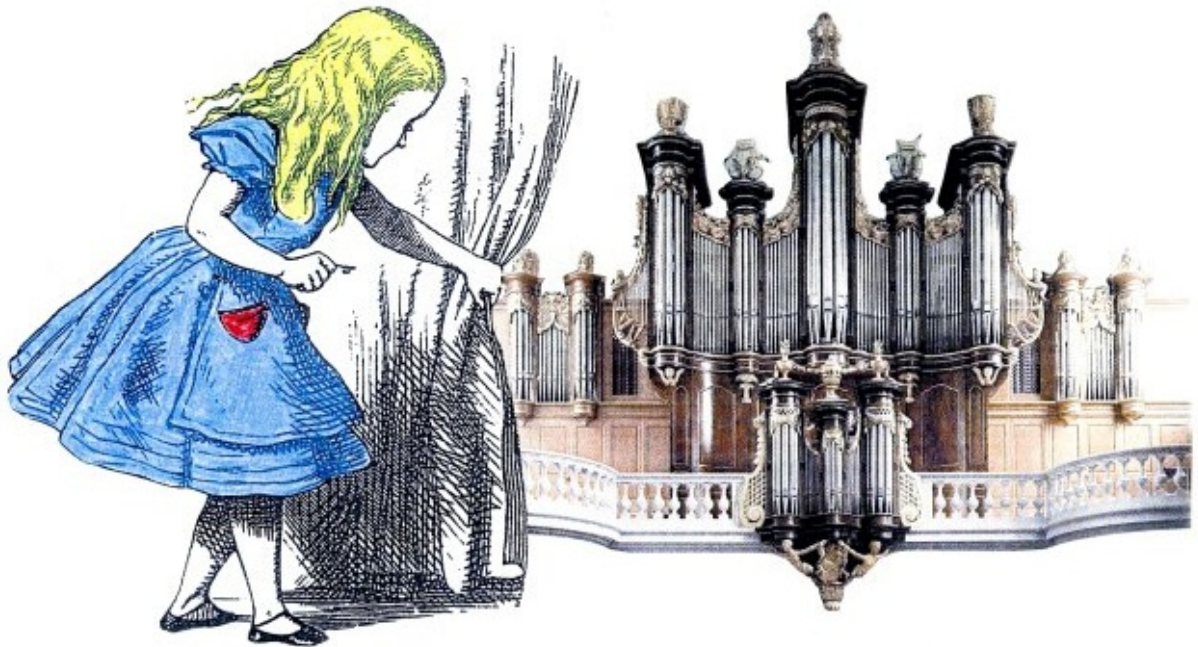




# LICE



*“Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?”*

*- That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.  
I don't much care where...*

*- Then it doesn't much matter which way you go.  
So long as I get somewhere.*

*- Oh, you're sure to do that, if only you walk long enough.”*

Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

Cover page: collage of the pipe organ, St-François Church, Lausanne and an illustration by John Tenniel from the 1st edition of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865)

## PRESENTATION

***“The debate about knowledge is no longer relevant and intelligence is no longer to be taken into account, so only dreams give Man complete liberty (...) In all families, every morning men, women and children, IF THEY HAVE NOTHING BETTER TO DO, talk about their dreams. We are all subjected to dreaming and to its’ power during our waking state, like a tyrant clothed in mirrors and lightning (...)”***<sup>1</sup>

“*Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*”, why not? For this is what it’s all about. It’s irrelevant that she’s travelling inside a pipe organ this time, Alice is a figure symbolic of dreams and she can go anywhere through each one of us. Is it our deep down desire that we can transgress reality and dive into our imagination to “really” live our dreams and fantasies? It’s in our own imagination that wonderful journeys like Alice through the looking glass take place. But can we really come back? Having jumped into the burrow, can we come out again unscathed?

In his stories, Lewis Carroll draws the reader into a universe without limits and he continually encourages artists to loose themselves in this wonderland. All, or at least most of the artistic fields are linked in some way to an interpretation of Lewis Carroll’s novels. Our wish is to portray this story using various musical works inspired by the Alice theme. We have chosen a small number of different music styles amongst the vast choice available, from Unsuk Chin’s modern opera, pop rock by Tom Waits and the Beatles to contemporary scores for organ by Jean Guillou. Two singers, a narrator, an organist and electronic equipment accompanied by video clips bring the story to life.

Even if the dream could have allowed all sorts of madness, this performance has been developed in a coherent manner to bring to the public a sensation of accomplishing a real journey into Wonderland, all in one concert.

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<sup>1</sup> J.A. Boiffard, P. Eluard & R. Vitrac, *La Révolution surréaliste n°1*, December 1924.

## EDUCATIONAL INTEREST & APPROACH

The “Alice” project embraces several musical disciplines which make the public aware of different musical styles and ways of formatting them. Vocals are presented in three distinct ways: storytelling and two styles of singing: lyrical and jazz. The instruments - an organ and an electronic deck - are an unusual combination and traditionally foreign to one another. The visual representation reflects different cinema facets and eras inspired by Lewis Carroll’s novel.

### **ORGAN – ELECTRO**

In **Alice in Organ-Land**, Guillou certainly imagines Alice on the other side of a looking glass, but in the heart of a pipe organ. This journey offers the spectator a didactic and theatrical insight to the instrument. The public discovers the different registers and colours of the organ by way of characters sometimes related to creatures in Carroll’s novel. In a more subtle way, Guillou calls upon other images such as the giant tarantula spider<sup>2</sup>.

On this basis, we conceived surrealistic electronic acoustics to accompany two Guillou waltzes and Tom Waits’ songs. The electro can also be heard in atmosphere improvisations throughout the performance. The **Alice in Organ-Land** script can be remodelled according to the organ at hand and is easily adaptable to different instruments in different locations.

### **VOCALS**

Two singers, two timbres, two different styles... From an architectonic point of view, a church offers optimal acoustics for singers and produces ideal voice propulsion. The choice to use two vocal techniques is deliberate. The classical repertoire offers a glimpse of Carroll’s influence on convention; the other genre opens the door to Alice’s influence on a different style of music. The aim is to give the public the occasion to hear different vocal styles working together and creating bridges between all forms of art and sounds.

### **VISUAL and more**

Jean Biollay enriched the formatting of above-mentioned elements by video extracts from various *Alice in Wonderland* films<sup>3</sup> and also the first performance of Unsuk Chin’s opera in Munich.

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<sup>2</sup> *Lycosa tarantula* is the species originally known as the tarantula. *Lycosa tarantula* is a large species found in southern Europe, especially in the Apulia region of Italy and near the city of Taranto, from which it gets its name. Historical superstition has it that the spider’s bite can produce severe symptoms called tarantism. It has been at one time a traditional belief among Apulian peasantry that a person bitten by one of these spiders must be treated by indulging in a special kind of dancing. The dance is now known as the tarantella.

<sup>3</sup> Video extracts from the following films :

- *Alice in Wonderland*, (1983 – 1984)
- *Alice in Wonderland*, Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson & Hamilton Luske (1951), Walt Disney Pictures.
- *Thru the Mirror*, David Hand, William Cottrell & Joe Grant (1936), Walt Disney Productions.
- *Alice In Wonderland*, Nick Willing & Peter Barnes (1999).
- Short film, Thierry Schwob (2010), see appendix

In addition to these extracts, Thierry Schwob created for the occasion, around and inside the organ, a short film<sup>4</sup> where Claire Schwob, in the role of Alice, ventures into Organ-Land. A final magical touch was to integrate a stage direction accompanied by some accessories, costumes and make-up cleverly used by the narrator and the two singers.

To repeat Guillou's words: ***"I always pay attention that a work doesn't become dispersed but forms a unit"***<sup>5</sup>. In this case, the work is a project centred around Alice. We don't claim to improve the composers' works by modifying them, but we wish to support them and present them in a more global way to the public, thus rebuilding an original journey in Wonderland with a departure and unfortunately also a return to Earth.

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<sup>4</sup> See video clip

<sup>5</sup> Gilles Cantagrel, *Guide la musique d'orgue*, Fayard 1991

## REPERTORY

The repertory, beyond Guillou's work, results from the musical universe directly inspired by *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Lewis Carroll drew inspiration for his texts directly from dreams, describing a world completely out of sync in which a real little girl is inadvertently plunged. This surrealist aspect is very difficult to reproduce, since we all have our own feelings about dreams and hidden faces. Which musical work is the closest to these fantastic adventures? No music can claim to be the true essence of Carroll's words.

For all these reasons, this project privileges incorporating "extracts" of musical works inspired by Alice's Adventures. Following this, and thanks to Jean Guillou's story, different musical works are added to support his tale. This concept gave birth not to a concert in its true sense, but to a performance of glimpses into the wonderful effects Lewis Carroll's work has had on musical compositions.

### JEAN GUILLOU, *Alice in Organland op.53*

Organist, pianist and composer, Jean Guillou (born 1930) is an exceptional musician who offers to his audience an extraordinary musical experience thanks to the originality and impulsiveness of his repertory.

From 1963 to 2015, he was the Titular Organist at St-Eustache Church in Paris, where the organ he designed is particularly suitable for performing his own compositions. ***"I perceive music like a sort of mobile sound effect illustrating the "continuous movement" of which Ciceron talks and which would be the origin of all speech."***<sup>6</sup> This is how Guillou defines his approach as a musician and composer.

For this performance, the story text is totally conserved; as for the music, it appears as extracts throughout the story.

### UNSUK CHIN, *Alice in Wonderland*

Unsuik Chin was born on July 14, 1961 in Seoul and currently lives in Berlin. She studied composition, mainly with Györgi Ligeti. It may come as a surprise that a Korean composer should be inspired by British classical literature for her first opera; in fact, she only discovered the *Alice* books as an adult thanks to Ligeti. She explains: ***"My music is a reflection of my dreams. I try to render into music the visions of immense light and of an incredible magnificence of colours that I see in all my dreams, a play of light and colours floating through the room and at the same time forming a fluid sound sculpture."***<sup>7</sup>

This work was produced at the Bavarian National Opera on June 30, 2007 under the direction of Kent Nagano.

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<sup>6</sup> Gilles Cantagrel, *Guide la musique d'orgue*, Fayard 1991

<sup>7</sup> [www.boosey.com](http://www.boosey.com), Unsuik Chin 2003.

### **TOM WAITS<sup>8</sup> & KATHLEEN BRENNAN, *Alice***

Thomas Alan Waits was born in California on December 7, 1949. His work stands out due to his husky voice, his strong personality, his presence on stage and the cynical humour he integrates into his texts.

Tom and his wife Kathleen Brennan wrote fifteen songs inspired by Lewis Carroll's novel for an avant-garde opera which was produced in Hamburg during winter 1992.

Unfortunately, despite the quality and beauty of some of the songs, the opera didn't get the desired success. However, ten years later Tom Waits reproduced the fifteen songs in a solo album and succeeded in making a name for his work.



### **ROBERT CHAULS, *Alice in Wonderland***

In 1978, Robert Chauls wrote an opera in eight scenes retracing the adventures of *Alice*. Lasting about an hour, it presents a light interpretation of Lewis Carroll's story. Although heavy on sarcasm, it still remains a well-written opera. ***“Mr. Chauls's melodies, straightforward and always tuneful, are not particularly memorable. But the opera is always lively, and sometimes engrossing.”***<sup>9</sup>

### **THE BEATLES, *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds***

As we all know, *The Beatles* are a British pop group from Liverpool comprising 4 musicians, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr. Like other great composers, they have left us a considerable musical heritage.

Speaking about their song *Lucy in the sky with diamonds* ***“We didn't notice that the title initials were LSD until publication and nobody believed our explanations”***<sup>10</sup>

According to John Lennon's<sup>11</sup> account, his son Julian came back from nursery school one day at the beginning of 1967 with a drawing of Lucy, one of his friends. He'd titled his drawing “Lucy in the sky with diamonds. Lennon explained over and over again that apart from his son's drawing his principal inspirational source for his surrealist texts came from the *Alice* novels.

<sup>8</sup> Photo of Nicola Boccaccini

<sup>9</sup> Tim Page, May 23, 1985, *MUSIC/NOTED IN BRIEF*; *Broque Opera Offers A 45-Minute « Alice »*

<sup>10</sup> George Harrison, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, *The Beatles Anthology*, Seuil, 2000

<sup>11</sup> John Winston Lennon was born in Liverpool on October 9, 1940 and was assassinated in New York on December 8, 1980. He founded the group *The Beatles*.

### **ERIK SATIE, *The Mad Hatter***

Erik Satie was born in Honfleur on May 17, 1866 and died in Paris on July 1, 1925. He figures amongst the rare composers to attempt the surrealist experience with “*Relâches*” in 1924. In his tune *The Mad Hatter* written in 1916 in a small collection of three works for piano and singer, he composed a surprising vocal line with an unusual prosody. This short piece is directly inspired from the scene where, wishing to repair his watch, Lewis Carroll’s Mad Hatter dips it into his tea and smears it with butter.

### **TMco, *Satin***

Under the guidance of Claudio Giampietro, *Tavannes Machines & Co* produces musical pieces combining electronic and acoustics. In their research of “authentic” sounds, they research noises on a daily basis which they use in the form of *samples*<sup>12</sup>.

The dreamlike character of Lewis Carroll’s books perfectly matches the philosophy of this group. The musicians produced a piece together called *Satin* which has been included in the project as an echo in the video extract *Thru the Mirror*; the harmonium used in the original version has of course been replaced by the pipe organ.

### **CHRISTIAN BRUHN, *Alice in Wonderland (generic)***

Christian Bruhn is a German composer who has notably sung with Mireille Mathieu. In 1983 he wrote the generic music for an animated Nippo/German television serial containing 52 episodes and based on Lewis Carroll’s novel. He is chairman of the GEMA<sup>13</sup> supervisory board.

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<sup>12</sup> A *sample* is a musical extract or sound reused in a new musical composition, often played in a loop. The extract can be a note, a musical pattern or any kind of sound.

<sup>13</sup> GEMA = *Gesellschaft für musikalische Aufführungs- und mechanische Vervielfältigungsrechte*, German society for copyright management, representing different bodies of the music industry – composers, interpreters, lyric writers etc – and labels.

## ARTISTS

### **ALESSANDRA BOËR, vocals “classic”**

Alessandra is a passionate classical and opera singer with a repertoire ranging from early music to the contemporary composers, completing her job with her pedagogy skills.

Born in Canada, she grew up in Switzerland and acquired various cultural and language skills which helps coaching singers in different languages for roles or recitals.

After beginning biology studies at University of Neuchâtel, she decided to develop her voice and obtained a Pedagogy Diploma for Singing in 2004 and a Concert Diploma and an Opera Diploma in 2006, all done at the University of the Arts in Bern (CH) and the Swiss Opera Studio in Biel in Marianne Kohler's class. In July 2006, she won the prize for the best

*Lied* interpretation at the “12° Concorso internazionale di canto solistico” in Gorizia (I).

Since 2000 Alessandra has worked as a freelancer in different activities, as a classical and opera singer, travelling world-wide for recitals, concerts and opera productions. The critics praise her theatrical skills and her round and touching timbre of voice so she has been able to use her theatrical skills for projects relating to different domains, for example “Antiphona”, a creation of the organist and composer Christoph Maria Moosmann for voice and organ.

Alessandra also shares her passion for the voice as a teacher to private students, choirs and small ensembles. More recently she developed the concept of pedagogical projects, the most recent project being “ProjOpéra 1” – the creation of a production in itself from 34 different opera scenes - which was a great success. She is also a member of the core choir of the *Zürcher Sing-Akademie*, singing under the direction of great conductors such as Daniel Barenboim and Bernard Haitink.



### **MALLIKA HERMAND, vocals “jazz”**

Mallika is a Swiss musician born in 1985 of Sri-Lankan origin. She cumulates many talents. She started the violin at the early age of 4 and the piano at 14. She then began singing and obtained a Bachelor of Arts (2010) in the jazz section of the *Haute Ecole de Musique* in Lausanne (HEMU) with Susanne Abbuehl (jazz) and Stéphanie Burkhard (classical singing). In 2013, she obtained a Master of Performance in the jazz section of the *Musikhochschule* in Lucerne and in 2015 a Master of Pedagogy.

Mallika has travelled to New York several times and had the opportunity to study with famous jazz musicians such as Jon Hendricks, Annie Ross, Kurt Elling, Darmon Meader (New York voices) and Cynthia Scott (chorister of Ray Charles). She is currently pursuing her studies at the *Musikhochschule* in Lucerne with Susanne Abbuehl and Stéphanie Burkhard and will obtain her Master in Pedagogy in



2015.

Influenced by French songs, classical music, jazz music and alternative trends integrating electronic music, she created her own Quartet in 2010 and continues to develop her own compositional skills. Following “A Poison Tree”, great success on stage and in the Medias, she returns with a new project, more intimate, with the intention of going even further in her musical exploration.

[www.mallikamusic.com](http://www.mallikamusic.com)



**YANN RICHARDET, narrator**

Yvan was born in 1981 and lives in Yverdon-les-Bains.

After obtaining a bachelor's degree in literature at the University of Neuchâtel and a teaching diploma at Lausanne HEP, he does theatrical improvisation professionally since 2008.

Yvan participates regularly in private or public theatrical activities, notably as a comedian in a troupe called *Murder & Mystery*. With the *Compagnie du Cachot*, based in the Echandole Theatre, Yverdon-les-Bains, he has produced four concepts of previously unseen shows, performed every month for the past 5 years.

In his role as theatrical improvisation teacher, he is responsible for four groups totalling about fifty students aged 10 to 30 years.

As well as his theatrical and teaching activities, Yvan has a poetry blog, plays the trumpet and sings in a quartet a cappella.

<https://improvisateur.wordpress.com/>

**ANTONIO GARCIA, organist**

Antonio García is an organist; he first began playing the accordion with Jean-René Glück as his teacher. Later, he started to play the organ with Bernard Heiniger in Bienne. Afterwards, he began his musical studies in the Lausanne Highschool of Music from where he obtained his educational diploma and master degrees, having studied with Jean-François Vaucher, Pierre-Alain Clerc and Jovanka Marville.

In 2009, Antonio García spent a year in Berlin at the *Universität der Künste* and studied under Leo van Doeselaar, Paolo Crivellaro, Dirk Elsemann and Arno Schneider.

As an organist he has already performed in many churches. In 2010 he played at the first night of *Le Jour*

*étoilé*, oratorio by Steve Muriset and the *Requiem of Icarus* by Lera Auerbach with the Verbier Festival Orchestra.

He is the designer of the multidisciplinary project "Marble Planet", produced in July 2013 in the Collegiate church in Neuchâtel (CH).

Antonio is back in Switzerland after two years at the Prins Claus Conservatorium in Groningen (NL) and in Hamburg (D) where he studied with Erwin Wiersinga, Wolfgang Zerer, Theo Jellema and Pieter van Dijk (organ), Johan Hofmann and Menno van Delft (harpsichord and clavichord) and Nata Tsvereli (piano).

Since 2013, he is the Titular Organist at the French Church of Bern and plays the accordion, notably in the Tango trio Tres vientos, as well as accompanying the B-Twin pop singers.

[www.antonio Garcia.ch](http://www.antonio Garcia.ch)

**CLAUDIO GIAMPIETRO, electronics**

Since 1995, Claudio Giampietro has dedicated his time to electronic music in the role of DJ or by creating his own compositions. He currently does these activities under the name Audio K.

Claudio continually records different sounds in order to gather their qualities and integrate them in his work: the sound of shower water, a coffee machine, nails falling on the floor etc... He also appreciates working with other artist domains such as dance, video or acoustic music.



In the last few years Claudio has notably made a name for himself at the following events:

- Knock Out Festival
- Les Fours à Chaux MTP 11 – 2007
- Les Digitales (La Chaux-de-Fonds, Porrentruy, Bienne) 2008 – 2009 – 2010
- Print (Vevey) 2009
- Alice – as of 2010
- Electric city (Coupole, Bienne) 2011-2012
- Berlin Fashion week, August in Teboul (Berlin) 2012
- Planète Billes (Neuchâtel) 2013

In parallel, he actively takes part in the organisation of the musical scene in his region and is a qualified electrician in his professional life.

<http://mx3.ch/audiok>

## CONTACT

The objective of the **Alice** project is to be able to produce several more performances and offer to the audiences a few moments of dreams and childhood insouciance. This will also enable us to raise their awareness to different composers, different musical styles and instruments – pipe organ, electro – and varied forms of vocals.

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