonie and the Elbphilharmonie. Also in 2019, *iv 17* for soprano and piano was premiered at the Lucerne Festival. *wohin*, a work for harp and ensemble, was premiered by the Ensemble intercontemporain at the Philharmonie de Paris in 2021 and performed again at the Pierre Boulez Saal Berlin in 2022. At the Musikfest Berlin in 2021, the 40-minute double bass solo piece *iv 18 "Sie fürchteten sich nämlich"* was on the programme, which will soon also be released on CD. The world premiere, expertly performed by Frank Reinecke, was part of a two-part concert evening with Pierre-Laurent Aimard featuring five piano works by Mark Andre. In May 2022, the *rwh cycle* was heard with five Hanoverian choirs and the Ensemble Modern at the KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen and subsequently at the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, followed by *rwh2* with the Gaechinger Cantorey and the ensemble ascolta at the Musikfest Stuttgart.

Mark Andre started the current season with the premiere of his *Sieben Stücke für Streichquartett* by the Kuss Quartet at the Elbphilharmonie. At Rainy Days at the Philharmonie Luxembourg, Brad Lubman conducted the Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg in the world premiere of *Vier Echographien for Orchestra*. In February 2023, Ilya Gringolts and the RSO Vienna under Markus Poschner gave the Austrian premiere of the Violin Concerto *an*. The orchestral work *Im Entschwinden* was launched in March by the Orchestre de Paris under the baton of Klaus Mäkelä at the Musikverein Vienna, where Mark Andre will be featured as a focus artist in numerous concerts this season; the German premiere will

follow at the Elbphilharmonie. Towards the end of the current season, *Dasein 1* for ensemble and electronics will be premiered with the Ensemble intercontemporain at the IRCAM festival ManiFeste in the Philharmonie de Paris; the piece marks the beginning of a new ensemble triptych.

Mark Andre is a member of the Berlin Academy of the Arts, Saxon Academy of the Arts, and the Bavarian Academy of the Arts, and was honoured with the order of Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres in 2011. In 2012 he was a fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in Berlin. He teaches composition at the Academy of Music in Dresden.

2022/23 season

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