

ERIC BETTENS

Cinematic Electronic Music

Composer • Producer • Belgium

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The architecture of sound, between orchestral majesty and electronic odyssey.

There are artists for whom music is not a simple succession of notes, but a space to explore — a living material capable of capturing the immensity of the world. Eric Bettens is one of them. Belgian composer, performer and producer, he has been shaping sonic landscapes since 2001 where orchestra and machine do not compete — they merge, breathe together, tell stories. At the crossroads of Jean-Michel Jarre's retro-futurist innovation, Vangelis' dramatic breath and Hans Zimmer's narrative power, his music does not illustrate the image: it precedes it, overflows it, gives it a soul.

From Instinct to Mastery

For two decades, Eric Bettens composed by instinct. Machines were his territory, passion his only guide. Then came the moment to confront this universe with rigour — not to discipline it, but to amplify it. In 2011, he undertook a double Master's degree in composition and classical writing at the Conservatoire Royal de Liège. His works entered the repertoires of international ensembles: Musiques Nouvelles, Sturm und Klang, Ensemble 21, Quatuor TANA. He then refined his craft in Vienna, in Hollywood orchestration, alongside Conrad Pope — the man behind the scores of Harry Potter, The Hobbit, Godzilla — and Nan Schwartz. The self-taught musician and the academician now coexist within him. It is this creative tension, never resolved, that defines his signature. He now passes on this dual culture at IMEP in Namur, where he teaches music computing, sonic environments and contemporary languages.

The World as a Score

The international turning point of his career was born from an encounter — that of composer Luc Baiwir, who immediately recognised something rare and encouraged him to present NYDHIS at the Festival Mondial de l'Image Sous-Marine in Antibes. Eric Bettens won the Prix François de Roubaix. A first triumph. A door opening onto the world.

Since then, he has signed over 200 projects — films, theatre productions, musicals, albums and artistic collaborations — collecting distinctions from Hollywood to Singapore, Istanbul to Moscow, Marseille to Manila. His opera YVAIN, LE CHEVALIER LION — a monumental work for choir, orchestra, soloists and narrator — was nominated at the Hollywood Music in Media Awards in 2012.

But the world, for Eric Bettens, is not merely a stage. It is a source. One encounter would literally take him to the ends of the planet: that of Michael AW, director of Ocean Geographic, a world figure in underwater photography and exploration. It was he who invited Eric Bettens to compose the opening music for the Celebrate the Sea festival in Singapore in 2004, then to perform in concert in Singapore and Manila. It was also he who took him on an expedition to Antarctica in 2010, where Eric Bettens composed in real time the soundtrack of a documentary shot in the heart of the ice. In 2015, and again in 2025, he returned to the Arctic under that same banner — the latest expedition already nourishing a new musical project in progress. From these journeys to the ends of the earth emerge works that capture the vertigo and fragility of the living — including Ana's Memory, Requiem pour la Terre, composed in 2019 and premiered on stage in January 2023 after years of pandemic-imposed silence.

On stage, he pushes the boundaries even further. His large-scale sound and light shows blend

video, lasers, pyrotechnics and dance into multimedia performances that have crossed Europe and Asia — including a performance before the former President of the Philippines, Gloria Arroyo.

A Discography in Perpetual Motion

Each album is a territory in its own right. An exploration that never repeats itself:

DISCOVERY (2006) & ENTRE CIEL ET MER (2009) — The first maps of a universe under construction.

EMPREINTE (2012) — The maturity album, in the wake of the Hollywood Music in Media Awards nomination.

ANTARCTIC ODYSSEY (2014) — The cinematic chill of vast polar expanses.

HORIZON (2020) — A vibrant tribute to retro-futuristic electronic atmospheres.

ANALOG MIND (2024) — A manifesto: an album recorded in a single take, without a safety net, on analog synthesizers exclusively. Risk-taking as an artistic act.

NOUS MALGRÉ LUI (2024) — The original soundtrack of the feature film of the same name, confirming an unbreakable bond with cinema.

ONE MORE LIFE (2025) — His latest opus. The soundtrack of a film you haven't seen yet. Majestic orchestrations, haunting synthesizer layers, and at the heart of it all: the question of what it means to be human facing the immensity of the universe and the vertigo of progress. Eric Bettens does not seek to occupy a genre. He seeks to reach something greater — that fraction of a second where music ceases to be music and becomes a physical, emotional, unforgettable experience.

Eric Bettens is also a composer of contemporary orchestral and instrumental works. Concertos, chamber pieces, operatorio — a complete catalogue available at ericbettensclassical.com.