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## **Summary of the doctoral thesis**

“Composition and improvisation reflected by specific artists from the French organ school”

The theme of this thesis is to explore the development of contemporary music within the French Organ School, looking at historical backgrounds and previous research, and how it has influenced both liturgical/secular improvisation and works written within this time. The primary focus of this thesis looks at the compositions and improvisations of Thierry Escaich, Pierre Pincemaille and Charles Tournemire. Through analyzed, improvised works, which can be seen as an organized contingency, the notated oeuvres, which are the fruition of experiences and reflections of the improvising composers, I hope to show the flexibility between them and how they are related. This thesis also contains researched information about the influence of musical education, specifically in France (both past and present) and how it has effected and connected each artist's personal creative style of improvisation and composition.

This thesis consists of two parts: a CD recording and its in-depth description, including some information about the latest methods of teaching with regards to the organ improvisation in France – which I have personally experienced as a student of the Paris Conservatory and at the Conservatory in Saint-Maur-de-Fossés in the class of Thierry Escaich, László Fassang, Philippe Lefebvre and Pierre Pincemaille. On this CD, besides the compositions/reconstructed improvisations of the three mentioned Artists, I also feature my own improvisations. The complete list of the recorded pieces includes the following works:

### **Charles Tournemire (1870-1939)**

Cinq Improvisations pour orgue reconstituées par Maurice Duruflé

III Improvisation sur le „Te Deum”

II Cantilène improvisée

### **Pierre Pincemaille (\*1956)**

Prologue et Noël varié

## **Thierry Escaich (\*1965)**

Récit pour orgue

## **Martin Gregorius (\*1991)**

Prelude and Double Fugue on the Kyrie XI from the Missa „Orbis factor”

Improvised Symphonic Suite „Ad honorem Beata Maria Virgine” :

Stabat Mater – Grave, Regina coeli– Scherzo, Ave Maria – Cantabile, Salve Regina – Finale.

The description of the recorded works consists of four Chapters:

Chapter one explores the origins of improvisation and composition – how and why they were formed and how they correspond to each other with certain similarities. This Chapter continues with specific research on improvising in the liturgy and describes the historical methodology of the teaching of improvisation. The former educational system (especially in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century) in this matter has been compared with its contemporary equivalent.

The second Chapter focuses on the three Artists (Charles Tournemire, Pierre Pincemaille and Thierry Escaich) and explores how an educational upbringing, musical career and a series of personal experiences can be illustrated in their improvisations and compositions.

Chapter three presents an analytical description of the works found on the CD. I have also included a description of my own improvisations from a subjective point of view and as a student of these great Pedagogues, how it could feature a different analytical perspective.

The fourth Chapter contains a summarization of the issues and mutual relations between composition and improvisation, the important influences of both subjects with regards to the educational system.

In the final reflection I have included a brief reflection about the future of organ improvisation and composition for this instrument.