

The SILLAGES ENSEMBLE

artistic director Philippe Arrii-Blachette



CINE-CONCERT **GEORGES MELIES** (1861-1938) The 'Magician of Cinema'

Three short features by **GEORGES MÉLIÈS**

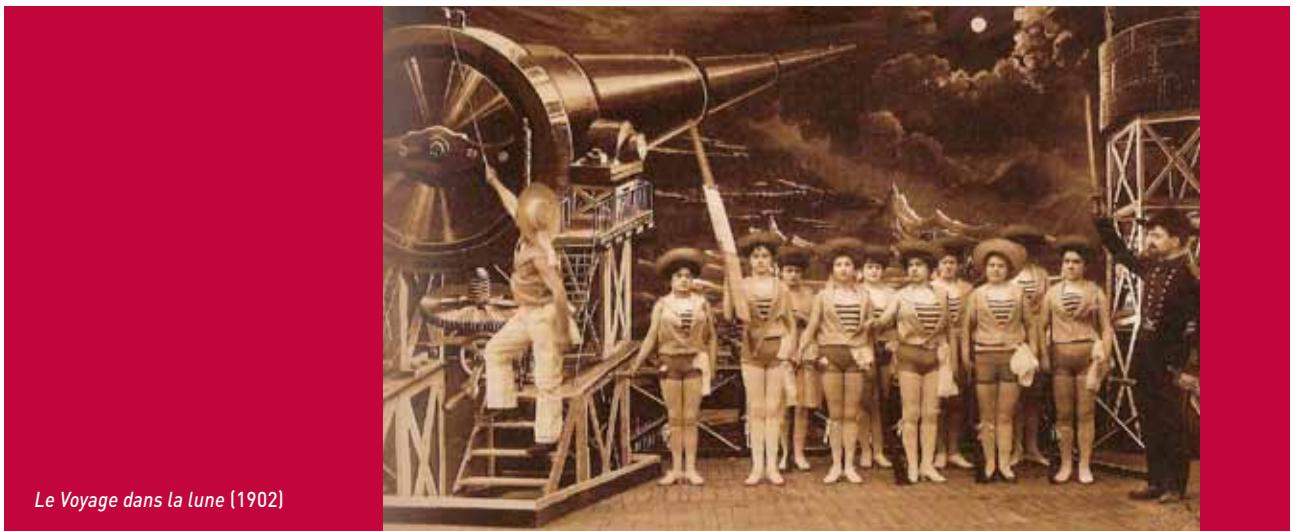
interspersed with four short films

original music* by **CARLOS GRÄTZER**

performed live by the **SILLAGES ENSEMBLE**

PRODUCTION / ADMINISTRATION CONTACTS

Ensemble Sillages : 00 33 (0)2 98 47 94 14 - ensemblesillages@orange.fr
Geneviève Chardin : 00 33 (0)6 77 25 17 15 - chardin.g@club-internet.fr



Le Voyage dans la lune (1902)

CINE-CONCERT **GEORGES MÉLIÈS** (1861-1938) The 'Magician of Cinema'

Three short features by GEORGES MÉLIÈS
interspersed with four short films

- L'Homme-orchestre (The One-man band, 1900)
- Le Voyage dans la lune (A Trip to the moon, 1902)
- Nain et géant (The Dwarf and the giant, 1901)
- Le Royaume des fées (The Kingdom of fairies, 1903)
- L'Illusionniste double et la tête vivante (The Triple Conjuror and the living head, 1900)
- Voyage à travers l'impossible (The Impossible Voyage, 1904)
- Dislocation mystérieuse (Extraordinary Illusions, 1901)

original music* by CARLOS GRÄTZER
performed live by the SILLAGES ENSEMBLE

Sophie Deshayes, flute
Jean-Marc Fessard, clarinet
Hélène Colombotti, percussion
Vincent Leterme, piano
Nadine Bodiguel, violin
Gilles Deliège, viola
Séverine Ballon, cello

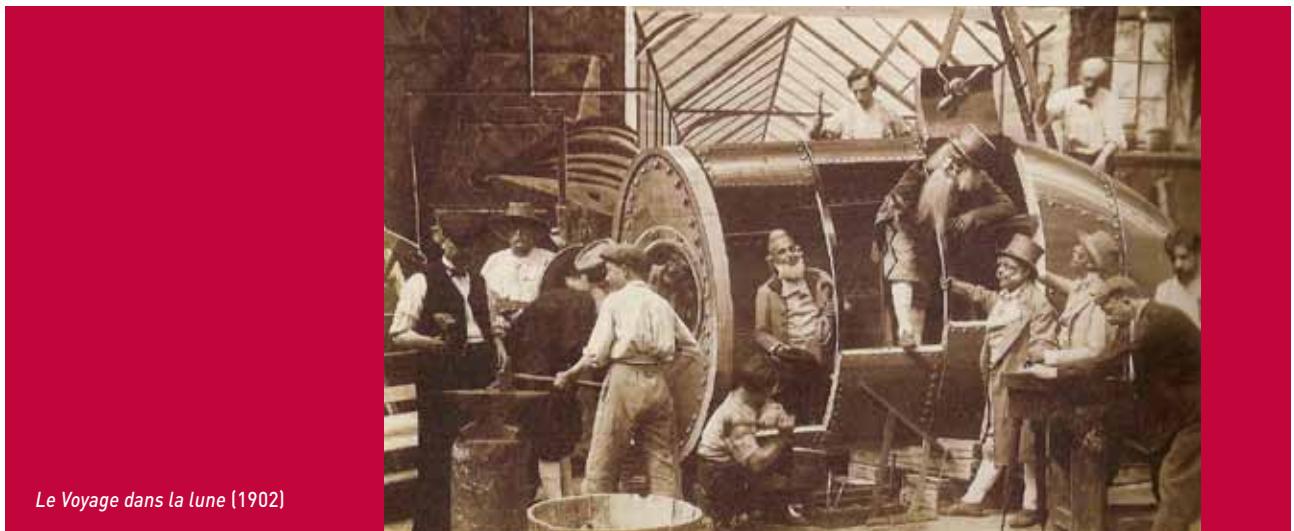
Renaud Déjardin, conducting

with electronics elaborated in the Césaré studios
(National Centre of Musical Creation, Reims)

* Commissioned by the City of Geneva on the occasion of the Fête de la Musique

First performance: 17th June 2011 Hall of the Alhambra in Geneva
(in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Méliès's birth)

DRAMA/Sillages Production with the support of the National Centre for Musical Creation, Reims (Césaré)



Le Voyage dans la lune (1902)

GEORGES MÉLIÈS

Georges Méliès was, without a doubt, the creator of the cinematographic show. His oeuvre, which comprising more than 500 titles, covers a period of barely fifteen years (1896-1913), during which he contributed to all genres. Whereas the Lumière brothers made a name for themselves by filming outdoors, Méliès began by filming magic shows that he staged in his own theatre, the Théâtre Robert-Houdin. Méliès was initially a political caricaturist and draughtsman before converting to the practice of prestidigitation. When he discovered the Lumières' animated views, he viewed this invention as an extraordinary means for increasing and enriching the magic shows. He soon built a studio in Montreuil, just outside of Paris, constructed the sets, elaborated the first films with screenplays, and took care of the direction and special effects.

His first masterpiece was *Le Voyage dans la lune*, which he made in 1902. Lasting a quarter of an hour, this was the longest and most expensive film up to that time. With this title, freely inspired by Jules Verne, Georges Méliès made the first film of science fiction and gave free rein to his overactive imagination. In it, the Professor Barbenfouillis, played by Méliès himself, directs an interstellar expedition and sends explorers to discover the star of the night. The rocket that plunges into the lunar eye has become one of his most famous images and has been universally plagiarised. But in 14 minutes, Méliès invented editing, double exposure and graphic madness, the whole on a hectic rhythm. The scientists fall asleep, dreaming of the Milky Way, and will be captured by the Selenites, savages that live in the grottoes of the moon. But the scientists manage to escape and end up landing in the sea.

The story of *Au Royaume des fées* is in keeping with the traditional fairytale repertoire. Here we find the nasty witch, the captive princess and the young troubadour who is going to rescue her. This great new magic show stands out for the originality and richness of the decor, along with the humour and colourfulness of his story. Like most of the works from the same years, the copies of the film were coloured by stencil, extending the visual exuberance of the costumes and sets.

In a way, *Voyage à travers l'impossible* marks the apogee of Mélièsian creativity. The heroes of this new band do not cross interstellar space but that of a universe of the wildest dreams and nightmares, filled with fantastic creatures and cannibalistic monsters. The film is more or less contemporary with Sigmund Freud's interpretation of dreams and, by its very whimsical manner, is a cinematographic illustration of it.

In the space of a few years, primarily from 1902 to 1908, Méliès feverishly turned out one film after another, holding all the creative positions: producer, screenwriter, actor, art director, special effects man, editor and distributor. But, above all, he constructed an original visual universe, developing a graphic conception of cinema that later avant-garde filmmakers, as well as advertising people and video artists, would quote abundantly.

For this reason, his oeuvre has travelled down the century and still procures the same jubilation for viewers of every era.

Michel Marie
(professor at the University of Paris)

'A conjurer who puts the cinematograph in a hat to pull out cinema.' (Edgar Morin)



Le Royaume des fées (1903)

Accompaniment music for seven musicians, electronics and conductor

'The show is organised round three films mixing science fiction and extravaganza : *Le Voyage dans la lune*, *Voyage à travers l'impossible* (voyage to the centre of the sun) and *Le Royaume de fées*. The first two films complement one another symmetrically : the first voyage is made left to right, the second right to left. Between these two large interstellar voyages, we find ourselves with a fanciful fairytale brimming with imagination.'

These long short features (lasting 12, 16 and 20 minutes) are punctuated by very short films (2-3 minutes) in which we see Méliès direct himself, giving free rein to the magic of special effects : multiple exposures, matte shots, frame-by-frame shooting... They attest to the discovery of the new technical means permitted by cinema at its birth.

The composition of the music remains closely linked to the image and the cinema discourse, while maintaining its own grammar and freedom. It follows the plot, fading or accentuating with musical gestures that are sometimes exuberant, in keeping with the acting, which evokes mime more than theatrical declamation of the period.

Here, mixing instrumental sounds and those produced by electronic synthesis or transformation takes on its full sense, echoing the approach of this enthusiast of discovery, innovation and new technologies.

My idea was to write 'light', playful music that plays between real sound and transformed sound, motifs, rhythm and colours. It endeavours to be close to Méliès's art, above all his intentionality, open-mindedness and humour, taking the imaginary, wonder and invention as sources of inspiration.

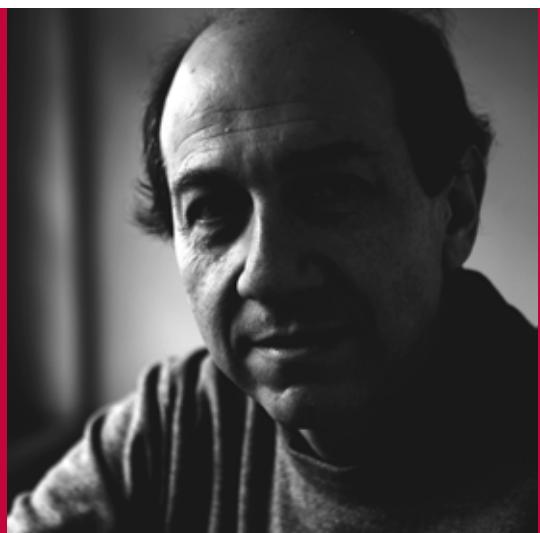
One could establish a progression - an historic lineage - as concerns my relation to the image and handling of musical time. I have always adhered to Norman McLaren's thought that 'it is of little importance what moves; what is important is how it moves'. The Canadian filmmaker considered himself the spiritual son of Méliès, to whom we owe the remark : 'The question is to understand what cinema must be... especially movement'.

Méliès, like the Symbolists, felt that art had value only if based on magic and music. He conceived the film as a means of personal expression, which gave me the freedom to do as much with the musical composition for this show.

What could be closer to the desired goal in my work than his idea of 'showing what does not exist' : creating a new music for these marvellous films, making heard (a century later) what does not yet exist ?'

Carlos Grätzer (march 2011)

Carlos Grätzer



Isabelle Meister

CARLOS GRÄTZER, composer

Carlos Grätzer was born in Buenos Aires in 1956. He received his musical training, and especially in composition, from his father, the Austro-Argentine composer Guillermo Graetzer (born in Vienna, emigrating to Argentina in 1939), himself a student of Paul Hindemith.

For several years, Carlos Grätzer divided his artistic work between music and cinema, making animated films in particular (two of which won awards). Since 1980, he has devoted himself exclusively to music and at the same time produces programmes of contemporary music for the Radio Nacional Argentina.

Holding French nationality, he moved to Paris in 1984, when he received a grant from the French government. In Paris, he attended the composition class of Ivo Malec at the Conservatoire and met Carlos Roque Alsina and André Boucourechliev. He attended the Darmstadt summer session in 1986 on a scholarship, was selected to participate in the Musical Computing for Composers programme at IRCAM in 1989 and, in 1995, was invited to the Composers Conference at Wellesley College (Massachusetts, USA).

Amongst his works let us mention, in particular, *Découvertes* (1985), a State commission premiered by the 2e2m ensemble at the Centre Georges Pompidou ; *Failles fluorescentes* (1991), commissioned by UPIC for the 70th birthday of Iannis Xenakis and first performed at Radio France ; *Mouvements* (1993), premiered by the Alea Ensemble at the Tsai Performance Center, Boston University, USA, and given its French premiere in Paris by the Ensemble Intercontemporain ; *Aura (par-delà les résonances*, 1996), commissioned by Radio France, first performed by the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and the Ensemble Intercontemporain conducted by Jonathan Nott ; *Ausbruch* (1997), a commission from INA-GRM ; *Transmutango* (1999), first performed at the Musica festival in Strasbourg and chosen for the saxophone competition of the Paris Conservatoire ; *Trio en 5 mouvements* (2001), a commission from Radio France for the 'Alla Breve' programme ; *Liens*, commissioned by the Greek Ministry of Culture and first performed at Radio France.

Finally, his two works written for a film-concert programme in homage to Sherlock Holmes - a State commission - were premiered at the 22nd European Short Film Festival in Brest, by the Sillages ensemble and performed again at several other events (Paris, Lyon, Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, Victoria Hall in Geneva...).

Renaud Déjardin



RENAUD DÉJARDIN, conductor

Cello soloist Renaud Déjardin obtained the gold medal, highly commended, at the Strasbourg Conservatory at the age of 12 and went on to be a prize-winner at numerous international competitions including the Rostropovich Competition and the Leipzig Bach Competition. In 2003, he enrolled in the advanced conducting class at the Paris Conservatoire without ever having conducted previously, obtaining the premier prix in June 2007, conducting Stravinsky's *Firebird* and Ravel's *Concerto in G* at the Cité de la Musique in Paris.

Quickly noticed for his exceptional gifts, he guest conducted at the Paris Opera (concert in homage to Elliott Carter at the Palais Garnier), the Matthew Bourne production of *Swan Lake* at the Théâtre de Mogador, the Orchestre d'Auvergne, Eskisehir (Turkey) Philharmonic ; he regularly works with contemporary music ensembles such as the Israel Contemporary Players and the Sillages, Quaerendo Invienetis and Court-Circuit ensembles.

His cellist discography includes works by Schumann and Bohuslav Martinu and, as conductor, works by Jean-Luc Hervé (*Algarade*, 'Coup de coeur' of the Académie Charles Cros), Berio (*Aeon*, rewarded by Le Monde de la musique) and Durosoir (*Alpha*).



ENSEMBLE SILLAGES, director artist Philippe Arrii-Blachette

Founded in 1992 by Philippe Arrii-Blachette, the Sillages Ensemble is a group of musicians who find the expression of their performers' sensibility through composers of our time.

Since 1996, Sillages and Le Quartz - National theatre of Brest, have been associated, and numerous projects have thereby resulted including first performances, dissemination of the contemporary repertoire, and cultural and pedagogical actions. It is a whole arsenal of proposals that Sillages develops everywhere for familiarising the public with the music of our time.

Working with living composers is at the centre of the ensemble's artistic policy, to ensure an accurate interpretation of their musical thoughts and to also favour bringing them closer to the public by a living comprehension of their works.

In addition to the contemporary repertoire, Sillages elaborates projects always aimed at bringing the broadest possible public to rub shoulders with new musical forms. This approach has been backed up by several 'ciné-concerts': Grémillon-Jean-Louis Agobet in 1999, Vigo/Buñuel-François Paris (2005) and Keaton-Carlos Grätzer (2010).

Its national and international activity develop in parallel, and the ensemble has been applauded in Lyon, Perpignan, Dijon, Nice, Lyon and Paris, as well as Madrid, Seville, Alicante, Geneva, Buenos Aires, Rome, Mexico City, Monterrey...

In addition to the disc of André Hodeir's *Anna Livia Plurabelle* (Label bleu) with jazz musicians, Sillages recorded a monograph devoted to Jean-Luc Hervé (*Sillages, l'empreinte digitale*) and Martin Matalon's *Traces II-VII* (Sismal production).

In residence at Le Quartz - National theatre of Brest, the Sillages Ensemble is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Drac-Bretagne (Brittany Regional Department for Cultural Affairs) on the grounds of aid to subsidised ensembles, the City of Brest, the Brittany Region, SACEM, action culturelle, and SPEDIDAM, performers' rights.

PROJECT STAGES

- 17 June 2011 - first performance - Hall of the Alhambra, Geneva (Switzerland)
- 11 October 2011 : Le Quartz - National theatre of Brest

FINANCIAL CONDITIONS

- Contact Geneviève Chardin : 00 33 (0)6 77 25 17 15 - chardin.g@club-internet.fr
salaires, voyages, hôtel et défraiement : 7 interprètes, 1 chef, 1 régisseur, 1 accompagnateur

SPECIFICATION SHEET

- in progress

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