

# André Riotte

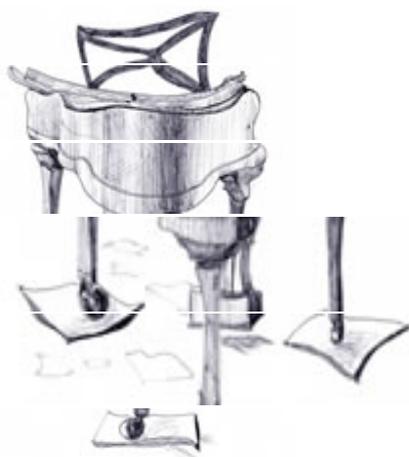
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*André Riotte*  
compositeur

André Riotte studied musical composition (under André Jolivet), musical analysis (with Olivier Messiaen and Jean Barraqué) and trained as an electronics engineer (at the ESME). He composed his first works (*La cage aux chiffres*, 1948, *Suite Guerrière*, 1952, *Trio à cordes*, 1954) while he was exploring electronic calculation and simulation technologies at the CNET (Centre National d'Études des Télécommunications) in Issy-les-Moulineaux, which hosted Xenakis' CEMAMu (Center for Studies in Mathematics and Automated Music) 30 years later.

In 1961 he took up a scientific career within the European Community, and settled in Italy (Varese) close to the first major EC Research Centre (Ispra, Lake Maggiore), where he familiarised himself with the latest scientific calculation techniques (analogue and digital).

## Musical excerpts



He continued to compose, and at the same time organised musical events for the 2,000 scientists of 6 nationalities working there. He quickly discovered the possible relations between musical composition and scientific calculation. *Suite pour piano* -



1958, the 1er quatuor à cordes - 1957, Dualités - 1963, Abysses - 1964 were composed in this framework.

Riotta moved to Brussels in 1970, where he took a more active involvement in Belgian musical life (Orbitales - 1970, Transe Calme - 1974, Anamorphoses - 1977) and also took part in Parisian activities (at the CEMAMu, then at Ircam).

He retired from public life in 1982 following a severe heart attack. Since then, he has devoted himself entirely to music, dividing his time between Brussels and Paris, where he taught musical formalisation, first at Paris 8 University (1978-1990), then at Ircam (1991-1998). He retired to the village of Provins, south of Paris, in 2003.

Riotta has never thought of himself as a scientist who composes music, but as a composer, finding, exploring and exploiting the multiple bridges opening up between music and mathematics.

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## Performed works

### **Works for piano**

Amabilités (1946-48) 8 pieces, partial creation by Monique Mercier (1948, École Normale, salle Debussy-Pleyel). Publisher: De Plein Vent. Performed again by Ana Garcia Urcola at Le Triton (2003, Paris).

La cage aux chiffres (1948), fantasy for piano, won an award at the French Festival Year (1950, London); members of the jury included Arthur Honegger and Louis Aubert. The music publisher Peeters refused to publish it ("ugly harmony"). Performed at the National Music Society by Evelyne Chaufour (1952), at Varese (1964) by Guido Salvetti. Performed again by Ana Garcia Urcola at Le Triton (2003, Les Lilas). De Plein Vent.

Instantanés (1955) performed by Monique Mercier (1948, Paris), Enza Ferrari, (1964, Milan) Performed again by Carine Gutlerner at Le Triton (2003, Paris) - De Plein Vent.

Suite pour piano (1956) création par Jean-Paul Sevilla (1963, Varese, 1964, Milan, Paris). Performed again by Carine Gutlerner at Le Triton (2003, Paris) - De Plein Vent.

Danses de peu (1963) 6 pieces. Performed by Carine Gutlerner at Le Triton (2003, Paris) - Éditions De Plein Vent.

Orbitales (1970), Transe calme (1974) Performed in Italy (1975, Côme) by Enza Ferrari, Brussels (1975, Europalia) and Paris (1976, Passage du XXe siècle) Carlos Roque Alsina.

17 Inventions (1987-1989) partially performed in Italy (1989) and Marseille (1990) by Anne Piret, performance of Inventions inédites (2003, Ircam) by Dimitri Vassilakis.

L'âge canonique (1952, revised 1995) Performed by Carine Gutlerner at Le Triton (2003, Paris) - De Plein Vent.

Placet (1997). Performed at l'Ircam (2006) by Thérèse Malengreau.

Mélopée (1997).

Suite Implicite (1998) 3 mouvements.

Météorite et ses métamorphoses (2000-2001), 31 variations and a coda. Performed in Brussels (2002), Paris (2003), partially at Ircam (2006) by Thérèse Malengreau - De Plein Vent.

Broutilles (2002) 12 pieces. Partly performed by Thérèse Malengreau in Paris (2003).

Espaces Intérieurs (2005) 3 pieces.

Exaltation (2005).

3 Études (2006).

Exercices de style (2007) published under the pseudonym Germain Cognito, Éditions Delatour.

## Chamber music

Chemin de nuages (1948) mélodie pour soprano et piano, poem by Paul-Jean Toulet, performed by Micheline Bertaux and André Riotte (1948, Paris), and at Le Triton (2003, Paris) by Kaoli Isshiki and Carine Gutlerner - De Plein Vent.

Berceuse pour un conte de fées (1948) for cello and piano, performed by Bernard Fonteny and André Riotte (1948, Paris), and at Le Triton (2003, Paris) by Anne-Cécile Fonteny and Ana Garcia Urcola - De Plein Vent.

Suite guerrière (1952) for two pianos. Performed at the National Music Society (1954) by Jacques Casterède and Christiane Augustin., and by M-C et F. Doublier (1970, Paris) - Delatour.

Trio à cordes (1954) performed by the Pasquier trio (Schola Cantorum, 1957, École Normale, 1958) The New Art String Trio (1996, New-York), the Orphée trio at Le Triton (2003, Paris).

Premier quatuor à cordes (1957) won an award from the *Amis de la Musique de Chambre* (1957, Paris), performed in Ispra (Italie), Dublin, Paris, Lyon (1963), and Londres (1954) by the Margand *quartet*.

Dualités( 1963) for violin and piano, performed by Michel Chauveton and Francisco De Brito (1964, Ispra, Venise, Varese), Paris (1965, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées). Spain, the United States (1965) and Italy, piano *Jacques Lagarde* (1966) - Delatour.

Hypnoses (1963) five melodies for mezzo-soprano and piano with lyrics by *André Riotte*. Performed by Rashida Agosti and Enza Ferrari (1964, Milan).

Multiple (1983) second string quartet, with multiple solutions, performed in Paris (1988, Perspectives du XXe siècle) by the Sarrebruck quartet.

Suite explicite (1974, revised 1990) for clarinet only, performed by E. Zappatini (1963, Milan) 1st performed in Belgium (Brussels, Europalia France, 1975) by Michel Portal. Score completed in 1990 (5 movements): partially performed by Didier Beloeil (1991, Festival de musique contemporaine d'Evreux) - Delatour.

Le coq et la perle (1950, revised 1995) for mezzo-soprano and piano, to words by *Max Jacob*. Performed at Le Triton (2003, Paris) by Kaoli Isshiki and Carine Gutlerner - De Plein Vent.

Origami, collection for string quartet (2005) 6 mouvements.

Apartés (2006) 3 pieces for violin.

Dualités (1962) for violin and piano , Éditions Delatour.

Suite Guerrière (1952) for 2 pianos , Éditions Delatour.

### **Small ensembles, percussions**

Jubilation heuristique (1968) for mezzo-soprano, clarinet, trumpet, marimba and electro-acoustic devices. Entremonde Gallery (1968, Paris).

Anamorphoses (1977) for baryton and eight musicians to words by Marc Rombaut. Performed in Belgium (International Congress "Le récit et sa représentation") by *Musique Nouvelle*, conducted by *G.E. Octors*, (1977, Saint-Hubert, 1977 ; 1978, Théâtre 140 , Brussels, 1978). 1st performance in France (Nantes, Angers, 1984, *Festival Musiques du XXe siècle*) by the Alternance ensemble, conducted by *Lukas Pfaff* - De Plein Vent.

Jubilation (1992) for 12 strings, performed by the Stringendo ensemble, conducted by J. Thorel. (1992, Saint Julien-le-Pauvre Paris).

Rymes (2003) for soprano and a small ensemble, 4 poems by Pernette du Guillet.

Messe des Apôtres (1954- Rev. 2004) for 3 male voices a capella.

L'âge canonique (1952 -2005) for wind instruments.

Fanfares (1999-2005) 6 pieces pour wind instruments.

Minimales (2008) 12 pieces for 4 instruments and one percussionnist ; performed in Manhattan (September 2008) by the New-York Miniaturist Ensemble.

Lettera Amorosa (2010) on a text by Rebé Char, for baryton and a small ensemble.

## **Orchestra, orchestra and vocals**

Abysses (1948, revised 1962) *etude* for symphony performed (1964, Ispra, Italy) by the Orchestre de la Radio Svizzera Italiana, conducted by *J. Jakus*. Germany, conducted by E. Jochum (1966, Duisbourg).

La Bibliothèque de Babel (1985) inspired by *Jorge Luis Borgès*, for soloist, soprano, baryton, brass quintet, percussions, two groups of vocalists and wind section, commissioned by the State (*Maurice Fleuret*). ). Performed in Nantes and Angers (1985, *Festival Musiques du XXe siècle*).

Soloist: Jean Gillibert, Soprano : Mireille Patrois Baryton : Jacques Bona.  
Nantes brass quintet and percussion ensemble, *Schola Cantorum, Nantes and University Choir of Angers*, conducted by Jean-Claude Brehu, , Union philharmonique de Nantes, conducted by *Michel Berger*.  
Conducted and coordinated by Jenö Rehak.

Palinodie (1991) for wind section, State commission. Performed by the *Harmonie - Ecole Régionale*, conducted by Michel Peus, (Perpignan Festival 1992).

Le Grand Relief (1994) for orchestra, commissioned by UDCM 93. Performed by the *Jeune Philharmonie de la Seine-Saint-Denis*, conducted by H.-C Fantapié (1999, Noisy-le-Sec).

## **Unperformed Works**

### **Works for piano**

La jeune créole (1949).

Imitations (1950- rev. 2000) 2 pieces.

Objets (1958-62) 4 pieces.

Première sonate (1963) in 2 movements.

Alleluia (1985).

Allusions (1992) 5 pieces.

Antienne (1995) - Delatour.

Mélopée (1997).

Suite Implicite (1998) 3 movements.

Petite Suite Équilibrée (2001) 3 sequenced movements - Delatour.

Lignes (2001).

Broutilles (2002) 12 pieces.

Auras (2004) 5 pieces.

Mouvances (2004) 3 pieces.

Espaces intérieurs (2005) 2 pieces.

6 Études, first part (2001-2005).

6 Études, second part (2005-2006).

Intime (2007) 4 pezzetini.

Isola Madre, l'ultimo riposo (2007).

4 petites pièces (2007).

L'imprévu (2008) 2 pièces.

### **Chamber music**

Petite suite pour flûte seule (1955) 4 movements.

Lettera amorosa (1967) cycle of 11 melodies for baryton and piano to words by *René Char*.

Le miroir à trois faces (1989) for trumpet and piano.

Abolis bibelots (1994) for 5 instruments.

Chansons briardes (2004) 2 melodies for baryton and piano.

Origami (2005) collection for string quartet - 6 movements.

Apartés (2006, revised Mai 2007), 3 pieces for violin.

Chant Pascal (2007) for cello and harpsichord.

### **Small ensembles, percussions**

Messe des Apôtres (1954, revised 2004) for 3 a capella male voices.

Partitions-Gouffres (1987) for four percussions.

Arcanes (1990) for 1 to 3 percussionists, commissioned by the *Bagnolet Conservatory*.

Abolis bibelots (1994) for 5 instruments, commissioned by *SFAM*.

Rymes (2003) for soprano and 6 instruments, to poems by Dame Pernelle du Guillet.

### **Orchestra, orchestra and vocals**

Suite Guerrière (1952 - orchestration 2004).

L'âge canonique (1952 - orchestration 2005) for wind ensemble.

Hypnoses (1967) version for mezzo-soprano and orchestra.

Invocations (2002) for orchestra.

Fanfares (2004) 6 pieces for wind ensemble.

Obsession (2006 - 2007) for orchestra.

Invocations (2002) for orchestra. Unperformed.

Suite Guerrière (1952-2004) 3 movements for orchestra. Unperformed.

Obsession (2007) for orchestra. Unperformed.

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## Biography

When André Riotte took up his position at the EURATOM research facility in Italy in 1961, he began to organise a cultural life for the two thousand scientists working there, including concerts, a record library, film club, etc.

Also in 1961, he defined the concept of "balanced cycle" (series of pitches and cycle of intervals) for which he calculated all the modulo-12 forms by computer. He gave a series of lectures at Ispra and Milan on the relationships between musical composition and modern scientific techniques.

In 1964, the San Fedele Centre in Milan organised a concert of his chamber music, to the acclaim of the Italian critics.



He became involved in Xenakis' CEMAMu in 1969; there he presented the computer formalisation of a piece by Stravinsky in 1973, and a computer composition model in 1975, applied to *Transe calme* (1974) for piano.

From 1978 to 1990, at Paris 8 University, first as a lecturer and then associate lecturer, he taught mathematical formalisation and computer processing of musical structures.

André Riotte has devoted himself entirely to music since 1982. In 1984, he began research work the 4X computer at the Ircam on the computer synthesis of pseudo-periodic sounds (inharmonics) with a view to the continuous transformation of synthetic timbres. He presented the results of this work at the International Computer Music Conference in Paris in 1984.

In 1985-86, he took part in a computer-assisted composition project at Ircam. The team that was assembled on this occasion became independent in 1987, calling itself CRIME (Collectif de Recherche Instruments Modèles Ecriture), which he chaired.

In January 1988, with Marcel Mesnage (computer scientist, member of CRIME), he published, "a computer model of Stravinsky's 1st piece for string quartet", which was the completion of work he had commenced some fifteen years earlier; the model renders the score as it was written.

In February 1989, he ran a three-day course entitled "Contemporary Languages" in Dijon, for Principals and teachers of Music Schools in the Bourgogne Franche-Comté region.

As a Fellow of the French Society for Musical Analysis (SFAM), of which he became vice-chairman in 1993, he took part in preparations for the European Musical Analysis Congresses (Colmar, October 1989 - Montpellier, February 1995) within the Programmes Committees.

In 1991, he gave presentations at a number of Conferences: Quadrivium in Metz, the first Spanish symposium on Musical Analysis at Oviedo, foundation of the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music - ESCOM - at Trieste, where he was appointed to the Executive Committee.

From 1991 to 1998, he lectured at Ircam on the mathematical formalisation of music to doctorate students in 20th century Music and Musicology, and in the Composition and Computer Music course from 1990 to 1993.

After working on the editorial team of the review *Analyse Musicale*, he became actively involved in the launch of the new review, *MUSURGIA, Analyse et pratique musicales*, (published by ESKA) and in 1994 became chief editor. After 25 issues, he left the position in 2001 to devote himself to composing.

In 2003, a grant from the Direction de la Musique gave rise to a "tribute to the composer André Riotte":

- A first concert was devoted to the works he composed in his youth, on the occasion of the publication of the CD "Le Passé Simple", a collection of most of these works.
- A conference by Riotte: "My musical adventure: from creative intuition to formalism and back", was illustrated with musical examples played by pianist Thérèse Malengreau.
- The grant also encouraged the preparation of a CD based on *Météorite et ses Métamorphoses*, to be published late 2010.

Upon request of the du New-York Miniaturist Ensemble (NYME), he wrote *Minimales*, 12 mini-pieces for 4 instruments and one percussionnist (2008). Creation in Manhattan, 25 September 2008, by the NYME.

He finished composing *Marcello*, works for marimba and cello (2007) written in memories to past team partner, Marcel Mesnage.

A first concert for string quartet *Or i g ami* is planned March 2011 in Paris (salle Cortot).

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<http://www.andreriote.org/english/publications/index.htm>

## Publications

Published by Delatour in French and English

Formalismes et liberté de l'imaginaire in Actes du Symposium "Autour de la Set Theory" (Delatour 2008)  
Formalisms and Freedom of the Imagination in Proceedings of the Symposium "Around Set Theory" (Delatour 2008)

Preliminary remark: Most of André Riotte's publications have been grouped in the following work:

Formalismes et modèles musicaux, André RIOTTE & Marcel MESNAGE  
Un recueil de textes, 2 volumes (Éditions Delatour, 2006), Collection Sciences/Musique, avec la participation de l'Ircam et le soutien du CNRS et de la SFAM.

Only the following works are not included.

## Published in English



From traditional to formalized analysis, in M. Baroni & L. Callegari (dir.), Musical Grammars and Computer Analysis, Olschki, Florence (1984)  
Duration structure generation and recognition in musical writing, Avec E. Amiot, G. Assayag et C. Malherbe. Proceedings of the ICMC. La Haye (1986)

## Published in Italian

Scrittura intuitiva o ideazione cosciente ? Creazione, formalismi, modelli, tecnologie, in Sonus Fasc. 14 (Anno 7 n°1,2,3), Potenza (1995)

Organizzazioni del tempo intorno alla serie, da Webern a Boulez, in Sonus Fasc. 17 (Anno 9 n°1,2,3), Potenza (1997)

## **Published in Spanish**

In Preliminares - Spanish magazine, special bilingual (Spanish/French) issue on music analysis  
Thoughts on formalized analysis  
Capitulo dos, André Riotte, sin ton ni son  
Algunas reflexiones sobre el análisis formalizado (p. 84-95)  
Chap. 2, André Riotte, À bâtons rompus - Quelques réflexions sur l'analyse formalisée (p.262-273)

## **Published in French**

Informatique musicale : jonction nouvelle entre art et science, in EUROSPECTRA Vol.12 No°1  
Brussels (1974)

Formalisation de structures musicales. *Paris 8 University, computer science departement* (1979)

Vers un langage descriptif des micro-particules sonores, in Dossier Pascal Dusapin , *Cahier Musique n°2 - Festival de La Rochelle* (1981)

Au-delà du système tonal, in *Jean-Philippe Rameau théoricien de la tonalité - 12e Festival de Saintes* (1983)

L'utilisation de modèles mathématiques en analyse et en composition musicales, in *Actes du Quadrivium Musique et Sciences, I.P.M.C., Metz* (1991)

Formalisation des échelles de hauteurs en analyse et en composition, in *Actes du Colloque "Musique et assistance informatique", MIM, Marseille* (1992)

Formalisation de structures musicales, modélisation informatique de partitions et pédagogie de la musique contemporaine, in *Orphée apprenti n°12, Brussels* (1992)

Une lecture de Schoenberg par Pierre Barbaud, préface to *Schoenberg, Pierre Barbaud, Éditions Main d'Œuvre, Nice* (1997)

Des séries proliférantes chez Barraqué aux cycles équilibrés dans mon oeuvre, Exposé au séminaire MaMux ([Ircam](#), 2003). Will be published shortly

A bâtons rompus - quelques réflexions sur l'analyse formalisée in *Communicarte, Portuguese magazine, vol. 1 # 4 - (p. 262-273 - 2003)*