



Saturday April 27th, 2024, 7.30pm
Clare Hall Dining Hall

Charlie Draper, Theremin & Ondes Martenot
Patrick Hemmerlé, piano

Vellones: Fantaisie for ondes Martenot and piano

Gershwin: Summertime

Rachmaninoff: Vocalise

Medtner: Suite-Vocalise

Rodney-Bennett: Suite number 2 for ondes Martenot and piano

Milhaud: Suite for ondes Martinet and piano

Rósza (arr Paul Jackson): Spellbound Concerto for theremin and piano

Pierre Vellones (1889-1939) - Fantaisie for ondes Martenot & Piano

Pierre Vellones, a doctor, composer, and painter, first met Maurice Martenot while treating his cousin. The two forged a friendship and in 1930, he composed *Fantaisie*, perhaps the earliest published composition composed specifically for an electronic instrument and piano. Vellones played a pivotal role at the 1937 Exposition Universelle in Paris, recommending the use of the ondes Martenot and prerecorded music for the nighttime events. He composed at least six works for the ondes Martenot, and collaborated on several works with the notable French saxophonist Marcel Mule.

George Gershwin (1898-1937) - Summertime

- Composed for his opera *Porgy and Bess*, the deceptively simple aria *Summertime* has amassed over 55,000 recorded covers since its 1935 premiere, making it the most recorded song in music history. These include a 1977 LP recording by theremin virtuoso Clara Rockmore and her sister Nadia Reisenberg, which ensured this piece entered the canon of theremin standards.

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943) - Vocalise (arr. Clara Rockmore)

- Composed in 1915 as the last of fourteen songs in his opus 34, and dedicated to lyric soprano Antonina Nezhdanova, Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise* is set without words, instructing the singer to perform the piece to a chosen vowel. Although Rachmaninoff never composed for theremin, he was in New York at the same time as the instrument's inventor Leon Theremin, and attended one of his recitals in February 1928.

Nikolai Medtner (1880-1951) - Suite-Vocalise in F Minor

- Introduzione (Introduction). *Allegretto espressivo*
- Gesang der Nymphen (Song of the Nymphs). *Andante con moto*
- Geheimnisse (Secrets). *Molto sostenuto e misterioso*
- Zug der Grazien. *Allegretto sempre al rigore di tempo*
- Was der Dichter spricht (What the poet speaks). *Tranquillo*

- Composed in 1927, as a complement of his Sonata Vocalise, the work is based on a poem by Goethe, *Geweihter Platz*, “Sanctified Place”:

*In the sacred moon-lit night, when the Graces secretly descend from Olympus and join the assembled ranks of Nymphs:
Here the poet eavesdrops on them, hears the beautiful songs,
and sees the mysterious movements of their secretive dances.
What splendor only the Heavens have, and what fortunate loveliness
the Earth bore, appear to this watching [waking] Dreamer.
All this he tells to the Muses, and so as not to anger the gods,
the Muses teach him to speak of these secrets in modesty.*

The Suite-Vocalise is one of Medtner’s finest work, combining an exceptional technical mastery in its use of leitmotiv and counterpoint, with a melodic invention that never flags. Originally written for the voice, the transcription for the ondes Martenot allows a greater freedom of interpretation. Medtner writes all his music with a pianistic mindset, which sometimes makes it quite unidiomatic for the singer. The ondes being a keyboard instrument with a vocal sound is quite ideally suited for the piece.

-interval-

Richard Rodney Bennett (1936-2012) - Serenade No. 2 for ondes Martenot and Piano
Allegretto - Arioso - Scherzando

- Equally at home in the worlds of jazz, film and concert music, British composer Richard Rodney Bennett composed a handful of works incorporating the ondes Martenot. In addition the cantata *Ophelia* and scores to *Enchanted April* and *Murder on the Orient Express*, he composed this three movement suite for ondes in New York in 1984, dedicating it to his ondiste collaborator Cynthia Millar, whose work was heard that same year in Elmer Bernstein's score to *Ghostbusters*.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) - Suite for Ondes Martenot and Piano
Choral - Sérenade - Impromptu - Etude - Elégie

- Darius Milhaud followed the development of the ondes Martenot with interest since its first public presentation at the Paris Opera in 1928. In 1932, he was asked by Charles Dullin to provide incidental music for the play *Chateau des Pape* at the Théâtre de l’Atelier and seized upon the opportunity to write for the ondes Martenot. In 1933, he adapted this instrumental music for piano and solo ondes Martenot, resulting in this “Suite”. It employs unusual resonant effects on the *metallique* speaker, and frequent retrograde melodies.

Miklós Rózsa (1907|1995) (arr. Paul Jackson) Spellbound Concerto for Theremin and Piano

- Hungarian-American composer Miklós Rózsa received Oscar nominations for his scores to both Hitchcock’s *Spellbound* (1945) and *The Lost Weekend* (1945). Both also incorporated the sound of the theremin, performed by the violinist-chiroprapist Samuel Hoffman. In this arrangement, the theremin plays both the "love" theme, and the "madness" theme, the latter of which signifies the protagonist's dream-like realisations of his past, famously accompanied in the film by a sequence designed by Salvador Dali.

Charlie Draper is an accomplished theremin and ondes Martenot player who provides exceptional bespoke recording and performance services for film, television and live events.

Moving between London and Bristol, Charlie has dedicated his career to these instruments since 2005. His performances have captivated audiences at prestigious venues like Wigmore Hall, Oslo Opera House, Abbey Road Studios, and Glastonbury Festival. His performances have recently been featured on Netflix, Disney+, BBC, and Classic FM.

Offering tailored services, Charlie regularly provides performances, recordings, music education, composition, transcription, and consultation on theremin, ondes Martenot, and early electronic music.

Charlie performs with the Radio Science Orchestra, RETROPHONICA, pianist Paul Jackson, and harpist Holly Lowe as Stranger Strings. His recent recordings include work for composers Natalie Holt, Carlos Rafael Rivera, Benjamin Wallfisch, and Christophe Beck.

Patrick Hemmerlé is one of Europe's foremost and most enigmatic pianists. Refusing to follow musical traditional conventions, he has forged a unique path in the musical world which leaves him free to immerse himself with singular dedication into the repertoire and musical expression resonating with the profoundest convictions. The results are interpretations of startling insight and originality. By dauntlessly performing all 24 Chopin Etudes or 24 of Bach's Preludes and Fugues in a single concert, as well as championing lesser-known composers he feels a deep affinity for, he has developed a reputation as an original with something out of the ordinary to say,

A charismatic speaker, he is able to elucidate the musical concepts close to his heart with unapologetic candour in a manner that both mirrors and complements his piano playing. Not comfortable with compromise, he engages with his audience from the keyboard with an energy and integrity that leaves no-one in the room in doubt as to his musical intentions.

French born and trained at the Conservatoire de Paris under Billy Edie, and laureate of many international piano competitions, he now lives in Cambridge, England, where he has built up a staunchly loyal following. He also performs all over the world and recent engagements have taken him to New York, Berlin, Paris, Vienna and Prague and China. He has published 5 CDs, and his latest recording project to be issued shortly, is a pairing of Bach's Well Tempered Clavier and Fischer's Ariadne Musica. Patrick is a member of Clare Hall, where he is in charge of the concert programme.

Forthcoming concerts:

-May 19th, 7.30pm: Fitzwilliam String Quartet, with Patrick Hemmerlé, piano
Shostakovich - Johnson - Dvorák

-June 16th, 7.30pm: Mélanie Clapiès, violin, Patrick Hemmerlé, piano
Franck - Enesco. Violin Sonatas

-June 29th, 7.30pm: Grace Davidson, soprano, Julian Perkins, harpsichord
Purcell - Campion - Humphrey - Haendel - Dowland - Scarlatti