

DANIEL ROTH

Biography

Daniel Roth has been widely acclaimed as one of the leading French organ virtuosos, and has held several prestigious positions as an artist and teacher. At age twenty he made his debut at the organ of the Basilique du Sacré Coeur in Paris, as assistant to his teacher Madame Falcinelli. He later succeeded her as Titular Organist, a post he held until 1985 when he was appointed Titular Organist at St. Sulpice, the famous Paris church where his predecessors were Charles-Marie Widor, Marcel Dupré and Jean-Jacques Grunenwald. Having recently retired from his duties as titular organist at St. Sulpice in 2023, Daniel Roth now holds the title Titulaire Emerité and still plays some services at St. Sulpice on a regular basis.

A former student at the Paris Conservatory, his teachers have included Marie-Claire Alain and Maurice Duruflé. Daniel Roth has won several competitions, among them the Grand Prix de Chartres in 1971 for both interpretation and improvisation.

From 1974 to 1976 Daniel Roth held the position of Artist-in-Residence of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington DC. Upon his return to France, he resumed his teaching position at the Conservatory of Marseille, which he held until 1979 when he was appointed to the Conservatory of Strasbourg, a post he filled for nine years. From 1988 until the summer of 1995, Mr. Roth taught at the Musikhochschule in Saarbrücken; he then served as Professor of Organ at the Musikhochschule in Frankfurt am Main, succeeding Edgar Krapp and Helmut Walcha, until his retirement in 2007.

Renowned for his brilliant interpretations of organ literature and for his thrilling improvisations which are regularly included in his concert programs, Daniel Roth has concertized extensively throughout Europe, Great Britain, The United States, Scandinavia, Japan and Korea. In addition to his regular tours, he has come to North America on several occasions as guest artist for various conventions: the Third

International Congress of Organists (Washington DC and Philadelphia), the national convention of the Royal Canadian College of Organists (Montreal) and the national convention of The American Guild of Organists held in Detroit. He has also served as visiting artist/instructor at Yale University, where he gave private lessons, presented a lecture and performed a recital at Woolsey Hall.

Mr. Roth has earned the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, Officier des Arts et Letters, and he was named an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. In July 2006 he was awarded the "Europäische Kirchenmusik" prize by the Europäische Kirchenmusik Festival in Schwäbisch-Gmünd, Germany. Other musicians who have received this prize include Krystof Penderecki, Arvo Pärt, and Petr Eben. In 2015 he received the International Performer of the Year Award from the New York City Chapter of The American Guild of Organists in recognition of his extraordinary achievements and unparalleled career in organ music, church music, concert performance and recording.

A prolific composer as well as performer, Mr. Roth has written works for organ solo, flute and organ, choir and organ, orchestra, and for piano, organ and orchestra. He has also composed three transcriptions for organ: *Rédemption* and *Symphonie en ré mineur* by César Franck, and *Scherzo* (from *Six Duos for Harmonium and Piano*) by Camille St-Saëns, which are published by Leduc, Delatour, Schott-Mainz, Bärenreiter, Novello, Association Boëllmann-Gigout, Butz (Bonn), and Joubert (Paris). Several Daniel Roth works have been commissioned by Kenneth Star in Boston, Philip Brunelle in Minneapolis, the towns of Ingolstadt and Ludwigshafen (Germany), the Music Festival San Sebastian, Spain, and the Festival of Dudelange (Luxembourg), and are available on CD and DVD. In January of 1999, he was honored with a concert entirely dedicated to his compositions at the Church of the Madeleine in Paris. Later that year he was awarded the Prix Florent Schmitt by the Institut de France, Académie des Beaux-Arts for his compositions. In 2004 the city of Ludwigshafen commissioned him to compose a work for orchestra; the tone poem *Licht im Dunkel*, which received its world premiere in May 2005 performed by the Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, under the baton of Daniel Roth's son François-Xavier Roth. Its

first performance in Paris took place the following year during the St-Etienne-du Mont Festival. Mr. Roth later added a second and third movement to turn *Licht im Dunkel* into a Tryptique for piano, organ and orchestra (I L’Espérance; II L’Amour; III La Joie). “La Joie” was premiered in 2008 during the César Franck-Tage-Philharmonie Essen (Germany) conducted by Emmanuel Plasson. The complete Tryptique, now published by Schott, received its world premiere on April 18, 2010 during the dedication of the new Metzler organ at the Church of Saint Anne in Düren, Germany (near Köln).

In 2017 a Festschrift of articles was published in Daniel Roth’s honor and in celebration of his 75th birthday, published by Dr. J. Butz, Bonn, Germany. In 2019 a two-volume set of books entitled “Daniel Roth, Grand Choeur” (Volume 1 and 2) was published by Editions Hortus. These contain extensive interviews with Daniel Roth about his life and work, as well as his thoughts about the interpretation of organ repertoire. Volume 1 of these is now published in English translation by Boydell and Brewer publishers.

Daniel Roth has numerous recordings to his credit from companies of JAV Recordings, Erato, Philips, Arion, Pathé-Marconi, EMI, Wergo, Motette-Ursina, Priory and Aeolus. He has won several “Diapason d’Or” from the French magazine Diapason.

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