Alexandre Tansman 1897 - 1986 A lyrique way in a troubled century



Conception Design Realization

Bettina Sadoux

In association with Mireille Tansman-Zanuttini

Parents

Alexandre Tansman was born in Łódź, Poland on June 11, 1897. His parents, Mosze and Anna Tansman (born Gurwicz), belonged to the Jewish upper middle class and owned a textile export company.

However, the Tansmans' material situation got worse after his father's death in 1905, and worsened with the First World War and the Russian revolution.

Alexandre grew up in a highly cultured and music-loving family. Since a very early age, the young « Sacha » (Alexandre) had received a very good education and learnt several languages: Polish, Russian, French, English and German.



Mosze Tansman



Alexandre Tansman





A musical family



His aunt was Anton Rubinstein's pupil and his sister Thérèse studied at the Conservatory of Berlin with the famous pianist Artur Schnabel. Chamber music concerts often were organised at home. Moreover, Sacha had the opportunity to listen to prestigious concerts during his holidays in Moscow at his cousins' home - close friends of Scriabine - in particular those of the famous conductor Koussevitzky. After attending a concert by the violinist Eugène Ysaye he decided to become a musician at the early age of six.

Alexandre and his sister Thérèse

A musical training

Alexandre Tansman began to learn the piano when he was four years old with Wojciech Gawronski, a teacher who came especially for him from Warsaw. When he was eight, the young Sacha started composing short pieces. He studied piano, harmony and counterpoint at the Conservatoire of Łódź. Later, he learnt orchestration within the recently established Symphony Orchestra of Łódź where he played the parts of the harp at the piano.

In 1915, he left $\pm \delta dz$ for Warsaw where he attended Piotr Rutel's classes at the Conservatoire as well as classes at the University of Law and Philosophy (in numerus clausus) where he was awarded his doctorate in 1918.



Alexandre with his sister and his cousins

First works First prizes for composing

Of course, Tansman's very first works were influenced by Polish folklore and were written, in the composer's own words, « in the style of Chopin and Grieg ». But during his second Polish period, one can already note a real style of « avant-garde » style (with polytonal harmony, innovative resolutions beyond the limits of functional harmony).

At the first composition competition in Poland - independent again - he won the three first prizes under three different names. This success led to his decision to leave Poland where he saw no hope of pursuing a career because of prevailing anti-Semitism. He obtained his passport from the new President of Poland, the famous pianist Ignacy Jan Paderewski.





Tansman in the musical background of the twenties in Paris

From Warsaw to Paris

Arriving in Paris at the end of 1919, Tansman, 22, had to earn his living. He first worked as a packer at La Villette. Then he made use of his language skills and found work as a translator in a bank. He also gave piano lessons. But his circumstances rapidly improved and one year later, his sister and his mother were able to join him in Paris.

Maurice Ravel: a key figure

Maurice Ravel played a deciding part in Tansman's musical career. He introduced him to his publishers (Demets, Eschig) and to the most prominent performers of the time. He also took him to the famous « Roland Manuel's Monday gatherings », to the Clémenceau and Godebski « salons » (the artists' meeting place). Thus, he soon became a member of the Parisian musical scene and made friends with the most important musical personalities of the time: Bartók, Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Milhaud, Honegger, Roussel, Manuel de Falla etc. Soon his works were conducted by the most famous conductors, first in Paris (Koussevitzky – with whom he played his l^{st} piano Concerto at the Opera – Golschmann and Monteux), then in Europe and finally the United States (Toscanini, Mengelberg, Mitropoulos, Stokowski...).



Vladimir Golschmann



Pierre Monteux

Maurice Ravel

First tours abroad

1927-1928 : first tour in the United States

1929-1930 : second tour in the United States

1931 : tour in Poland

1932-1933 : tour around the world (one year)



The peak of Tansman's first tour in America was the world première of his Second Piano Concerto on December 28, 1927, commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky who conducted it with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the composer at the piano at the Carnegie Hall. The work was dedicated to Charlie Chaplin who attended the concert and to whom Tansman was introduced. Tansman made this first tour with Ravel.

« To Alexandre Tansman in memory of a pleasant evening, Charlie Chaplin »

First tours abroad

During this same tour, he made friends with George Gershwin and went around numerous jazz nightclubs with him and Ravel. The influence of jazz is noticeable in several works among which is his *Sonatine Transatlantique*.

It is also in 1931 that Mrs Elisabeth Sprague Coolidge commissioned him with his *Triptyque* and Tansman's first monograph was published by

Irving Schwerke.

« For Alexander Tansman whose geniality & hospitality have made my visit to Paris a delight. With thanks & admiration, Georges Gershwin, April 21st, 1928 »



First tours abroad

1932-1933, Tansman began his world tour in the United States as a composer and pianist, where his *Four Polish Dances* were conducted by Arturo Toscanini at the Carnegie Hall. Then he embarked for the Middle East and Asia: Egypt, Japan (where he was introduced to the emperor), China, the Philippines, India (where he met Gandhi).



A. Tansman, S. Prokofiev playing the 2nd piano concerto piano of Tansman, V. Golschmann and his wife





« Ecole de Paris »

École de Paris (« School of Paris »)

This was the name given to a group of composers, all friends with one another and all from central and eastern Europe, in the thirties by the famous Belgian music critic José Bruyr. The group was made of: the Romanian Marcel Mihalovici, the Russian Alexander Tcherepnine, the Hungarian Tibor Harsányi, the Czech Bohuslav Martinu, the Pole Alexander Tansman, and later the Swiss Conrad Beck



A. Tcherepnine



B. Martinu



T. Harsanyi



M. Mihalovici



C. Beck

Ecole de Paris

They met at the café du Dôme in Montparnasse or in the artistic salons. As Tansman said, « this doesn't mean anything aesthetically speaking [...]; apart from the friendship ties, the attraction of France, and the technical preoccupations of our generation, each brought his own 'folklore' and followed his own path ».



A. Tansman on the right in the café du Dôme de Montparnasse, you can find M. Mihalovici.

Private Life 1937-1939

In December 1937, Alexandre Tansman married the pianist Colette Cras, daughter of the composer and admiral Jean Cras, who had died in 1932. They had two daughters, Mireille and Marianne.

In 1938, he was granted French nationality. When the Second World War broke out, he took refuge at the Archives Internationales de la Danse. The director was Pierre Tugal, his sister Thérèse's husband.





Colette Cras with her daughters Marianne and Mireille



citizenship act

1940 Flight from Paris to Nice

Extract from Tansman's diary: Regards en arrière

« [...] Our departure took place in awful conditions. The banks were closed, I could only take the money I had with me... we had to leave almost everything in Paris.

I put some bags on Mireille's baby carriage, I walked along the banks till the Gare de Lyon. Colette and the babies were supposed to arrive by bus and we were supposed to meet at the station at the buffet. It was easier said than done. I had to find Colette and the children amid the crowd... I moved as a madman and by a real miracle, when I had lost every hope I found them... »



Gare de Lyon, Paris 1940

Nice - between anxiety and hope

In spite of the very precarious living conditions - « living in one small cramped room », the critical lack of money, the daily queues to get supplies - this forced stay in Nice was relatively productive and Tansman composed several important works. However, the worst was « the long discouraging pursuit of our American visa ». First of all, the exit visa, which was given... by Alfred Cortot (at the « Commissariat Général aux Affaires Juives » in Vichy); then, the Portuguese and Spanish visas and « we had to turn real cartwheels to get one before the end of the other », the weekly travels to Marseilles, the interminable queues in front of the consulates, the systematic refusal of the American consulate.



Colette and her daughters at the beach of Nice, summer 1941

Nice - between anxiety and hope

« [...] In spite of all these worries, I still worked with an eager enthusiasm and in these dramatic circumstances wrote my *Polish Rapsody* for orchestra, my 5th String Quartet, my String Sextet, the 3rd and 4th books of *Intermezzi*, the 3rd and 4th books of *Mazurkas*, 3 Ballads for piano, etc. » (extract of the diary Regards en arrière)

Colette and her daughters at the beach of Nice summer 1941



Departure from Nice to America

In December 1940, Tansman received a letter from Charlie Chaplin informing him that the President of the American Society of Assistance to the French Artists, Mrs Mabel Randal-Mclver, had offered to give a guarantee (affidavit) for the Tansman family at their arrival in America, an essential document if you wanted to get the American visa.

 Charlie Chaplin founded a support committee in New York in which appeared, besides himself, the conductors Toscanini, Koussevitzky, Mitropoulos and

Golschmann.

Some time later, Tansman also received an answer from his impresario, Bernard Laberge, who had already organized a series of concerts for 1941-1942 and 1942-1943.

However, the departure was postponed several times.

« [...] We live in the perpetual waiting for our departure. We are registered on the 1st boat leaving from Lisbon or Cadiz. Maybe at the end of July, maybe around August 10. I go to Marseilles every week and I call almost every day. So our travel money evaporates little by little. Anyway, let us hope that we shall still succeed [...] »

 « [...] We are still at the same point, waiting for departure – registered for the first boat to leave... but which still doesn't leave. Anyway, let us hope for the middle of August [...] »



A. Tansman, B. Laberge, S. Prokofiev, V. Golschmann

Departure from Nice to America extracts correspondance

Letter to Mrs Roussel July 15, 1941

« [...] If I tell you that I leave with pleasure I would lie. I lived in this country the 22 best years of my life, I loved there, I suffered there, I owe it very much in my artistic and spiritual development, I loved it and I love it, maybe more than many people; I don't believe that I harmed it or that I brought shame on it in any way; I made friends there and all my life is closely connected to France.

I considered wrongly to be a part of it. So I may tell you that I truly had to tear myself away when I decided on this departure, which is for me a sort of exile. Unfortunately, I have no choice. If we only had to share with all the other French the consequences of the tragedy, to participate to the general hardships, with them and like them, I wouldn't have hesitated to stay in order to suffer the common ill fate as well as the good one.

But unfortunately, for the reasons you know, one is excluded even from the right of equality before suffering, not to mention the right to work, that is to live. Maybe better days will come back – let us hope -. I know what you think of all this and I can imagine what Albert Roussel would have thought! So I prefer to forget my life of this past year and take with me the memory of the other 21 years [...] ».



Departure from Nice to America extracts correspondance

May 7, 1941 « My dear Mum and my dear Monique,

[...] If you knew how people are fighting to get seats, some are waiting for months and months, without any success, in spite of all the money spent, and they cannot leave. Moreover, the conditions are so terrible. Most of the freighters leave with 700 passengers and ought to contain 50. As for Lisbon, we were supposed to leave from there, it is a real hell. 80,000 persons wait fighting it out for thousands of dollars. So you may imagine how happy we are to have such supports. In Martinique, we hope for a letter of recommendation [...]. Also, once there, we shall need to do some string-pulling, as everything is 'jammed'. If only I could tell you in more detail about the vicissitudes, the hopes and despairs we had to suffer in order to get the American visa!...»



Departure from Nice to America extracts correspondance

Letter from May 7 – continued

« [...] You saw that 4 days ago the consulate thought that the lawyer's document was insufficient, then, 2 days after, the visa is awarded... and then taken away again a quarter of an hour later [...] and if you knew all the strings we had to pull influences, without any success though! From Charlie Chaplin to Lourdeg Hull, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and all this for nothing. At last, the nightmare is over and we shall not have, thanks to you, the worst of all, the one of the boat...».



Stages of travel

 ϵ « ... This is our itinerary, according to my plans :

€ Tuesday 14.8	dep. Nice	6.15	- arr. Toulouse	18.20
€ Friday 15.8	dep. Toulouse	8.15	- arr. Pau	13.15
	dep. Pau	13.32	arr. Caufran	17.14
	dep. Caufran	17.45	(Spanish hour)	
€ Saturday 16.8	arr. Madrid	8.35	dep. Madrid	23.00
€ Sunday 17.8	arr. Lisbon	15.32		

« [...] Maybe we shall stay one day more in Madrid, in order to arrive in Lisbon on Monday. The boat leaves on Wednesday [...] »





On the boat Mouzinho with J. Hadamard, mathematician

Arrival in New York

The Tansman family arrived in New York on September 3, 1941, in an awful condition after a very difficult two-week travel. The Mouzinho was the last boat to leave from Lisbon to New York. On board were also 45 children survivors of the concentration camps, « sponsored » by the Joint Distribution Committee. As Tansman said in an interview, « of course, if you come as a refugee, it is not the same thing as if you come as a star... ».

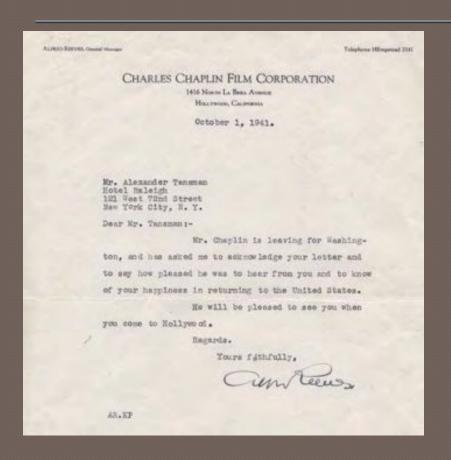
Tansman was met by his impresario Bernard R. Laberge, the conductor Vladimir Golschmann and many journalists.

Thanks to Golschmann's financial support, the family lived some time in New York, in a small flat at the Raleigh Hotel, waiting for a still uncertain future. Among Tansman's friends, the famous conductors Serge Koussevitzky (Boston Symphony orchestra) and Pierre Monteux, and... Charlie Chaplin expressed their joy at knowing that he was finally safe.



Mireille et Marianne Tansman on the boat Mouzinho arrival at Staten Island

Letters from Chaplin, Koussevitzky, Monteux



BOSTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SERGE KOUSSEVITZKY, Greautron & E. JODG, WHITEH O. W. SPALDING, ASSESSANT MANAGER SYMPHONY HALL, BOSTON Lenox, Massachusetts, October 3, 1941 Mr. Alexander Tanaman, The Raleigh, 121 West 72nd Street New York , N. Y. Dear Sachar I was so happy to hear from you and to know that you and your family are safely in this country. I did receive one letter from you from Nice, to which I answered, but that was months ago. As I wrote to Mrs. MacIver, I shall do all I can to arrange an appearance for you with the Boston Symphony. Could you send me your choice of an orchestral work which you would like to be performed ? Forgive my writing you back in English, and find here warm wishes and regards to you and yours from my wife and myself. Yours always.

« My dear friend,

It is impossible to express with words our joy to know that you are finally on this side of the Atlantic, and that you escaped from your long ordeal, you and your little family [...] »

Pierre Monteux

Letter to Milhaud

The Raleigh, 121 West, 72 Street, New York City

le 18 Sept. 1941

Mon cher Milhaud

Je ne saurais pas vous dire quel sincère plaisir j'ai eu à recevoir votre si affectueuse et amicale lettre. J'ai su par Golschmunn et par votre père que vous vous étes intéressé à notre triste sort pendant ces 15 mois de misère et j'en ai été très profondément touché. Il serait trop long de vous écrire tout ce qu'on a vécu là-bas. J'espère vous le raconter bientôt de vive voix. Impossible de vous dire combien nous sommes heureux d'être let. Ce changement moral et matériel nous paraît être un vrai rêve. Tout le monde est si gentil, si prévenant pour nous, et nous en avores complètement perdu l'habitude. J'espère retrouver peu à peu ma place au soleil et les débuts sont assez encourageants. Comme vous le savez, nous avores pu durer tout ce temps uniquement grâce à l'appui des amis d'ici, comme Vladimir, Chaplin, Toscanini, etc., car nous avons perdu tout ce que nous possédions en France. Je pense venir avec ma petite famille en Californie sur le début de novembre, après le concert de Mrs. Coolidge à Washington (30 oct.). Sa commande a été pour moi plus que bienvenue à lout point de vue et je travaille activement à la Sonate³.

Pourriez-vous dire au Paramount que je serai en Californie en novembre? J'aurais été tellement heureux de pouvoir faire quelque chose pour eux au point de vue musique, après Washington.

Vous ne connaissez pas votre bonheur d'être parti à temps avec votre femme et enfant. S'il n'y avait que les privations à supporter, cela serait peu de chose, mais le reste a été bien plus pénible - difficile à en rendre compte sans l'avoir vécu.

Je suis heureux pour vous de vous savoir en un endroit qui convient à votre santé et vous permet de travailler en toute tranquillité – c'est une chose incorréciable.

Nous avons tous été malades par réaction et commençons enfin à nous remettre. Pour notre séjour de 6 semaines ici nous avons pris un petit flat de 2 pièces avec cuisine au Raleigh. Cela nous paraît un palais, cur nous vivions à Nice tous les 4 entassés dans une petite pièce, un vrai enfer!

A bientós, mon cher Milhaud, merci encore pour toute votre gentillesse. Mille affectueuses pensées de nous deux à vous deux.

Très amicalement

Al. Tansman

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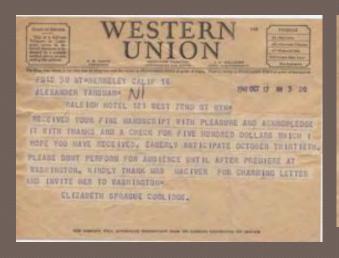
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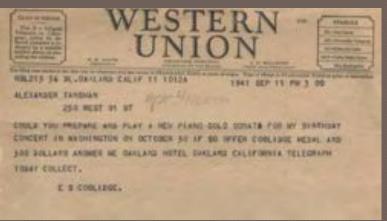
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³ Sonate N° 4 (1941), "to Mrs Elizabeth Coolidge", Création mondiale, 30 octobre 1941, Washington, The Library of Congress, The Coolidge Auditorium - Alexandre Tansman, piano.

The Coolidge Medal

• An article in the New York Times caught the attention of the famous sponsor Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, who had already supported, among others, Stravinsky and Bartók and had commissioned Tansman with the *Triptyque* in 1931. She asked the composer to write a piece for piano for her birthday on October 30, 1941. It was the *Sonata N*° 4.





THREE COMPOSERS GET COOLIDGE MEDAL

Britten, Tansman and Thompson Honored at Founder's Day Concert in Washington

Washington, D. C., Nov. 5.—Three sminest composers, Benjamin Britten, Alexander Tanoman and Randall, Thompson, respectively British, Pulish





(Abore) Eardell Thumpson

(Above inger)

Alexander Tanıman (Right)





and American, were awarded the Coolsige Medal for distinguished services to chander sussic at the sixteenth F-sander's Day concert on Oct. 36 in the Discory of Congress. It is no appeal overs what place on the Injustity of Mrs. Elizabeth program Cooling who established the foundation bearing her same.

Mrs. Coolsign was present to hear the performance of three works written for the occasion and dedicated to her, and to confer the medals on the composers. Archibald MacLeish, Librarian of Congress, presided at the held recessory and introduced Mrs. Coolidge to the antience largely exeposed of members of the Friends of Music in the Library. of Congress. Before presenting the medals Mrs. Coolidge said: "In calling together these representatives of Engfish, Palish and American art. I cannot help feeling that the occasion is symholic of more than just numical couradeship or sympathy.

The concert of works by the honored composers was played by the Cooldige Quarter. It included Thompson's first string Quarter, Tanoman's boarth parti-Sensta (with the composer at the plane), and a see string Quarter by Betton.

The photograph of Males Japane is the

The Coolidge Medal

At the concert at the Library of Congress in Washington, A. Tansman was awarded the Coolidge Medal with B. Britten and R. Thomson and it was there that he played his Sonata. It came just at the right time. On November 6, 1941, the Tansmans left for Los Angeles, where the composer hoped he would obtain a commission for film music. However, this first film project failed. « [...] I expect to come to California with my little family at the beginning of November, after the Mrs Coolidge's concert in Washington. Her commission was for me more than welcome...

(Letter to Darius Milhaud, September 18, 1941)



Hollywood, a « Weimar 1940 »

During the years 1930-1940, many famous European artists had already been exiled and had moved to America. Many of them lived in Los Angeles, an excellent location because of its mild and healthy climate and offering, for some (like Tansman), the prospect of working in the film industry. (However, let us remember that neither Stravinsky nor Schoenberg could obtain film music commissions). In order to avoid the solitude of exile, these artists joined forces. Tansman soon became part of this circle of emigrated artists.



I. Stravinsky and A. Tansman



A. Schoenberg and A. Tansman

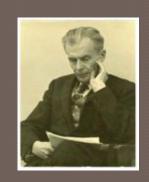
Hollywood, un «Weimar 1940 »

« [...] As soon as I arrived, I received a phone call from Stravinsky, who invited us to dinner... Some days later, we were invited to dinner by the Arnold Schoenbergs, who welcomed us with great cordiality... I must say that Hollywood was at that time a real Weimar of 1940, or rather could have been one. Musicians, like Stravinsky and Schoenberg, painters like Berman, writers like Thomas Mann and Feuchtwanger, Emil Ludwig, Sholem Asch and Aldous Huxley, had sought refuge there. But there was no contact between this elite and the local community. The latter was directed towards the studios, towards the artificial, imitated life of the movies, towards snobbery, towards cultural ignorance [...] ».

Extracts: Regards en arrière



S. Asch







T. Mann

A. Huxley

E.L. Cohen

A. Schoenberg

« Flesh and Fantasy »

Tansman's first film

The film producers didn't turn to symphonic composers for film music, but to amateur musicians, assisted for orchestration by « arrangeurs ». Fortunately, the famous director Julien Duvivier, also exiled in Hollywood – and with whom Tansman had already collaborated for the music of the film *Poil de Carotte* in 1932 – asked the composer to write (and orchestrate himself!) the music of a film of sketches, entitled *Flesh and Fantasy*. This one obtained the highest of praise.



J. Duvivier and A. Tansman reading the score of « Flesh and Fantasy »



28/51

Hollywood: Tansman and the cinéma

Examples of the main films for which Tansman wrote the score in America:

1942 Flesh and Fantasy by Julien Duvivier

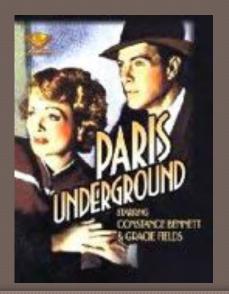
1945 Paris Underground by Gregory Ratoff

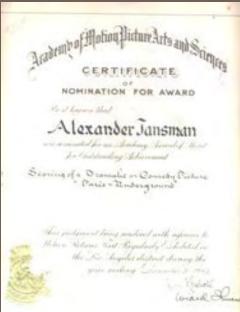
1946 Sister Kenny by Dudley Nichols

He received the award for the best film score for the film

Paris Underground.







Friendship with Stravinsky

During these years of exile, the two composers became inseparable friends. They met almost every day, showed each other their respective works, shared the same nostalgia of Europe and the same interests...

« [...] As you may have guessed, for us, the only comfort living in this hole, more provincial than the suburbs of Noisy-le-Sec, has been the Stravinskys' presence... Here, I may say, they became our best friends and they consider us likewise. As soon as he finishes a new piece, we are the first to hear it played by him, or with Colette and me with six hands, and needless to say I do the same. Besides the marvellous musician he is, his personality is extraordinary and we often stay up talking till three o'clock in the morning ...»

(extract from letter addressed to Marcel Mihalovici)

Tansman will consider this friendship « as one of the greatest privileges of his life ». He will dedicate a book to Stravinsky (published in 1948 and republished in 2009) and following Stravinsky's death, Tansman will write his splendid and moving *Stèle in memoriam Igor Stravinsky*.



« To Colette and Alexandre Tansman, souvenir bien sympathique '42, Igor Stravinsky »



In Stravinsky's garden 1942

Milhaud - Ensemble Brodetzky

- Tansman will also strengthen his firm and lasting friendship ties with Darius Milhaud, who lived and taught in Oakland. Darius Milhaud was full of praise for Tansman's 5th Quartet at the International Festival of Contemporary Music (EIMC). At Milhaud's death, Tansman wrote his Élégie à la mémoire de Darius Milhaud.
- « [...] the great success of the concert was Alexandre Tansman's 5th Quartet. I never heard from Tansman such a complete, poignant piece; maybe it reflects the hardships he suffered during the winter of 1940-1941 in France where this work was written? The composer was present at the concert and received a warm ovation ».
- « Dear friends,
- It was a pleasure to stay at your house and I was very grateful to the Congress of Barbes which allowed me to come and take up a little of your time. I thank you with all my heart. I was happy to hear Sacha's beautiful piano pieces so marvellously played by Colette. Ah! She plays so well! It reminded me how well one plays in Paris.
- Tell the Stravigors (Stravinsky) how I was glad to see them again and to hear the Danses Concertantes [...] ».
- Love from the Trio to the Quartet
- DM

Another important friendship was the one with Julian Brodetzky. His chamber music ensemble performed several works by Tansman, among which were the *Suite-Divertissement*, the *Variations sur un thème de Frescobaldi*...



«À Sacha et Colette souvenir affectueux, Milhaud 1943»

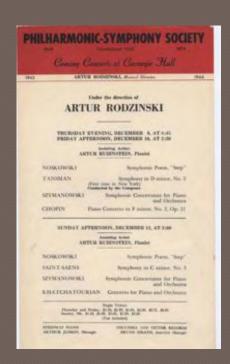


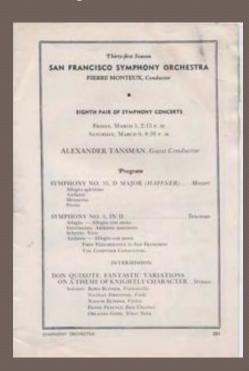
Tansman, Stravinsky, musicians from Ensemble Brodetzky

Symphonic works 1942-1945

Tansman favored the creation of great symphonic works and from 1942 onwards, with his 5^{th} Symphony and the Polish Rapsody he had the opportunity to go on tours to the major towns as guest conductor with the philharmonic orchestras, which gave him a great reputation in America. During this short American stay, he wrote three symphonies: the 5^{th} Symphony, the 6^{th} Symphony « in memoriam dedicated to the memory of those who have fallen for France », the 7^{th} Symphony « Lyrical », dedicated to Vera and Igor Stravinsky, the Serenade N^r 3, dedicated to E. Sprague Coolidge, the Divertimento for chamber orchestra, dedicated to Arnold Schoenberg...



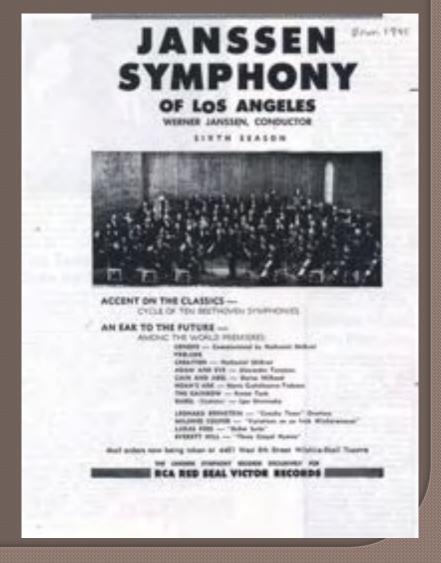




A « collective » work The Genesis

« [...] Last week a « collective » work was performed here — The Genesis Suite, (Genesis as in the Bible: for orchestra, choirs and narration, with episodes written by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Milhaud, myself, Toch and Castelnuovo-Tedesco. It was very interesting and I particularly liked the pieces by Schoenberg (Prélude — one of his best pieces in my opinion) and by Stravinsky (Babel). Darius did Caïn and Abel, and I had Adam and Eve [...] ».

 (Extract from a letter addressed to Mihalovici)



Leaving America

In spite of the successes and an easy material life, Tansman could no longer endure the American mentality. He had been thinking of going back to France since 1944, after the Liberation of Paris (he shared the euphoria at this event in Stravinsky's' company). the Unfortunately, this one was postponed his wife Colette had to undergo a significant operation. This was followed by a long convalescence, which swallowed up all the money that had been saved. Thanks to the commission of the Genesis Suite, and of the film Sister Kenny, he once again earned enough money to travel.





Leaving America

« [...] I write to you now in order to tell you that we have made the definitive decision to return to France within a few months. In spite of the very gratifying welcome I have had here, this exile has lasted enough and I feel that I cannot go on living in the oppressive Hollywood atmosphere [...] As Colette's operation « used up » several millions of dollars which I had saved for our return to France, we will make this return with the intention of starting again from scratch [...] ».



A.Tansman with his daughters Marianne et Mireille 1944

Tansman's departure in the press

ROAMING

With AUSTIN CONOVER

Hollywood Oldtimer



COMPOSER AND FAMILY PACK FOR PARIS TRIP

The whole family helps pack the last trunk as Alexandre Tansman, emposer of some of Hollywood's finest fain accors, closes his horse on America, to return to the French

COMPOSER GOING HOME

France Will Be Like 'Desert' to Tansman

Mirellie, 7, standing beside for father, has her rubbers ready. (Citizen-News

CURRENT EVENTS

E.C.L.A. Street, Clubs .-

Musicas Anonca- May 1946

Tansman Returns to Native Paris After Completing Score for Film



Sinfonietta Makes St. Louis Debut

Raymond Jones Conducts New Ensemble - Civie League Ends Season

Lengue Ends Season

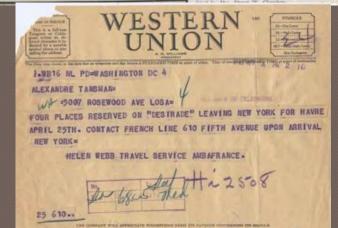
T. Lorin, Mr. — The first of your
institute Society under Engineer for
Season and the Season of Season
Institute Society under Engineer for
Season of Season
Institute Society under Engineer
Momerial Admitstration on March 31.

The society plane is present chain
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George L. Some, organist, as subject
Control of the Season
Company of Season
Company of Season
Company of Season
Company
Tamonan, Monart, Standby, Samour
Season
Season, Season
Seas









36/51

Return to France

Finally, the Tansmans embarked from New York on the liner Désirade on April 27, 1946. They travelled in the company of the poet André Breton and his wife with whom they made friends. The first impression of their return was very hard. « This first sight of a destroyed France was painful ». When they arrived in Paris, as their apartment had been sequestrated with all its contents, they had to live for more than two years at Colette Cras family's home.

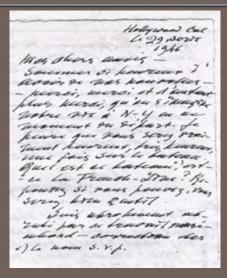
« My dear friends,

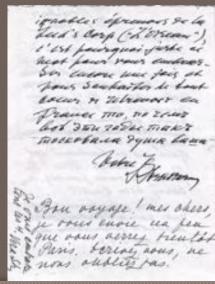
We are so happy to have news from you. Thank you, thank you and thank again. Our thoughts are with you in New York as you await departure. I think that you will be really happy when you are on the boat. Which boat is it? Is it the French-Line? Please reply if you can. It would be very kind.

I am completely punch-drunk by this constant flow of work – correcting the horrible proofs of the Leed's Corp. (The Bird), that's why I only have time to send you these few words to kiss you again and to wish you with all my heart that you find in France 'what your soul longed for so much' (in Russian) ».

Your Ig. Stravinský

(transcription of Stravinsky's letter)





Return - Career in Europe 1947-1953

In 1947, Tansman had already resumed his career in Europe, with many tours and festivals in Italy, Belgium, Holland, Scandinavia, England, Spain... His wife Colette accompanied him on the piano, especially in his Suite for 2 pianos and orchestra, the Partita N° 2 for piano and orchestra, dedicated to Madeleine and Darius Milhaud. In France, he had many commissions and his works were performed by major orchestras and on the radio.

Among his main symphonic works of this first period after the war, let us mention:

- The 8th Symphony (creation Biennial Venice Festival, 9.9.1949, conducted by R. Kubelik),
- - Ricercari (creation 12. 1949, conducted by V. Golschmann),
- The oratorio Isaïe le Prophète, written « in memory of the 6,000,000 Jews exterminated during the Second World War and to salute the birth of the state of Israel » (creation 5.5.1952, Paris, conducted by the composer),

 - The Sinfonia Piccola (creation Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, 22-23.11.1952, conducted by A. Cluytens)...

Programs

Tentro La Ferice

Venerdi 9 settembre - Ore 21,30

CONCERTO SINFONICO

diretto da RAFAEL KUBELIK

ALEXANDER SPITZMUELLER Trois Hymnes à la paix, op. 27 Magnificat - Prière - Fantasie

Prima esecuzione in Italia

ROBERTO LUPI

Salmo CL,
per teaure, coro e orchestra
Tencore: Tomaso Spatiano
Coro del Teatro La Fenice
Maestro del coro: Sante Zanon
Prima recuzione assoluta

FRANK MARTIN

Sei Monologhi (da "Jedermana" di Hago von Hofmanusthal) Mezzo soprano Elsa Cavelti Prima esecuzione in Italia

ALEXANDER TANSMAN POLONIA Mus que pour orchestre Allegro cos moto Elegro pour archestre Scherzo (Molto vivacz) Prima esecuzione amelista

Orchestra Sinfonica di Torino della Radio Italiana

Primo violino | Armando Gramegna

THE ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VLADIMIR GOLSCHMANN, Conductor

TENTH SYMPHONY CONCERTS

Thursday Evening, December 22 at Eight-Hirty Friday Afternoon, December 23 at Two o'clock

SoloH-MARTIAL SINCHER-Bertone

MOZART Symphony No. 39 in E Flat major

Adapte allegre Andapte con moss Misserto Finale: Allegro

RAMEAU Invocation et Hynne au Soleil from "Les Indes Galantes"

BERLIOZ Excerpts from "The Dammation of Famst"

Bong of the Plan

Chain of the Styline

And of the Berline

Maghintopoles" Seronde

MARTIAL SINGHER-Burkum

INTERMISSION

RAVEL Don Quichotte a Dulcimee

Chance a Below (First Time in St. Leuis)

DUPARC "Phidyle"

TANSMAN "Ricercari"

Study in Boogle-Woogle
(Pred Time Anywhere)
Dedicated in Underly Colorings and The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

The Steinwary Is the Official Plano of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

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THÉATRE DES CHAMPS-ÉLYSEES SOCIÉTÉ DES CONCERTS DU C O N S E R V A T O I R E

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115" Année - Saison d'Automne 1951 Prindret : Claule DELFINCOURT Vice-Prindret Chef & Orchestre : Autor CLUYTENS Sortium Gintral : Autor HUOT



NIKITA MAGALOFF

PREMIERE SYMPHONIE BEETHOVEN
CONCERTO POUR PIANO. SCHUMANN
SINFONIA PICCOLA A. TANSMAN
(Promite sendition)
LES MAITRES CHANTEURS R. WAGNER
(Probale, Daser des appentie, Marche des corporation)

PIANO STRINWAY

Direction :

ANDRÉ CLUYTENS



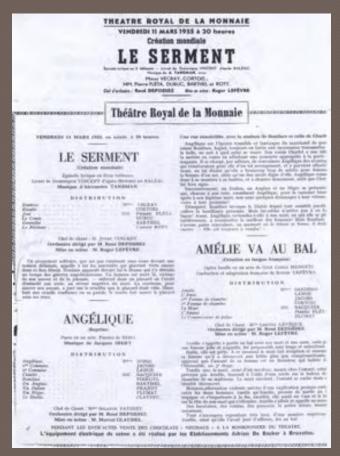
SAMEDI 22 NOVEMBRE 1952, à 10 heures DIMANCHE 23 NOVEMBRE 1952, à 17 h. 45

Career in Europe

The death of his wife Colette in March 1953 after a long illness marked a break in the composer's life.

« There are tragedies before which silence would be preferable to words of sympathy, but still we offer them in the hope of comforting the one who is suffering. So please accept these words, my very dear and poor Sacha and believe me when I say that this passing greatly saddens my heart. It is my heart that is with you in this time of terrible loss in which you find yourself ». Your Igor Stravinsky, Hollywood, 12 mars/53

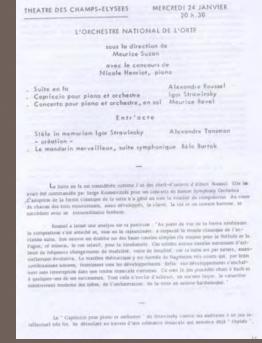
Despite his deep despair, the composer was soon back on his feet again thanks to a commission in 1953 of a radio opera, *The Oath (Le Serment)* (1954, Symphonic Orchestra of Paris, cond. A. Cluytens). The first stage performance took place at the Monnaie of Brussels in March 1955.



Career in Europe

THE HWISH MUSIC COUNCIL OF LOS ANGELES. THE WISTSIDE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER THE COMMITTEE ON FINE ARTS PRODUCTIONS UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT LOS ANGELIS are privileged to present The American Premiers of "ISAIAH THE PROPHET" SYMPHONIC OBATORIO FOR MIXED CHORUS AND ORCHISTRA Alexandre Tansman THE LOS ANGELES FESTIVAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FRANZ WAXMAN, Conductor THE ROGER WAGNER CHORALE BOGER WAGNER, Director LOUIS CALHERN, Navione BOYCE HALL AUDITORIUM Man/s 12, 1955

The next years were very productive for Tansman with a great number of state commissions and performances France and abroad. Among his main works were the Concerto pour orchestre, dedicated to D. Milhaud, Six Etudes pour orchestre. dedicated to Vladimir Jankélévitch, *Hommage* Erasme de Rotterdam, Stèle in Memoriam *Igor Stravinsky...* the opera Sabbatai Zevi, Psalms... He composed a great deal of chamber music and instrumental music for all the instruments. In 1978 he wrote for orchestra: the Sinfonietta N° 2 and the Ten Commandments.









41/5]

Friendship with Andres Segovia

Let us not forget his friendship and his close collaboration with the famous guitarist Andres Segovia. From 1959-1960, he took part in the summer classes at Santiago de Compostela.



A. Tansman and A. Segovia



1959 Santiago de Compostelle



A.Tansman A.Segovia Z at l'Academia Chigiana de Sienne

Zubin Mehta

Honorary distinctions

In 1977, he was elected member of the Fine Arts class of the Royal Academy, succeeding to Shostakovitch. In 1986, he was awarded the title of « Commandeur de l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres » in France. Post mortem, he received a nomination for « Doctor honoris causa of the Musical Academy of $\pm \acute{o}d\acute{z}$ ».



ACADÉMIE ROYALE des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts DE BELGIQUE

> 8 - 1000 Brossler, le . 7 Junivier 1972. Politis des Académies

Très honoré et cher Confrère.

une la Classe des Besur Arts adhérant à se proposition vous a die vu cours de se élect Arts adhérant à se proposition vous a die vu cours de se électe plémière d'aier à courant en qualité de Bevire associé de l'écedente Moyele des Delecces, des Lettres et des Besurs-Arts de Selejous deux fois séculitre vu qu'elle foi fondée nous l'égide de l'Impératrice Marie-Thérèse d'éutrishe.

J'avais assuné personnellement la notice de présenta-

he fautenil vecant you was not offert atait occupator few l'illustre whenchase Chostarovitch.

Permatter-noi de vous signilar qu'su palmarés de notre giorieuse institution triliant dans la domaine de l'art des sons des noss tels Liast, Brohm, Verdi, Jonnol, Smitt-Bessen, Feuré, et plus pres de nous Puil Dúras, Michard Jirasse, Samuel de Falla, Breal, Lirasimar, Rindsmith, Romapper, etc.

Er le Secrétaire Perpétual vous notifiera officielleuent cette élection et le diplône viéquet vous sera transmis an comforaité svec la tradition.

As présible, il se sereit précieux s'apprendre votre acceptation de se tire homorifique de plus à votre actif que vous voudres bies considérer sonte un homege belge à votre ceuvre comme à votre personne.

It une circonstance vont ementit un jour de l'ammée qui s'ourre en notre capitale, il v- de noi une mes Confréres et moi serions heureux autant qu'honnrés de vous sesuellis dans le Palais (face à colui du Noi qui abrite notre Compagnie,

A sonsieur Alexandre Tanasan Gospositeur Teris *****



Ministère de la Culture 3. rm de Vakis, 75012 Paris Culca 01 - Edephone : 296-10-60

La Ministre

13 MARS 1988

Monsieur.

J'ai le plaisir de vous annoncer votre nomination au grade de Commandeur dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Je suis particulièrement heureux que votre grand talent soit ainsi reconnu et je vous adresse mes très vives félicitations.

Le Bulletin Officiel des Décorations, Médailles et Récompenses publiers prochainement l'arrêté vous attribuant cette distinction.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

Jack LANG

Monsieur Alexandre TANSMAN

Return to Poland

After about fifty years, Tansman returned to his native country. Festivals, articles and interviews, were devoted to him, as well as the first Alexandre Tansman biography in Polish translated from the French by Janusz Cegiella, in collaboration with the composer. He was awarded numerous Polish decorations and medals, among which was the Merit of Culture.

One of his last works is a mazurka for guitar, *Homage to Lech Walesa*. An Alexandre Tansman International Competition is now organised by Andrzej Wendland in his native town every two years.



Medal of the Merit of the culture awarded by W. Lutoslawski



LECH WALESA FILOTOW HOSE SPATE SPARTE Gdsásk, 5.1.1985.

Pan Alexandre Tanaman

Paris, France

Szenowny Panie,

Przeds wszystkia przeprasza, że dopiero teras odpisuję, przez osły osas szukstem Pana odremu i ostatocznie nie znalusiem. Odpisuję więc na odres wydawsy.

Bytem naczerze wzruczony stymnęc utwór skomponowany pracz Pans na moją cześć. To naprawdę wielkie przeżycie stymneć taki utwór. Podczam jego cykonywania przez młodego gitarzystę M. Balawandera /o ile dobrze pamiętac/ myślażem o Panu z wźzięcznością oraz o tym, że jest wielu innych ludzi, którzy bardziej nie je zamżugają ma takie wyróżnienie. Jeżli kiedykolwiek będzie Pan w Gdańsku, zaprazzam do mieżie.

> Z syrazani prayjokni /2/07/---Lech Wakess

Arthur Rubinstein



Arthur Rubinstein, also born in $\angle odz$, invited A. Tansman to be a member of the jury and of the Founder Committee of the first Arthur Rubinstein International Competition in Jerusalem in 1974.

Arthur Rubinstein



On several occasions, he took part in international seminars about the problems around Israel that took place at the UNESCO site, with noteworthy personalities such as Raymond Aron, Vladimir Jankélévitch, Robert Badinter, Eugen Ionesco, André Lwoff, Elie Wiesel etc...

Alexandre Tansman and Israël

« [...] In spite of my numerous travels and my tour around the world, this country, where it seems that the divine spirit still reigns, impressed me more than any other... » (Extract of Regards en arrière)

A. Tansman could always relate to Israel. His oratorio *Isaïe le prophète* is dedicated to the memory of the 6 million Jews exterminated during the Second World War and to the birth of the state of Israel. In 1958, he returned to France so inspired by his first trip to Israel that others soon followed.

The commission of the Testimonium of Jerusalem, *Apostrophe à Zion*, a cantata for choir and orchestra (1976-1977), is the composer's last contribution to vocal works of Judaic inspiration.



STATE OF ISHAEL.
ISRAEL MOADCASTISS SERVICE

Jerusales, /4 May,1958

Dear Hr. Tansman.

I learned from your letter to Mr. Sh. Putrushka that you have not received the letter containing the proposed plan of yo r star in Isroel. I am therefore submitting to you the following:

14.7 Departure from Rome by simplane

15.7 Jerusalem

7 Baifa - ev. participation in the Touth Anniversary Sea Celebration

17.7 Haifs - Bightseeing in Haifs and surroundings

18/7, 19,20 - Visiting the Galilee and the Valleys of Jordan and Tiarnel

Return to Tel Aviv

21.7 Tel Aviv

22.7 Silet
23.7 Eilat, ev. 7el kviv

24.7 Eichron Yaakov, perticipation in the Chamber Music Seminary and in a specially arranged meeting of Israeli

3.7 Jerusales-rehearsals with the Eil Israel Orchestra

26.7 Visiting Jerusalem and the surrounds

27.7, 28, 29 Jerusales - rehearmals and concert in the sweming

30+751 Recordings of Chamber Husic

n.v Departure by airplane

I should like to have your general approval though some changes and particulars concerning sectings, receptions etc. may eventually grow to-

You have been invited by the management of the Chamber State
Seminary headed by the Composer E. Partosh and by the Iranal Composers
Association to attend a special meeting of Iranal Composers devoted to the
subject "Contemporary trends in music. Would you be willing to open the
proceedings with a lecture on the subject? In this seminary will take
Part: Kollech and Steuerman.

Concerning all particulars about the preparations of your concert and about the recordings you are being informed by Messra. Natroshka and Sacha.

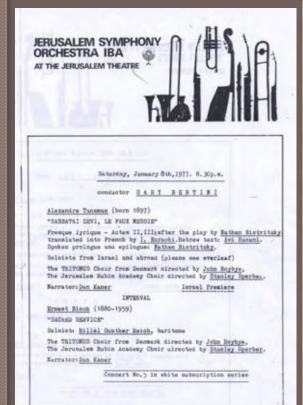
We are arranging for a plane ticket to be sent to you see of those days.

I am awaiting your confirmation of this letter.

Yours very sincerely,

Dr. T. Spire, Director of Programms.

Sabbataï Zévi





His first travel in 1958 followed an invitation by « Kol Israël » to mark the XXth anniversary of the State of Israel, A. Tansman conducted a concert composed of his own works among which was his oratorio *Isaïe* and the *Concerto pour orchestre*.

In 1977, to celebrate his 80th birthday, Gary Bertini conducted two acts of Tansman's opera *Sabbataï Zevi* at the Jerusalem Theatre.

« For me, Sabbatai Zevi represents the pinnacle of my musical work and through its text and music, it is at the same time a glorification of the Judaic spirituality. In that sense, it can be considered as the real Jewish Opera ». Extracts: interview with Dan Aronowicz in L'Information d'Israël, 1961

The press in Israël



L'oeuvre capitale d'Alexandre lansman, doit être produite en Israël

re brigge d'Aircandre Tananan a on live is 3 more dis-male derwise, on execut de la Ladiadiffusion Tentrales Franile, su Theatre des Champs-

par Dan Arenewicz *********

contains, the contends pour in mine on mine. In large on the contends pour in precisive this quant, or 1908, and precisive this quant, or 1908, a TEI-ATTV receion da Xirue Antivoyanira de Lind e di Figui las concert de concert des concert des concerts des l'Irushitable Concerts pour conductos, autoritàres, autorità

le tanglemps". La mw'ngus en scrowbii Jolie, fine, mais irre

partners, cointetta, austiner pour partners, cointetta, austiner pour series, toto d'authon, etc. 4 concertino pour emistes, victors, alcertino pour emistes, victors, alle l'Opéra, Mara Edic de l'inlia, visiblemille et urchestre, il lips, aprèr Danillous a maire, la limite de l'inlia, visiblemille et urchestre, il lips, aprèr Danillous a maire. phonies, it occurred lyriques, radio de sente aserres, palese en calculus, the

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Prelivet de Vertice.
Motre journal c'est fait Péchette de Ross messeure. C'est l'Orles de le precentare exchette concern à Techevic, Les outde Techtetal Zevi en citatt concinnes l'agrant d'au grant de l'est de Ross de Constant l'est de Ross l'Origental Lorigtelle Ross l'origental Lorigent de Ross l'agrant de l'est de l'e "Richfold Zert" dell men iniference, have autore Bredline.

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Tel-Arviv in "Minararpione
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Best-Di-Ot. Jones
Best-Di-

Chet, seril Esso Dument, es promise, puede la confession qui sont 60a sus au gracias de actia semposites, ses promises puedent la vac-paritant de actia semposites, ses Frits dictures en enceptid le per plus helles chieses que mass creas entretadas au hebito de Orchardo M. Decimeras, d'une

ocuvres. Un Achron, un Bloch, un Samiosky pour no eiter que ces maîtres qui ne sont plus! En ex lepant tout caractère juit de la musique en Israel, en a formé un climat anti-diaspera pour, soi-disant, erder de la musique purement Israélienne.

Etrange paradoxe: un violeniste, un pianiste, un musicographe qui, en Europe, n'a jamaia pense, en tant que "Juil" prétend en Israel ĉire le représentant de la musique "israélienne" alors que les créateurs de la musique juive en Europe sant traités avec mépris comme des musicions expriment la Galouth!

Nous pensons done que la musique en Israel doit, en sa majeure partie, donner l'i mage du pays de la Bible. Des oeuvres vocales: cantates, oratorios et dafques daivent être créées en Israel.

Vollà la raison pour laquelle nous nous sommes adressé à M. A. Tanman pour lui demander ce qui l'a inspiré à crier l'oeuvre lyrique "Sabbatai Zevi" et s'il accepterait de la produire à l'Opéra de Tel-Aviv, après le grand succès obtenu en concert à la R.T.F.

Voici la réponse de l'auteur de "Sahbatri Zevi" aux quatre questions que nous lui avons po-

> · Le texte de Nathan Bistritsky est très beau et a impressionné tous les auditeura. (La R.T.F. diffusera l'ocuvre, le 14 avril, à 29 heures).

> . Il n'y a pas de "difficultés particulières", il faut de bons solistes, un bon chocur (pas difficile), et un nombre suffisant de répétitions, comme pour tout "ouvrage blen fait" pour l'Orchestre.

s "Sabbatai" représente pour mai, écrit Tansman, le sommet de mon ocuvre musicale et est en même temps, par son texts et par sa musique, une glorification de la

Le dernier concers nepuoma daire de l'Orchestre de "Kol Israel" était annoncé comme un concert solennel et était destiné à marquer les festivités du 25ème anniversaire de l'ouverture des émissions sous le mandat, qui s'appelaient alors "Kol Yéronchalayim".

Le programme de ce cencert comprenalt des seuvres de; Weber, Beetheven, Morton Gould et de Karel Salomon, le premier directeur musical de la Radio.

Comme on to voit, it s'agintait. d'un programme de concert habituel, mais nullement adapté à l'occasion d'un concert solennel destiné à marquer une pareille date! A ce concert on a enteudu les récitations de: H. Rovina, Z. Leviouch et le message du président du Conseil, M. David Ben Gourion, qui nous paropéras à sujets bibliques et ju- lait de la résurrection de la tangue hébraique.

Est-ce que la musique israélienne a été développée à l'instar de la langue hébralque? Ce programme ne vient-il pas apporter un témoignage contraire?



Article of Dan Aronowicz, 6 April 1961, INFORMATION ISRAEL



A. Tansman in Jerusalem

« Esthétique » de Tansman



Photographe: Richard le Graby (Paris - New York) 1970

- Alexandre Tansman was a multicultural musician (Polish, French, Jewish), which reflected in his personality and frequently in his music.
- Alexandre Tansman's artistic legacy includes more than three hundred works for the most diverse instrumental and vocal formations/groups, including seven operas, eleven ballets, six oratorios, eighty orchestral pages (of which nine symphonies), numerous chamber music works, eight concerti for all the instruments, about a hundred pages for piano, violin, cello, guitar, wind instruments, etc., a lot of stage music and film music. He also composed many works for children.
- Among his main claims, he declared that he opposed all manner of exclusive systems « that restrict or paralyse people's freedom of speech, expression and their creative spirit ».
 - « [...] The artist's personality doesn't express itself through the originality of his means of expression, which are a temporary factor of a general evolution, but mainly in the spiritual attitude adopted by the artist towards his art and in the purposes he assigns to his art (...). The great question, for me, remains above all the one of the contribution of the human being to the act of creation, his deep and active role in the creation of a work of art... »

Information

Conception, design and realization

Bettina Sadoux

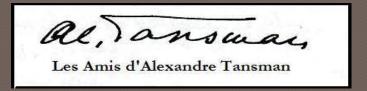
In association with Mireille Tansman-Zanuttini

- Association Alexandre Tansman
- ProQuartet
- Projet Esther
- Médiathèque Alliance
 Baron Edmond de Rothschild

www.alexandre-tansman.com www.proquartet.fr www.esther-europe.eu

www.aiu.org







Avec le soutien de la commission européenne

