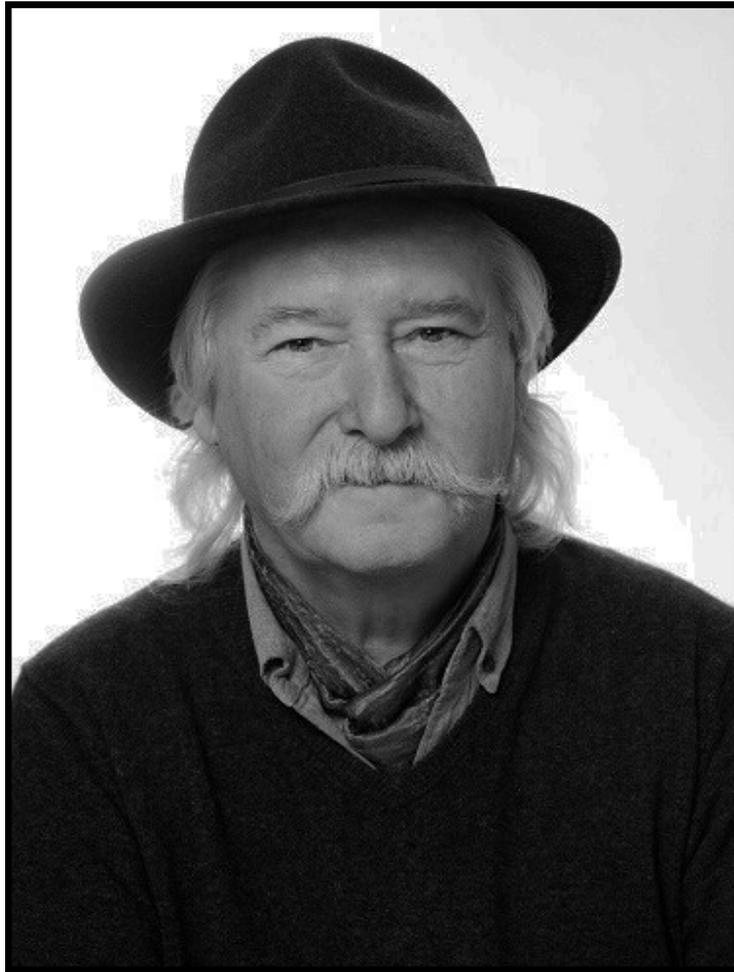


## BIOGRAPHY - DISCOGRAPHY



# Erik Marchand

**1955 - 2025**

A major artist, a cultural bridge-builder, and a committed humanist, Erik Marchand leaves behind a profound and lasting legacy, in Brittany and far beyond.

Erik possessed a rare and precious vision: that of a living, rooted, and open culture, attentive to folk traditions as much as to dialogue between peoples. From the village to the global stage, he tirelessly championed a deeply respectful, inquisitive, and humanist approach to world cultures.

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Singer and former clarinetist Erik Marchand is one of the key figures in contemporary Breton music, whose evolution and rich musical diversity are approached philosophically. Born in Paris to a family partly from Quelneuc in the Gallo region, he spent his childhood between a grandfather who sang and a father who played guitar. A lover of world music, he discovered, during his adolescence, a recording of a fest-noz (traditional Breton dance party) given to him by his father.

This was the turning point.

To acquire a repertoire and musical knowledge, he began collecting traditional songs, first in the Gallo region from his family and friends, then in the Rostrenen area and Central Brittany in general. He also took advantage of his travels to learn Breton.

It was at the age of eighteen that he discovered the personality and artistry of Manuel Kerjean at a fest-noz in Paris. Fascinated by the expression and subtleties of this voice, he decided to meet Manuel to learn the technique of traditional Breton singing. Manuel tested him before agreeing. In 1975, he settled permanently in Brittany to work and sing. A few months later, he performed on stage with Manuel for the first time. The audience loved it. In 1995, they celebrated twenty years of performing together. While learning to sing, Erik also began playing the Breton clarinet (*treujenn gaol*). In 1976, he worked at Dastum, classifying and cataloging recordings. There, he discovered the voice of Madame Bertrand and the superb melodies of her *gwerzioù* (Iwan Gamus...). He heard a new repertoire that captivated him, and he, in turn, began to perform it himself. This repertoire had been gradually disappearing since the 1960s...

From that time until today, alongside his various concerts, he also frequently sings at fest-noz (traditional Breton dance parties), initially with Manuel Kerjean, Yann-Fañch Kemener, and Marcel Guilloux, and more recently with Nolùen Le Buhé, Annie Ebrel, Eric Menneteau, and Christophe Le Menn. Possessing a diverse repertoire from both Gallo and Lower Brittany, he created in 1981 with

Gilbert Bourdin and Christian Dautel formed a trio (*Chants à Danser de Haute Bretagne* and *Chants à Réponse de Haute Bretagne*) and contributed to the *Armen/Le Chasse Marée* anthology of Seamen's and Boatmen's Songs until 1985, as well as to the group Cabestan in 1989.



*Manuel Kerjean and Erik Marchand (F. Morvan)*

He participated in the founding of the group Gwerz, whose first album, *Gwerz, Nouvelle Musique de Bretagne*, was released in 1985, followed three years later by *Au delà* (Grand Prix de l'Académie Charles Cros), and finally by *Gwerz Live*. Gwerz remains a key group in the history of 20th-century Breton music.

In 1988, he met Titi Robin, with whom he began analyzing and identifying the musical systems of Central Brittany (which proved comparable to those of Eastern music).

This work was primarily the subject of two albums. The first, a duo album, "*An Henchoù Treuz*," won the Charles Cros Academy Prize. The second, a magnificent album, "*An Tri Breur*" (The Three Brothers), brought together the two friends in a trio with Hameed Kahn and later Keyvan Chemirani. But he didn't forget the clarinet; he and Dominique Jouve created the association "*Paotred an Dreujenn-Gaol*" to develop the instrument's popular and local practice, and he participated in two compilations of clarinet players (on the *Le Chasse Marée* label). He recorded two albums with the "*Clarinet Quintet*," founded by Michel Aumont, and played in...

He has performed in numerous concerts, notably during collaborations with Louis Sclavis and Sylvain Kassap. Passionate about the diversity of timbres in world folk music, he founded Kan, a vocal ensemble, in 2000, bringing together singers of monophonic and polyphonic music from Mali, Galicia, Albania, Sardinia, and Brittany. Respecting these differences in expression, their repertoire is a truly contemporary composition built on modal understanding and oral traditions.

In late 1997, he formed a trio with Jacques Pellen and Pablo Fresu for an album with influences sometimes drawn from jazz. He continued in this vein with Jacques Pellen's orchestra, Celtic Procession, and more recently with "Tribute to Kristen Noguez."

In 2007, he created a multicultural orchestra, bringing together musicians and singers from Lower Brittany, Serbia, and Bosnia for the Friendship Festival in Gorazde. In 2010, he participated as a singer and artistic advisor in the concerts of the Bagad Quimper "Breizh Balkanik".

Later, in 2014, at the request of the War'l Leur confederation, he coordinated the musical component of the Dañs Akademi project, bringing together 13 musicians and a multitude of dancers. Révolution is the name of this musical and choreographic performance, which traces the history of the evolution of folk dance in Brittany. In 2011, he was invited by Sylvain Barou to participate in the creation of "Mor Kreiz Douar", alongside Stelios Petrakis, Florian Baron, and Keyvan Chemirani.

Following a musical encounter at the Panorama festival in Morlaix (29), he decided, with Rodolphe Burger and thanks to Le Quartz in Brest, to create a concert and an album, "Before Bac'h", where, for the first time, he explored rock and blues influences. His creation, "Ukronia", which is the result of a meeting between popular song from the Gallo region and classical music of the Renaissance, was released in 2012.



*Ukronia © Eric Legret*

Erik Marchand then formed a new sextet, "Akana," alongside Costica Olan, Djeko Demirov, Jacky Molard, H  l  ne Labarri  re, and Mihai Trestian, a duo with Florian Baron on oud, and a duo with pianist Bojan Z. In 2019, he created Gl  ck Auf, the second chapter of Before Bach, with Rodolphe Burger and Mehdi Haddab.

In parallel, musical creations related to kan ha diskan (call and response singing) have marked recent years, notably "Da  ns tro" with Yann-Fa  nch Kemener, Etienne Callac, and Jean Marie Nivaigne.

But Erik doesn't limit himself to musical performance; he also produces albums of Romanian and Balkan music and serves as artistic advisor on others. He participates in efforts to promote the folk music of Eastern Europe and the great Roma masters of this region. With Jacky Molard and Bertrand Dupont, he created the Innacor label (distributed by L'Autre Distribution) in 2005, promoting world folk music artists who often have a connection to Brittany. Wishing to transmit the modal understanding in Breton music, of which he is one of the few specialists, he founded "Kreiz Breizh Akademi" in 2003, a popular academy of modal music in Central Brittany. One of its objectives is to offer a distinctive orchestration where arrangements are developed around the modal understanding (a unique understanding in Breton folk music until the mid-20th century). This work continues the transmission he began during...

He led numerous Breton music workshops, notably with Marcel Guilloux.

He was the artistic and educational director of the Drom association, which works to develop modal music, and he initiated the Modality Hub, an international platform for reflection, creation, and research on modal music, bringing together performers, composers, instrument makers, instrument builders, educators, and musicologists from various musical styles. A singer, musician, researcher, and tireless creator, Erik Marchand dedicated his life to Breton and modal music, while actively working to connect them with other traditions, particularly those of the Balkans, the Mediterranean, and the East.

His artistic work was always accompanied by a strong commitment to transmission. Through Drom, and more specifically Kreiz Breizh Akademi, he trained, mentored, and inspired several generations of artists, encouraging artistic excellence, attentive listening, respect for original sources, and creative boldness.

**Until the end of his life, Erik Marchand worked with passion for creation, transmission and dialogue between cultures, leaving behind an immense artistic and human legacy.**

*Sources: Jérémie Pierre Jouan/MOELO Serge, «Le Témoignage d'Erik Marchand », MODAL magazine n°4, September 1986 / STEPHAN, « Erik Marchand, Une Voix qui Voyage », Le Journal des Bretons (1994) / Discographie Erik Marchand (offerte par Mme Le Meur) in B.E.D.*

## DISCOGRAPHY

**1982** : « Chants à danser de Haute Bretagne », avec Gilbert Bourdin et Christian Dautel, Dastum

**1985** : « Gwerz, nouvelle musique de Bretagne », Dastum/Gwerz

**1985** : « Chants à répondre de Haute Bretagne », avec Gilbert Bourdin et Christian Dautel, Le Chasse Marée

**1988** : Gwerz : « Audelà », Escalibur. Grand prix de l'Académie Charles Cros 1988

**1989** : « Gwerz Penmarc'h », avec Cabestan, Le Chasse Marée

**1990** : « An henchoù treuz, chants du Centre Bretagne » avec Thierry Robin, AMTA/Ocora, Grand prix de l'Académie Charles Cros 1990

**1991**: Trio Erik Marchand : « An tri Breur », Silex, ffff Télérama

**1991** : « Musique têtue » avec le Quintet de Clarinettes, Silex, ffff Télérama

**1993** : « Gwerz live », Gwerz Pladenn

**1993** : « Bazh du » avec le Quintet de Clarinettes, Silex. Diapason d'Or

**1993** : Erik Marchand et le Taraf de Caransebes : « Sag an tan ell », Silex. Grand prix de l'Académie Charles Cros 1995 et ffff Télérama

**1997** : Fresu, Pellen, Marchand trio : « Condaghes », Silex, Choc de la Musique

**1998** : Erik Marchand et le Taraf de Caransebes : « Dor », BMG, ffff Télérama, Choc de la Musique, R 10 de Répertoires

**2001** : « Kan », chanteurs d'Albanie, de Sardaigne, de Galice et du Mali, fff Télérama

**2004** : Les Balkaniks : « Pruna », Harmonia Mundi, fff Télérama

**2004** : « Before Bac'h » Erik Marchand vs Rodolph Burger, Dernière Bande

**2006** : « 1234, Unu daou tri chtar » Quartet Erik Marchand, Innacor

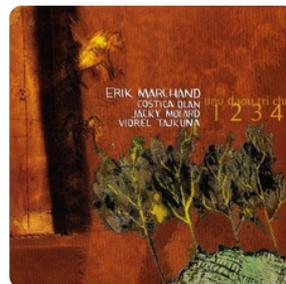
**2011** : « Breizh Balkanik », avec le Bagad Kemper, Keltia Musique

**2012** : « Ukronia », Innacor

**2015** : «[R]évolution» Coffret CD DVD avec les musiciens et danseurs de la confédération War 'l leur

**2021** : « Glück auf ! - Before Bach Chapitre 2 », avec Rodolphe Burger, Dernière Bande, CD et Vinyle

**2023** : « Hiri », avec Éric Menneteau et Youenn Lange, Compagnie des musiques têtues, CMT-170330, CD



Cover of "1 2 3 4" and "Ukronia"

## ARTISTIC PRODUCTIONS

**1996** : « Nicolae Gutsa, la grande voix tzigane d'aujourd'hui », Silex. Grand prix de l'Académie Charles Cros 1996

**1996** : « Virgil Muzur, grand maître du violon roumain », Auvidis

**1998** : « Mircea Ardeleanu, grand maître du cymbalum »

**2003** : « L'Ensemble de Mallakaster, polyphonies d'Albanie »

**2003** : « Viorel Tajkuna, le nouvel accordéon serbe »

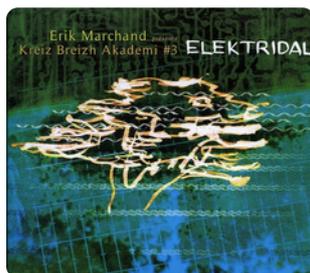
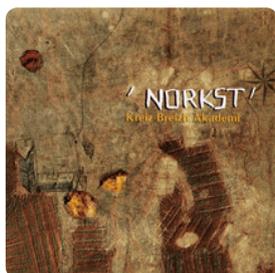
**2003** : « Anthologie de l'accordéon roumain »

### On the Innacor label

Hasan Yarim Dunya (P.D.G./Innacor)

Réédition de Nicolae Guta

Norkst (KBA#1) - Izhpenn12 (KBA#2) - Elektridal (KBA#3) - Pemped Round (KBA#5)



Cover of "Norkst" and "Elektridal"

### Self-production Drom

Pobl 'Ba'r Machin[e] (KBA#6)

Hed (KBA#7)

### Artistic consulting:

**1993** : « Gwerziou et chants de Haute voix », France 3 Ouest

**1996** : « Dibenn », An Naer

**1997** : Les Yeux Noirs, « Izvoara », EMI

**1999** : Noluen Le Buhé « Komz a Raer Din... », Prix Coop Breizh

**2001** : Tan Ban Ti, « Dilhad Sul »

## Artistic Direction

(within the association Paotred an Dreujenn Gaol)

**1990** : « Krachno Oro, musique populaire bulgare », Silex/P.D.G.

**1993** : « Le taraf de Caransebes », Silex/P.D.G. Choc de la Musique 1993

**1994** : « Kompania Takis Loukas, musique populaire d'Epire », Silex/P.D.G.

**1996** : « Orkestar Kavadarci », Macédoine

### Television Films :

**1988** : « Gwerz » (26') de Jean Charles Huitorel, Arc Bretagne

**1994** : « Trois voix pour un chant: la gwerz » (52'), d'Alain Gallet, Lazennec Production

**1996** : « Blues d'en France » (52'), d'Yves de Peretti, Bleu Krystal Media et « Wrens and Pipers » (« de Souffle et de Roseaux ») (52'), de Gei Zanzinger, Constant Spring Production

**2004** : « Melezour ar gwerziou », de Corentin Pichon

**2006** : « Before Bach » de Roland Thépot, France 3 Ouest, 26'

**2011** : « Marsel Guilloux » : Ur paotr plaen, de Sébastien Le Guillou

**2013** : « Répétition » de Zsofia Pesovar sur le travail avec Ukronia

As well as numerous contributions to films, documentaries, and television programs for FR3, La Sept, Arte, TV5, Planète, TVR... or to radio programs for France Culture, France Inter, RFI, France Musique, RBO, Radio Armorique, WDR, SDR, Radio Canada, RAI, and various Romanian radio stations.