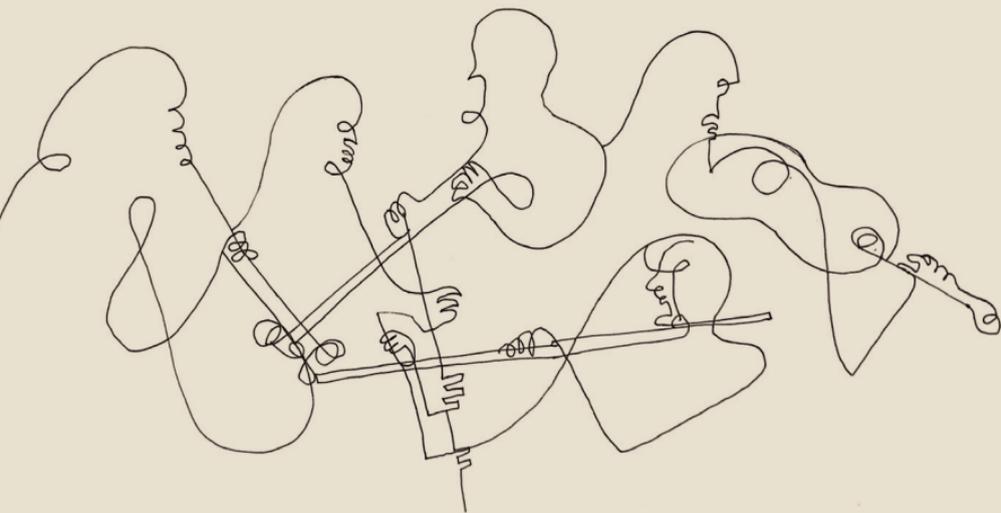


One note away...

Chamber music by Destenay, Goepfert & Loeffler



Juliette Bausor ♦ Daniel Bates ♦ Matthew Hunt
Adam Newman ♦ Olga Jegunova



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KARL GOEPFART (1859-1942)

Trio for flute, oboe and piano Op. 74

1	i	Allegro risoluto	6'16
2	ii	Andante cantabile	3'25
3	iii	Finale: Allegro con brio	3'41

CHARLES MARTIN LOEFFLER (1861-1935)

Deux Rapsodies

4	i	L'Étang	10'00
5	ii	La Cornemuse	12'03

ÉDOUARD DESTENAY (1850-1924)

Trio in B minor for oboe, clarinet and piano Op. 27

6	i	Allegro vivace	8'04
7	ii	Andante non troppo	7'44
8	iii	Presto	7'29

58'43

JULIETTE BAUSOR *flute*
DANIEL BATES *oboe*
MATTHEW HUNT *clarinet*
ADAM NEWMAN *viola*
OLGA JEGUNOVA *piano*

ONE NOTE AWAY...

Daniel Bates (oboe) on the project

We owe the genesis of this recording project to the wonderful people who organise the International Musicians Seminar at Prussia Cove in Cornwall. I had worked with Matt Hunt on a few occasions before, I had admired him greatly, and I was desperate to have some real time and space to work with him and to learn from him – he is a very special musician. Having been lucky enough to have been invited to play at Prussia Cove for several years running (a rare honour for wind players!), I had pretty much run out of decent oboe and strings repertoire to inflict on my poor, long-suffering fellow musicians. So, I started looking for chamber music written for oboe and clarinet, knowing that Matt would be down there at the same time as I was.

The piece that most readily came up on various internet searches was the Destenay Trio for oboe, clarinet and piano. I instantly fell in love with this highly-charged, operatic work and felt it was music where Matt and I could, in Matt's slightly teasing words, express our 'emotionality' and really have fun and let rip. I had only heard of the pianist Olga Jegunova by reputation and by watching her in videos of her participating in masterclasses given by Andras Schiff. I was therefore utterly delighted when the fine organisers of Prussia Cove decided to agree to my suggestion and programmed the Destenay for the three of us. A whole week in beautiful Cornwall to have fun and explore our 'emotionality' with this marvellous work. As soon as I had arrived, had said my hellos to the people that I already knew and had made myself known to the organisers, Olga marched up to me, full of rage, and tore strips off me for making her learn such a difficult and, in her opinion at that time, pointlessly flimsy piece. Of course, most of the pianists and string players come to Prussia Cove wanting to spend the week exploring the works of the great composers – not trivial works by composers nobody has even heard of. However, during that week of rehearsals something completely magical happened. The three of us clicked on so many different musical levels and we had the time of our lives. Olga was right – Destenay is not a first-rate composer. But there is something joyously alive and creative in this piece – almost as if it were just one note away from greatness. By the end of the week, we had really plumbed the (albeit possibly comparatively shallow) depths of the work and ended up performing it at one of the concerts. At Prussia Cove there is no pressure for any of the groups to perform in a concert – it is left totally up to the musicians involved whether they feel moved to or not. It is much more about the process of coming together and exploring music, removing the pressure to perform – a rare treat for us musicians. However, we all felt that Destenay deserved to be heard in all his glory.

Research on the composer himself didn't turn up anything very much – only that he was awarded the coveted Order National de la Légion d'Honneur. However, this was awarded for his distinguished service in the French Army and, apparently, nothing to do with his artistic or musical pursuits. It is clear that he must have had a very intense internal emotional life as the work is chock-full of passion and drama. It alternates between deep despair and an almost camp pastoral feel at the drop of a hat and gives all three instrumentalists the opportunity to run the emotional gamut from A to Z (or as Dorothy Parker would, perhaps unkindly, say 'from A to B') and, frankly, to show off and have an absolutely marvellous time together.

Since that first airing in Cornwall the three of us have performed the piece many times. We now love it so much (and, yes, that even includes the initially apoplectic Olga, who has since become a Destenay devotee) that we felt we absolutely must record it, to try and communicate and transmit the total joy that we feel collectively when the three of us unleash it on an unsuspecting public. It was a hot late summer when we first performed it at Prussia Cove and, without planning anything, all three of us took our jackets off simultaneously before starting the rambunctious final movement – a real moment of spontaneous synchronicity and communion with this wonderful piece.

An unsuccessful period of looking for companion pieces for this unconventional instrumental combination ensued. Try as we might, we failed to find anything written for this trio line up that seemed to fly in the same way as the Destenay Trio certainly does. So, we began to widen the remit and started exploring works by other similarly-unfamiliar composers for trio including piano. The result of this search was that we discovered fantastic works by some other rather neglected composers – by Loeffler and by Goepfart; composers that, incidentally, hail from roughly the same part of the world as our beloved Destenay. But, more than that, we found composers who have similar flashes of brilliance in their music, composers who deserve to be heard; composers who, while perhaps not consistently of the highest quality, have something incredibly special to express; composers who are just one note away from greatness.

Olga Jegunova (piano) on playing together

We never discuss technique: phrasing, dynamics and articulation was just a given alphabet that allowed us to read composers' mind. Once we agreed on the same language – its morphology and phonetics – we simply started trying different interpretations. As soloists we obviously have our own ideas about tempo, pulse and other corners of expression, but chamber music requires mutual decisions. Often musicians bump into an ego and self-centredness at this point. It was never the case with us. We have intuitively found the best chamber music formula: to play in a way that will make the other musicians blossom. We learnt how to breathe together.

Adam Newman (viola) on Loeffler

A pianist friend of mine from Hungary once told me that one cannot play better than one can listen. In the time since I heard that phrase uttered, its meaning and implications have grown on me, to the point of preoccupation. I used to be motivated simply to play better; now I am intent on discovering new things to listen to. This was a goal for us when preparing this trio. Combining minds, tools and experiences to help us portray a human and honest result. Although born in Germany, violinist and composer Charles Martin Loeffler aligned himself with France by asserting French nationality and acquiring French manners and tastes. Ultimately, he chose America as his permanent residence, becoming a citizen in 1887, as well as one of the greatest protagonists of impressionistic music in the United States.

Juliette Bausor (flute) on Goepfart

Dan and I have been making music together for many years, through the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Purcell School of Music and as members of the Linos Wind Quintet. We sat side by side in orchestral principal seats

with the Royal Northern Sinfonia but we have always loved playing chamber music together and are constantly on the lookout for new works to perform. Being sometimes a little bit dramatic in temperament, we immediately fell in love with the Goepfert Trio. The sweeping romanticism and lyricism of the music appealed to us – I suppose that we are both frustrated opera divas really. Strangely, like Destenay, Karl Goepfert was also a military man, and it is tempting to imagine that his regimented lifestyle during this period contributed to his outpouring of romanticism in his music – almost as a reaction against his daily life. Goepfert, born in 1859, travelled widely from his birthplace in Germany and for a time was the chief conductor in Baltimore. He wrote mainly chamber music and an impressive array of operas and died in Weimar in 1942. The Trio is a fantastic piece – very well written for our instruments and with a fabulous role for our wonderful pianist, Olga Jegunova.

Matthew Hunt (clarinet) on Destenay

Published in Paris in 1906 by Hamelle, Édouard Destenay's enchanting trio is a true gem, providing the rarely-used combination of oboe, clarinet and piano with a late-romantic work of substance and charming fantasy. Written in the late-19th-century style, following much of German tradition, Destenay still allows himself to follow the delicious flights of his imagination: extending phrases beyond the promise of their scope, accompaniments of extravagant roulades and cascades in the piano, pushing both woodwind instruments to the extremes of their registers. His melodic gift is ever present, although nothing prepares one for the hauntingly beautiful and beguiling theme of the central movement that forms the emotional heart of this wonderful work. Sadly, little is known of the life of Destenay, save that he was born in Algeria in 1850, served in the French army from 1870, achieved the rank of Officier and was awarded the Legion d'honneur before moving to Paris where he continued his musical career, which until that point had sadly only been a secondary one.

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