

THE MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IN PERFORMANCE: CHAMBER ENSEMBLE CONTEXTS

STUDY-DAY AT THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL RESEARCH

Chancellor's Hall, Senate House

Friday, 7 December 2012

Convenor: Mine Doğantan-Dack

Promoted by Middlesex University in collaboration with IMR.

9:30 REGISTRATION AND COFFEE

10:00 Mine Doğantan-Dack and Sebastian Comberti
Equal Partners? Piano-Cello Duo in Historical Context

11:00 John Irving, Jane Booth and Peter Collyer
Three Friends in Conversation - Mozart's 'Kegelstatt' Trio, K.498

12:00 LUNCH

13:00 CONCERT

Mozart Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano in E-flat K498, 'Kegelstatt'
John Irving (fortepiano), Jane Booth (clarinet) & Peter Collyer (viola)

Rachmaninov Cello Sonata in G minor op. 19
Sebastian Comberti (cello) & Mine Doğantan-Dack (piano)

14:00 COFFEE BREAK

14:30 Christopher Redgate and Paul Archbold
The Electronic Chamber: Creating Interactive Performance

15:30 Neil Heyde and Peter Sheppard Skærved
'Naked' instruments: Ravel's Sonata for Violin and Cello (1922)

16:30-17:00 Roundtable

19:00 CONCERT

Ravel Sonata for violin and cello
Peter Sheppard Skærved (violin) & Neil Heyde (cello)

Finnissy Âwâz-e Niyâz (world première)
Christopher Redgate (oboe doubling Lupophon) & Michael Finnissy (piano)

ABSTRACTS:

Mine Doğantan-Dack and Sebastian Comberti Equal Partners? Piano-Cello Duo in Historical Context

The piano and the cello are in essence vastly different musical instruments not only in terms of the experience of embodiment they afford the performer, but also in terms of the basics of music making. The conception of even a single musical sound differs profoundly between a cellist and a pianist. What a cellist imagines as a single note based on his or her experience of producing one is not the same phenomenon that a pianist imagines when thinking about a single note: while the cellist actively initiates, shapes, sustains and ends a note on a cello, thus creating a note that has an intentionally shaped 'inside', so to speak, for the pianist the 'inside' of a single note has no 'personal' shape in the sense that a note struck on the piano does not allow for any intentional moulding of the acoustical material for the period of its duration. Given this diversity between the two instruments, what kind of technical and aesthetic issues arise when they come together to make music? In this presentation we explore these

issues by reference to selected examples from the cello-piano repertoire, focusing on Rachmaninoff's Sonata in G minor Op. 19, which we will perform during the lunch-time concert.

John Irving, Jane Booth and Peter Collyer Exploring Intimacy: Mozart's 'Kegelstatt' Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Fortepiano

Ensemble DeNOTE was formed at the IMR in 2009 by John Irving. Originally working within the context of the IMR's DeNOTE Research Centre for eighteenth Century Performance Practice, this flexible period instrument ensemble has delivered recitals and lecture-recitals across the UK, always integrating performance practice research within its programmes. In May 2012 DeNOTE made a video documentary of Mozart's Kegelstatt Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano, K498 at Finchcocks Musical Instrument Museum in Kent. In this presentation the three performers (John Irving, Peter Collyer and Jane Booth) will introduce the video documentary and touch on questions of performance practice leading into a lunchtime concert in which the Kegelstatt will be played. A particular focus of the documentary is to capture the intimacy of chamber music performance, and especially ways in which the classical (rather than modern) instruments influence aspects of communication within the ensemble in this unusual piece.

Christopher Redgate and Paul Archbold
The Electronic Chamber: Creating Interactive Performance

As the RedArchDuo we have been performing, for a number of years, music for oboe and live electronics including repertoire works, works written for us (including Archbold's own works), and improvisations. Additionally we have conducted extensive research into the oboe's multiphonics. In this presentation, we will explore two aspects of our work: first, the influence of live electronics in the chamber music setting, discussing how performers relate, communicate and rehearse, and comparing these activities with a more standard 'classical' chamber music practice. Second, our creative processes leading to improvisations and compositions, and the way in which they are informed by our research activities. The presentation will include an improvisation for oboe and live electronics.

Neil Heyde and Peter Sheppard Skærved
'Naked' instruments: Ravel's Sonata for Violin and Cello (1922)

'Ravel's audacity expresses itself in two ways firstly in a liking for difficulties overcome and an obstinate search for effort, and secondly in the spirit of artifice.' (Jankélévitch, 1939) 'Revelation of resource' is intrinsic to Ravel's writing in this sonata, and his collaborator, the violinist Hélène Jourdan-Morhange, noted that Ravel 'treats the violin rather harshly' [and] 'does not permit [the violin] any seduction in easy charm; the poor violin is naked!' This presentation will reveal the Duo's instrumental distillation of the heterogeneous homogeneity of the string quartet. Jourdan-Morhange has written that Ravel 'drove her mad' along with the cellist Marice Maréchal with his insistence that passages must pass without even a tiny 'fissure' between the two instruments. Antoine Reicha's writing laid the theoretical and practical groundwork for many of the techniques on which Ravel draws. His Opus 84: Twelve Duos for violin and cello (Paris c. 1814) accompanied an extensive treatise concerning the idealistic nature of two part writing, and includes one movement 'in imitation of an aeolian harp', where the two instruments never play at the same time.