

la
présence d' *Olivier*
Messiaen

concert X exposition

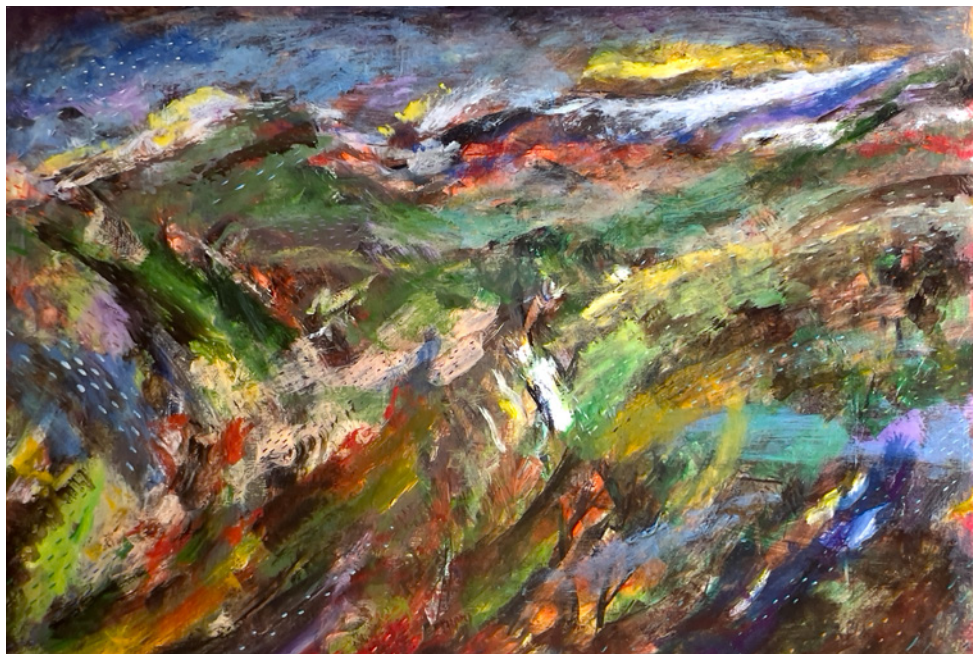
Pierre **Thomas**

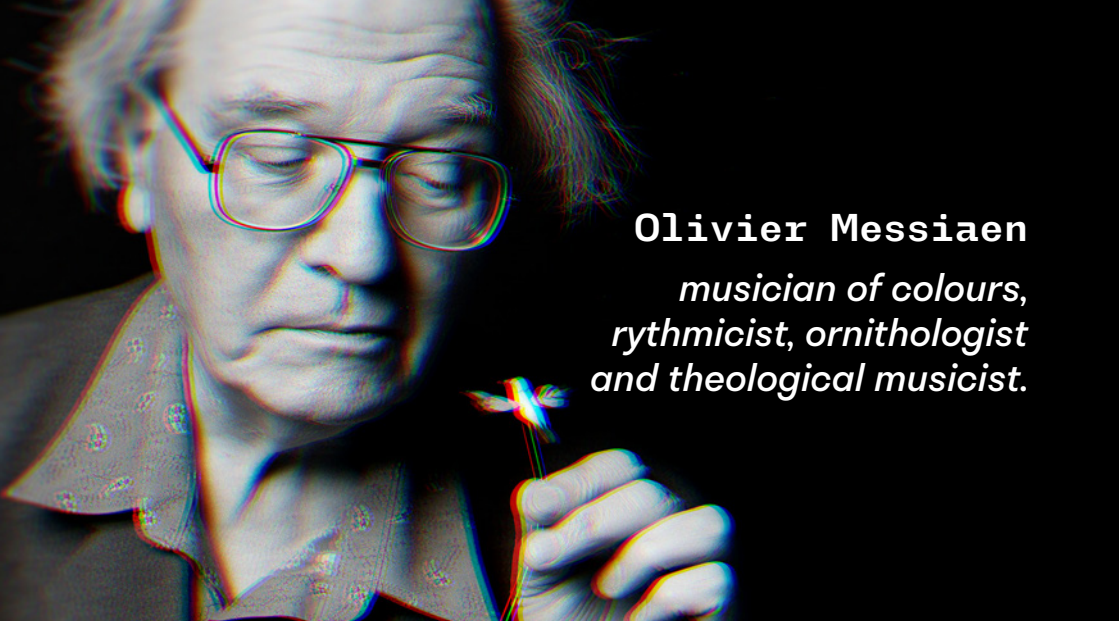
Bern **Wery**

Sabine **Lawalrée**

Laura Elisabeth **Verlinden**

14/6/25——16h00





Olivier Messiaen
*musician of colours,
rythmicist, ornithologist
and theological musician.*

Programme

| | |
|--|--|
| La dame de Shalott (1917) | <i>Inédit</i> |
| Mélodies (1929) | <i>Pourquoi ? Le sourire</i> |
| Préludes (1929) | <i>La colombe Le nombre léger Plainte calme</i> |
| Rondeau (1943) | |
| Quatre études de rythme (1949) | <i>Île de feu</i> |
| 20 regards sur l'Enfant Jésus (1944) | <i>Pourquoi ? Noël Le baiser de l'Enfant Jésus</i> |
| Harawi, chant d'amour et de mort (1945) | <i>Amour oiseau étoile</i> |

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After death, during the necessary purification that precedes the final vision of God, one no longer remembers the joys and sorrows of this life. Only one's good and bad actions remain in memory. At that moment, I will grieve over all the wrong I may have done. But I will also rejoice in all the good I may have accomplished — and that latter memory will gradually allow me to finally understand the INVISIBLE.

Olivier Messiaen

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Composer's biography

Olivier Messiaen was born on **December 10, 1908**, in **Avignon**. The son of Pierre Messiaen, a translator of Shakespeare, and the poet Cécile Sauvage, he showed an early and exceptional talent for music. Admitted to the **Paris Conservatory** at the age of 11, he completed his studies there with distinction, earning five first prizes.

Appointed titular organist of the great organ at the Church of La **Sainte-Trinité** in Paris, he would hold this position for the rest of his life. He went on to teach at the École Normale de Musique, the **Schola Cantorum**, and the Paris Conservatory.

He left behind a vast body of work, notably marked by his **rhythmic in-**

novations, modes of **limited transposition**, harmonic **colors**, deep **Catholic** faith, and **birdsongs** he transcribed from all over the world.

He died in Paris on **April 17, 1992**.

Messiaen and Belgium

In **1958**, he gave a renowned lecture as part of the World Expo.

This was followed by performances of some of his most iconic works — the **Turangalila-Symphonie** and the **Trois Petites Liturgies de la Présence Divine** — presented in **Brussels, Liège, Antwerp, and Hasselt**.

For his seventieth birthday, he was invited by **Henri Pousseur**, who organized a three-day festival in Liège dedicated entirely to his music.

Musicians

Pierre Thomas

After studying at the Conservatory of Nancy and then at the CNMS in Paris, **Pierre Thomas** continued his exploration of contemporary music. He taught at the **Franz Constant Academy** and the **Royal Conservatory of Liège**. In 1978, he joined the ensemble Musique Nouvelle, produced *Attitudes* by Philippe Boesmans at the Royal Theatre of La Monnaie, and developed a passion for the works of **Claude Ballif** and **Olivier Messiaen**.



Sabine Lawalrée

Born in 1962 in **Brussels**, Belgium, pianist **Sabine Lawalrée** began her musical studies at the Auderghem Academy under **Pierre Thomas**.

She completed her pedagogical training at IMEP (Namur) and further refined her skills at the Brussels Conservatory under **Robert Leuridan**.



Currently, she teaches music theory at the Auderghem Academy, where she has also served as an accompanist and **children's choir conductor**.

Additionally, she has led other children's choirs within the choral movement **A Cœur Joie**, for which she served as president of the Brussels region from 1998 to 2001.

She has a particular affinity for accompanying singers as well as repertoire for piano four hands and two pianos, and performs with various ensembles, including the six-pianist group **Toccatine**, founded in 2004.

As **artistic director** of the «**Classiques Surréalistes**», a concert series that popularizes classical music for the general public, she is also involved in several associations supporting young musicians.

A member of piano competition juries, she performs concerts in Belgium, France (notably at the Superspectives Festival in Lyon), Germany, and Switzerland.

Her repertoire of preference is **20th-century** music.

She champions the music of her brother, **Dominique Lawalrée**, a minimalist composer, as well as other composers from this movement. Her work focuses on exploring **sound** and **silence**.



Laura Elizabeth Verlinden

Laura Verlinden began her musical training as a member of the **La Monnaie Choir** under the direction of **Denis Menier**, before continuing her lyrical singing studies at the **Maastricht Conservatory** with **Susanne Schimmack**. She further enriched her education with notable programs such as **Opera Nuova** in Edmonton and the **Tibor Varga** in Sion.

Throughout her career, the young **mezzo-soprano** has distinguished herself in a variety of projects. She

has participated in productions such as *La Petite Flûte Enchantée* with **La Chapelle Musicale** and performed on stages including the **Rey Balduino Festival** in Spain and the **Superspective Festival** in Lyon. Her passion for contemporary composers has also led her to give several concerts centered around the works of **Dominique Lawalrée**. She regularly performs at private events, ranging from concerts in churches and salons to musical moments at weddings and significant occasions like the **200th anniversary of AG Insurance**.

She has also performed small roles in operettas with the **Brussels Operette Theater (BOT)**, including Mathilde Pic Tordu in *Gendrillon*, Le Bottier in *Les Bavards*, and Parthenis in *La Belle Hélène*.

Alongside her singing career, Laura has developed a teaching role as a **vocal coach** at **Mélopée**. Her pedagogical commitment extends to primary schools, where she leads **workshops on opera** supported by the **PECA** program (Cultural and Artistic Education Pathway). Laura continues to explore **new musical horizons**, combining her passion for singing with her dedication to **vocal art education**.

Painter

Bern Wery

After studying **sociology**, Bern Wery decisively turned towards the **visual arts**. He regularly exhibits both in **Belgium** and **abroad**, and his works are included in several museum collections. A recipient of numerous awards, including one from the **Royal Academy** of Science, Letters and Fine Arts of Belgium, he was honored with the prestigious **Gaston Bertrand Prize in 2023**. He has also taught at the Academies of **Braine-l'Alleud** and **Woluwe-Saint-Pierre**.

Birdlike Complicity

Coincidence? Or not? Pierre lives at number 22 on the street, Bern at 24. **One a musician, the other a painter**; their studios are **neighbors**. Notes pass through the walls, **creativity** flows. So do the **colours**!

Bern says that **birds** were his academy for painting. Like Pierre, he has been a teacher. Concerts and exhibitions alternate and complement each other. Twenty-five years ago, Pierre proposed a **joint project**: to create inspired by the work of **Olivier Messiaen**.

Their complicity is truly birdlike!



Selection of works



1. Untitled, circa 2019

Oil on wood
49x69 cm



2. Untitled, circa 2020

Oil on wood 49x69 cm

3. Untitled, 2020

Oil on wood 40x40 cm



4. Untitled, circa 2021

Oil on wood 40x40 cm



5. Untitled, circa 2021

Oil on wood 30x50 cm

**6.
Untitled,
2021**

Oil on wood
49x69 cm



**7.
Untitled,
2022**

Oil on wood
60x80 cm



8. Untitled, 2022

Oil on wood 60x80 cm



**9.
Untitled,
2022**

Oil on wood
30x40 cm



10. Untitled, 2022

Oil on wood 60x80 cm

**11.
Untitled,
2022**

Oil on wood
61x80 cm



**13.
Untitled,
2023**

Oil on wood
70x94 cm

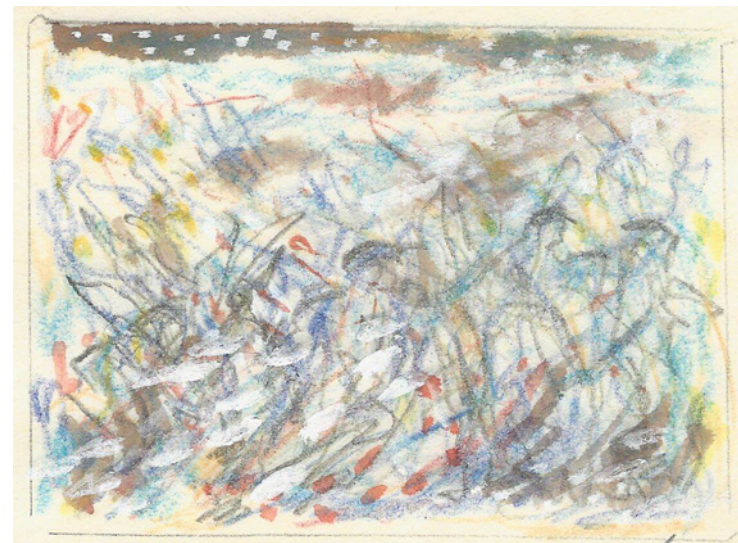


**14.
Untitled,
2025**

Oil on canvas
74x98 cm



15. Watercolor illustration #1
Watercolor on washi paper 2.5x4.7 cm



17. Watercolor illustration #3
Watercolor on washi paper 2.5x4.7 cm



16. Watercolor illustration #2
Watercolor on washi paper 2.5x4.7 cm





18. Watercolor illustration #4
Watercolor on washi paper 2.5x4.7 cm

What is BrIAS?

The **Brussels Institute for Advanced Studies** (BrIAS), founded in 2018 by the **VUB** and **ULB** universities, serves as an incubator for groundbreaking **ideas** and **disruptive research**. Each year, BrIAS selects a timely **theme** with significant societal **impact**, inviting top **scientists**, **academics**, and **artists** from around the world to collaborate with VUB and ULB colleagues.

The recently concluded 2024-'25 programme, **Sustainable Robotics**, brought together around 30 international fellows specializing in robotics, AI, and automation. In June 2025, BrIAS launches its new theme: **Democratic Governance: Challenges and Innovations**, promising even more interdisciplinary events and collaborations.

More info & past events  **@BrIASTalks**  **www.brias.be**