



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



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



Global Piano Roll Meeting

Prelude #8

Online

17 February 2024, 21:00 (CET)

[Check for your own timezone](#)



Program

Saturday, 17 February 2024

Zoom-Link after [free registration](#)

21:00 (Bern, CET) [20:00 (London, GMT), 12:00 (San Francisco, PST), 07:00 (Sydney, AEDT)]

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21:00 **Welcome**

21:10 Jörg Holzmann, Bern & Christoph Siems, Leipzig

The piano roll as soloist. Grieg's Piano Concerto and Early Recordings Informed Performance Practice

In 1922, Grieg's Piano Concerto was performed for the first time in a version using a pre-recorded piano roll of the solo part. Conducted by Willem van Hoogstraaten, the New York Philharmonic accompanied Percy Grainger's playing captured on roll one year before. This source is particularly valuable as Grieg considered Grainger to be the Concerto's best interpreter and had studied the score with him only a few weeks before his death. For this reason, the Concerto has been performed again and again in this constellation ever since.

As the resulting concert situation is a combination of historical recording and new interpretation, a divergence arises between the solo and the orchestral part. The sound information on the roll is fixed, but the members of the orchestras are subject to changes in taste during the last one hundred years. On the basis of historical audio recordings, it can be assumed that the pianists' playing in the romantic tradition also presupposes orchestral playing of the time, with typical stylistics as, for example, the extensive use of portamento. The paper first wants to examine how the use of a historical solo part reproduced by a piano roll affects the way "modern" orchestras play while accompanying. In a second step, it will be assessed to what extent this special setting is suitable for the concept of musical re-enactments. The performance of the orchestral part can be seen as a scientific process aiming to come as close as possible to the historical ideal as well as a creative process that helps to re-interpret specific features of historical performance practice.

Jörg Holzmann first studied classical guitar at the HMDK Stuttgart, graduating with the highest marks in both the artistic and pedagogical courses. He was awarded prizes at major competitions in Spain, India, Korea and the USA. This was followed by studies in musicology, literature and art history in Leipzig and Halle, his Master's thesis dealing with piano rolls by women for Hupfeld. From 2018 to 2020, he was research assistant at the Musical Instruments Museum

at the University of Leipzig. Since 2020, he has been employed in the same position in the project “Historical Embodiment” at the Bern Academy of the Arts, where he is writing his PhD on musicians in early sound film documents.

Christoph Siems studied musicology at the universities of Leipzig and Halle. Already during his studies, he specialised in the music of Scandinavia. He further deepened his knowledge through a semester abroad at the NTNU in Trondheim along with other stays abroad. Since 2021, he has been a doctoral student with Tomi Mäkelä at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg. His doctoral thesis focuses on religiosity in the music of Rued Langgaard and Fartein Valen. In 2022, he has been spending a DAAD-funded research semester at the Centre for Grieg Research at the University of Bergen and in 2023, he was appointed manager of the Grieg Memorial Centre Leipzig.

22:00 News and updates from the roll community:

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

22:30 End of the Meeting