

CLASSICAL MUSIC

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6. Classical Music

6.1 CLASSICAL MUSICs IN FRANCE

Classical musics are not the privilege of some thousands of classical music amateurs or professionals, they are somehow present in the life of each of us through advertisement, films, radio, television, concerts and festivals, or family events. Their turnover reveals difficulties to adapt to a new civilization based on visuals and speed. However the classical music demonstrates an amazing vitality as we can see it through the figures below:

. The France - festivals association which federates 82 of the many festivals on the French territory considers that the global attendance at these festivals went from 700.000 to 900.000 spectators in two years with 1500 shows and 2000 acts and with 15.000 hired artists.

. In the National Opera of Paris, the average level of full attendance for both venues (Garnier and Bastille) is 95% for the first part of the season 2002/2003 (until January 15th).

. The Open Air Opera Festival – young artists performing every year in a popular opera in some castles' exceptional environment - gathered 85.000 people in 2002 and 2003, for 35 acts. Half of the audience had never attended an opera show before.

Despite the public's craze for classical music, **for about fifteen years the disc has been going through strong turbulences and a deep crisis characterized by a constant regression** which brings today the market share of the classical disc below 5 % of the total disc's turnover.

Until 1978, while the general market of the disc had enjoyed a long and steady growth (around 15 % a year), the classical music disc market was having a regular evolution by keeping a market share close to 10 % of the disc publishing's total turnover. The classical music industry did not undergo the period of congestion crisis touching the whole market in 1979 (5 % decline of the market in 1979) and hold the 10 % average part. The penetration of the compact - disc even allowed to raise the market share of the classical music disc : 11,5 % in 1984 and 1985 to reach 14,5 % in 1986 (constant market share in 1987

and 1988). Indeed the music lovers were the first ones to renew their discotheque of classical music and this renewal phenomenon spread out over several years.

Since 1989, the classical disc market share has been facing a regular decline year after year. It reached no more than 4,7 % late in the year in 2002 (with a 14,5 % regression in 1999, 12,5 % in 2000, 13 % in 2001, 13 % in 2002).

The situation in 2003 has not really improved since during the 2003 semester the market share of the classical music was at 4,6 % and 4,3 % on October 1st for the first nine months of the year what represents, in a market globally in decline, a drop in the 17,35 % turnover (and of 15,80 % in quantity of discs sold) compared to the first nine months of 2002.

6.2 THE TRADE FAIRS

- **MUSICORA**, the music fair that first started in 1984. For the first years, at the Grand Palais, the classical disc producers were present as exhibitors. In 2003 at the Grande Halle de la Villette, Musicora welcomed 370 exhibitors and 34.500 visitors among whom 14.954 professionals (primarily professors and directors of Music schools and Conservatories).

- **MIDEM** (International Music Publishing and Disc Market) organized every year in CANNES. Since 1994, at the same time as the Market of the French Popular music, is also held the **CLASSICAL MIDEM** with a space dedicated to classical music exhibitors and concerts programming to promote the artists and their labels. Contrary to Musicora, this fair is not opened to the public and is exclusively for professionals. In 2003, 65 % of the classical music producers were at the MIDEM but only three producers had their own stand and three other producers were sharing their distributor's stand.

6.3 INTRODUCING THE CLASSICAL MUSIC PRODUCTION IN FRANCE

A first investigation found **90 French structures working in the sector of the classical music production.**

Of course there are more classical music labels (between 100 and 110). Indeed half of the companies or associations only produce under their name, the other half also produces under the name of other labels, either to differentiate their production sectors, or after the take over of companies such as NAIVE that produces under its own name and under the name of taken over labels (OPUS, 111, ASTRÉE,

MONTAIGNE.) or such as ARION that produces under its own name and under the name of the PIERRE VERANY taken over catalog.

There are four main categories of producers:

- 1) The multinational companies which possess a classical department
- 2) The independent companies which produce and possess a distribution sector for their own production and for other labels’.
- 3) The independent companies or other organization distributed either by another producer owning a distribution sector, or by an independent distributor.
- 4) The independent companies or organizations operating their own distribution.

While multinational companies feature homogeneous characteristics, independent companies or organizations have completely different structures (different establishment, size, turnover, legal structure, production diversification).

For half of these structures, the records production is their only activity. While the other half diversifies its activities: mainly musical publishing and concerts or festivals organization but some producers diversify in many other ways (publishing or books distribution, photography, computer graphics, programming services or consulting.), but in most of the cases the records production remains the most important part of their activity. Besides some structures had to open their activities to sectors more profitable than the classical music production to be able to pursue their production work.

All the multinationals are of course active in all the sectors of production and the classical music department only represents a small part of their production between 3 and 7 % depending on the company. Half of the independent companies only produces classical music and the other half diversified its sectors of production by keeping an editorial coherence. 35 % of them also produce traditional music, other 35 % produce jazz music, 20 % produce discs for children and 20 % also produce French chanson.

Teams are rather small in most of the companies. In multinationals, the classical music department employs from 1 to 16 people and 90 % of the other structures only hire 1 to 5 employees (more than a third of these companies employs only 1 person) and 10 % have between 5 to 10 people.

A quick glance at the turnover of the production structures confirm the **existence of many very small structures and the big disparity in company sizes** (even if these data must be examined with caution because half of the interviewed companies do not wish to publicize their turnover).

Figures of the multinational companies' turnover is only for France while the other structures' turnover is for France and abroad. The part of the turnover made in France is considerable in most of the cases compared to the part made abroad (between 55 and 60 % for the two most important independent French companies) between 40 and 100 % for the other companies because some companies make no export turnover. A very big disparity also exists in catalog sizes. Six companies currently have more than 1000 references in their catalog (3300 references for the most important catalog), two companies have between 500 and 750 references, four companies between 100 and 500 references and all other structures have less than 100 references in their catalog, among which 12 with less than 10 references).

6.3.1 TWO LOGICS OF PRODUCTION

The production in France is divided into two very different groups with very different functioning modes.

The multinational companies - UNIVERSAL-EMI / VIRGIN-BMG - SONY - WARNER - which image in classical music is often based on "star-system" as in their other production sectors and in particular in the French popular music. The genre's strategy consists in pushing a star (or an event) with lots of advertisement and promotion towards the widest possible target. The multinationals' strategy was developed after 1992 because these companies being used to making significant profit until the 1990s, changed their mode of production.

So **the marketing services took a considerable place in these companies** often to the detriment of the artistic services because marketing was supposedly going to save the classical music sector which profit had decreased. From 1988 till 1994 this sector gradually slid from the artistic to the marketing and financial services that wanted to reach an immediate profitability on usually medium or long-term profitable classical products. The production of multinationals thus mainly centered :

- . On the most famous artists and directors
- . On the often thematic compilations, the " best of ", the re-release of famous artists
- . On the "cross-over", in other words " genre mix ", for example classical production performed by French popular music artists.

Looking at the hundred best sales classification of classical music records in 2002 elaborated by the "Observatoire de la Musique", we noticed that out of the hundred best sales in 2002, 63 titles are

compilations and products very strongly marketed (André RIEU, Andréa BOCELLI.) coming from multinational companies and that 83 references out of 100 were produced by these majors (30 by UNIVERSAL, 20 by EMI, 17 by SONY MUSIC, 8 by BMG and 8 by WARNER). In this classification, it is necessary to clarify that seven other references are compilations specially put together for brands and sold at low prices as " appeal products " (1 euro including taxes for the disc positioned as second in the classification).

This dominant position of multinationals is confirmed in the sales classification of the first half of the year 2003.

The independent companies are represented, in this 2002 hundred best sales classification, with ten titles by two important companies possessing their own distribution services (HARMONIA MUNDI and NAÏVE).

The way most of these independent companies work is closer to craft art with passionate artistic choices than to marketing analysis.

They very often have **a real role of pioneer** and a lot of young artists make their first discs with these independent companies which often undertake **a real work of career development**. The main qualities of these companies are their light structure, their proximity and their ability to listen to their artists, plus a flexibility that allows them to dare starting projects, experimenting and making quick decisions.

Damien POUSSET artistic director of AEON summarized his policy in an interview to Le Monde on February 1st, 2003 "For me, the harmonization of the disc compositions is really important: the division of the programs, the elegance of the sound recording, the impact of the visual identity, the relevance of the text. Everything has to be under control." Sylvie BRELY of ZIG ZAG TERRITOIRES also clarified in Le Monde her conception of the independent producer " we think that it is the dialogue which entices the artists, the capacity to listen to their artistic method and the artistic commitment that we have in discs production, in sound recording, in the CD booklet and also in the visual".

6.3.2 APPEARANCE OF NEW LABELS, POLES OF CREATIVITY

There are of course some stable companies that have been around for more than twenty years (ARPEGGIO – BNL - CALLIOPE – DE PLEIN VENT - FORLANE-LYRINX - SOLSTICE) and three companies created more than forty years ago (CHANT DU MONDE in 1938 - HARMONIA MUNDI in 1958 and ARION in 1962) but a lot of new structures have been opening in the last 10 years. **More than half of the structures are less than ten year old.** More than twenty structures have been created in the

last five years (AEON - ALPHA - AMBROISIE-INTRADA – LA NUIT TRANSFIGUREE - LORCOM-MIRARE - NAÏVE – PLENUM VOX-TRANSART) and they become each day more significant for the classical music market. Their development often leans on a **"niches" policy**, that is sectors of production that are little taken into account by the majors.

These light structures, their faculty of adaptation and decision are important assets. Their originality and their force primarily come from:

- . the relationships created with the artists who are very sensitive on one hand to the producers' capacity of listening , on the other hand to the productions work the artist participates in with the producer.
- . the qualitative research and the care brought in the productions both at the sound level and at the visual level and in the texts.
- . a new vision of the producer's profession which, while he produces the disc, takes care of the artist image and uses all the current medias to promote the work of the artist (concerts, festivals, web site, radio, press, television).

Actually some new labels leaned on the main artistic activity of the company which they emerged from to strengthen this global work around the artist, for example:

- AMBROISIE stemming from the company MUSICA NUMERIS recording lots of classical music and managing artistic directions of classical music discs.
- AEON stemming from EDITIONS LEMOINE that produces discs of contemporary music in synergy with the company's main activity of music publishing.
- TRANSART that, beside the Agency of Concerts VALMALETE, produces discs recorded in concert and particularly helps out young artists.

With the decrease of the multinational companies' production volume and noticing the innovative artistic policy of these new structures of production, some artists of international fame today want to work with these young labels while formerly they would have never agreed to record somewhere else than in a multinational company, for example Felicity LOTT at AEON, Gustav LEONHARDT at ZIG ZAG TERRITOIRES, Philippe CASSARD at MIRARE, Pierre HANTAÏ at AMBROISIE.

But these new labels also pay **a close attention to young artists** and it is significant to notice that the majority of the artists featured at the “Victoire de la Musique classique” in the categories "Revelations" have already released a first record with one of these new labels.

6.3.3 AN IMPORTANT PRODUCTION OF CD AND THE NEW FORMATS THAT SEEM “TO TAKE OFF”

The classical music offer is very important in France and is increasing in spite of the regular decline tendencies the market is facing in this sector.

According to “L’Observatoire de la musique”, **35 200 different titles of classical music have been sold in the first half of the year 2003** (32.184 references sold in 2002). The references were scanned at the cashier and include all the discs published in France for sale and discs published in the world currently distributed in France, either creations, or compilations or re-releases.

The DIAPASON data base lists 19.000 discs. This data base grows constantly because DIAPASON receives every month more than 300 new records: two thirds are real new releases and a third is re-releases coming from French producers and from foreign producers through their distributor in France. So we can consider that **every year approximately 3.000 new classical music records (French and foreign) are released on the market in France** among which only 25 % come from French production structures.

Among the total available references in France we consider that approximately a quarter emanates from multinationals’ catalogs, a another quarter comes from French independent companies and the other half come from foreign producers catalogs.

If compared with the global quantity of discs sold during one year, this offer seems far too big but can be explained:

- By the nature of the classical music which is a music of repertoire. The artists are inspired by this repertoire for their recordings and so there are often hundred different recordings of the same musical composition.

- By the attitude of the majors which for a while complied with the desires of recordings of the famous orchestra directors and performers (for example approximately 900 recordings of Karajan were released on the market).

- By the longevity of the classical music discs. Contrary to the French popular music records, these remains, for the majority of the productions, available for a very long time in catalogs even if the duration of exposure in the store's display is becoming more limited.

Today **the producers became aware that the profusion of releases on the market was rather negative for the sales** and often revise their policy of production but maintain however a massive number of re-releases and compilations.

On the other hand the companies that have a policy of accompanying artists and of career development collide with an important problem because a record is essential for an artist today to exist (concerts, press, radio, television) and when a producer chooses to work with new artists, he/she undertakes to regularly publish their new productions quickly facing the obligation of a production way too big for his/her structure and his/her financial means.

The 2002 production of classical music goes as follow :

35 % of instrumental music and chamber music records

30 % of music for orchestra records

12 % of artists' recitals records

10 % of religious music records

8 % of profane vocal music records

4 % of lyric and musical records

1 % of electro-acoustic music records

It is important to note that more than 50 % of these discs released in 2002 feature foreign artists. This strong percentage results from the majors policy which reflects the international production in France (since only approximately 10 % of the discs released on the market in 2002 by these companies feature French artists).

In the technological battle that has been around for four years between PHILIPS/SONY, that launched the SACD (Super Audio Compact Disc), and WARNER, main promoter of the AUDIO DVD, it seems today that **the SACD ahead of the competition**. Indeed, according to Jean-Marie PIEL, chief editor of DIAPASON, " There are already many examples of convincing SACD formats because the surrounding of the music is amazing, is readable by many systems and its structure is clearer. With this mode of reproduction, we really feel the particular expansion of the musical sound. It offers at the same time a high

definition and releases the sound on five channels without compressing the digital signal. More over- a decisive factor for its establishment – except from few cases, the SACD is marketed under its hybrid version allowing to read it on any CD system. The progress is thus not only technical, but it is also musical. "

SONY naturally, but also HARMONIA MUNDI, UNIVERSAL, LYRINX, DIGITAL BMG, PRAGA DIGITALS have already published more than hundred titles in SACD format.

The musical DVD is also becoming more common in stores with 200 references published in majority by the majors because the budgets of production are higher than the CD's production costs and there are not many financial supports available so far for the French independent companies to create musical DVD.

6.4 FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR CLASSICAL MUSIC PRODUCTION

6.4.1 ORGANIZATIONS WHICH THE PRODUCERS COULD START AN INTERESTING COLLABORATION WITH

- The France-Festivals federation which includes more than 80 of the most important music festivals in France - mostly classical ones.

- The French Association of Orchestras

- The FEVIS (Federation of the Vocal and Instrumental Specialized Groups) which represents 71 groups which genres extend from medieval music to contemporary creation

- The National Stages

6.4.2 CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

Few French companies take the risk to produce contemporary music discs due to production costs and weak sales. The current composers thus have difficulties promoting their work in France and abroad.

Most of the contemporary music records released on the market in 2002 were published thanks to the help of MFA (Today's French Music). MFA was created in 1978, by the Ministry for the Arts and Communications, Radio France and the SACEM (association of composers and music publishers to protect copyright and royalties) with the support of the graphic publishers, joined in 1998 by the SACD (Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers). These various partners put in common their logistic and financial means to bring their support to the production, distribution and promotion of records. These discs had to be representative of the French musical creation in the field of the contemporary classical music until 1996 (chamber music, symphonic and lyric music) but also from this date they feature jazz, improvised music and traditional music.

An approval commission selects the projects which MFA brings its support to through grants and/or through lending Radio France's technical facilities for the recording, the mixing, the editing and the production of the master. MFA offers its expertise and its relational level to the artists and the producers:

- by positioning itself as a relay between artists, labels, concert and show producers, graphic publishers.
- by offering consulting sessions to the projects that will be sent to the approval commissions.
- by offering its support to the artists and producers facing difficulties to carry out the projects.

6.5 DISTRIBUTION METHOD IN FRANCE AND ABROAD USED BY CLASSICAL MUSIC PRODUCERS

The majors (BMG-EMI - SONY-UNIVERSAL - WARNER) are responsible for their own distribution in France as are HARMONIA MUNDI, NAÏVE, M10 and six small companies which did not find a distributor or which try to create by themselves a modest network of distribution. All other companies have a distributor with whom they sign an exclusive contract of distribution for France (four distributors are in charge of the distribution of more than half of the independent companies).

French-speaking countries are the regions where the classical music producers are most present (Belgium - Switzerland - Canada) and then in the European countries close to France (Germany - Italy - United Kingdom - The Netherlands - Luxemburg - Spain - Austria) and in two big countries with great sale potential (the United States and Japan).

Except from the sales of compilation and crosses-over discs promoted through TV advertisement, the average of the classical music sales is very low: in 2002 only one record (The Art of Cécilia Bartoli) reached sales of 50.000 copies and some discs only exceeded sales of 10.000 copies.

In about twenty companies the best sales of year 2002 did not exceed 3000 copies (France and abroad) even 1.000 copies for six companies.

According to “l’Observatoire de la Musique”, the 100 best sales in France of classical music including above all compilations and cross-over productions represented in 2002 approximately 30 % of the total volume of the classical music sales.

Sales abroad (from the five best sales of every company in 2002) remain very weak and two companies only sold more than 5000 copies of a reference on the whole market export (HARMONIA MUNDI with five discs sold more than 10.000 copies and NAÏVE with three discs sold more than 5000 copies).

6.5.1 STRUCTURES OF DISTRIBUTION EXISTING IN France

There are four categories of classical music distributors:

. The majors (BMG-EMI - SONY-UNIVERSAL - WARNER) that today only distribute the productions of their labels (while before some of them also used to operate the distribution of other producers) and the small independent production structures taking care of their own distribution (SOLSTICE - VERNOU - EDITIONS A.CHARLIN - HARMONIC CLASSICS - SYMPHONYLAND - CASSIOPEE - ART ET MUSIC)

. Independent production companies distributing their own records but also other producers’ (HARMONIA MUNDI - NAÏVE - M10)

. The independent companies focusing their activity on the distribution but which also produce some records (ABEILLE MUSIQUE - INTEGRAL - FREMAUX ET ASSOCIES - XCP)

. The independent companies only focusing on the distribution (CODAEX - CD DIFFUSION - DAM – DOM-DELTA MUSIC-ILD - LORELEY-NIGHT AND DAY-SOCADISC - TALIS)

The number of labels distributed by these companies is impressive: ABEILLE MUSIQUE distributes approximately eighty labels (a dozen are French labels) representing approximately 8.000 titles, CODAEX distributes twenty labels (five French labels) representing approximately 6.000 references, INTEGRAL distributes twenty seven labels (eleven French labels) representing approximately 4.000

references, HARMONIA MUNDI distributes twenty labels (thirteen French labels) representing approximately 2.000 references, XCP distributes fourteen labels (six French labels) representing approximately 700 references.

The foreign production of classical music is so strongly implanted in France and in a much more significant way compared to the French production establishment abroad.

6.5.2 SITUATION OF THE SALES NETWORK IN FRANCE

The sale of classical music is mostly made by the following seven channels:

- The independent record dealers
- Specialized chain stores (Fnac, Virgin, Espace Culturels Leclerc)
- Supermarkets
- Department stores
- The wholesalers
- The bookstores
- The mail-order companies (through the mail and the Internet)

In 2002 the sales of discs – all genres included- was divided up as follow according to " L'Actualité du disque " published by the SNEP (National Union of Phonographic Publications):

- 38 % for Supermarkets
 - 36,1 % for specialized Chain stores (among which 21 % for Fnac)
 - 17,6 % for the wholesalers
 - 3,9 % for the mail orders selling
 - 2,3 % for the independent record dealers
 - 1,1 % for Department stores
- (bookstores' sales are not significant)

This sales distribution is very different for the classical music records and it varies very strongly depending on the distributors:

- For the multinational companies distributing their own production, the specialized chain stores represent more than half of their turnover (around 53 % except for a company which market share reaches 65 %). Fnac represents between 80 to 85 % of the specialized chain stores turnover. Supermarkets represent

approximately between 20 and 25 % of sales with a big number of shops (between 500 and 1000), the independent record dealers between 10 and 12 % except from a company which they only represent 4 % for. The rest of the turnover (around 10 %) divides up between department stores, wholesalers and mail-order (none of these companies are using the bookstores' network).

- For the main independent producers that have a structure of distribution, the specialized chain stores remain the privileged network with approximately 60 % of the sales among which 80 % by Fnac, then come to almost equal part the independent record dealers and the supermarkets representing each approximately 10 % of the sales. The rest of the turnover (around 20 %) divides up between department stores, wholesalers but also bookstores (between 3 % and 5 %) and the mail-order (between 3 % and 5 %). For HARMONIA MUNDI, depending on the important sales made by its own "Shops", the percentage of sales by the networks is of course different but remains in the same proportions if the sales in the "Shops" are not taken into account.

- For the other structures of distribution, the specialized chain stores can represent between 75 % and 90 % of the turnover, the independent record dealers between 5 % and 20 %, the sale by the other distribution channels is insignificant (supermarkets, wholesalers, department stores, mail-order, bookstores).

Some remarks are essential:

- **The part of classical music sales in supermarkets** for the multinational companies (between 20 and 25 %) and for the other distribution structures (between 0 and 10 %) **is much lower than the market share in constant evolution for the whole music publishing sector** (38,7 %). Supermarkets indeed display only very few references and mostly select the compilations and the cross-over productions published by the majors, widely covered by the media and promoted by TV advertising campaigns.

- **The part of sales** – that used to dominate before - **from independent record dealers is becoming smaller each year** and only represents today approximately 10 %. This decrease can be explained by the progressive disappearance of the stores.

- **The part of sales from the specialized chain stores** and primarily the Fnac **reaches today, according to the distributors, between 53 % and 90 %** (except for HARMONIA MUNDI because of the big sales at the HARMONIA MUNDI Shops).

- **The wholesalers** that make 17,6 % of the sales (for the whole records production) **work primarily with the multinational companies** and have a much lower market share (between 0 and 8 %) for the discs of classical music.

- **The independent distribution structures begin to diversify their means of sale by integrating the mail-order and the sale through the bookstores network.**

6.5.3 SPECIALIZED CHAIN STORES DOMINATING THE SALES

The specialized chain stores and mainly the Fnac, Virgin, Espaces Culturels Leclerc are thus today the most important relays of distribution of classical music.

From the 90 interrogated specialized chain stores:

- 8 chain stores offer more than 15.000 references of classical music
- 23 offer between 5.000 and 15.000 references of classical music
- 24 offer between 3.000 and 5.000 references of classical music
- 33 offer between 1.000 and 3.000 references of classical music
- 2 offer less than 1.000 references of classical music

Even in these specialized chain stores the new formats are again not very common:

- The audio DVD seems to back up compared to the advance of the SACD. 82 shops sell about 25 references and 8 shops sell between 25 and 40 references of classical music DVD.
- The SACD (Super Audio Compact disc) seems to become more popular:
 - 2 shops offer more than 100 references of classical music
 - 28 shops offer between 50 and 100 references of classical music
 - 60 shops offer less than 50 references of classical music

Finally the specialized chain stores develop the musical DVD sale with:

- More 300 references in 10 shops
- Between 200 and 300 references in 21 shops

- Between 100 and 200 references in 43 shops
- Less than 100 references in 16 shops and every month many new titles arrive on the market

6.5.4 A PROGRESSIVE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE INDEPENDENT RECORD DEALERS

Less than twenty five years ago, any city of 25.000/30.000 inhabitants had at least one record dealer. With a network of about 3.000 record dealers every buyer used to find the disc he was looking for not too far from home. Today there are more than more than hundred cities of more than 40.000 inhabitants that do not have a record dealer anymore and **today we can estimate they are about a hundred left for the whole country.**

Out of the forty independent record dealers interviewed, only four are still specialized in classical music - which represents the main part of their sales - " The Music box " in Montpellier with 98 % of sales and 8.000 references of classical music, "Arpèges" in Aix en Provence with 85 % of sales and 5.000 references of classical music, the recent " Salon de Musique" in Toulouse with 75 % of sales and 6.500 references of classical music and " La Librairie Mollat " in Bordeaux with 43 % of sales and 6.500 references of classical music. Of course the ten better sales of these record dealers in 2002 do not correspond at all to the 2002 best sales (mostly compilations and cross-over discs) communicated by l'Observatoire de la musique.

For seven of the forty record dealers interviewed, the part of the classical music sales is between 10 and 25 % of their turnover and for twenty nine others dealers it is below 10 % of their turnover with a very variable offer of classical music:

- 8 record dealers offer between 3.000 and 5.000 references
- 15 record dealers offer between 1.000 and 3.000 references
- 13 record dealers offer less than 1.000 references

The record dealers have quickly developed the DVD sale:

- 16 record dealers offer between 100 and 300 DVD references
- 13 record dealers offer between 25 and 100 DVD references
- 11 record dealers offer less than 25 DVD references

As for the prices asked by the record dealers, they go from 5 euros to 26,90 euros for a CD, from 15,50 euros to 32 euros for a SACD and from 15 euros to 43 euros for a DVD. The independent record dealers, and the specialized chain stores, complain " about a constant change in the prices. It destabilizes the customers (one day a CD is at 29,90 euros and next month at 12 euros) and it slows down the sales ". Furthermore it is hard to understand the logic behind these prices since new releases, requiring strong investments, are sold at the same price as the widely paid off records, soloists' discs are sold at the same price as opera records with orchestra and choirs and young artists' first albums are more expensive than famous artists' records.

HARMONIA MUNDI has been really successful at finding alternative networks. They knew how to foresee (from 1990) and to compensate for the disappearance of lots of record dealers and for the exposure decline of classical music in specialized stores. They then started their own network of "Shops" implanted today in 40 cities of France (with 3 Shops in Paris) and making 38 % of their global turnover. Having opened twelve new shops in 2001/2002 and after a period of consolidation and the training of 90 shops employees, HARMONIA MUNDI plans to open about fifteen new shops between 2004 and 2006.

Their success comes from three principles adopted by the whole network:

- they only distribute HARMONIA MUNDI and don't buy any other products
- they have a small sales area in the shops since they limit the references available
- they have a limited staff in every Shop

This alternative solution tempts the other producers today who would like to ensure the presence of all their productions in few music stores. Some of them have already try the experience:

- ALPHA with the opening of a shop close to its head office in the center of Paris which follows the three principles which brought success to the " HARMONIA MUNDI Shops ".
- The CALIF (Action club of the French Independent Labels). This association created at the end of 2002 by six labels and independent distributors is planning on opening – with the help of the FISAC (Intervention Funds for services, art and business) and the Ministry for the Arts and Communications - two shops by the end of the year (one in Paris and another one in a French department)

6.5.5 ON-LINE SALES

There are of course in France important actors of the cultural e-business :

- Amazon.fr is the first website selling cultural products on-line

- fnac.com which benefits from the fame of the Fnac shops
- alapage.com that was a precursor in the on-line business of discs, books, DVD, VHS and video games.

But the websites of these e-businesses are primarily built for selling and do not take into account the classical music specificities while displaying the products

The company CD MAIL in 1987 was at first a company of mail-order selling to individuals before starting to sell to record dealers and bookstores and becoming an on-line sale company with its website www.cdmail.fr. This company is specialized in music: all the music genres are represented on all kinds of formats (CD, tapes, SACD) and offer more than 225.000 references from 8000 labels. The classical music sales represent an important part of the turnover (approximately 20 %). CD MAIL is a supplier for the magazines DIAPASON and PIANO MAGAZINE and manages the sales of the HARMONIA MUNDI, NAÏVE and NIGHT AND DAY websites through a direct link to its data base.

Two companies which do not sell directly established a pretty complete data base for the productions of classical music:

- . The data base of DIAPASON magazine which search engine and extraction modes were developed to allow the publishing of a paper dictionary: the Classical DIAPASON Catalog. It is supposed to list the classical music recordings available (19.000 discs listed), with the music works they include (50.000 pieces listed), their artists (60.000 artists listed) and their commercial references (bar code, disc title, the label, the distributor).

A narrow collaboration exists between the magazine DIAPASON and CD MAIL for the information and the update of each of their data base.

- . The data base of the TITE LIVE cultural products with:

- MEDIA LIVRE referencing 790.000 books (among which 300.000 are not available any more) from 3.700 publishers and 280 distributors.

- MEDIA DISQUE which is the professional data base of the SNEP (National Syndicate of the Disc Publishers) created in partnership with all the disc publishing companies, referencing discs from labels represented by more than 100 distributors. This data base includes general and commercial information available on the website about every reference before their release and are followed up until their withdrawal from the market.

This data base is already used by the Espaces Culturels Leclerc, Galleries Lafayette, Pintemps, Auchan, Gibert Jeune, La Procure, Le Furet du Nord, Forum Espaces Culture, Hypermédia and by independent record dealers.

6.6 MEDIA COVERAGE OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

Below will be examined how the information about the classical music production - and particularly the new releases – is transmitted to the public, how this musical patrimony meets the music lovers and more generally every music amateur.

6.6.1 STRONG PRESENCE IN THE SPECIALIZED PRESS, WEAK EXPOSURE IN THE GENERALIST PRESS

The monthly magazines of the specialized publications (Classica - Diapason – Le Monde de la Musique - Opéra International et Répertoire) **are very important for the media coverage of the classical music but they only touch a limited public.** These specialized magazines are fundamental for the presentation of the new releases among which approximately 300 are reviewed every month. The distinctions awarded to some discs by the editorial staff have a real impact on sales:

. "Diapason" (average circulation: 57.250 copies) awards every month a **GOLDEN DIAPASON** to the discs considered as the best of the month by the editorial staff and gives to the other discs a classification from 1 to 5 **DIAPASONS**.

. " Le Monde de la Musique " (average circulation: 54.900 copies) awards every month a **SHOCK** to the recordings considered as exceptional.

. "Répertoire" awards every month some 10 **DE REPERTOIRE** to the editorial staff's favorite records and proposes for the other discs a grade from 1 to 9.

. "Classica" selects every month the discs "**RECOMMENDED BY CLASSICA** " and proposes for the other discs a classification from 1 to 5

. " Opéra International ", magazine specialized in opera, awards every month a **PLATINUM STAMP** to the exceptional recordings.

These distinctions have lost some of their impact on the disc sales and today the accumulation of rewards to a same disc is what really influences the sales.

However most of the classical music producers consider the reviews' impact as very important: 83 % for Diapason, 70 % for Le Monde de la Musique, then come Classica and Répertoire and finally Opéra

International (focused on opera). Since January 2004, both magazines Classica and Répertoire acquired by the same group are united in a single magazine Classica / Répertoire.

Some stores display the new releases rewarded every month by the magazines and a Guide of the rewarded Classical music CD is published every year by Blue Harms Publishing.

On the other hand the **lack of exposure in the generalist press is a huge problem and contributes to maintain the production of classical music in a marginal position.**

In some rare exceptions, classical music does appear in the non-specialized press:

. Télérama, a cultural and non-specialized magazine promotes less the music than the cinema, the theater or the books but remains very important for 83 % of the producers to promote discs or at least some of them reviewed every week and marked by 4 “Télérama keys”.

. Le Monde, despite its decline of interest for classical music, Liberation and the Figaro regularly review new releases of classical music and the majority of the producers estimate these columns to be very important.

6.6.2 CLASSICAL MUSIC POORLY represented ON THE NON-SPECIALIZED RADIO STATIONS

We find here exactly the same situation as in the press: **two radios almost completely dedicated to the classical music and an almost total absence of this genre on the non-specialized stations.**

These two specialized radios, as for the specialized press, target a public composed of music lovers estimated daily at several hundreds of thousand auditors for each of these two radios:

- France Musiques broadcasts quality shows but do not touch a public of neophytes. So some people wish "a wider opening of France Musiques to also target the mainstream audience ". Thierry BEAUVERT and François HUDRY's radio show which seems more accessible to a wider public is the main radio reference for the producers.

- Radio Classique which tries to open up a little to people such as executives and leaders with its economic columns and its news shows.

The producers in their majority insist on how important these two radios are while asking for " clearer and more regular information about the new releases ", " an attractive presentation of the new releases and a higher attention to independent companies which are really creative " .

Producers also recognized the quality of Alain DUAULT's show on RTL. Moreover they really appreciate France Inter's efforts " to promote classical music to those who do not listen spontaneously to France Musique". Frédéric LODEON's considerable contribution in this discovery (the high audience of his shows proves that a wide public likes classical music when it is well presented and " well defended "). We should also mention classical music artists' presentations on the 1 PM news or on Stéphane BERN's show. But most of the other non-specialized radio stations never broadcast classical music and so it remains totally marginal in the media that are close to the youth who is by far the strongest music consumer.

6.6.3 ABSENT FROM THE TELEVISION

In 2002, there were very few classical music productions broadcasted on TV or even announced on TV. Even if France Televisions agreed to broadcast on a Sunday "The Trojans" live from the Theater of Châtelet, there is just once a year one classical music show broadcasted on TV in prime-time called "Les Victoires de la Musique classique".

There are of course Eve RUGGIERI's interesting shows on TV channel France 2 and Alain DUAULT's on France 3 but these shows are relegated to late night time. Catherine CLEMENT wrote regarding this late programming in her recent report on the cultural offer of France Televisions: " In France, the culture is broadcasted when most everybody is asleep ".

ARTE dedicates a large part of its program to the classical music - for example "Maestro" on every Sunday late in the afternoon - but targeting a restricted public of music lovers.

DIAPASON magazine was noticing in October, 2001 that "TV channels have reduced to 2/3 the part reserved to classical music in their programs" the magazine also added that " 95 % of the offer of classical music in television comes from thematic channels MEZZO and MUZZIK, today only less than 4 % of the French population receives those channels at home. "

Indeed, the cable channel MEZZO (union between channels MUZZIK and MEZZO) schedules exclusively classical music, jazz and world music but for a public extremely restricted. Let's hope that the efforts recently displayed by this channel in its program, in its format and in its image, will allow a development of its audience in France.

6.6.4 SOME MAJOR EVENTS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC IN FRANCE BROADCASTED ON TELEVISION

- LES VICTOIRES DE LA MUSIQUE broadcasted live in February, one year from a Parisian venue, another year from a provincial town (in 2004 in LILLE) and another year from the MIDEM in CANNES.

Produced by the association of the Victoires de la Musique, this show broadcasted by France 3 for ten years has been appreciated by more and more viewers. This show has always a special focus on young artists.

- MUSIQUE EN FETE, the day of the “Fête de la Musique” on June 21st live from La Cour d’Honneur des Invalides in Paris.

6.6.5 OTHER EVENTS WHICH COULD BE BROADCASTED ON TELEVISION

- LA FOLLE NUIT DE NANTES in January live from Nantes.

All France now knows the success of the Folle Nuit de Nantes which attracts more than 100.000 people with a rich program focusing on a theme performed by many different artists.

- FLANERIES MUSICALES in August live from Reims. Every year in July and August thousands of people invest the city of Reims to discover and listen to young artists.

Hervé CORRE, responsible for the programming of the FLANERIES MUSICALES, could imagine a type of lighthearted show focusing on classical music.

- LA NUIT DE L’OPERA could be broadcasted in October / November from a French opera: the Palais Garnier or the Opera Bastille but then later from Lyon, Marseille, Nancy, Rouen, Strasbourg, Nice. A popular evening dedicated to the opera with the most beautiful voices of famous artists and young revelations.

6.7 CONCLUSION

Despite the difficulties the classical music market in France is facing, young and motivated production companies are still popping up. Besides, many actors from the music field and many talented artists try to open the classical music to a wider public. This approach is indeed the fundamental condition to maintain its competitiveness within the music industry.