



Doctoral day / Journée du doctorat / Doctoraatsdag

25/05/2023

Salle de concert / Concertzaal / Concert hall

9.30 Welkom / Accueil / Welcome

10.00 Hugo Leemans (UCLouvain), *What can diachronic lexicology of reed instruments tell musicology?*

The organological lexicon should contribute substantially to musicology. Indeed, it provides data to the history of musical instruments and is essential to understand the representations associated with them. However, organological lexicons are seldom consulted. Indeed, lexicographers have difficulties identifying the corresponding instruments. Musicologists, for their part, quickly find themselves helpless when facing phenomena which, like variation, complicate the use of terms and the analysis of their meanings. Thus, received ideas concerning the etymology of names circulate and, for example in the case of *gaita*, serve as an evidence to write the history of instruments. With this contribution, I would like to demonstrate the relevance of knowing and using a few simple methodological and linguistic (and, more precisely, semantic) principles. To that end, I will expose the etymology of the term *gaita* as given in musicology literature, show that it is not valid, and propose a new hypothesis.

10.20 Alexandre Piret (ULiège-VUB), *Toots Thielemans' early musical practice as documented in his notebooks*

Among the various documents in the personal collection of Toots Thielemans (now held at KBR) is a set of some twenty notebooks which document in a unique way his early artistic development and performance activities. There is however a paradox here, since these notebooks document musical practices in a genre (jazz) for which music notation isn't a prerequisite and which is believed to largely rely on orally transmitted performance conventions. This issue calls for the construction of a specific conceptual and methodological framework which borrows both from genetic studies based on philological methods and from the knowledge of creative and learning processes among jazz musicians.

After a general presentation of these notebooks (description of material aspects, state of preservation and dating hypotheses), I will briefly present the method used to describe and map their content. The main part of my intervention will be devoted to examining what these notebooks reveal about Thielemans' learning process, the organization of his early performance career, and, by extension, the post-WWII cultural milieu as experienced by a young Bruxellois jazz musician. While these documents confirm and illustrate well-known practices, they also disclose more

surprising aspects. Overall, they offer a fascinating insight into the lesser-known formative stages of a performer who grew out to become one of Belgium's most famous musicians.

10.40 Salvatore Sclafani (ULB-CRB), *From source studies to piano interpretation: Alberto Ginastera's Suite de danzas criollas, op. 15*

Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) is one of the most influential composers of twentieth-century South American music. Rooted in the Argentine musical nationalism of the beginning of the century, his production offers an exceptional example of synthesis between modernist aesthetics and traditional Argentinian music. In this presentation, I will focus on his *Suite de danzas criollas, op. 15* (1946-1956) for piano, characterised by the reworking of the stylised rhythmic patterns of the traditional dances zamba, gato, and malambo.

My investigation led me to a research stay at the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel (Switzerland), to study the composer's collection. Thanks to a prior online consultation of the materials available at the foundation, I defined a database of sources to deepen the relationship between the composer, Argentinian musical traditions, and Western musical modernism.

This experience was decisive for entering into more intimate contact with Ginastera's personality and musical universe, opening a wider space for a deeper investigation of his production. Direct contact with elements of his daily and artistic life (libraries, sound recordings, musical manuscripts, correspondence, and concert programmes) and consultation of this material, including the good ink copy of the manuscript of the first unpublished version of the *Suite* (1946), allowed me to deepen the study of the impact of modernist aesthetics and Argentinian traditional dances on the work.

Through theoretical and performative analysis of this source, rarely mentioned in the literature on Ginastera, and via its comparison with the second version of the *Suite*, published in 1957, I wish to trace its genesis and explore Ginastera's compositional process, since its very first conception. The study of this manuscript and my investigation of the materials consulted at the foundation is proving crucial to understand what impact to attribute, in my piano interpretation, to the stylisation of the traditional element within the composer's modernist writing.

11.10 Pause / Pauze

11.50 Luis Mora Matus (KCB), *The evolution of the double bass drum in jazz drumming*

The use of the double bass drum in jazz drumming goes back as early as the 1940s. Its origin is attributed to Louie Bellson, who used it for soloing and performing specific arrangements of compositions (e.g. "Skin Deep" by Duke Ellington). Its use became more prominent during the seventies and eighties with drummers like Billy Cobham, Steve Smith, and Dave Weckl. In recent years, drummers like Antonio Sanchez and Marcus Gilmore continue its technical and timbral development in new and exciting ways.

In this lecture, I want to show how the double bass drum and double bass drum pedal have been used in different historical and musical contexts of jazz, as well as discussing new possibilities for its application in contemporary jazz drumming. This will be done with the help of transcriptions of audio/video material, as well as academic and non-academic literature. The style periods that will be analyzed are big band, fusion and contemporary jazz. Special attention will be given to the organological evolution (drum sizes and pedals) as well as the different rudiments that drummers have mastered. Lastly, I will demonstrate through video clips how I use the double bass drum in my own practice, for both improvisation and composition, as part of my doctoral research.

12.00 Chrétien Ekume Azali (UCLouvain), *The aesthetics of Congolese rumba. From abstraction to functional and cultural considerations*

Rumba is a musical genre that originated in Cuba and has its roots in Afro-Cuban culture. With the slave trade, the Africans who were torn away from their continent took with them an intangible heritage, their culture and their music. After the abolition of slavery at the end of the 19th century, Congolese rumba made a comeback, but was seasoned with the ingredients of other cultures. From 1930 (the year of its return to the Congo), it changed from a music out of necessity to one that is considered as the Congolese cultural identity and registered as intangible cultural heritage of humanity by Unesco in 2021.

In a previous study on the semiotic structure of the rumba, I focused on its beauty, that is, its aesthetic dimension. What is the beauty of this rumba that becomes the cultural identity of a nation? What are the rules of its aesthetics? If these rules are established, are they universal? Are they linked to an era? Are they mutable according to the cultures and contexts of production?

To answer these concerns, I started from two visions of musical aesthetics: The first is advocated by Hanslick and Gadamer. It stipulates that the study of musical aesthetics must be based entirely on what is beautiful in music itself, rather than depicting the feelings that music arouses in us. According to this orientation, music aesthetics tends towards abstraction. It considers musical production in isolation from everything external to it; that is, it discards its social function and its original context.

The second, led by Christian Accaoui, states a slightly different thesis; musical aesthetics must link music to the extra-musical world. To abstract the work from the social conditions of its production as well as the conditions of access to which one is subjected in order to hear it, is to idealise it excessively.

It is on these two opposing positions that our reflection is based. Our objective is to understand the aesthetic theory on which Congolese rumba derives its beauty and on the other hand, to try to outline some rules on which its beauty is based.

12.20 Lunch

14.00 Manon Fauconnier (UCLouvain), *The manuscripts of the Saint Gudula collection and the canon Jan Bernard Vanden Boom*

The Saint Gudula collection is an exceptional Brussels collection of more than 500 musical manuscripts from the 18th and early 19th centuries, most of which are preserved in remarkable condition. A large number of these works were written by local composers who were active in the collegiate church of Saint Gudula and at the Court of Brussels. The initiative for the creation of this collection was taken by Canon Jan Bernard Vanden Boom, an enigmatic figure wearing many hats, whose name appears on most of the manuscripts. The aim of this talk is to present the Saint Gudula collection and the particularities of its manuscripts, as well as to shed light on Jan Bernard Vanden Boom and his role in the musical life of Brussels, and particularly of Saint Gudula.

14.20 Richard Sutcliffe (Huddersfield University), *Creating a Belgian Violin School: The violin classes of the Brussels Conservatoire under the directorship of François-Joseph Fétis (1834-1870)*

The Belgian Violin School was born just a few years after Belgium became an independent country. This school of playing trained some of the most important soloists, orchestral musicians, and

teachers of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Nevertheless, in present day parlance it is rarely referred to as an independent school but rather as part of the Franco-Belgian Violin School. In order to reclaim the individual nature and identity of the 19th-century Belgian Violin School we need to pose the following questions. What role did nationalism play in the administrative and artistic choices taken in forming the Belgian Violin School? What were the pedagogical approaches of its proponents and how did they view their own contributions? And finally, what were its artistic ideals, not only as expounded by its teachers and performers, but as perceived by the public and its critics?

14.40 Nils Vermeulen (KASK/UGent), *Into the toneworld*

The way an instrument is played, and consequently the music itself, is directly affected by technology. This is true for all instruments but perhaps most so for the double bass.

Thanks to its long string length and large body, the instrument has an immense acoustic potential and is constantly challenging for both player and maker. It also makes the double bass the instrument par excellence to lead the search for other sounds.

Within the research, various so-called technical advances and/or modern inventions, are reoriented in time. Thus, the history of strings seems to be read in an idea of progress, with the gut string finding legitimacy only in historically informed performance practice, versus the "modern" string that continued to develop as a servant of technicality and virtuosity. We see a similar story in the development of the bow. But also in terms of temperament; the 'primitive' Pythagorean tuning seems to be inferior to the 'sophisticated' equal temperament tuning, a perception fueled by the idea of telos in history.

'Into the Toneworld' explores the acoustic sound possibilities of the double bass, without adhering to the current techniques, technologies, tunings, etc. These have a narrowing effect and exclude a lot of possibilities only from a linear and progressive idea of time. Instead, this research is based on the physical properties of sound, more specifically, of the string.

I will not present a paper but discuss the specific part of my ongoing research that deals with questions about the future of (double bass) strings and the impact of technology on music itself. How strings can inspire us, and foremost surprise us. Let the strings dictate the tuning, follow the string deep into the toneworld and you'll be amazed on the richness of your bass, your music and you.

15.00 Pause / Pauze

15.30 Xiao Dong (ULB), *Felix Mendelssohn : programmation, interprétation et improvisation*

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) was one of the most renowned improvisers of his time. For an 1845 concert in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, he extemporized a transition between two of his songs without words (op. 67/1 and op. 62/6, "Frühlingslied") in which, according to his student William Rockstro, the arrival of "Frühlingslied" theme caused "an electrical thrill through every heart in the room", a moment "never to be forgotten by anyone who heard it." This well-documented example of Mendelssohn's improvisation and its profound impact naturally attracted musicological interest; in a 2012 article, R. Larry Todd even proposed a reconstruction of Mendelssohn's improvised transition.

Todd's work clearly demonstrated the importance of improvisation in Mendelssohn's musical thinking and in the composer's personal expressive ideal but gave less attention to Mendelssohn's reason for choosing and linking these two songs. A closer look at their construction and an analysis

of the number which precedes “Frühlingslied” in Op. 62 (no. 5, Gondellied) shows that his choice was the result of a careful calculation, one involving a delicate balance between his sensibilities as composer and practical musician. This juxtaposition revealed unexpected connections between two separate compositions. Mendelssohn’s improvised transition justified his programming choice and created a unique dramatic effect through its spontaneity.

Mendelssohn’s practice suggests interesting possibilities for developing the individuality of our performances through original programming and improvisation. Inspired by the original context in which the musical works were presented, we may also be able to reveal the composer’s ingenious but “hidden” designs to modern listeners.

15.50 Bobby Mitchell (VUB/KCB), *Playing Schumann Again for the First Time*

How can one learn to improvise convincingly within the context of the nineteenth-century piano repertoire? And why is it important to improvise on this repertoire in the twenty-first century? Taking the music of Robert Schumann as a departure point, *Playing Schumann Again for the First Time* proposes an answer to these questions through methods towards a pianistic practice that is driven by experimentation and strives to continually find more layers where improvisation can take place, both in sounding musical practice and in notation. These practice methods are contextualized by a discussion of the presence of improvisation in Western classical musical practice in the nineteenth century. They are then substantiated by a plea to use improvisation as a tool for rethinking the current performance practice of nineteenth-century music. Improvisation itself and the concepts driving this term will also be addressed: improvisation in musical performance will be described as a process guided by a feedback loop between mimesis and morphosis with which the practitioner engages using his or her individual cognitive and embodied approach to listening, forgetting, and conceptualizing; the results of which bear his or her own sonic signature. The knowledge gained in this project lies within the realm of what will be described as improvisation as practice, a category of improvisational behavior that circumvents the need to be presented as art and is rather intended for the development of one’s own music-making.

Poster: Lothar Peirsman, Jesuit ideology, the Counter-Reformation, and the Spiritual Madrigals of Philippe de Monte (1521-1603)

The genre of the spiritual madrigal reached a height of popularity in the final decades of the 16th century. With its combination of spiritual and philosophical poetry, and the music-expressive power of the secular madrigal, it flourished in Counter-Reformist contexts as a medium for introducing sacred elements into the daily life. The Fleming Philippe de Monte (1521-1603) was not only one of the most significant and prolific composers of his time, but also one of the most important producers of spiritual madrigals. Yet, despite the rich socio-cultural and musical interest of the spiritual madrigal, and Monte’s stature and reputation, both the spiritual madrigal as a genre and Monte’s contribution to it have not received much attention in research. The doctoral project that I will present in this poster scrutinizes Monte’s spiritual madrigals textually and musically. Monte’s spiritual madrigals clearly exhibit connections with the Society of Jesus, which formed a powerful ally of Catholic rulers in their struggle against the rise of Protestantism. The hypothesis thus emerges that these pieces conveyed Jesuit doctrine or philosophy to their performers and audiences. A textual analysis of Monte’s spiritual madrigals for their spiritual and philosophical content allows these pieces to be allocated within a Jesuit ideological framework. In addition, a

musical analysis reveals techniques that empower the conveyed spiritual and philosophical messages in these madrigals.