

HOMAGE TO HENRI DUTILLEUX

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SUMMARY. Henri Dutilleux was one of the prominent figures of European composition, especially in the second half of the 20th century. A complex personality, he worked throughout his career as a musician in various poses, from pianist, to accompanist, to conductor, to pedagogue, to composer, being one of the main promoters of French culture and beyond. He received numerous awards and recognitions for his entire activity, his reputation not only surpassing the borders of the country, but also the European ones. Although he began composing at a very young age, Dutilleux repeatedly

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omits to include these works in his catalog, even refusing to mention them in the section of his interpreted works. Meticulous and extremely pedantic, he always made changes to his works, constantly crystallizing his style both throughout the varied musical experiences in which the musician took part and through the close collaborations he had with instrumental artists whom he consulted regarding timbral possibilities and techniques of the instruments he was writing for. His compositions, although not very numerous, encompass a vast genuistically variety, and an exhaustive stylistic approach. Although he always embraces new compositional techniques, Dutilleux never reaches a rational extremism, keeping in the foreground the idea of meaningful music, and not the other way around. He died on 22nd of May 2013, in Paris, at the age of 97.

Keywords: Henri Dutilleux, French composer, 20th century

Born in 1916 in Angers, but whose family tree has its roots in the North of France², Henri Dutilleux is one of the prominent figures of European compositional life of the 20th century. He comes from a large family of artists³, being the youngest of five children. Henri Dutilleux benefited, from the earliest years of his life, from an extremely complex education. His parents, as the composer himself would later say in various interviews, made efforts for all the brothers to enjoy a beautiful childhood, gradually discovering the secrets of the arts. This turned out to be extremely difficult, as far too many times they were forced to move due to the uncertain socio-political context. Despite the not-so-ideal conditions, the composer nostalgically remembers those times, his native lands or his mother's singing⁴. The many trials that his family had to overcome built him a strong character, instilled with the dignity of every work, a fact that became extremely useful in his youth years, when he had to accept different jobs, some of them being far below his intellectual or artistic capacity. However,

² Henri Dutilleux's' Family Tree - <https://gw.geneanet.org/pdelaubier?lang=en&n=dutilleux&oc=0&p=henri>, last acc. 9th of May 2020.

³ His paternal great-grandfather was Constant Dutilleux, 1807-1865, a renowned French painter. His maternal grandfather, Julien Koszul, 1844 – 1927, was an organist and composer, and for a long time Director of the National Conservatory of Roubaix. The latter retired in his old age to live with his family, a fact that opened new worlds for little Henri in his knowledge of the musical language.

⁴ Glayman, Claude – Interviews, *Henri Dutilleux - Music - Mystery and Memory*, trans. Engl Roger Nichols, Routledge Publishing House, London and New York 2016, p. 35, web edition in pdf format.

he never gave up on his ideals, always managing to forge his own path, even when uncertainty was a widespread factor, not just of French society.

He composed his first work at only 13 years old. *La fleur* is a short piece for voice and piano, which surprises with its harmonic language, especially at the ending where it brings an unexpected modulation⁵. Shortly after this experience, he decided to pursue a career in composition. As he later testified himself, his decision somewhat surprised the family: „It was a decision that seemed perfectly straightforward to me, but everybody else was amazed by it, especially my brother and sisters, who thought it was extremely risky. But I had this need to express myself on the piano and that was all I thought of. Obviously, I was stimulated by everything I heard around me.”

In 1924 he was admitted to study at the Douai Conservatory. Under the guidance of Vincent Gallois, he deepened his knowledge in harmony, piano, counterpoint, and musical theory. Here he stayed to train during his childhood and adolescence. His schedule was very busy because he had to divide it between music study hours and high school classes⁶.

In 1932, his work was noticed by the recruiting officer of the Paris Conservatoire, who was in Douai at the time, looking for young talents. He invites him to study at the prestigious institution in the capital⁷.

When he was only 16 years old, he left, together with his older sister, Hélène, to study at the Paris Conservatoire, where for one year he would only be an audient member in Henri Büsser's composition class, afterwards being accepted as a student in 1934. He continues to perfect himself under the guidance of Büsser, and begins to study harmony with Jean Gallon, counterpoint with Noël Gallon, conducting with Philippe Gaubert, course which he gives up after only one year, and music history with Maurice Emmanuel, whose teaching style, which placed great emphasis on the ancient Greek modes and the rhythmic system, strongly influenced Olivier Messiaen⁸.

⁵ Potter, Caroline – *Henri Dutilleux – His life and works*, Routledge Publishing House, London and New York 2016, p. 3, web edition in pdf format.

⁶ Noel, Johnston Richard Jr. – *The Figures de résonances and 3 préludes of Henri Dutilleux – Analysis and Context*, Doctoral dissertation, Houston University, Texas, 2003, p.5, web edition in pdf format.

⁷ Potter, Caroline – *Henri Dutilleux – His life and works*, Routledge Publishing House, London and New York 2016, p. 5, web edition in pdf format.

⁸ Suniga, Rosemarie - *The solo piano works of Henri Dutilleux: a stylistic analysis*, Doctoral dissertation, University of South Carolina, 2011, p.5, web edition in pdf format.

Among his colleagues at the time were the cellist and actor Maurice Baquet, the pianist and composer Henri Betti, the conductor and composer Paul Bonneau, the jazz pianist, composer, and conductor Léo Chauliac, the actor and musician Henri Leca, Louiguy⁹, the harpist, pianist and composer Pierre Spiers and the pianist Raymond Trouard¹⁰.

Throughout his life as a musician, Dutilleux's career has known three fundamental positions: pedagogue, composer, conductor. Although he was a very good pianist, stage performances were never a point of interest for the maestro. The only poses as an instrumental pianist are revealed in the few recordings in which he accompanied soloists who performed some of his works, and in the accompanying jobs he held.

Henri Dutilleux had a fascinating personality and a curious mind, which always appreciated beauty, constantly looking for it in any form of cultural manifestation, taking refuge as if in the intimacy of the artistic gesture. Constantly concerned with improving himself, the composer always displayed a modest personality. His art never aimed to revolutionize, to shock, to reinvent, the meaning being acquired precisely by moving away from the customs and expectations of contemporary society.

Dutilleux incorporated, during the evolutionary course of a long career, an impressive multitude of stylistic elements, being undoubtedly one of the synthesis composers of his period. Thus, his style can be described as an extension of the French school of composition rather than a break. Tom Service stated in an article for The Guardian newspaper, published when what would be the last anniversary of the great composer: „As one of music history's most fastidious perfectionists, Dutilleux's published works are few. [...] Together, all of them, from his First Symphony, composed in 1951, to a recent masterpiece, *Correspondences* from 2003,[...] is proof of a fundamental sometimes little-understood truth about French musical life in the postwar period: there is another way apart from Pierre's (Boulez's, that is). Dutilleux never accepted any of the dogmas of the avant-garde, above all, what Boulez called at one stage the necessity of serialism, a systemization that's anathema to Dutilleux's creative sensibilities.”¹¹

Roger Nichols, the well-known sound engineer, producer, and inventor of American origin, stated, shortly after the passing of the great composer, for the same publication: „This allusion to the magic of music was

⁹ Stage name of composer Louis Guglielmi, known for the song *La Vie en Rose*.

¹⁰ Henri Dutilleux - webpage, <https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0244791/>, last acc. 9th of May 2020.

¹¹ Service, Tom - A guide to Henri Dutilleux's music, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2013/jan/21/henri-dutilleux-contemporary-music-guide>, last acc. 9th of May 2020

not haphazard. Dutilleux believed in composition as a quasi-sacred occupation and permitted himself to utter (for him) harsh words about composers who spent more time in front of television cameras than in front of their manuscript paper."¹² Likewise, Paul Griffiths, the music critic of British origin, described for *The New York Times*, the style of the great composer as follows: „Mr. Dutilleux’s position in French music was proudly solitary. Between Olivier Messiaen and Pierre Boulez in age, he was little affected by either, though he took an interest in their work. Ravel, Roussel, Bartok and Stravinsky clearly mattered to him, as did big-band music. But his voice, marked by sensuously handled harmony and color, was his own.”¹³

We observe many times, in the melodic sense, the intention of the composer to achieve, as it were, an incursion into the bottom of the soul, reaching new spheres of depth, intended not only to generate a state of awareness of the current moment of the artistic act, but rather of self-transposition in a universe where the past finds its fulfillment in the present, thus achieving a universal balance where the passage of time is no longer perceived conventionally.

Of course, in Dutilleux's case, rhythm sometimes becomes a bridge through which he manages to connect the outer world, of sounds, with the inner self, of introspection.

We can ask to what extent the spiritual morphology of spatial temporality, of sacred art understood as ritual art, can still have an impact on modern style today, if we consider the almost exhausted attempts to explain the relationship between two great concepts: spatiality and temporality.

At an overview of his work, we notice that at the macrostructural level there are four ways to approach the two previously mentioned concepts: duration and spatiality. Dutilleux achieves a global fusion between them, which very well describes the sonority of each of the works as a whole:

- the scientific representation of duration – the mensural character
- the spiritual representation of duration – the overlapping of different rhythms
- the scientific representation of spatiality - the height of the notes
- the spiritual representation of spatiality – the timbre

To better understand this concept, we will attribute to the scientific perspective the elements of notation and compositional technique, the rules of harmony, which Dutilleux precisely observes both in the case of carefully

¹² Nichols, Roger – Henri Dutilleux obituary, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/may/22/henri-dutilleux> - last acc. 9th of May 2020

¹³ Paul Griffiths – *Henri Dutilleux, Modernist composer*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/23/arts/music/henri-dutilleux-modernist-composer-dies-at-97.html>, last acc. 9th of May 2020

notated durations and in the case of characteristic pitches. We can therefore state that Dutilleux uses, in general, a rather traditional approach to notation, more conventional than would be expected. The spiritual perspective is described by rhythm, and especially by timbre.

As is easy to notice from the first hearing of a work, rhythm occupies, in the case of Dutilleux, an extremely important place in the elaboration of the musical approach. This phenomenon is, of course, in full accordance with the requirements of the era, leaning heavily on neo-modal principles that enjoy a strong interest from both composers and musicians in general and, of course, the public. In the case of Dutilleux, we find elements such as: non-retrogradable rhythms, polyrhythm, polymetry, increasing or decreasing some values based on clear mathematical structures, the rhythmic pedal, the rhythmic character, etc. These are elements with which we are somewhat familiar, being easy to spot in the works of names such as George Enescu, Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Messiaen, and others. However, Dutilleux manages to take this technical mosaic to a higher level, refusing this time to let his art be subjugated by a mechanical process. His compositional style proposes a way of approaching the subject in extremely well-thought-out music, which makes it possible to create a very clear descriptive image, obtained by non-simplistic means, which manage to primarily address the human spirit and not just the reasoning. This is a basic feature of the period, with free creative fantasy now being the rule.

To understand more deeply the unification of the compositional style that defines Dutilleux, it is necessary to take an overview of several events that undoubtedly played an important role in the formation of a strong personality from a musical point of view.

Shortly after the passing away of some outstanding personalities in the world of international composition, such as Alban Berg - 1935, Bartók Béla - 1945, Anton Webern - 1945, and marking the last years of the life of some such as Arnold Schönberg - 1951, Charles Edward Ives - 1954 or George Enescu - 1955, the young Dutilleux dedicates himself exclusively to composition. From the historical point of view, this moment is extremely interesting to look at through a perspective of temporality. As we stated before, the 20th century brought with it an extremely deep polystylistic mosaic, which took over all the arts in turn, creating stronger links between them than ever before. Thus, we can see how works like Dutilleux's Piano Sonata op.1 appear in the same artistic context as John Cage's Sonatas and Interludes, or Pierre Boulez's first Piano Sonata.

The liberation of Paris brings with it an attempt to restore the cultural balance, to regain the artistic values that the regime had tried to suppress.

Now, names like Messiaen and Honegger are regaining their rightful place on the concert stage.

Dutilleux was always a mature spirit, who did not rush into major changes; he calculated every decision intensely, managing to step on a balanced path in terms of the evolution of his career. During his formative years he showed a lot of docility and perseverance, simultaneously attending the courses of several French cultural institutions, working tirelessly to choose a path that would satisfy him and be in full harmony with his personality. This was the period in which he managed to make himself popular, among the French academic life. He worked in many institutions that promoted art, which later gave him international exposure. Due to his introverted personality, however, he did not excel at self-promotion. This is easy to see if we look at the years in which Dutilleux held positions that would have allowed him to propel his career internationally. However, he preferred to be a promoter of culture, encouraging many of his colleagues to assert themselves (we refer here in particular to the period spent in the field of radio broadcasting, when he constantly urged fellow composers to write works that were going to be played, period in which he used all the means at his disposal to promote not only local culture but also international musicians).

We might think that, because of this, he placed himself in a cone of shadow, but it is easy to see that this exact humble but dignified and courageous attitude later gave him the appreciation and openness to extremely productive collaborative relationships.

During the Vichy Regime, cultural life suffered from political pressures. Many of the representative names of French cultural society were censored or even banned by it. In the long run, this reprehensible initiative worked as a catalytic factor that managed to create a resistance movement.

Although Henri Dutilleux was never a direct target of any reprisals, probably due to his low-key nature, he joined the cultural support actions. During this period, as it emerges later from his interviews, he will make friends with key names of the resistance movement such as: the composer and conductor Manuel Rosenthal, the composer Georges Auric, the composer Marcel Mihalovici¹⁴, the pianist and composer Claude Delvincourt, the composer and conductor Roger Désormière, the composer Elsa Jacqueline Barraine, composer and art critic Alexis Roland Manuel, the soprano and teacher Irène Joachim and the composer Henry Barraud. The latter was, at that time, the musical director of a clandestine radio station, established before the liberation of Paris, which aimed at a movement of cultural resistance. As

¹⁴ Marcel Mihalovici was a composer of French origin, born in Bucharest, who lived in Romania until the age of 21. His talent was discovered by the great George Enescu.

Dutilleux himself had confessed in one of the interviews given later, the initiative never materialized in the form of a group, being only a simple resource of promoting some cultural-artistic values, independent of the influences and wishes of any political regime¹⁵.

Due to his clear positioning in support of culture, and his tireless work to encourage and promote young talent, Dutilleux is today recognized as an eloquent personality of the resistance movement.

At the beginning of 2015, in March, a tribute event was scheduled in Paris, during which a commemorative plaque was to be unveiled on the facade of the building where the composer lived. This event was postponed due to the refusal of Christophe Girard, the mayor of the 4th Arrondissement, to approve the installation. His position was intensely criticized in the intellectual communities at that time, as the mayor had made some offensive statements regarding the activity of the great composer, letting it be understood that the reason for the refusal was given by some possible collaborative relationships that the composer would have had with promoters of Nazi ideology. In response to this grotesque injustice, Guy Krivopissko, director of the National Museum of Resistance, published, based on the archives he had at his disposal and his unquestionable expertise as an expert researcher in the field, a letter to definitively and irrevocably destroy any trace of uncertainty that could tarnish the name of the great composer. We offer here a short excerpt, from the beginning of the document: „Henri Dutilleux, the resistant composer, was a member of the honorary committee of the National Resistance Museum (MRN) alongside the resistant writer Jean Cassou, the resistant filmmaker Jean-Paul Lechanois, the resistant philosopher Vladimir Jankelevitch, the resistance artist Madeleine Milhaud, resistance poet Pierre Seghers, resistance painters Boris Taslitzky and Édouard Pignon, as well as resistance fighters Lucie and Raymond Aubrac, Renée Bédarida, Jacques Debu-Bridel, Vincent Badie, Georges Montaron, Pierre Sudreau, Christian Pineau, Louis Terrenoire, Charles Lederman, Joel le Tac, Hélène Langevin, Henri-René Ribière, Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier, Jacques Piette, Gaston Cusin, Pierre Meunier, etc. A justified place that honors the museum”¹⁶

¹⁵ Glayman, Claude – Interviews, *Henri Dutilleux - Music - Mystery and Memory*, English translation Roger Nichols, Routledge Publishing House, London and New York, 2016, p.35, web edition in pdf format.

¹⁶ Letter published by Guy Krivopissko, director of the *National Museum of the Resistance* in Champigny-sur-Marne, specialist in the archives of the Resistance and especially in the letters of those who were shot, to whom he dedicated several books, Seconded Professor of History, Co-author of the communication dedicated to the Front National of Musicians at the conference “Musical life under Vichy” under the direction of Myriam Chimènes, Complete editions. <https://slippedisc.com/2015/03/who-smearred-dutilleux-as-a-collaborator-when-he-was-in-fact-in-the-resistance/>, last acc. 9th of May 2022. - „*Henri Dutilleux, le compositeur*

Faced with a strong reaction from the academic community¹⁷, which above all, respects, admires and promotes the integrity and sacredness of the artistic act, values that Dutilleux himself promoted throughout his life, the officials were forced to revise, shortly after the incident, the initial decision. Today, on the streets of Paris, we can find the plaque that indicates the place where the great composer spent most of his life.

As we stated before, Dutilleux has always enjoyed special attention from musicians. We mention here names such as those of international soloists Mstislav Rostropovitch, Isaac Stern, Anne-Sophie Mutter, choreographer Rolland Petit, or conductors Charles Münch, George Szell, Paul Sacher or Seiji, as well as important collaborations that the composer had during his life with artists like Daniel Barenboim, Alain Pâris, Yan-Pascal Tortelier, Jukka-Pekka Sarasate or Sergiu Celibidache. No less impressive is the momentum that Dutilleux's works experienced after his death. Even if a complete list of the conductors who performed his works would probably be impossible, and not necessarily edifying in the current context, we offer for reference the names that stood out during this research¹⁸.

résistant, était membre du comité d'honneur du musée de la Résistance nationale (MRN) aux côtés de l'écrivain résistant Jean Cassou, du cinéaste résistant Jean-Paul Lechanois, du philosophe résistant Vladimir Jankelevitch, de l'artiste résistante Madeleine Milhaud, du poète résistant Pierre Seghers, des peintres résistants Boris Taslitzky et Édouard Pignon, ainsi que des résistant(e)s Lucie et Raymond Aubrac, Renée Bédarida, Jacques Debu-Bridel, Vincent Badie, Georges Montaron, Pierre Sudreau, Christian Pineau, Louis Terrenoire, Charles Lederman, Joel le Tac, Hélène Langevin, Henri-René Ribière, Marie-Claude Vaillant-Couturier, Jacques Piette, Gaston Cusin, Pierre Meunier, etc. Une place justifiée qui honore le musée.

¹⁷ The official petition through was initiated by three great personalities of artistic life, namely: Etienne Kippelen, composer, musicologist, laureate of the 2012 Dutilleux Competition, Matthieu Stefanelli, composer, pianist, Régis Campo, composer, Winner of the 1996 Dutilleux Competition - https://www.change.org/p/non-%C3%A0-la-calomnie-sur-le-compositeur-henri-dutilleux-apposition-d-une-plaque-comm%C3%A9morative?just_created=true, last accessed August 30, 2022.

¹⁸ David Shallon, Ernst Bour, Ferenc Fricssay, Jean-Baptiste Mari, Michael Tilson Thomas, Jean Martinon, Hans Zender, Paul Strauss, Karl Anton Rickenbacher, Pierre Dervaux, André Lodéon, Jean Claude Casadesus, Serge Baudo, Michel Plasson, Ernst Ansermet, Armin Jordan, André Cluytens, James DePrest, Alain Lombard, Georges Prêtre, Oliver Knussen, Charles Dutoit, Lucas Vis, Charles Bruck, Manuel Rosenthal, David Zinman, Claude Bardou, Pierre-Michel Le Conte, Jacques Houtmann, Theodor Guschlbauer, Lawrence Foster, Kent Nagano, Antal Dorati, Jahja Ling, Sylvain Camberling, Marek Janowski, Stanislaw Skrowaczewski, Semyon Bychkov, Hiroshi Wakasugi, Simon Rattle, Vassili Sinaisky, Robert Delcroix, Louis Frémaux, Jean Fournet, Louis de Froment, André Girard, Claire Gibault, Roberto Benzi, André Previn, Yves Prin, Daniel Chabrun, Marc Soustrot, Marius Constant, Maurice Le Roux, Jean-Pierre Jacquillat, Claude-Henry Joubert, Gilbert Amy, Kazuhiro Koizumi, Michel Tabachnik, Roland Zollman, Michiyoshi Inoue, Václav Smetáček, Georg Solti, Eugene Ormandy, Konstantin Iliev, Bernard Haitink, Samuel Baud-Bovy.

Today, Dutilleux's music lives on, becoming more widely known and appreciated. Of course, a great advantage these days is given by the evolution of technology, which allows us more than ever to have access not only to digital scores, but also to an impressive number of recordings and interviews of big names of soloists of the international scene. We can thus have direct access to testimonies and intimate thoughts, which once again reveal the mastery of the great composer.

The cellist Johannes Moser stated the following at the end of 2018, in an interview given to *The violin channel*: „Dutilleux raises the orchestra to the rank of the solo instrument, interweaving the solo part with the orchestral fabric to create his mystical color palate [...] I want the listener to travel back in time with me to the early 1970s, a time that was so important for so many different reasons ... social, (pop) cultural and certainly musically speaking... both works present prime examples within the composers list of works, but also take us into the spirit of this special time, that, not unlike our own times, was a period of transition and turmoil.”¹⁹

It is easy to understand the fact that Henri Dutilleux has enjoyed, since his lifetime, special attention from some famous names in music. It is worth noting, however, that a decade after his death, the composer's works still enjoy special attention, not only on a European level, but especially internationally. Without pretending to have a complete record, we mention here the names of soloists such as: cellist Daniel Müller-Schott, oboist Russell Coates, pianist Pascal Rogé or violinist Lisa Batiashvili.²⁰

About what it means to interpret Dutilleux's music, the cellist Nicolas Altstaedt states in one of his interviews with the documentary writer Melchior Huurdeman: „With Dutilleux it is very atmospheric and very instinctive music[...]There is a lot of imagination in this music[...] because there is a lot of music that is listening to itself, or listening to its own echoes, there are a lot of pauses and brakes [...]it is music that wants to go inside, and that is

¹⁹ Moser, Johannes for: *The violin channel* - <https://theviolinchannel.com/cellist-johannes-moser-lutoslawski-dutilleux-cello-concertos-new-cd-out-now-pentatone/>,

²⁰ Alban Gerhardt – cello, Alexander Ramm – cello, Alisa Weilerstein – cello, Andreas Brantelid – cello, Anne Gastinel – cello, Brannon Cho cello, Cameron Crozman – cello, Clare Hammond – piano, Dominic Painchaud – cello, Edgar Moreau – cello, Emily Pailthorpe – oboe, Emmanuel Strosser – piano, François Leleux - oboe , Gautier Capuçon – cello, Gérard Caussé – violin, Henri Demarquette – cello, Isabelle Faust – violin, Isang Enders – cello, Jean -Guihen Queyras – cello, Johannes Moser – cello, Jonathan Aasgaard – cello, Julian Steckel – cello, Konstanze von Gutzeit – cello, Leonard Eischenbroich – cello, Mahan Esfahani – clavecin, Marc Coppey – cello, Maximilian Hornung – cello, Miklós Perényi – cello, Nicolas Altstaedt – cello, Olivier Godin – piano, Sebastian Klinger – cello, Stefan Schweigert – bassoon, Steven Isserlis – cello, Truls Mork – cello, Valentino Worlitzsch – cello, Valeriy Sokolov – violin, Victor Julien -Laferrière – cello, Wolfgang Emanuel Schmidt – cello, Xavier Phillips – cello, Zuill Bailey – cello, and many others.

what I like very much about the music, because it's not pretentious music that was invented to show how good it has been done, it's something that touches everyone. [...] It's an artist that touches us as Van Gogh or Baudelaire, and it's someone we must listen to, and who shows us a lot about human beings."²¹

Altstaedt is not alone in talking about the importance of instinct and intuition in approaching Dutilleux's scores. Cellist Emmanuelle Bertrand, in a miniseries of interviews dedicated to the great composer entitled *Découvrir Redécouvrir*, tells with emotion about the moment she met the master: „For me to meet Dutilleux was precisely to meet Bach or Schumann”, about the first time she played for him, and how he encouraged her: „You must always keep the truth of what is the text and that the text be the confirmation of instinct”.²²

There are, of course, many such moments that, once discovered, help us to unravel the depth of the fascinating personality that was Henri Dutilleux, moments that testify to the immense legacy that he left behind, not only from the perspective of an impeccable repertoire, but also that of a strong spirit, whose vocation as a pedagogue is indisputable.

Dutilleux was a complex musician who always managed to impress both with his presence of mind and his exceptional performances. In one of Glaymann's interviews, we learn of a somewhat amusing incident²³, in which Dutilleux had to go on stage to perform the piano score of the Violin Concerto *L'arbre des songes*. The soloist was Isaac Stern, and the confusion started from the fact that the organizers decided to open the concert with this work but failed to tell the pianist about it. It was later found in one of the rehearsal rooms in the basement of the theater. The composer stated, with great modesty, that the experience of being faced with only the piano score was somewhat overwhelming, and that his interventions as a soloist were discreet. Such accounts help us outline more clearly the profile of the great composer's personality, understanding once again why he was not tempted by either a solo career or a conductor. Dutilleux was gifted and perhaps a man whose modesty and sensitivity prevented him from fully realizing his

²¹ Altstaedt, Nicolas – *Interview about Henri Dutilleux* – transcription of the interview <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLvaAPJDyy8&t=184s>, last acc. 4th of September 2022.

²² Bertrand, Emmanuelle - *Découvrir Redécouvrir* - Entretien avec Emmanuelle Bertrand #Dutilleux2016, - transcriptions of the interview, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P4_ueqaTAXc, last acc. 4th of September 2022 - „Pour moi rencontrer Dutilleux c'était rencontrer justement Bach ou Schumann”, „Il faut toujours garder la vérité de ce qui est le texte et que le texte soit la confirmation de l'instinct.”

²³ Glayman, Claude – Interviews, *Henri Dutilleux - Music - Mystery and Memory*, English translation Roger Nichols, Routledge Publishing House, London and New York 2016, p. 42, web edition in pdf format.

vast artistic potential, two qualities that made the artist's legacy a powerful testimony to his character and virtues.

Although he lived in an extremely turbulent period, both from an economic and political point of view, the musician never abandoned the moral and spiritual values that he acquired from his family. Thus, regardless of the situation, he always managed to cultivate and maintain diplomatic relations with artists from everywhere.

Analyzing his entire activity, we can observe several directions in which the musician consciously assumed the responsibility of renewing and evolving music towards a superior artistic form; we can therefore synthesize several fundamental ways:

- the attempt to constantly train and encourage young musicians, promoting with all the resources at his disposal the need for a new breath in modern composition
- the permanent work of educating the public in the spirit of such important cultural values, but especially in the spirit of music lived actively, consciously.
- refreshing the concepts of interpretation, reaffirming the procedures of instrumental expressiveness.
- the redefinition of some fundamental relationships, anchored in centuries of musical tradition.

Motivated by the idea that music is the best way to form a culture, Henri Dutilleux ensured its promotion as a conductor, teacher and performer, his greatest contribution being of course through his compositional creation. The clear proof that his efforts were not only understood, but extremely fruitful, is probably the popularity his works have among the musicians of the new generations. Here we can mention famous names of personalities of the conducting scene such as: Jukka-Pekka Sarasate, Cristian Macelaru, Marek Janowski, Alain Pâris or Valery Gergiev who not only took over but carried forward this spiritual heritage²⁴.

²⁴ We offer here for reference other names that we encountered in the course of the proposed research: Alain Altinoglu, Alan Gilbert, Alexander Liebreich, Alpesh Chauhan, Andrea Pestalozza, Andrew Gourlay, Andris Nelsons, Andris Poga, Aziz Shokhakhimov, Benjamin Zander, Bertrand de Billy, Bialsko Biala, Billy de Bertrand, Bruno Mantovani, Carlos Izcaray, Charles Dutoit, Christoph Altstaedt, Christoph Koenig, Christoph Mathias-Müller, Clemens Schuldt, Courtney Lewis, Cyril Englebert, Daniel Cohen, Daniel Kawka, Daniel Klajner, Daniele Gatti, David Afkham, David Lockington, David Milnes, David Robertson, David Zinman, Diego Masson, Dima Slobodeniouk, Dirk Kaftan, Douglas Boyd, Eckehard Stier, Edward Gardner, Elias Grandy, Ernest Martínez Izquierdo, Fabian Gabel, Fabio Mechetti, Gabriel Feltz, Gemma News, Gergely Madaras, Giancarlo Guerrero, Gustavo Gimeno, Hannu Lintu, Hugh Wolff, Ian Niederhoffer, Ilan Volkov, Ingo Metzmacher, Jacques Lacombe, Jacques Mercier, James Feddeck, Jean-Claude Casadessus, Jean-Francois

Pierre Gervasoni, musician of French origin, graduate of the Paris Conservatoire, teacher, and journalist, recognized for his musical criticism written for the daily newspaper *Le Monde*, was the one with whom Henri Dutilleux chose to collaborate for the creation of a biographical book. As the author himself testifies, the book went beyond the scope of a simple review of the significant events in Dutilleux's life, becoming like a novel - "a novel in which everything is true"²⁵. Gervasoni is probably the man who best understood who Henri Dutilleux was, since during his vast period of documentation he went to almost all the places where the great composer worked, talking to those who knew him. This approach was not elitist, the author being interested in getting to know not only the personalities with whom Dutilleux interacted, but especially those outside the professional area.

Today, the book bears witness to an impressive personality who loved fishing, found refuge in simple things such as photography, film, driving or hiking (he especially liked walking in nature with his wife, or with André Jolivet), and liked to enjoy an occasional glass of whiskey. Henri Dutilleux was essentially a timid romantic who preferred to listen to the songs of Georges Moustaki rather than a work by Berio or Boulez²⁶.

Today, a decade after the passing of the great composer, we can say with certainty that his works continue to shape young talents.

One of the most impressive honors bestowed upon him during his lifetime was the prestigious *Praemium Imperial*, offered to him by the Emperor of Japan in 1994, for his entire career. With this honor, Dutilleux travels to

Durand, Jean-Francois Heisser, Jeffrey Tate, Joachim Jousse, Joakim Unander, Jochem Hochstenbach, Jonathan Nott, Jörg-Peter Weigle, José Antonio Trigueros, José Eduardo Gomes, Josep Pons, Joseph Swensen, Joshua Weilerstein, Juanjo Mena, Julia Jones, Karina Cannelakis, Kirill Karabits, Klaus Mäkelä, Kwamé Ryan, Lawrence Foster, Lionel Bringuier, Ludovic Morlot, Marc Albrecht, Marc Soustrot, Marc Tardue, Mario Venzago, Mariss Jansons, Markus Poschner, Martin Yates, Maxim Emelyanychev, Michael Francis, Michael Lewanski, Michael Rosewell, Michail Jurowski, Michel Tabachnik, Mikko Franck, Myron Michailidis, Myung-Whun Chung, Neal Stulberg, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Oleg Caetani, Otto Tausk, Paavo Järvi, Pablo Heras-Casado, Paolo Bellomia, Pascal Rophé, Patrick Davin, Patrick Rafter, Paul Daniel, Paul McCusker, Philippe Bach, Pierre-Michel Durand, Roberto Fores Veses, Robin Ticciati, Russell Keable, Sakari Oramo, Semyon Bychkov, Sesto Quatrini, Shao-Chia Lü, Stanislav Kochanovskis, Stanislav Kochanovsky, Stephan Zilias, Susanna Mälkki, Sylvain Cambreling, Thierry Fischer, Thomas Hengelbrock, Thomas Søndergård, Thorsten Encke, Tomas Brauner, Tugan Sokhiev, Ulrich Windfuhr, Ville Matvejeff, Vladimir Jurowski, Vladimir Verbitsky, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Zsolt Nagy, etc.

²⁵ Gervasoni, Pierre à propos d'Henri Dutilleux – biography – interview about the process of elaborating the book - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEOeW8IEhs0&t=80s>, last acc. 30th of August 2022.

²⁶ Vagne, Thierry - <http://lacritiqueparisienne.fr/75/dutilleux.pdf>. last acc. 30th of August 2022.

Japan for the handover ceremony and then to Washington D.C. where he meets the President of the United States of America at the time, Bill Clinton, along with other dignitaries. In 1995 he was invited to participate in the Tanglewood Festival in Massachusetts, as an artist in residence, as a mentor for a group of eight young composers, selected after a rigorous competition.

Appreciated since his lifetime, Dutilleux enjoyed many tribute concerts, but also many recognitions and distinctions. Among these we mention:

1938 – at the third attempt, he wins the Prix de Rome and leaves for Italy shortly after.

1967 – French National Grand Prix - awarded for the entire creation.

1981 – becomes an honorary member of the American Academy and the Institute of Arts and Letters in New York.

1993 – becomes an honorary member of the National Academy “Saint Cecilia” in Rome.

1994 – he is awarded the Praemium Imperiale in Japan for his entire creation.

1996 – becomes an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music in London.

1998 – the distinction of Commander in the Order of Saint Charles – Monaco.

2004 – Grand-Croix de la Légion d'honneur - France - the highest distinction awarded by the French state.

2011 – Royal Philharmonic Society of New York Marie-Josée Kravis Award for New Music.

Whether we are talking about painting, literature, music, or nature, Dutilleux is a composer who has always been inspired by the artistic richness of the world that surrounded him, as he himself stated in an interview given to The Guardian newspaper “I often feel great emotion when I read or study a work of art, and that emotion exalts me. Afterwards, under this emotion, I create my own works - sometimes many years after. Sometimes the work will be utterly abstract, but there are traces there of the emotion.”²⁷.

Baptized in the Roman Catholic religion, and brought up in the Christian spirit and morality, Dutilleux always showed integrity and character. Although he was not a “declared” Catholic composer, like Liszt or Messiaen,

²⁷ Jeffries, Stuart – *The Perfectionist* – publishing date, 19th of April 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/19/shopping.artsfeatures1>, last acc. 9th of May 2022.

he had his own spiritual values: “Musical activity is close to being a kind of ceremony, something very nearly sacred, including elements of mystery and magic—as with love or religion—we should approach it with a certain gravity.”²⁸

Throughout his life he enjoyed the privilege of listening to all his creations, both those officially recognized and included in his personal catalog, also some of those “forgotten” in drawers or “lost”, as we learn from his biographer.²⁹

The only musical genre that he was never tempted to tackle was opera. Although after the ballet *Le Loup* it was expected that Dutilleux would also go in this stylistic direction, the composer did not feel that this would be the right one: „It is a painstaking process for me. You know, people always ask why I haven't written an opera - I think I would have found it too hard. I've written only one string quartet, *Ainsi la nuit*, but that was hard enough. The organization of such a work is so difficult, you need to be so meticulous, that I need to go back again and again. Just as I have with this nocturne. There's a lot of work there for the soloist.”³⁰

Today Henri Dutilleux has remained present in the memory and consciousness of the public, through the impressive number of concerts where his works can be heard, but above all through the digital recordings of all his works, which allow us to travel beyond any border:

„Dutilleux is one of the most important composers of our time. Of course, I am not making anything up by saying this. I discovered it thanks to Charles Munch during a concert in Tanglewood where I played the Second Concerto of Brahms. In the first part Munch directed Dutilleux's *Metaboles*. I feel a particular attraction for his music, [...] Dutilleux represents for me the flowering, the blossoming of the tree of French music. There is a complexity of writing, a density, an instrumental texture, a depth of expression that touched me infinitely. [...] As a man, I love and admire him just as much. He is a very strong personality, but also very modest, humble, with an exquisite politeness, a respect, and attention to others that you hardly ever meet again.”³¹

²⁸ Glayman, Claude – Interviews, *Henri Dutilleux - Music - Mystery and Memory*, English translation Roger Nichols, Routledge Publishing House, London and New York 2016, web edition in pdf format.

²⁹ Gervasoni, Pierre à propos d'Henri Dutilleux – biography – interview about the process of elaborating the book - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEOeW8IEhs0&t=80s>, last acc. 30th of August 2022.

³⁰ Jeffries, Stuart – *The Perfectionist* – online article published on 19th of April 2002, <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2002/apr/19/shopping.artsfeatures1>, last acc. 9th of May 2022.

³¹ Istomine, Eugene – Interview by Bernard Meillat In 1997,

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