

Edinburgh International Festival 2016 REVIEW – Yann Tiersen ****



Photo by Gaelle Evellin

Whilst sat waiting for French composer, Yann Tiersen, to address the stage, conversing with another journalist sitting in your booth who writes for a German publication, it is precisely then that you understand the “international” in Edinburgh’s International Festival.

Modestly playing against a silhouetted Edinburgh set design on Monday, Tiersen’s immersive talent brought his crowd to a piano paradise in the cabaret-jazz vibe of The Hub.

Yann Tiersen, French musician and composer, most known for his work for Jean Pierre Jeunet’s film *Amelie*, is acquainted with more than just the piano. His music involves a large variety of instruments; primarily the guitar, synthesizer or violin together with instruments like the melodica, xylophone, toy piano, harpsichord, accordion and typewriter.

Often confused for a classical composer when he has repeated often that he has no classical background, his primary focus is on touring and his albums. In this instance the concert marks the up-coming release of his new album *EUSA*. And if his Edinburgh show was anything to go by, this is noted.

Tiersen humbly took to his piano, all in black, camouflaged against the setting with little expectation from his audience. Melodically, repetitively hitting those high notes on his keys, I recalled my fondness for the *Amelie* soundtrack. Dimly lit, his music evokes a positive nomadic sound of hope, a

reflective journey, one which the audience were happy to be participate in.

With delicate sounds of the city, the sea, the birds, there is an evocative cinematic vibe to this night, reminiscent of nights with Michael Nyman and Michel Le Grand.

However, he does also plays similar notes on rotational instruments, the violin and toy pianos. Watching him play the two tiny pianos is redolent of the fun fair and ice cream vans but also more than hinted at his talent and coordination. Unbelievable.

At other times it is easy to escape and feel as though one is sat in a Parisian café. With a resounding applause before his encore we are then treated to two more pieces, more emotionally charged. An immersive night taking his audience on a European journey.