

Biography 26/27

Julien Brocal is a French pianist, composer and improviser whose poetic, modern and socially engaged vision sets him apart on the international music scene. He was named BBC Music Magazine's Newcomer of the Year in 2018.

A pupil of Éric Berchot—the emblematic pianist who accompanied Charles Aznavour and Michel Legrand in Claude Lelouch's films—Julien developed from an early age a playing style imbued with depth and narrative flair. He further refined his pianistic mastery under the guidance of the renowned pedagogue Réna Shereshevskaya, whose teaching has shaped the exceptional careers of Lucas Debargue and Alexandre Kantorow.

A decisive encounter with the legendary pianist Maria João Pires profoundly influenced his artistic journey. She invited him to accompany her on international tours, imparting a sensitive and humanistic vision of musical interpretation.

His recordings devoted to Chopin as well as to Ravel and Mompou have received wide acclaim from the international press, which hails the delicacy, depth and originality of his interpretations. Critic Patrick Rucker wrote in *Gramophone* magazine: “I implore you not to miss the chance to hear this singular talent.”

Julien broadens his artistic horizons through arranging and composing, notably bringing his subtle, contemporary touch to the musical arrangement of Jane Birkin's iconic song “Jane B.” His creativity also finds expression in socially engaged works, such as the soundtrack for a hard-hitting documentary on Greenland's melting ice, *Memory of Darkness and Light*, soon to be broadcast on Arte and NCBS in the United States. He is currently composing an ambitious work for Deutsche Grammophon in collaboration with cellist Camille Thomas, scheduled for release in autumn 2025 ahead of a U.S. tour in February 2026.

With *HERE*, a book-album co-written with Ilios Kotsou, Thierry Janssen, Pablo Servigne, Pascale Seys, Satish Kumar and Raphaël Stevens, Julien offers a musical and literary meditation on our connection to the world, inviting an intimate yet universal reflection on intuition.

Founder of Le Jardin Musical in Brussels, Julien Brocal has created an innovative and inspiring venue where music dialogues with other art forms and fosters the emergence of new talent through audio-visual artist residencies.

Through his poetic, contemporary and deeply committed approach, Julien Brocal embodies a generation of artists who passionately and sensitively reinvent the role of the musician in today's world.