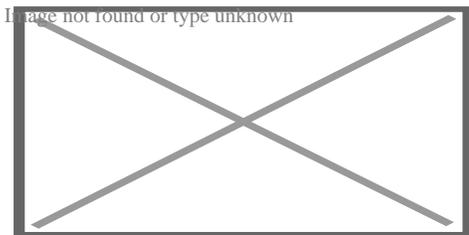


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Identifier

OMF.2002.03.07.01.H

Object Type

Digital Audio

Musical Selections

Distance da Fée, for Ondes Martenot and piano (1949) (7:06) / To?ru Takemitsu [arr. by Takashi Harada]

Description

OM 8 featured a number of compositions for Ondes Martenot performed by Takashi Harada, including works by André Jolivet, Lou Harrison, Madrius Milhaud, Harada, and more.

Jolivet had been impressed by a demonstration of the Ondes Martenot, and composed "Ondes" for the instrument's inventor, Maurice Martenot. Martenot gave the work its first performance at the Société Nationale (Paris) in 1939, with composer Arthur Honegger in attendance. Although for many years the full suite was performed with the first & second movements reversed, Mr. Harada will present the work in its original state. The title "Serimpie" is Jolivet's own invented word derived from "estampie." The "estampie," (incidentally a favorite form and title in the oeuvre of Lou Harrison) is one of the oldest known dances from the Middle Ages. It sometimes was performed on the portable organ. The Ondes Martenot takes the place of the organ here. Modal and later tonal compositional techniques in the original version of the "estampie" have been replaced by serialism in Jolivet's "Serimpie," hence the first syllable of the unusual title.

Jolivet described the concluding movement in 1930s annotational fashion thusly: "After an introduction

establishing the dominant mood of controlled suffering in "Chant d'oppression," the piano plays muffled percussive sounds over which the Ondes emits a plaintive recitative that rises and transforms itself into a true melody. After several attempts to take flight, one of which is particularly violent and distressed, this melody falls back once more and ends in an aggrieved phrase, leaving us with a feeling of resigned contemplation. If this piece deserved interpretation, it would be the following: revolt has but little chance of bringing freedom; and ordeal is only salvation if it is accepted. From a stylistic perspective, this work falls outside any customary formal and compositional conventions."

—Adapted from Georges Hacquard

"Poison d'or" was premiered at Noh Theatre in Nagoya, Japan, in 2001. The work is based on emotionless piano patterns derived from the sounds of continuous snowing in the dead of night. These patterns are juxtaposed with the Ondes' expressive, human song, which paints my mind's inner landscape. —Takashi Harada

"Untitled "I started as an improvisation made after visiting an art exhibition. The abstract titles of the visual artworks impressed me, and struck me as similar to the titles "Composition," or "In A-Minor," one would apply to musical works. I did some recording sessions at my studio based on the paintings' titles, and this composition is the result. I perform the work solo with tape accompaniment. —Takashi Harada

"Voyage en septembre" is a transfiguring suite for me, a work that will never finish. Each time I play this, I change the instrumentation and other aspects. Sometimes I'll modify even the number of movements. I usually rehearse with three movements: Prelude, Fugue, and Echoes. It might become something altogether different at this concert! —Takashi Harada

"Thermal Conductivity" is a masterpiece of writing for the Ondes Martenot. Shin-ichiro Ikebe (b. 1943) is a distinguished Japanese composer who studied with Akira Miyoshi and has written a large body of music in all media. He wanted to explore the Ondes as an expressive vehicle for contrasting musical lines: hard and soft; short and long; organic and inorganic, as opposed to the Ondes' more conventional use as an analogue to the human voice. I gave the premiere of this solo work at the concert hall of Mito Art Tower in Japan, an hour-long train ride from Tokyo. —Takashi Harada

The great French composer Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) wrote many scores that included the Ondes Martenot. His sister-in-law, Jeanne Loriod, was one of the great teachers and performers on the instrument. She had studied with the inventor Maurice Martenot and subsequently was the teacher of tonight's soloist Takashi Harada. Messiaen often included parts for Jeanne Loriod to perform in his major orchestral works such as the "Turangalîla-Symphonie" and his opera "St. François d'Assise". At the time of his death, several pages of works for ondes and piano were left undated. They were only recently edited for publication by the pianist Yvonne Loriod, the widow of the composer, and include some of his early romantic writing with some of his later melodies inspired by his notation of bird songs. A recording of the music, performed by Jeanne and Yvonne Loriod, was released in 1999. —Charles Amirkhanian

Darius Milhaud followed the development of the Ondes Martenot with great interest since the instrument made its first public appearance in 1928. In 1932, Milhaud was asked by playwright Charles Dullin to compose the incidental music to Dullin's play, "Château des Papes". The limited size of the stage available for the performance and the varied sounds of the new instrument led Milhaud to write for Ondes Martenot and small orchestra. The composer himself arranged the work for Ondes and piano. In 1933, this work was given its first performance at the école Normale de Musique in Paris.

-Adapted from Georges Hacquard

"Distance de Fée" was inspired by a poem of the same title by Shuzo Takiguchi, and was originally composed for violin and piano. Toru Takemitsu loved the Ondes Martenot from his younger days and promised to write

me a concerto, but was unable to do so before his death in 1996. However, he gave me official permission to play this beautiful piece on the Ondes, and left some important modifications and suggestions. The work is a companion to “Uninterrupted Pause for Piano” (1952). —Takashi Harada

People

Other Minds Festival (features)

Takemitsu, To?ru (features)

Harada, Takashi (features)

Sakurazawa, Hiroko (features)

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