



De Hartmann:
A Life in Music
Fabio Mittino
Bert Lams



PENTATONE

DE HARTMANN: A LIFE IN MUSIC

Fabio Mittino
Bert Lams
two guitars

Thomas de Hartmann

A Life in Music

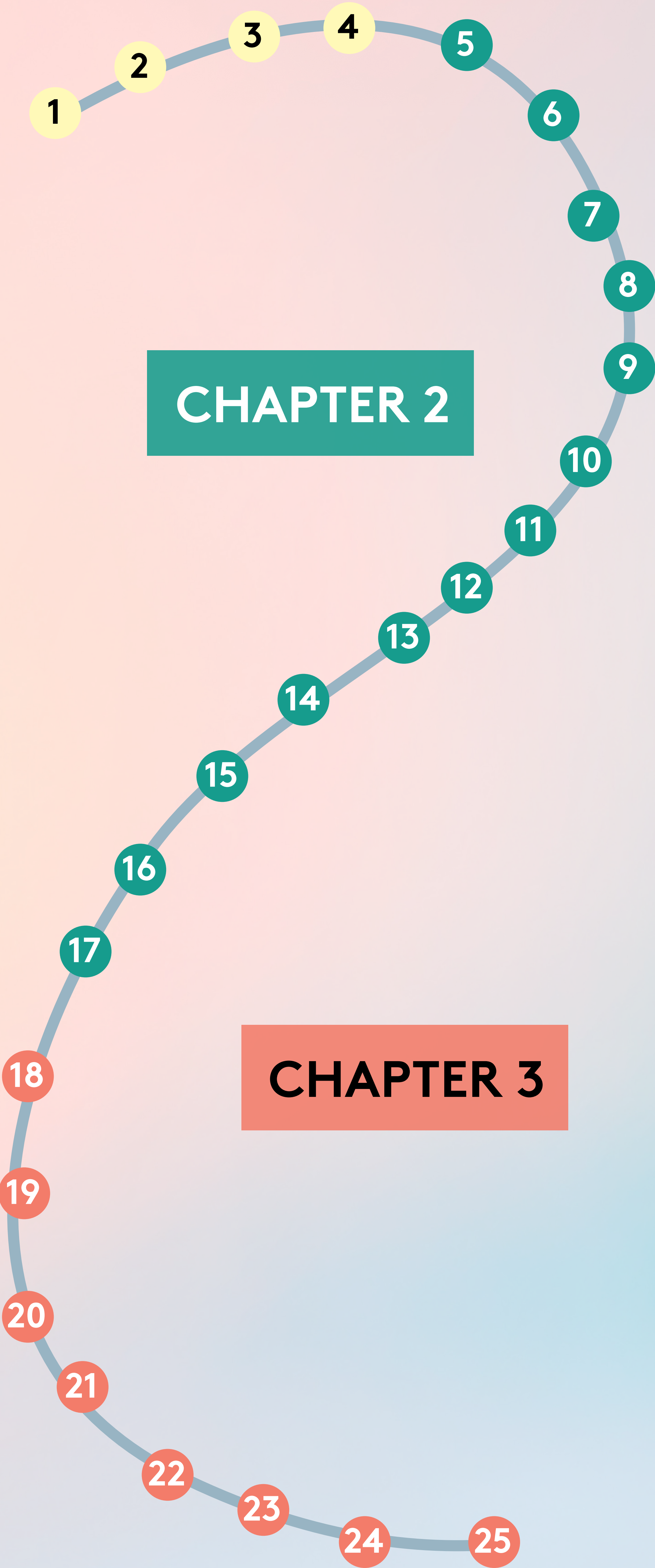
A Life in Music is a collection of 25 compositions by Thomas de Hartmann, carefully arranged for guitar and presented in chronological order, allowing the listener to experience the evolution of de Hartmann's life and artistic journey through his music.



Thomas de Hartmann

© film company Synchro-Ciné, Paris, ca 1930

CHAPTER 1



CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

CHAPTER 1

Tracks 1–4 (1899–1915)

Thomas de Hartmann was born on October 3, 1884, in Ukraine (former Soviet Union) into a Russian aristocratic family.

At a very young age, he was sent to military school. His musical skills were apparent, and he was allowed to study composition with Anton Arensky at age 11. At age 21, he wrote his first opera *La Fleurette Rouge*, which was performed for the Tsar of Russia, Nikolay II. Impressed by the performance, the Tsar gave de Hartmann permission to travel abroad to study with the famous conductor and pupil of Wagner, Felix Mottl. In Munich, de Hartmann met Kandinsky, and as their friendship developed, he became increasingly fascinated by the scope of Kandinsky's creative vision.

During this period de Hartmann wrote:

In all the arts, and especially in music, every means that arises from an inner necessity is right...

The correspondence of the means of expression with inner necessity is the essence of beauty in a work.

Tracklist:

- 1 Mazurka - Trois Morceaux, No. 2 Op. 4 (1899)
- 2 Molto Cantando - Three Preludes, No.1, Op. 11 (1904)
- 3 Andantino - Three Preludes, No.3, Op. 11 (1904)
- 4 La Grenouille ("The Frog") - Divertissements, from Forces of Love and Sorcery, Op. 16 (1915)

CHAPTER 2

Tracks 5–17 (1918–1929)

In 1916 de Hartmann met Georges Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (1877–1949).

Deeply influenced by his teachings, TdH and his wife, Olga, remained in Gurdjieff's immediate orbit for the next twelve years. TdH served as composer-in-residence and accompanist, while Olga became Gurdjieff's personal secretary.

Times were turbulent. To avoid the bloodshed of civil war, Gurdjieff and the de Hartmanns were constantly on the move. They travelled long distances, narrowly escaping with their lives until 1922, when they moved to Paris.

Gurdjieff introduced Eastern music to Thomas de Hartmann.

In his book *Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff*, de Hartmann wrote:

Mr. Gurdjieff sometimes whistled or played on the piano with one finger a very complicated sort of melody—

as are all Eastern melodies...

To grasp these melodies and write them down in European notation required a kind of tour de force, and very often—probably to make the task more difficult for me—he would replay it a little differently.

De Hartmann also composed music for the Movements, a series of sacred dances designed to cultivate mindfulness and inner awareness.

Tracklist:

- 5 Prayer of Gratitude (30 VII 1924)
- 6 Mamasha (26 XII 1925)
- 7 Sayyid Chant & Dance No.29
- 8 Song of the Fisherwomen
(26 III 1926)
- 9 Hindu Melody (22 II 1926)
- 10 Armenian Song – N27 Volume I
(6 IV 1926)
- 11 Kurd Melody for Two Flutes
(22 IV 1927)

Music for Movements:

- 12 Dance No. 27

- 13 The Spinners
- 14 The Circles
- 15 Dance in G
- 16 The Sacred Goose
- 17 Multiplication of Oct 9

CHAPTER 3

Tracks 18–25 (1929–1953)

In 1929 TdH parted ways with Gurdjieff and resumed his composing and teaching career. He continued his friendship with Kandinsky and found a new and supportive friend in the cellist Pablo Casals. TdH wrote music for films under the name Thomas Kross. His work on film music led him to add bitonality, jazz, and ultra-modernism to his compositions. In addition to his film music, TdH had a lively and successful life with the performance of chamber works, concertos, and symphonies in concert halls and on the radio.

In 1950 TdH moved to New York and—recognized for his highly creative nature—was invited by Frank Lloyd Wright to his school of architecture where he taught students about the interrelation of the arts. He continued to teach and compose in

New York until his death in 1956.

Tracklist:

- 18 Sentimental Song - From the cycle Volga, Op. 21 (1915)
- 19 The Last Flowers - A Poet's Love – Nine Poems by Pushkin, No. 9, Op. 59 (1937)
- 20 Theme + Variations - Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 63 (1941)

Deux Pleureuses, Op. 64 (1942)

21 No. 1 - Lent

22 No. 2 - Andante Molto

23 Lumière Noire, Op. 74 (1945)

Fantastico e rubato assai

Andante Funebre

Allegro giocoso e molto ritmico

24 Pour chanter à la route d'Assise (1948)

25 The Music of the Stars

'Look into the Depths of Eternity' - Two Nocturnes, Op. 84 (1953)

Bert Lams
© Elena Jasic



PERSONAL NOTES

I studied classical guitar at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels with Monique Vigneron and Albert Sundermann, where I graduated cum laude in 1984. A few years later, in 1987, I took part in a Guitar Craft course led by Robert Fripp at Claymont Court, West Virginia. This experience opened new paths for me, and in the following years, I toured internationally with The League of Crafty Guitarists, a performing ensemble of Robert's students.

In 1991 I moved to Los Angeles and co-founded the California Guitar Trio. Our debut album was released in 1992 on Fripp's label, Discipline. In the following three decades our trio has recorded sixteen albums and toured and performed extensively. We continue to enjoy creating and performing music today. I met Fabio Mittino in London in 1996 during a public event for

Discipline. He had traveled from Italy with his father and a clear and unwavering intention to study with Robert Fripp. It was suggested he speak with me instead. Fabio came to Broad Chalke, England, and we spent a week immersed in daily guitar sessions. He was already a refined player with a strong sense of direction and dedication.

In 2010 Fabio recorded *Resonance*, an album of Gurdjieff/de Hartmann music arranged for solo guitar.

He invited me to join him for a concert in Los Angeles. Although I was unable to join him for the LA concert, soon thereafter, I traveled to Milan where we first rehearsed and performed these arrangements together.

Over the past fifteen years, Fabio and I have enjoyed playing hundreds of concerts in private homes, small venues, churches, and theaters throughout the US and Europe, gradually expanding our repertoire of de Hartmann's compositions.

To date, we've arranged and performed at least forty of his works. For *A Life in Music*, we selected twenty-seven tracks in chronological sequence, a reflection of the path we've walked together and a tribute to the timeless beauty of this music.

Bert Lams

Fabio Mittino

© Elena Jasic



I began studying classical guitar at the age of 13, then moved to electric guitar around 16. While it was fun and full of energy, I started to miss the discipline and depth of classical technique. At 18, I returned to classical studies with greater commitment, though I still felt a sense of dissatisfaction. I was looking for something different, something more adventurous. Everything changed when I discovered the Robert Fripp String Quintet, featuring Fripp, Lams, Moriya, Richards, and Gunn. It was unlike anything I had heard before. The sound was new, the musical language unfamiliar, and the level of precision extraordinary. The guitars were tuned in fifths, and the clarity of the playing left a deep impression on me. From that moment, I knew I wanted to learn that technique and study with Robert Fripp.

The following year, I met Robert in England. Since he wasn't teaching at the time, he recommended that I connect with Bert Lams, whom I

already admired. Bert was living in England then, and I went to study with him at his home. From that point on, I continued exploring this technique. Although I eventually had the opportunity to study with Robert Fripp as well, I have always considered Bert my teacher.

The Guitar Craft courses Robert created were first held at Claymont, where British author and thinker J.G. Bennett had founded the Claymont Society for Continuous Education. Bennett is known for his work in psychology and spirituality and for his studies with G.I. Gurdjieff.

Over the years, Gurdjieff's name would occasionally come up during Guitar Craft courses. When I discovered he had composed music together with Thomas de Hartmann, I became curious. Listening to it for the first time, I was deeply moved. While the pieces could be described as classical, they carried a kind of depth and

presence that went beyond any category. That impression stayed with me, and I felt compelled to explore the music further on the guitar.

I soon realized no one had yet created this type of transcription, so I began working on it and released my first solo album, Resonance.

When Bert, with whom I had stayed in close contact, accepted the invitation to join this project, a new phase began. Over the following fifteen years, we recorded three albums and performed hundreds of concerts throughout the United States and Europe.

Sharing this music with so many different audiences, always alongside a musician like Bert, continues to be one of the greatest honors of my life.

Fabio Mittino

ABOUT THE INSTRUMENTS

From the very beginning of this project, we were seeking a distinct and resonant sound and therefore chose to record using archtop guitars. Pioneered around 1890 by luthier Orville Gibson, the archtop guitar was created by adapting violin construction techniques to the guitar. The result is an instrument that shares many materials and structural features with the violin, though the acoustic outcome is entirely different. This is largely due to the different ways the strings are set in motion: with a bow in the case of the violin, and with fingers or a pick in the case of the guitar.

Eddie Lang, born in 1902, was the first great virtuoso to adopt the Gibson L5, and we are fortunate many of his recordings still survive. Known as the father of Jazz Guitar, Lang also embraced classical repertoire, as in his magnificent

rendition of Rachmaninoff's
Prelude in C-sharp minor, Op. 3
No. 2.

It is somewhat unfortunate the
acoustic archtop guitar eventually
drifted away from classical music,
perhaps due to the rise of Segovia's
nylon-string guitar. Yet Lang
belonged to an Italian tradition
that had long used steel strings in
classical performance. Bert and I
feel the acoustic archtop guitar is
now returning to its rightful place
in the classical world, and we
are proud a prestigious label like
Pentatone has chosen to support
and preserve this vision.

For the pieces composed solely by
Thomas de Hartmann
Fabio: Gibson L7 (1961)
Bert: Gibson L7 (1936)

For the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann
repertoire
Fabio: Gibson L5 (1930)
Bert: Gibson L4 (1936)

For the Movements music

Fabio: Mirabella Trap Door Custom
(2018)

Bert: Mirabella Trap Door Custom
(2018)

Fabio Mittino uses Galli Strings and
TrumpetLab microphones

Bert Lams uses D'Addario Strings,
a Beyer mc930 microphone and a
Krivo manouche pickup

Acknowledgements

PRODUCTION TEAM

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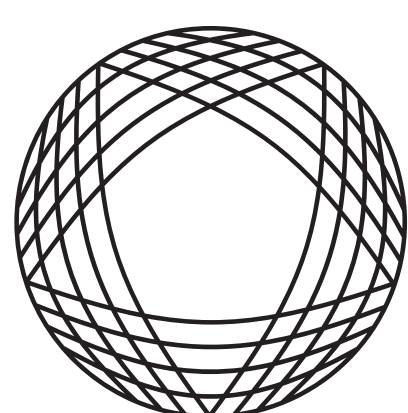
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