Beat: Music

The BBVA FOUNDATION HONORS GEORGES APERGHIS FOR HIS REINVENTION OF MUSIC THEATER

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USPA NEWS - The BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the Contemporary Music category goes in this eighth edition to Georges Aperghis for reinventing musical theater and taking it in entirely new directions. To do so, he has played with multiple elements “ voice, sound, gesture, language, video,...

The BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award in the Contemporary Music category goes in this eighth edition to Georges Aperghis for reinventing musical theater and taking it in entirely new directions. To do so, he has played with multiple elements “ voice, sound, gesture, language,video, space and lighting “ translated into music.

The jury also makes a parallel between the spirit of these awards and the power of the new laureate's works to dissolve the frontiers between theater and music.

Georges Aperghis was self-taught. Born into an artistic family in Athens, Greece, in 1945, he came to music through the radio, and the piano lessons he took at school and with a friend of his parents, without setting foot inside a musical conservatory. At the age of 17, he moved to Paris to continue his music studies.

It was during these first years in Paris that he discovered the world of the stage. He also encountered serialism at the Domaine Musical concerts, the musique concrete of Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry, and the work of Iannis Xenakis, which inspired his early compositions.

By 1970, he was seeking a freer kind of language and began his explorations of vocal sounds. His growing interest in musical theater led to the 1971 work 'La tragique histoire du nécromancien Hiéronimo et de son miroir'. Wedding text, music and stagecraft, it marked out an innovative course.

In 1976, he and his wife, the actress Edith Scob, founded the Atelier ThéÃ¢tre et Musique (ATEM), based in the outlying Parisian district of Bagnolet until 1991 and then in the ThéÃ¢tre Nanterre-Amandiers.

In his shows with ATEM, musicians became actors and vocal, instrumental, gestural and scenic ingredients were mixed together in equal measure. For their dramatic content, they drew on everyday events transposed to a poetic setting, usually with an absurd or satirical edge. Georges Aperghis's two decades with ATEM produced around twenty compositions including Jojo (1990), Sextuor (1993) and Commentaires (1996).

Despite being author, director and composer of his shows, Georges Aperghis makes sure that every performer, instrumentalist, actor, singer or dancer, is part of the creative process.

Georges Aperghis pursues a universal language where text is unimportant and words make way for onomatopoeia, phonemes and noise. This fragmentation is echoed in surreal stage productions in which the author at times creates imaginary languages on the borders of sound poetry.

He began to work with new technologies in the 1990s, using the video, electronic and real-time sound processing resources of the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM).

Much of his catalogue of over one hundred works is devoted to music theater, the genre he revolutionized and also where he feels most at home

About the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Awards :

The BBVA Foundation promotes, funds and disseminates world-class scientific research and artistic creation, in the conviction that science, culture and knowledge hold the key to better opportunities for all world citizens.

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