



Hochschule der Künste Bern
Haute école des arts de Berne
Bern Academy of the Arts



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



Global Piano Roll Meeting

Prelude #7

Online

14 October 2023, 21:00 (CEST)

[Check for your own timezone](#)



Program

Saturday, 14 October 2023

Zoom-Link after [free registration](#)

21:00 (Bern, CEST) [20:00 (London, BST), 12:00 (San Francisco, PDT), 06:00 (Sydney, AEDT)]

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21:00 **Welcome**

21:05 Judith Kemp (Munich)

Preserving a Musical Treasure: Initiatives and Processes for Digitizing Piano Rolls in the Past and Present

In 2015, the Deutsches Museum presented an extensive online catalog of its holdings of over 3000 piano rolls, which subsequently attracted widespread attention. As preliminary work for considerations to digitize the collection, a six-month research project was carried out in which an overview of previous international private and institutional initiatives and approaches for the digitization of piano rolls was compiled. The findings, which will soon appear in a larger publication, form the basis for the further procedure at the Deutsches Museum and can also be seen as a possible aid for other comparable digitization projects at other institutions. The most important results of this research work will be presented in this lecture.

Dr. Judith Kemp is Scholar in Residence at the Deutsches Museum, where she is conducting a research project on the digitization of music rolls. Previously, she was involved in the implementation of the Deutsches Museum's new permanent exhibition Musical Instruments as a research assistant. In addition, Judith Kemp worked for several years as an editor at the Österreichische Musikzeitschrift and at the Kritische Gesamtausgabe der Schriften Arnold Schönbergs, Vienna.

21:35 Peter Phillips (Sydney)

Welte Mignon Rolls to Disklavier – New Discoveries

I have been working on creating emulated MIDI files of digitised Welte-Mignon rolls for over 10 years, and my presentation describes new findings about this process. The algorithms used in the emulator software David Gosden and I have developed, called Rollmidi, are well established. Because this program allows all parameters to be adjusted, we consider the program to be in its final stages of development. However, this is not the end of the story, as my

presentation will show. I have found it necessary to make important adjustments to the eroll MIDI files of Welte rolls to ensure the performance on a MIDI instrument, such as a Disklavier, is the same as would be heard on a Welte-Mignon. I have also found an error source in the expression coding of some Welte rolls, which I will explain. Another error source is the digitizing process, whether by roll scanner or roll reader. The end result of fixing these errors and making modifications to the expression coding in the MIDI file gives improved nuance to the expression, which I will demonstrate.

Peter Phillips was introduced to piano rolls by Denis Condon in 1976. Peter is an electronics engineer and amateur pianist, and has developed a range of equipment and technologies that bring piano roll recordings into the modern realm. He holds a PhD in musicology.

21:50 Peter Phillips (Sydney)

Comparing the two Pachmann Roll Recordings of Henselt's *La Gondola* Etude.

Vladimir de Pachmann recorded his altered versions of Henselt's *La Gondola* etude twice. The first recording took place in Leipzig on February 19, 1906 for the Welte-Mignon, the second in New York in 1925 for the Welte Licensee. Up until recently, a 1906 roll recording (number 1227) had not been located, so it was never possible to compare these two recordings. Early this year, a Green Welte roll of this work was located, and subsequently loaned by the Brentford Musical Museum to Marc Widuch who scanned the roll and sent the resulting data to Peter Phillips. At last, a comparison could be made between these two recordings, which is the subject of this presentation. The significance of Henselt's *La Gondola* is also discussed.

22:05 **News and updates from the roll community:**

Esther Burgos-Bordonau (Madrid) will report on a roll conference held in Madrid in October 2022.

Sebastian Bausch (Bern) will talk about new research and scholars studying rolls at the HKB.

Neal Peres da Costa (Sydney) will present a preview of the next Global Piano Roll Meeting at Sydney, Australia in July, 2024.

Musical tribute to Bob Berkman (*5 February 1955 – †12 July 2023)

22:45 **End of the Meeting**