ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: MEL BONIS (1858–1937): PIANO WORKS

Rok Palcic, Doctor of Musical Arts, 2020

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Department of Music

In a world dominated by men, music, and art in general, are thankfully seeing encouraging signs that point to the community finally not only realizing the disparity, but actively working towards finding a solution that would at least mitigate the problem. It is important to realize that women have always occupied an important place amongst composers, and it was mostly societal limitations that prevented them from receiving rightful praise. Mélanie Hélène Bonis was one of the rare exceptions. Like many of her contemporaries, she had to resort to the use of synonyms, and changing her name to the gender-neutral version Mel Bonis made it possible for her works to be acknowledged by audiences, and publishers. Yet, her talent was undisputedly the driving force behind her success. Since a very young age, she has garnered the support of some of the most prominent members of the music community, including César Franck, whose role was instrumental in getting her admitted to the famed Paris *Conservatoire*. Even though she

shared classrooms with Debussy and Pierné, she managed to set herself apart and excel, and her achievements eventually led to her role as of Secretary of the *Société des compositeurs de musique* (Music Composers Society). However, despite her fame, position, and rich opus, which comprises about 300 vocal and instrumental works covering a variety of genres, her name remains largely confined to music archives. The goal of this research is to at least try to assuage this issue by presenting, in the form of studio recordings, about three quarters of her works for solo piano, which are representative of her mature creative period—between 1881 and 1932—and document the evolution of her compositional technique and style in great detail. To my knowledge, while most of her piano works have been recorded, this project represents the first collection by a single performer, and the only one entirely based on the recent reissue of her collective piano works by the German publisher *Furore Verlag*, which introduces important revisions, achieved through scholarly research.

MEL BONIS (1858–1937): PIANO WORKS

by

Rok Palcic

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
2020

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Preface

This dissertation is presented in accordance with the recording project format guidelines set forth in the Academic Handbook of the University of Maryland School of Music. The entire dissertation consists of two parts—the recorded performances of the works for piano solo by French composer Mel Bonis, presented on two compact discs, which will be eventually made available in digital format through the Digital Repository at the University of Maryland (DRUM), and this document, which represents the supplementary written component.

The performances were recorded in the *Studio 26* of the Slovenian National Radio (*Radio televizija Slovenije*) by pianist Rok Palčič. The process was overseen by sound engineer Matjaž Mastnak and producer Janja Velkavrh. The editing process was handled by Rok Palčič and Janja Velkavrh.

A Steinway (Hamburg) Model D grand piano was used in all recordings. The sound engineer used three arrays of microphones: a pair of large-diaphragm microphones close to the body of the instrument (one for treble and one for the bass register), a pair of small-diaphragm microphones spaced approximately one foot from the body (one at the tail and the other covering the lid opening), and a surround microphone to capture the room sound.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to three women who, throughout different stages of my life and career, knowingly or inadvertently, have kept me heading down the right path and made it possible for me to bring this project to life: my mother, who allowed me to dream of someday becoming a concert pianist; my loving wife, who has stood by me and supported me during every phase of my degree; and, last but far from least, Mélanie Hélène Bonis, for the fantastic music she has left behind for us to discover, enjoy, and learn from.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Chia Chou, for introducing me to the wonderful music of Mel Bonis in the first place; Christine Géliot, president of the *Association Mel Bonis*, for helping me obtain all of the musical scores; and Meredith Graham, for assisting with the editing process.

Furthermore, I would like to express my gratitude to the staff at the Slovenian National Radio and Television Studios (*Radio Televizija Slovenija*) for the outstanding quality of the audio recordings. I would like to particularly thank producer Janja Velkavrh and sound engineer Matjaž Mastnak, but also Executive Producers Matej Venier and Gregor Pirš; sound assistants Cole Moretti, Jože Lap, and Matjaž Šercelj; as well as piano technician Zlatko Silič.

Finally, none of this could have been possible without the support of professor Larissa Dedova, who over the past three years embraced my every idea with open arms, giving me the courage to push my creativity to the absolute limit.

Table of Contents

Preface ii

Dedication iii

Acknowledgements iv

Table of Contents v

Compact Disc Track Listing vii

Compact Disc One vii

Compact Disc Two viii

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Chapter 2: Program Notes 7

5 Pièces pour piano 8

Impromptu, Op. 1 9

Rondo dans le genre ancient, Op. 7 10

Près du Ruisseau, Op. 9 10

Pensées d'automne, Op. 19 10

Berceuse, Op. 23, 1 11

La chanson du rouet, Op. 24 11

Ballade, Op. 27 11

Papillons, Op. 28 12

Romance sans paroles en la bémol majeur, Op. 29 12

Carillons Mystiques, Op. 31 12

Méditation, Op. 33, 1 13

Marionnettes, Op. 42 14

Barcarolle, Op. 41 and Barcarolle-Etude, Op. 43 14

Femmes de légende 15

Romance sans paroles en sol bémol majeur, Op. 56 18

Sorrente, Op. 61 18

Barcarolle en mi bémol majeur, Op. 71 19

Echo, Op. 89 and Narcisse, Op. 90 20

L'ange gardien, Op. 99 21

Il pleut, Op. 102 21

La cathédrale blessée, Op. 107 22

Au crépuscule, Op. 111 22

Près du moulin, Op. 115 23

Cinq pièces pour piano 23

Sévillana, Op. 125 and Ariel, Op. 129, Posthumous 24

Etude de concert en sol bémol majeur, Op. 136, Posthumous 25

Dolorosa, Op. 138, Posthumous 25

Chapter 3: Concluding Remarks 26

Appendix: Publication Information 28

Compact Disc One 28

Compact Disc Two 29

Bibliography 30

Compact Disc Track Listing

Compact Disc One

		Opus Number	Time
Impromptu (mon premier morceau)		Op. 1	3:19
Rondo dans le genre ancien		Op. 7	2:47
Près du Ruisseau		Op. 9	2:13
Prélude (*en mi bémol majeur*)		Op. 10	1:18
Gai printemps		Op. 11	1:54
Eglogue		Op. 12	2:04
Aux Champs		Op. 13	1:56
Menuet		Op. 14	2:42
Pensées d'automne		Op. 19	3:01
Berceuse		Op. 23, 1	2:17
La chanson du rouet		Op. 24	3:11
Ballade		Op. 27	6:53
Papillons		Op. 28	1:23
Romance sans paroles en la bémol majeur		Op. 29	2:33
Carillons mystiques		Op. 31	5:11
Femmes de légende			
	Ophélie		4:52
	Phoebé		2:39
	Salomé		4:35
	Viviane		2:55
	Omphale		4:17
	Desdémona		2:32
	Mélisande		2:11

Total Duration: 1:06:53

Compact Disc Two

		Opus Number	Time
Méditation		Op. 33, 1	2:30
Barcarolle en si bémol majeur		Op. Posth., 41	3:34
Marionnettes		Op. 42	2:04
Barcarolle-Etude		Op. 43	3:28
Romance sans paroles en sol bémol majeur		Op. 56	1:51
Sorrente		Op. 61	2:17
Barcarolle en mi bémol majeur		Op. 71	4:22
Echo		Op. 89	2:40
Narcisse		Op. 90	2:54
L'ange gardien		Op. Posth., 99	3:15
Il pleut		Op. 102	2:11
La Cathédrale blessée		Op. 107	6:30
Au crépuscule		Op. 111	3:29
Près du moulin		Op. 115	1:40
Cinq pièces pour piano			
	Une flûte soupire	Op. 117, 1	1:42
	Berceuse triste	Op. 118	1:10
	Boston valse	Op. 119	1:09
	Agitato	Op. 120	1:07
	Clolches lontaines	Op. 121	2:43
Sévillana		Op. 125	2:45
Ariel		Op. Posth., 129	2:30
Etude de concert en sol bémol majeur		Op. Posth,, 136	2:52
Dolorosa		Op. Posth., 138	2:40

Total Duration: 1:01:33

Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation represents the culmination of my doctoral research at the University of Maryland's School of Music—the discovery and recording of the collective piano works by French composer Mélanie Hélène Bonis. The audio recordings of forty-five pieces, representative of her mature works—the entire *Femmes de Légende* (Legendary Women) cycle,[1] as well as most of her character and concert pieces—document the evolution of her compositional style in great detail.[2] About a third of her almost 300 works were written for piano, and recording all of her works for piano solo, as well as transcriptions and collaborative pieces for piano four hands would have essentially doubled the scope of the project. Hence, I had to make the hard decision of omitting three volumes of dances,[3] collaborative pieces for piano four hands,[4] as well as her didactic youth pieces,[5] leaving ample room for future research. However, each of the

[1] Mel Bonis and Eberhard Mayer, *Piano Music*, vol. 1, *Femmes de légendes* (Kassel: Furore, 2003).

[2] Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition is Six Volumes*, ed. Eberhard Mayer, 6 vols., (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2003–2016) and Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition in Seven Volumes*, ed, Eberhard Mayer, vol. 7, *Pièces Pittoresques et Poétiques C: 1910–1932* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2006).

[3] *Etiolles (Valse)*, Op. 2; *Les Gitanos (Grande Valse espagnole)*, Op. 15, 2; Mazurka, Op. 26; *Suite en forme de vlases*, Op. 35–38 published in Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition in Ten Volume*, eds. Eberhard Mayer and Ingrid Mayer, vol. 5, *Danses A* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2013); *Diamant noir*, Op. Posth. 186; *L'escarpolette*, Op. 52; *Orientale*, Op. 32; *Soirs d'antan*, Op. 34; and *Viennoise*, Op. 8 in Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition in Eleven Volumes*, eds. Eberhard Mayer and Ingrid Mayer, vol. 10, *Danses B* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2014); *Bourrée*, Op. 62, 1; *Pavane*, Op. 81, 1; *Sarabande*, Op. 82,1; *Black Pearl*, Op. 70; *Boléro*, Op. Posth. 177; and *Mazurka-Ballet*, Op. 181 in Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition in Eleven Volumes*, eds. Eberhard Mayer and Ingrid Mayer, vol. 11, *Danses C* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2015) and Mel Bonis, *6 pièces à 4 mains, Op.130* (Paris: Max Eschig, 1930).

[4] *Pavane*, Op. 81; *Six Valses-Caprices*, Op. 87; and *Le Songe de Cléopâtre*, Op. 180, 1 published in Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition is Ten Volumes*, ed. Eberhard Mayer, vol. 6, *Pieces à quatre mains* A (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2007) and *Scherzo-Valse* Op. 35; *Danse sacrée* Op. 36; *Ballabile* Op. 37; *Valse lente* Op. 38; and *Interlude et Bacchanale*, oO. 39 published in Mel Bonis, *Piano Music: Edition is Ten Volumes*, ed. Eberhard Mayer, vol. 8, *Pieces à quatre mains* B (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2009).

[5] Mel Bonis, *Scènes enfantines, Op.92* (Paris: E. Demets, 1912); Mel Bonis, *Album pour les tout-petits, Op. 103* (Paris, Poulalion, 1913); Mel Bonis, *Deux pièces pour piano, Op. 113* (Paris: Sénart, 1924); Mel Bonis, *Dix-sept pièces enfantines, Op. 116* (Paris: Eschig, 1926); and Mel Bonis, *Miocheries, Op. 126* (Eschig, 1928).

works included in this collection document a unique style, characterized by a broad knowledge of composition and orchestration, as well as a blend of experimental audacity and loyalty to tradition. Some attributes of her technique include a thick texture; delicate, yet expressive tone; intricacy of counterpoint; and the continuous shifting of melodic material between registers, which in the case of her piano works translates to a continuous use of hand-crossings.[6]

This research is also particularly intriguing because it helps us paint a more accurate historic picture, adding a new perspective to the narrative that is far too often written exclusively by major figures, or at the very least about them. While we mostly associate the period between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century with the likes of Saint-Saëns, Debussy, Ravel, and Stravinsky (rightfully so due to the impact that they had on their contemporaries and future generations), they were not the only driving forces behind French music. Its contingent was far grander, and while Mel Bonis might well be considered a minor cog, her contribution was in no way insignificant. Her repertoire includes what we could categorize as serious music—both short concert pieces and large-scale chamber music works of considerable depth—as well as light-hearted compositions, which shows that there was a need for *salon music* as well.[7] At the time, women faced far bigger obstacles than men when trying to get their works performed or published; such repertoire faced less opposition, which is why it represented a viable choice for female composers.[8]

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[6] Even though there is no concrete record of her enjoying a prominent career as a performer, based on her extensive use of virtuosic elements, there is abundant reason to believe that she possessed a remarkable pianistic technique.

[7] Mel Bonis, *Piano Music*, vol. 10, *Danses A* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2013), 10.

[8] Katharine Ellis, "Female Pianists and Their Male Critics in Nineteenth-Century Paris," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50, no. 2/3 (Summer - Autumn, 1997): 357–358.

The turn of the century marked one of the biggest shifts in classical music, one that would act as catalyst for the birth of a variety of contrasting streams, the roots of which we can trace to the period between the 1880s and 1930s. Fauré, d'Indy, Pierné, Massenet, Satie, and Chaminade, just to name a few, were responsible for solidifying Paris's place as one of the most progressive and musically relevant cities in the world. This also shows us the caliber of masters that Parisian composers had to measure up against, which makes it at least a touch simpler to understand why Bonis's name, along those of countless other contemporaries, had a hard time withstanding the trial of time.

Yet, Mel Bonis was no ordinary composer. A brief look at her life (not as close as to stray too far away from the main purpose of this document) should prove useful to better understand her background, which unveils just how closely she interacted with some of the characters who crafted an important piece of our history.[9] Furthermore, in order to appreciate her creative productivity—and just how big a testament to her resilience it is—we have to look into the dramatic circumstances that, in my opinion, prompted her to seek refuge in her own compositions, turning her pain and suffering into optimistic creativity.

From a young age, through nothing more than sheer determination and faith and constantly challenged by her parent's lack of support, Bonis somehow managed to keep her love of music alive. Luckily, Monsieur Maury, a friend of the family who happened to be a cornet professor at the prestigious *Conservatoire de Paris*, noticed her potential

[9] For a detailed account of her life, I recommend consulting Christine Géliot, *Mel Bonis, femme et compositeur, 1858-1937* (Paris: Harmattan, 2009), which is likely the only comprehensive and authoritative biography documenting the life and work of the composer. All biographical information included in this document stems from this collection and the abridged version found on the website of the *Association Mel Bonis*—Mel Bonis Association (Christine Géliot, "Mel Bonis Biography (English)", translated by Florence Launay and Michael Cook, Association Mel Bonis, publication date unknown, accessed February 19, 2020, https://www.mel-bonis.com/melboanglais.htm).

and helped Mélanie by introducing her to César Franck, who took her under his wing. He was instrumental in grooming her and eventually facilitating her enrollment into the exclusive conservatory in 1875, where she would study alongside some of the future greats, most notably Debussy and Pierné. During her studies, despite the fierce competition that she faced on a daily basis, she managed to shine, receiving several internal competition prizes. During her student years, she also fell in love with the poet, singer, journalist and musical critic Amédée Landély Hettich, several of whose poems she set to music. But her parents did not approve of this relationship and sought to end it by arranging her marriage to the local businessman Albert Domange instead. Unfortunately, he was unsupportive of his wife's musical ambitions, which eventually led her to withdraw from the *Conservatoire*. Obviously, this brought about a rather grim and stagnant period,[10] which was fortunately interrupted by her reacquaintance with Hettich a few years later, who not only motivated Mel to resume composing but also introduced her to Alphonse Leduc—her future publisher. In time, the close collaboration between Bonis and Hettich crossed the boundaries of a professional relationship, resulting in an illegitimate pregnancy. As they were both married with children, they had to find a way to hide Mélanie's pregnancy, as such news would undoubtedly destroy both their families' reputations. She already had three children with her husband, on top of five stepchildren from his first marriage, which is why she decided to give birth to Hettich's daughter Madeleine in secrecy during an extended visit to Switzerland. She placed her

[10] This period lasted roughly between 1883 and 1893. According to Mayer, Bonis made the conscious choice of focusing on her personal life and truly rededicated herself to composition only after 1900 (Bonis, *Piano Music*, 1:7). While I cannot dispute that her most productive period falls indeed between 1900 and 1914 (which coincides with the onset of the First World War), several of her earlier compositions (particularly her Ballade, Op. 27) show that she was rather productive during the late 1890s as well.

newborn in the care of a former chambermaid, instructing her to leave the child in the dark. Throughout her childhood, Madeleine would receive little more than vague accounts about her parents. At the beginning of the First World War, following the death of Madeleine's foster mother, Bonis saw a chance in reuniting the shattered family by adopting Madeleine as a victim of war. However, for reasons known only to her, Mel was still reluctant to share the truth with her daughter. Several years later, Madeleine started to develop love feelings for one of her half-siblings, at which point Mel had little choice but to finally reveal her true identity. Both mother and daughter were understandably devastated, which was made even worse by the fact that they had to keep the truth wrapped in secrecy. The decade following this revelation truly tested their newly-forged relationship; yet, they eventually managed to mend this rift, which was of great comfort to Mélanie during the last years of her life, particularly after losing her son Edouard.

Bonis certainly possessed the rare ability to channel her agony and grief into her creative work, and the time following the birth of her illegitimate child was one of her most productive periods. In 1910, she accepted the position of Secretary of the *Société des compositeurs de musique* (Music Composers Society). This tenure opened several doors, and even though we might not be familiar with her name today, during her lifetime her compositions were regularly programmed by performers and conductors such as Francis Planté, Louis Fournier, Ricardo Viñes, and Gabriel Pierné.

Her creative period spanned over 51 years and covered a transitional and highly experimental epoch, encompassing the departure from the Romantic period and opening the gates for several new streams. Her style lies somewhat between late romanticism and

impressionism, and although her harmonic language became significantly more intricate during the first two decades of the 20th century—making pervasive use of extended chords and the whole-tone and octatonic collections—she remained faithful to the tonal system throughout her life. Her piano oeuvre includes well-crafted and ambitious masterpieces, characterized by a rich and intricate polyphonic texture, clear formal structures, and a plethora of virtuosic elements, as well as simple *salon* miniatures, pointing to a demand for such compositions by both the Parisian aristocracy and publishers, who were desperately trying to increase sales figures around the turn of the century.[11] To this end, several of her simpler dance pieces exist in two editions, one for piano solo and another for piano four hands.

While most of her works have been recorded individually, by both aspiring young musicians and recording artists in Russia and Europe,[12] to my knowledge, no integrated recording collection by a single performer yet exists. Moreover, the revised versions published by *Furore Verlag* between 2003 and 2016 introduce several redactions based on original manuscripts and notes that were in some cases not acknowledged in their first editions (which is what most of the pre-existing recordings seem to have been based on), changing some compositions in important ways.[13] My research represents a unified recording collection by a single author, the entirety of which is based on a single scholarly edition.

[11] Mel Bonis, *Piano Music*, 5: 10–11.

[12] Examples include Maria Stembolskaja, "Mel Bonis - Maria Stembolskaia (2010) Various pianoworks [sic]," October 10, 2019, video, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q5MqbvglZ6c and Mel Bonis, *Piano Music*, with Veerle Peeters and Jan Vermeulen, piano, Etcetera, KTC1422, 2010, CD.

[13] Bonis, *Piano Music (Danses A)*, 2013.

Chapter 2: Program Notes

According to Mayer, piano was Bonis's "instrument of choice",[14] and her piano works document the entire development of her style from 1881 (when she wrote her first student work, the Impromptu, Op. 1) to her last piece for piano solo in 1932. A close analysis of her oeuvre allows us to see that her shift from romanticism to impressionism was neither instant, nor fully embraced. Essentially, her transition, or better yet evolution, unfolded in three stages. Since she has never fully abandoned romantic practices, particularly in terms of musical form, I cannot claim that she ever became a representative member of the impressionist movement.[15]

Yet, there is no denying that Debussy set the trend for many of his contemporaries, and he undoubtedly exerted his influence on Bonis from the very beginnings of her career as well, which we can see by comparing his early works, such as his Piano Trio in G Major (written in 1880), with most of her works written between 1881 and 1900.

The following period (approximately 1900–1920) signals a departure from her romantic style in favor of extended chords and non-diatonic scales. Larger works for piano solo, such as *La Cathédrale blessée*, Op. 107, as well as numerous orchestral and

[14] Mel Bonis, *Piano Music*, 1: 7.

[15] According to Byrnside, the terms *impressionist* and *impressionism* in conjunction with music only began to gain some consistency during the first decade of the 20th century, and were almost exclusively associated with Claude Debussy, who started appearing in scholarly publications during that time. See Ronald L. Byrnside, "Musical Impressionism: The Early History of the Term", *The Musical Quarterly* 66, no. 4 (Oct., 1980): 523–525.

chamber music works, such as the remarkable Piano Quartet in B-flat Major,[16] are representative of her most productive, mature period.

Her final, late period, is characterized by a return to compact forms, the majority of which are between one and two minutes long. It begins in the early 1920s with her *Au crepuscule* (At Dusk), Op. 111, a pivotal piece, and concludes with her last piece for piano, *Dolorosa*, Op. Posth. 138, which she wrote in 1932. Since she rarely dated her manuscripts, it is difficult to determine accurately when certain works were composed; however, she likely wrote very few of them beyond this point, mostly due to the severe depression brought on by the tragic loss of her son, which tormented her during the final years of her life.

5 Pièces pour piano

According to the Italian historian and art critic Venturi, the essential principle of impressionism can be traced back to the need of finding a new, realistic way of depicting natural elements on canvas, the shimmering water of the Seine being the main source of intrigue for Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro around the 1870s.[17] Many are familiar with Ravel's "Ondine" from his suite *Gaspard de la nuit*,[18] in which the composer achieves a similar effect—albeit aurally, not visually. Even though we cannot claim that she ever fully embraced the impressionist idea, Bonis was clearly fascinated by the movement, as is shown by her fondness for extramusical content, particularly illustrating scenes from

[16] Mel Bonis, *5 Pièces pour piano, Op.109* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1925); *Quatuor en si bémol* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2004); and *La Cathédrale blessée*, Op. 107 in Bonis, *Piano Works*, 4: 20–25.

[17] Lionello Venturi, "The Aesthetic Idea of Impressionism", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 1, No. 1 (Spring, 1941): 35–36.

[18] Maurice Ravel, *Gaspard de la nuit* (Paris: Durand & Fils, 1909).

the nature and rural life (almost as if *Madame Domange* longed for something besides the glamour of the Parisian streets and sought to escape from them by hiding in her own compositions).

Among her first published collection, *5 Pièces pour piano*,[19] the three pieces "Gai printemps" (Cheerful Spring), Op. 11; "Eglogue" (Shepherd's Song), Op. 12; and "Aux champs" (In the Fields), Op. 13 evoke joyous feelings, reminiscent of a simpler life. The remaining two miniatures, her Prelude in E-flat Major, Op. 10 and her Minuet, Op. 14 are optimistically exuberant, and, despite their light-hearted character and short duration, truly challenging for the performer. From a technical point of view, her piano writing is extremely idiomatic; however, the presence of subtle counterpoints and interlocking melodies—much like we are used to seeing in the music of Robert Schumann—requires thorough preparation, both physical and mental.

Impromptu, Op. 1

On the manuscript of her Impromptu, Op. 1, dated 1881, the editors at Furore discovered the note "*mon premiere morceaux*" (my first piece),[20] indicating that this might have been her first piece ever written. Nevertheless, several of her distinctive traits are already present: prolonged *legato* lines, a subtle polyphony, and technically challenging elements, which add a touch of liveliness to the texture—in this case, brisk repeated thirds that support the melody.

[19] Mel Bonis, *5 Pièces pour piano* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1898).
[20] Mel Bonis, *Piano Music*, 2:9.

Rondo dans le genre ancient, Op. 7

Bonis's *Rondo in the Old Style* was first published in 1893. This short piece is based on the simple ABA rondo form popular during the 18th century, prototypical of the *scherzo* movement that we are accustomed to hearing in classical sonatas. The outer sections are simple, lively, and dance-like, characterized by fast ornaments—mordents—which also appear in the middle part, considerably more lyrical and dramatic.

Près du Ruisseau, Op. 9

In the impressionist miniature *By the Creek*, we can see her fascination with imagery from the nature. The texture mimics the flow of the water, creating a gushing effect that acts as tapestry for the melody, which with great fluidity constantly switches registers as well. From a technical point of view, hand-crossings, which dominate several of her piano works, are prominently displayed. These gestures are rather physical in nature and require that the performer calculates each transition carefully, yet plays them freely enough in order to make them sound natural and flowing, just like water.

Pensées d'automne, Op. 19

Thoughts in Autumn was composed in 1894, and dedicated to the pianist of the famous trio of Chaigneau sisters, this *song without words* is a melancholic waltz, characterized by subtle colors, quiet sonorities, and an overall gentle character.

Berceuse, Op. 23, 1

The first of her two *Lullabies* bears the dedication "A ma petite Jeanne", one of Mel's daughters. While initially tender and fragile, the major challenge for the performer is to avoid getting carried away by the rich and moving sonorities and progressions as the piece unfolds, which can easily disrupt the overall character.

La chanson du rouet, Op. 24

Even though Mel Bonis was an accomplished pianist, and fond of shorter formal concepts, she did not follow in the footsteps of so many of her peers who composed at least one set of etudes. However, she did write two of them (the Concert Etude, Op. 136 and the *Barcarolle-Etude*, Op. 43) and, while technically and musically perhaps not as demanding as her two *proper* etudes, her *Song of the Wheel* could just as easily be labeled a study as well. The brisk broken chords in the right-hand part symbolize the rotary motion of the wheel and the particular difficulty is to avoid overshadowing the melody, which she placed in the tenor register beneath the dense accompaniment.

Ballade, Op. 27

Her largest single work for piano solo is a true masterpiece, comparable in scale to the Ballades of Chopin, and both musically and technically, just as challenging. Beginning with a delicate, still pastoral introduction, the narrative quickly develops into an alternating series of passionate eruptions and contrasting serene moments. The culmination, a triumphant *coda*, calls for a healthy degree of *bravura* and endurance, as performers find themselves at the top of the dynamic range and both hands engage in

demanding passages in parallel octaves. Like most romantic pieces of this scope, it is emotionally and physically draining, but also demands an incredible delicacy of touch, which is necessary to evoke a vast variety of colors.

Papillons, Op. 28

Contrary to her ballade, her *Butterflies* is one of her shortest pieces, yet due to the amount of sudden changes, both in terms of dynamics and colors, also very rich. Lighthearted, and juvenile, this miniature is an ideal recital piece for aspiring pianists, showing us Bonis's fondness for youth compositions.

Romance sans paroles en la bémol majeur, Op. 29

While she did not compose many pieces for cello, her cello sonata, two piano quartets, and a few shorter collaborative pieces featuring this instrument show that she was at the very least interested in it. In this *Song Without Words* Bonis introduces the melodic line beneath the right hand, very much in the register that is usually dominated by the lower strings.

Carillons Mystiques, Op. 31

One of the defining features of the *Mystical Carillons* is a recurring four-measure *ostinato* phrase, which symbolizes the musical pattern of a carillon, creating a repetitive background onto which two voices are set. The curious harmonies, which are created through the interaction between the repeating motive and leading voices provoke a rather

particular, mystical effect. The harmonic language is tonal, yet the pervasive use of extended chords and pedal points generate truly unique colors.

This piece is particularly intriguing from a musicological perspective, too, as figuring out the intended accidentals was not entirely self-evident, as some passages span over several registers and are notated using *8va* symbols, repeating certain accidentals, while omitting others. Although performers have to consider elements beyond notation—such as harmonic context and performance practices—we also have to assume the chance of editorial error, particularly in the case of relatively unknown works. In this particular instance, there are quite a few occasions where we reach an impasse, and resisting the urge to choose common sense over interpreting the material literally proved to be the right choice, as it resulted in truly exquisite and unique sonorities.

Méditation, Op. 33, 1

Two versions of this piece exist—the one for piano solo, which was recorded as part of this project, and one for cello and piano (Op. 33). The former essentially takes the melodic line and merges it with the accompaniment, making the piano version slightly more challenging, yet, more importantly, retaining all of its charm. Much like Massenet's own "Méditation" from the opera *Thaïs*, Bonis' rendition (which is likely unrelated) also juxtaposes a soaring melody over a steady and unobtrusive accompaniment; yet, contrary to Massenet, she makes use of a secondary voice, which interacts with the main one contrapuntally. This dynamic is obvious in the version for cello and piano, but can be nicely emulated in the solo version as well.

Marionnettes, Op. 42

A rather whimsical piece, probably inspired by her many works for children (which could unfortunately not have been included in this project), this piece (entitled *Puppets*) displays her ability to compose music for young pianists that is both within their grasp, yet not free of challenges. The polyphonic element is not as prevalent as in most of her other works, yet there is an abundance of occasions to bring out certain inner voices, which invite the performer to create interesting moments.

Barcarolle, Op. 41 and Barcarolle-Etude, Op. 43

Two barcarolles, both composed in 1899, conclude her early creative period. Gabriel Fauré, who composed thirteen barcarolles, was also more than familiar with the work of Mel Bonis, and particularly fond of her first piano quartet. We can draw several parallels between the styles of these two composers, from an impeccable clarity of form, to a sensible treatment of the melodic material, which manages to always remain in the foreground, despite being surrounded by a rich texture.

Both of her barcarolles are characterized by the typical swaying rhythm and long melodic lines, split between mostly thirds and sixths. However, while the first of the two presents them in a gracious and calm manner, the second turns them into a virtuosic element, which is when, after a graceful arpeggiated introduction, we finally understand why she chose the title *etude*. It is extremely challenging, particularly due to the intricacy, technical demand, and scope. To my knowledge, this is the premiere recording of this piece, as even an extensive search of popular online platforms and recordings archives yielded no results.

Femmes de légende

Her middle period is when we see her style reach a new stage of maturity, which we can clearly appreciate in her seven-piece collection entitled *Femmes de légende* or *Legendary Women*. Each piece strives to capture the character of a female legendary, mythological, or literary personality.

Mélisande is the central figure of the symbolist play *Pelléas and Mélisande*, written by Maurice Maeterlinck in 1893.[21] Immediately following its first performance, the play inspired the entire artistic community (composers included), with Debussy leading the way in setting it to music. He started working on his homonymous opera immediately following the 1893 premiere and allegedly completed a preliminary version between 1893 and 1895; however, it would only see its full first performance in 1902, after a thorough revision. The following year, Arnold Schoenberg unveiled his own orchestral work—*Pelleas und Melisande*, Op. 5—which he revised twice, in 1911 and 1920.[22] Jean Sibelius made his contribution, too, with his incidental music in the form of a suite— *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Op. 46—in 1905.[23] Yet, the first work to receive a proper public performance was Fauré's incidental music, which was commissioned in 1898 by Mrs. Patrick Campbell for its first British production, which took place later that June. Initially, Debussy was the one who had been asked to compose it, but had to refuse, as he was busy working on his own opera.[24]

[21] Robert Orledge, "Fauré's 'Pelléas et Mélisande'", *Music & Letters* 56, No. 2 (Apr., 1975): 170.
[22] Arnold Schoenberg, *Pelleas und Melisande, Op.5* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1920).
[23] Jean Sibelius, *Pelléas et Mélisande, op. 46* (Berlin: Schlesinger, 1905).
[24] Claude Debussy and François Lesure, *Lettres, 1884-1918* (Paris: Hermann, 1980), 10.

According to the publisher *Furore Verlag*,[25] later that same year, Mel Bonis composed her own *Mélisande*, a short piano work characterized by many of the features that we are able to appreciate in the works from her early period—clear melodic lines that are often treated contrapuntally, a rich accompanying texture, and extended harmonies. Yet, this particular piece shows a far more progressive language than her opuses 41–43, which were in fact composed in 1899, making it difficult to believe that such an important shift could have occurred around that same time. The more probable date of composition is likely closer to the one claimed by the publisher Leduc, which dates the manuscript to 1922, which would better explain the presence of the whole-tone scale, characteristic of her later works.

The three pieces "Phoebé", "Viviane", and "Salomé" were first published as a collection in 1909.[26] Christine Géliot describes the first of the three pieces with the following words:

> "The sister of Phoebus, the sun, [Phoebe] symbolizes the moon, the night, chastity. The piece creates an impression of night. Steeped in twilight, languor and a sense of immense space, the atmosphere is one of unreality. This feeling of alienation is reinforced by the incoherence of rhythm between the two hands."[27]

The Lady of the Lake, "Viviane", is portrayed in this miniature rondo form through the charming dance-like motion, reminiscent of Chopin's *Barcarolle*, gracious ornaments, and an overall witty exuberance. For the first time, we can see her experimenting with meter changes, which she used more consistently in her later works.

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[25] Some sources claim 1898 as the date of composition (Bonis, *Piano Music*, 1: 6); however, Mélisande was first published as part of the collection Mel Bonis, *5 Pièces pour piano, Op.109* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1925), which claims 1922 as the date of composition.

[26] Mel Bonis, *Trois pièces pour piano* (Paris: Leduc, 1909).

[27] Christine Géliot, introductory supplement to Mel Bonis, *Piano Works*, trans. Holger Klier, vol. 1, *Femmes de légende* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2003).

The final piece of the original 1909 collection, "Salomé", takes it a step further by making use of composite time signatures, pointing to her interest in expanding her vocabulary and practices. This device also serves a semiotic purpose, as it is probably used to better illustrate the iconic biblical tale featuring King Herod, Salomé, and her mother Herodias, who with the help of her daughter's enchanting dancing is granted her perverse wish—the head of John the Baptist. Through the steady pulsating rhythm, the composer creates a sense of a certain military, authoritative, and regal presence, contrasted by exuberant and irregular passages, which in my opinion represent Salomé's exquisite and enchanting dancing. The overall mood is somehow twisted and eerie, and culminates in the vile and violent decapitation.

Ophelie, which was not part of the original three-piece collection was also composed in 1909, but remained unpublished until 1998. It is also one of her most representative impressionist works, using a plethora of colors and techniques to evoke Hamlet's lover and her tragic demise. Gracious sonorities, which represent her innate beauty and elegance, are juxtaposed to the enigmatic imagery of water, tied to ideas of sadness and ultimately death, symbolic of Ophelies's mysterious drowning.

Omphale, the Greek queen of the kingdom of Lydia, was often associated with themes of sexuality and promiscuity. The eroticism and freedom of spirit are palpable throughout this exceptional work, incredibly complex and technically challenging. Until now, all existing recordings seem to have been based on the 1910 publication, which won a special composition prize, awarded by the German publisher *Signale für die musikalische Welt* (Signals for the Musical World).[28] The version that I used for this

[28] Mel Bonis, *Omphale* (Berlin: Verlag der Signale für die musikalische Welt, 1910).

recording project was the one published by *Furore Verlag* in 2003, which introduces a number of important changes, the most consequential of which is essentially the complete alteration of measures 52–55.

Finally, Desdémona portrays the Venetian beauty from one of the most iconic of Shakespearian plays, who is murdered by her husband, Othello. This short, melancholic piece from 1913 is characterized by a rather classical and retrospective style, which stands in stark contrast to the rest of the collection.

Romance sans paroles en sol bémol majeur, Op. 56

Published in 1905, this *Song Without Words* in Gb Major features the very same technique that the composer used in her *Près du Ruisseau*, Op. 9—continuous hand-crossings. This approach, which is rarely seen outside the works of Mel Bonis (at least to the degree of making it an integral part of the structure), requires an unusually active engagement of the entire body for such a lyrical piece, turning every performance into an intensively physical experience. As a consequence, despite its gentle and seemingly calm character, there is a sense of urgency that accompanies every phrase.

Sorrente, Op. 61

Sorrente likely refers to Sorrento, a coastal town in southwestern Italy. According to Mayer, this piece is a "miniature melodrama", a musical form widely popular at the turn of the century.[29] A love poem by the same title, written by Cécile Guinand accompanies

[29] Mel Bonis, *Piano Works*, ed. Eberhard Mayer, vol. 3, *Pièces Pittoresques et Poétiques B: 1895–1905* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2006), 9.

this piece, evoking imagery from the nature as observed through the eyes of a couple of lovers—a terrace, sailboats, waves, doves, and the hope of their brief time together lasting for an eternity.[30]

Barcarolle en mi bémol majeur, Op. 71

Her last barcarolle is one of her most sophisticated pieces, which builds upon the ideas that she used in the other two. The rising and descending arpeggios create a fluid effect of the flowing water, while the melody, which is intermittently accompanied by a subtle counterpoint, creates a positive and cheerful character worthy of a true *gondoliere*. Essentially three-partite, the middle section features a sudden departure from the home key of Eb Major, introducing a surprising rhapsodic section in the remote key of A Major, reminiscent of works by Franz Liszt. Once more, the whole-tone scales make an appearance at the very end, before ultimately reverting to the home key through a series of highly interesting progressions.

The brief departure from conventional tonal constructs, particularly at the close of larger sections, is one of the defining characteristics of her mature compositional technique. Observing her later compositions, we can notice a dichotomy between progressive and traditional, creating a portal, which allowed her to wander effortlessly between the two worlds.

[30] Just as a curiosity, this idyllic town also inspired Italian singer Ernesto De Curtis to write his "Torna a Surriento" in 1902, two years before Bonis composed her own tribute. Alongside songs such as "O sole mio" and "Funiculì funiculà", De Curtis's original became one of the most representative examples of traditional Neapolitan song, popularized by various singers throughout the 20th century.

Echo, Op. 89 and Narcisse, Op. 90

Both pieces were composed in 1910, one of the most productive years of her career. They are likely based on Ovid's myth *Narcissus and Echo*.[31] The nymph Echo, famous for being rather talkative and always wanting to have the last word, crosses Juno, queen of goddesses, who curses her, making her annoying habit Echo's only means of communication—the ability to respond, yet not to initiate a conversation. One day, she follows the handsome hunter Narcissus through the woods, falling in love with his otherworldly beauty; Narcissus, realizing that he is being followed shouts "who's here?", to which Echo, cursed by Juno, can only repeat his very words.

Narcissus wanted nothing to do with Echo, which incurred the wrath of Nemesis, the goddess of revenge, who decided to punish him for breaking Echo's heart. One day, thirsty, leaning over the waters of a spring, Nemesis shows him a reflection from his youth; mesmerized by his own image and unable to avert his gaze, Narcissus withers away, turning into the flower that today bears his name.

While compact, both works exhibit an incredibly intricate texture, showing how far her compositional technique has evolved over the years. Displaced imitations, flowing scales, as well as intricate rhythms make them rich and varied, and put even the finest pianist to the test.

In her Op. 89, Bonis captures Echo's delicate and playful character beautifully. The sorrow and passion are obviously present, too, yet the piece ends in a surprisingly optimistic and charming manner. The echo effect is reserved for the left hand, which

[31] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Brookes More, vol. 3 (Boston: Cornhill Publishing Co., 1922): 339–358.

crosses over the right—a technique that performers familiar with her piano compositions are more than accustomed to. Worthy of a true impressionist, the echo effect seems to obey, or at least mimic the laws of physics; sometimes it is fast, other times slow, based on the material that it stems from.

Narcisse's character is mirrored in the seemingly free structure; the material is through-composed, purposely engineered to sound somewhat disorganized, quirky, and capricious. The texture is riddled with displaced and overlapping counterpoints, as well as constant and complex meter changes, notated using composite time signatures. The resulting effect makes it often sound like some sort of structured improvisation, further stressing Narcisse's unrestrained personality.

L'ange gardien, Op. 99

The *Guardian Angel* once more makes extensive use of hand-crossings, which make it possible for the melodic line to seamlessly transition between registers, constantly playing with our expectations by shifting our focal point. The middle section resembles a Lisztian *recitative*, a rather unusual feature among her piano pieces.

Il pleut, Op. 102

It Rains is a compact, light-hearted, juvenile, and fresh composition, not free of technical challenges. The texture evokes the effect of gentle rain drops, but the overall character is joyous, much like spring showers, alternating between sunshine and rain, with the occasional downpour also making its appearance.

La cathédrale blessée, Op. 107

By contrast, *The Wounded Cathedral* is one of her largest works for solo piano; and, as it was largely inspired by the horrors of the first World War, one of the darkest, too. As the title suggests, resonance plays an important role, and the performer has the freedom to experiment with various effects to create a rich palette of colors. Essentially, this piece is a funeral march, stressed by the *Dies irae*, which we can hear twice in the inner section—as a recitative-like statement in the baritone register, and subsequently as an afterthought at the very high extremity of the instrument.

As most French piano repertoire from this period, the harmonic language is extremely complicated, often wondering away from the tonal center through series of progressions and modulations. The seemingly random chord sequences challenge our senses, as we have to keep finding new colors for each new chord.

Au crépuscule, Op. 111

At Dusk marks the beginning of the transition into her late creative period. Much like Brahms, who explored condensed forms during his last years, particularly with his collections Opp. 116–119, Bonis turned to miniatures. While most of her piano works err on the shorter side to begin with, no composition after this one exceeds three minutes in length; in fact, half of them last less than two.

At Dusk is another quintessentially impressionist work. Bonis paints a pastoral scenery, which is slowly revealed to the listener, almost symbolizing the sunrise, from the very first rays that show us mere glimpses of the landscape, to the bright daylight, which unveils the vista in all its glory.

Près du moulin, Op. 115

By the Mill is another representation of a common rural scene. The clockwork eight-note motion illustrates the continuous motion of the mill, while the middle section briefly turns our attention to the freely flowing water, passing the melodic line between hands in sweeping descending gestures.

Cinq pièces pour piano

Another collection of *Five Piano Pieces*, initially published in 1929,[32] contains a medley of miniatures. "Une flûte soupier" (A Flute Sighs), Op. 117 is a charming piece inspired by the wind instrument. The manuscript contains the following quotation by Victor Hugo: "Come, an invisible flute is sighing in the gardens."[33] Pieces such as Beethoven's Symphony No. 6, commonly known as the "Pastoral", and his Violin Sonata No. 5, or "Spring Sonata", helped establishing F Major as the key of choice for portraying pastoral themes. Although Bonis wrote this miniature in the key of B-flat Major, it opens on its dominant—F Major. A later transcription for flute and piano was published in 1936.

The "Berceuse triste" (Sad Lullaby), Op. 118 initially evokes a nostalgic and melancholic mood, yet shifts from the key of B Minor to B Major half-way through, ending on a more optimistic note.

With her "Boston valse ou valse lente" (Boston Waltz or Slow Waltz), Op. 119, she pays homage to the new streams that were making their way to Europe from overseas. The light-hearted miniature stands in stark contrast to the "Agitato", Op. 120,

[32] Mel Bonis, *Cinq pièces pour piano* (Paris: Éditions Maurice Sénart, 1929).

[33] "Viens, une flûte invisible soupire dans les vergers." In Mel Bonis, *Piano Works*, ed. Eberhard Mayer, vol. 7, *Pièces Pittoresques et Poétiques C: 1910–1932* (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2006), 11.

which stands out from her opus due to its almost apprehensive mood, ultra-compact form, and intricacy, challenging even the most seasoned performer.

Resonance plays an important role in her "Clolches lontaines" (Distant Bells), Op. 121, which calls for extensive, clever use of the pedal, timing, and various tone colors. All works by Mel Bonis showcase a variety of dynamic shades and contrasts; however, what sets this piece apart from the rest of her piano repertoire is the extensive use of soft dynamics, particularly at the very end, likely mimicking the fading echo of the bells.

Sévillana, Op. 125 and Ariel, Op. 129, Posthumous

Both composed in 1925, their refreshing and playful characters make them exuberant exceptions among her more introverted works. The *Sévillana* evokes syncopated Spanish rhythms and harmonies, as well as an open sound, which the composer accents by doubling the leading voice and supporting it with full-bodied chords. Once more, the whole-tone scale makes an appearance, leading into a calm and rather sensual coda, which suddenly and surprisingly transforms into a grand final gesture.

Ariel, Op. 129, published posthumously, is an enigmatic piece, witty and seemingly disorganized, which makes it particularly difficult to approach and interpret. Furthermore, it offers a rare glimpse into the creative process of Bonis, which was not always entirely free of obstacles. In this case, several versions of this piece have been attempted and discarded, prompting her to finally publish it under the pseudonym of Mélas Benissouvski, an ironic version of her own name.[34]

[34] Mel Bonis, *Piano Works*, 7: 11.

Etude de concert en sol bémol majeur, Op. 136, Posthumous

Her penultimate work for piano, the Concert Etude in G-flat Major, is essentially a recapitulation of her stylistic traits. Virtuosic arpeggios, passed in ascending and descending gestures flow seamlessly between both hands, and seemingly endless melodic lines embedded in this rich texture evoke lush 19th-century sonorities. As the piece progresses, increasingly more complex structures emerge, culminating in a coda that abandons the traditional romantic vocabulary. It makes use of octatonic and whole-tone scales, both heavily altered, before ultimately returning to simplicity, which she finds in the home key.

Dolorosa, Op. 138, Posthumous

Her last work for piano solo, and one of her last works overall was written in 1932 to mourn the loss of her youngest son, Edouard, who passed away tragically during a business trip to Egypt. Mélanie dedicated this musical eulogy to her daughter-in-law, the young widow François Domange.

Chapter 3: Concluding Remarks

Her life was certainly not free of conflict and sorrow; yet, she managed defy feelings of depression and produce sensible, clever, intricate, and—above all—meaningful works.

What made this recording project particularly interesting, albeit arduous, was the sheer quantity of musical material that required much time to research and prepare. It is true that the better part of her entire piano oeuvre consists of short pieces; still, 45 compositions—each with its own unique character—needed thorough analysis, study, and contemplation.[35] Spending such an extensive amount of time with a single composer helped me see her oeuvre from a different perspective; such exposure empowers performers to take bold approaches and gather the courage to make audacious choices. As we uncover the design behind someone's compositional technique, patterns emerge, and when in doubt—as is often the case with underrepresented composers—we can resort to our experience and make more informed judgement calls. Ultimately, an interpretation is rooted in understanding historical context as well as notation.

Any attempt at performing a composition—let alone recording an entire opus—requires a great degree of devotion and meticulousness. The inability to consult the original author, nor a reliable source to compare our version to, as well as a general lack of primary sources, can make such a project seem daunting. The idea of safeguarding the legacy of a brilliant composer was a constant source of inspiration, and I truly hope that this collection serves as a basis for future renditions.

[35] Even though not all of them were recorded, all 64 concert pieces for piano solo (not including didactic works) were studied thoroughly in an attempt to gain a comprehensive understanding of her collective repertoire, making them an essential part of the research.

In conclusion, after thoroughly analyzing her works for solo piano, one cannot help but wonder why we cannot find any large-scale works among them. Bonis was undoubtedly an accomplished and versatile composer, and her orchestral and collaborative repertoire proves that she certainly achieved mastery of multi-movement forms and sonata-principle as well. We can only speculate on whether this lacuna is rooted in societal obstacles (which she faced as a woman composer) or a deliberate choice. In any case, her larger chamber music works—such as her two piano quartets, cello and flute sonatas, violin suite, and the two-movement trio *Soir Matin*[36]—are undisputedly centered around the piano. In my opinion, all of these pieces represent an extension of her solo piano repertoire, making her a far more prolific composer than one might initially think. Yet, while her collaborative pieces are generally well-known and still performed today, I believe that her solo piano pieces deserve more attention and could easily be programmed more often, particularly as interludes between her larger chamber music works.

[36] Mel Bonis, *Sonata for Flute and Piano, Op. 64* (Paris: E. Demets, 1904); Mel Bonis, *Cello Sonata, Op 67* (Paris: E. Demets, 1905); Mel Bonis, *Soir Matin for Violin, Cello, and Piano*, ed. Eberhard Mayer (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2003); Mel Bonis, *Piano Quartet in B-flat Major*, ed. Eberhard Mayer (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2004); Mel Bonis, *Suite for Violin and Piano, Op. 114*, eds. Eberhard Mayer and Ingrid Mayer (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2012); and Mel Bonis, *Piano Quartet in D Major, Op. 124*, ed. Eberhard Mayer (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 2007).

Appendix: Publication Information

Compact Disc One

		Opus	Manuscript Date	First Published
Impromptu (mon premier morceau)		Op. 1	1881	2001 ‡
Rondo dans le genre ancien		Op. 7	/	1889 ||
Près du Ruisseau		Op. 9	/	1893 *
Prélude (*en mi bémol majeur*)		Op. 10	/	1889 §
Gai printemps		Op. 11	/	1889 §
Eglogue		Op. 12	/	1897 §
Aux Champs		Op. 13	/	1889 §
Menuet		Op. 14	/	1889 §
Pensées d'automne		Op. 19	/	1894 *
Berceuse		Op. 23, 1	1888	1895 *
La chanson du rouet		Op. 24	/	1895 *
Ballade		Op. 27	/	1897 *
Papillons		Op. 28	/	1897 *
Romance sans paroles en la bémol majeur		Op. 29	/	1897 *
Carillons mystiques		Op. 31	/	1897 *
Femmes de légende				
	Ophélie		1909	1998 ‡
	Phoebé		Undated	1909 *
	Salomé		Undated	1909 *
	Viviane		Undated	1909 *
	Omphale		Undated	1910 **
	Desdémona		/	1913 *
	Mélisande		Undated	1925 *

Publisher information (/ = same as publication date):

* Alphonse Leduc	‡ Fortin-Armiane	|| Grus
† N. Simrock	§ Durdilly	

Compact Disc Two

		Opus	Manuscript Date	First Published
Méditation		Op. 33, 1	/	1898 *
Barcarolle en si bémol majeur		Op. Posth., 41	1899	2006 ‡‡
Marionnettes		Op. 42	/	1899 *
Barcarolle-Etude		Op. 43	/	1899 *
Romance sans paroles en sol bémol majeur		Op. 56	/	1905 #
Sorrente		Op. 61	/	1904 §§
Barcarolle en mi bémol majeur		Op. 71	/	1905 **
Echo		Op. 89	/	1910 ††
Narcisse		Op. 90	/	1910 ††
L'ange gardien		Op. Posth., 99	1913	2001 ‡
Il pleut		Op. 102	/	1913 ††
La Cathédrale blessée		Op. 107	1915	1929 **
Au crépuscule		Op. 111	/	1923 ||||
Près du moulin		Op. 115	/	1925 ††
Cinq pièces pour piano	*Une flûte soupire*	Op. 117, 1	/	1929 ††
	Berceuse triste	Op. 118	/	1929 ††
	Boston valse	Op. 119	/	1929 ††
	Agitato	Op. 120	/	1929 ††
	Clolches lontaines	Op. 121	/	1929 ††
Sévillana		Op. 125	1925	1928 **
Ariel		Op. Posth., 129	1925	2006 ‡‡
Etude de concert en sol bémol majeur		Op. Posth., 136	1927	1998 ‡
Dolorosa		Op. Posth., 138	1932	1999 ‡

Publisher information (/ = same as publication date):

* Alphonse Leduc	§ Durdilly	** Max Eschig	§§ E. Demets
† N. Simrock	|| Grus	†† Maurice Sénart	|||| Hamelle à Paris
‡ Fortin-Armiane	# Henry Lemoine	‡‡ Furore Verlag	

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