

Devotion

Experimental-electro-contemporain album
by
François Minaux

Press Release



Album cover art

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1. Introduction

Devotion is an album written, recorded, produced and mixed by François Minaux. It was self-released on Bandcamp on December 30, 2019. It borrows its title from one of the songs included in this album. François' music is a blend of electronic music, experimental music, free improvisation and contemporary classical music. The lyrics are based on three poems (Devotion, Powder of Time and Surrender) written by him between 2017 and 2019. The album was recorded:

1. at François Minaux's home studio located in Austin, TX, U.S.A. between July 2018 and July 2019,
2. and at Pascal Minaux's home studio located in Labouillan, Aix-en-Othe, FRANCE between July 29 and July 31, 2019.

It was mastered by Nathan Moody at Obsidian Sound in CA, U.S.A.

Devotion's music genres:

As a classically trained musician specialized in contemporary music, i write a lot of free-jazz, atonal, arhythmic sections to be either read or improvised. Therefore, the genre can be described as experimental and contemporary. We use modular synthesizers and field recordings as well. We also play a range of electro and acoustical instruments.

Devotion's meaning:

Devotion looks at the different aspects of humankind's devotion during its existence on Earth. How it has venerated Earth, prob the mystery of existence and how it shares those experiences with each other.

The first song, **Devotion** portrays the practice of love between two human beings. It is about this intimate communion that links two persons when they devote oneself to the other.

The next piece, **Powder of Time** sees mankind's life cycle on planet Earth during which it worships the place they are living on. Here, the ground is not only a kind of underground mausoleum but also the womb where life spring forth.

The last song, **Surrender** talks about the moment when oneself slows down its pace to synchronize with outer perception of everyday life. In this state of presence, we can not only

better appreciate the simple things such as a smile, a hand on your shoulder or accepting help from others but also magnify consideration we have for each other.

Devotion's concept:

Each song is followed or combined with some free improvisation sections augmenting the score of each song. While the song will always have the same score, the improvisation sections vary depending on the musicians involved in each live or studio versions.

Performing Devotion:

The debut of **Devotion** was very unexpected due to the outbreak of the Corona Virus in March 2020. We turned ourselves to livestreaming performances in order to present the work to our virtual audience. The two livestreamed performances were done through the **VORTEX virtual programming** channels and my personal Facebook page in Austin, TX. The VORTEX is a local theater that is currently offering livestreamed shows to its audiences on their different social media platforms such as Youtube and Facebook.

Devotion's performers:

François Minaux and Kenken Gorder were in the Austin studio. Pascal Minaux and Baptiste-Florian Marle-Ouvrard were in Saint Eustach Church in Paris, FRANCE.

One of the challenges of this show was to synchronize and mix the musicians in Paris while also performing and streaming from the USA. Eventually, we succeeded to broadcast a successful performance as you can see in the video available to watch on my website.

Devotion' arrangement:

The live version of **Devotion** differs from the studio album version in a number of ways. First, the live arrangement depends on the musicians and the instruments they will use. Secondly, we will balance the use of pre-recorded music such as a bass line, some field recordings or a synth line and mix them with live musicians on stage. This way, we are able to keep the identity of the studio album and at the same time create a unique live version.

The live performance also adds a visual and theatrical layer to the music. Stage props such as small objects described in the lyrics of the song are (when possible) used to enhance the live performance. Musicians' costumes and makeup also take part in the visual aspect of the performance. Finally, theatrical elements (musicians changing position on stage and interacting with the props and the audience) are also at play to better convey the spatio-temporal aspect of the stories told in the songs.

Depending on the venue and the length of the set that we are playing, and the budget available, we will adapt the number of musicians, pre-recorded music, props used on stage and duration of the music played. Devotion set can last anywhere between 20 minutes to 60 minutes.

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2. history

Recording, performances (in bold) and release history of the album

- 2017 – 2019 Composing, arranging, recording sessions of *Devotion's* three poems, music and lyrics. François Minaux, vocals, flutes, keyboard – Kenken Gorder, trumpet. Austin, TX, USA.
- JULY 29-31, 2019 Album recording session at Labouillant, Aix-en-Othe, FRANCE
François Minaux, vocals – Baptiste Florian Marle Ouvrard, keyboard – Pascal Minaux, modular synth. Thomas Minaux, grand piano.
- DEC 8, 2019 ***Surrender*, solo vocals and tape. François Minaux, vocals. Density512 Orchestra Fundraiser, Austin, TX, USA.**
- DEC 30 2019 *Devotion* was self-released on Bandcamp.com and made available for purchases to the public. <https://fminaux.bandcamp.com/album/devotion>
- JAN 20, 2020 ***Surrender*. Vocals and flutes: François Minaux - Pascal Minaux, modular synth. ME MER MO, Experimental Music Series, curated by Melissa Seely at the Volstead Lounge.**
- MAY 14, 2020 ***Devotion – Livestreamed Show - The VORTEX* virtual programming: François Minaux, vocals & flutes – Pascal Minaux, modular synth – Kenken Gorder, trumpet and keyboard. Austin, TX and Saint Eustach Church in Paris FRANCE.**
- AUG 1, 2020 ***Devotion – Livestreamed Show - The SAINT EUSTACH ARRANGMENT* – livestreamed on François' Facebook page. François Minaux, vocals & flutes – Pascal Minaux, modular synth – Kenken Gorder, trumpet and keyboard - Baptiste-Florian Marle-Ouvrard, church organ. Austin, TX and Saint Eustach Church in Paris FRANCE.**

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3. biographies

Performers:

François Minaux:	Vocals, flutes
Kenken Gorder:	Trumpet and keyboards
Pascal Minaux:	Modular synthesizers
Baptiste-Florian Marle-Ouvrard:	Keyboards, and church organ

Biographies:



François Minaux is a French singer, multi-instrumentalist, multi-disciplinary artist, lyricist and composer based in Austin, Texas in the USA.

His music combines electronic, experimental, free improvisation and contemporary classical genres. His live performances are driven by free improvisation where his compositions are augmented by extensive free improvisation sections (vocals and instrumentals) which produces pieces that can last approximately 20 minutes.

In 2019, he self-released his first album on Bandcamp untitled “Devotion”.

He is co-founder of *Leaf Chime*, a free improvisation ensemble and of *Corps Multiple*, a multidisciplinary performance project.

François Minaux performed at the *Fast Forward Music Festival*, the *New Media and Sound Summit* in the USA and at the 798 Art District in Beijing, CHINA. He collaborated with *So Percussion*, *line upon line percussion*, the *Kraken Quartet* among others. As a classical flutist, he played with the *Dallas Wind Symphony*, the *Laredo Philharmonic* in the USA and with Ensemble Vibration in FRANCE. Since 2015, he is the principal flutist of both the chamber orchestra of the *Classical Music Institute* of San Antonio, TX and the contemporary chamber orchestra *Density 512* in Austin, TX.

Born in Paris, FRANCE, he studied classical music at the Paul Ducas Conservatory of the 12th arrondissement of Paris, FRANCE. He holds a Master of Music (MM) from the Yale University School of Music and a Doctorate of Musical Arts (DMA) from UT-Austin. Since 2007, he teaches flutes at Wired Flutes, a flute studio he owns and operates. Visit www.francoisminaux.com for more information.



Baptiste Florian Marle Ouvrard

Baptiste-Florian MARLE-OUVRARD is one of the younger generation of French organists defending an eclectic repertoire while giving an important contribution to the art of improvisation.

After brilliant studies at the National Conservatory of Music in Paris (CNSM) where he received such teaching from Olivier LATRY, Thierry ESCAICH, Philippe LEFEBVRE,

Pierre PINCEMAILLE, Jean-François ZYGEL and François-Xavier ROTH where he received 8 awards, he became laureate of numerous international competitions among which we can mention:

- International competition of improvisation from Leipzig 2009 (First Prize)
- International competition of improvisation Luxembourg 2011 (First and audience Prize)
- Winner of the M.Tariverdiev international competition in Kaliningrad, Russia 2011
- International competition of Grand Prix d'Improvisation de Chartres (2° Prix ex-aequo and audience Prize - *Grand-Prix* not awarded) – 2012
- International competition of Longwood Gardens – Clarence Snyder Award (USA) - 2013

Titular organist of the Saint Vincent de Paul Church of Clichy-la-Garenne (Paris) since 2001, he was appointed by competition in 2015, titular organist on the great organ of the main church Saint Eustache in Paris. He perpetuates in Saint Eustache, with the help of his colleague Thomas Ospital, an intense musical life around the great organ with weekly concerts and various cultural events.

His intense concert activity leads to occur throughout Europe and in Russia, Canada, the USA and South Africa. He regularly teaches improvisation and French music at academies and master classes. In 2007, he has created his first piece, an oratorio composed for choir, orchestra and organ named *L'Arche de Noé*. According to the german magazine «Organ -Journal für die Orgel», he has been named «Organist of the Year 2007»

Also passionate by music accompaniment of silent film, he regularly collaborates with the French Cinematheque in Paris, where he was artist in residence for the 2015 Festival "All the memory of World". Although possessing a vast repertoire, he regularly include in his program several transcriptions of symphonic works. He also continues to explore the most bold combinations between organ and other forms of artistic expression, dance, graphic works, electronic music. In 2016, he collaborated with the American choreographer Dylan Crossman to create the ballet *breath on the pond* but also with the clarinetist Yom, in a program mixing various traditional world music. They have recorded their album *Priere* at the "Philharmonie de Paris".

www.bfmo.fr



Pascal MINAUX composes and performs electronic and experimental music. He is based in Aix-en-Othe in Grand-Est in FRANCE and Austin, TX, USA.

In 2018, Pascal debuts on the electronic and experimental scenes and starts to produce his own works in studio and on stage.

His works yields compositions, interpretation and improvisation mixing modular and digital synths with fields recordings, and non-traditional acoustical instruments.

Between 2018 and 2019, he is featured as guest artist for *Corps Multiple's* shows in residency at the VORTEX and at the Butterfly Bar in Austin, TX, USA. In 2019, Pascal records the modular synth part in the album *Devotion* written by François Minaux and released on Bandcamp in December 2019.

In 2020, he start performing *Devotion in* a series of concerts alongside François Minaux in the USA and in FRANCE.

Social Medias :

Bandcamp page:

<https://fminaux.bandcamp.com/album/devotion>

Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/francois.minaux>

Website:

<https://francoisminaux.com>

Videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ws00aLSE_F4

<https://www.facebook.com/melissalovesafunnybunny/videos/10157721631857911/>

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4. Photos

Live Performances (livestreamed and live venues)



video still from **the Saint Eustach Arrangement** livestreamed show on AUGUST 1 2020 – on François' Minaux Facebook page.



Devotion - video still from the Saint Eustach Arrangement livestreamed show on AUGUST 1 2020 – on François' Minaux Facebook page.



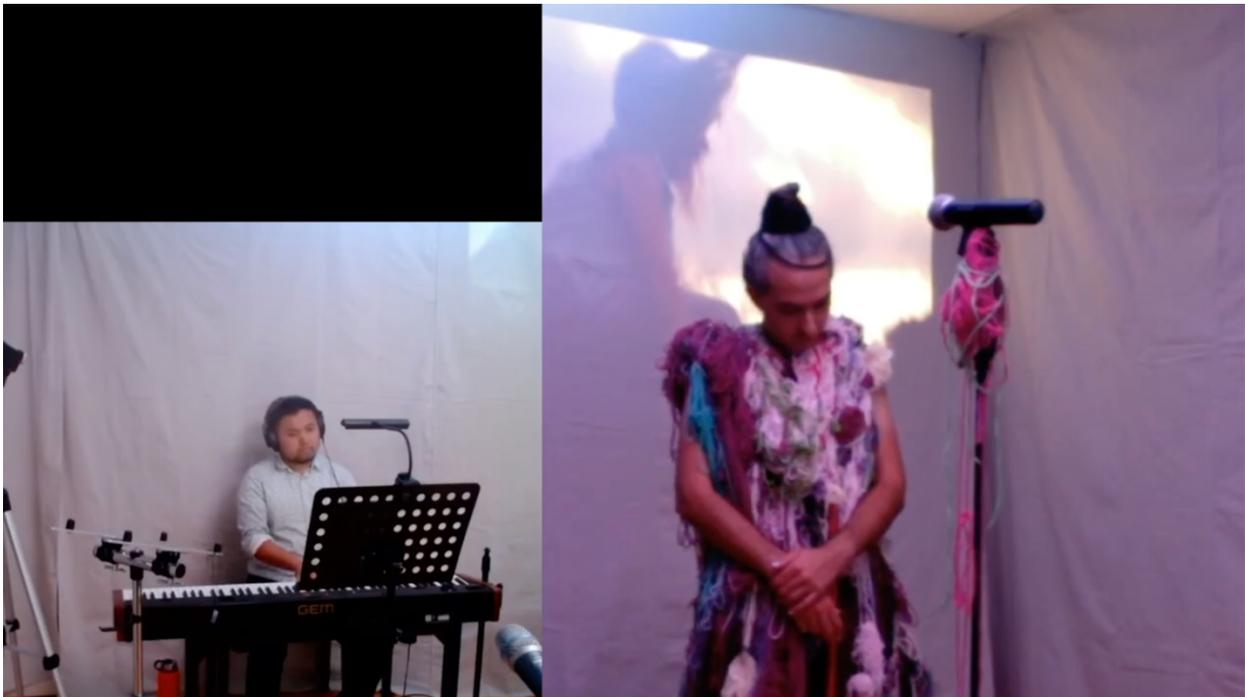
Facebook page poster for the Saint Eustach Arrangement livestreamed show on AUGUST 1 2020



Youtube ad for the VORTEX virtual programming livestreaming show on MAY 14 2020



Devotion - video still from the VORTEX virtual programming livestreamed show on MAY 14 2020 on the VORTEX social medias channels.



Devotion - video still from the VORTEX virtual programming livestreamed show on MAY 14 2020 on the VORTEX social medias channels.



Devotion - video stills from the VORTEX virtual programming livestreamed show on MAY 14 2020 on the VORTEX social medias channels.



Density512 Fundraiser show – *Surrender* – François Minaux, vocals. 12/8/19, Austin, TX, U.S.A.



Density512 Fundraiser show – *Surrender* –François Minaux, vocals. 12/8/19, Austin, TX, U.S.A.



Me-Mer-Mo Experimental Music Series, The Volstead Lounge. *Surrender* - François Minaux, vocals, flutes; Pascal Minaux, modular synth. 1/20/20, Austin, TX U.S.A.

Photos – repetitions :



Saint-Eustach Church, Paris FRANCE – recording session – François Minaux & Baptiste Florian
Marle Ouvrard



Recording session for *Devotion* – the album. Baptiste Florian Marle Ouvrard, clavier. François Minaux, vocals and flutes. Labouillant, Aix-Villemaur-Palis, 7/29/19