CHANDOS



Lumière

SOHY · BOULANGER · BONIS · MILHAUD
FRANCK · MASSENET · FAURÉ

JÂMS COLEMAN piano · LAURA VAN DER HEIJDEN cello



Chronicle / Alamy Stock Photo

Nadia Boulanger, 1910, with her own teacher, Raoul Pugno

Charlotte Sohy (1887 – 1955)

1 **Paix, Op. 18 No. 1** (1922) **3:59**
from *Méditations: Trois Mélodies pour chant et piano*
(Meditations: Three Songs for Voice and Piano)
Adapted for Cello and Piano by the Performers
Modéré – [ ] – Premier Tempo – Plus animé – Premier Tempo

Nadia Boulanger (1887 – 1979)

Trois Pièces (1914) **6:26**
(Three Pieces)
for Cello and Piano

2 1 Modéré – Un peu plus vite – Tempo I 2:19
in E flat minor • in es-Moll • en mi bémol mineur

3 2 Sans vitesse et à l'aise – Un peu plus intense –
Tempo I – Retenez un peu le mouvement jusqu'à la fin 1:40
in A minor • in a-Moll • en la mineur

4 3 Vite et nerveusement rythmé – Très lent – Vif 2:26
in C sharp minor • in cis-Moll • en ut dièse mineur

Gabriel Fauré (1845 – 1924)

5 **Sicilienne, Op. 78** (1893) **3:36**
in G minor • in g-Moll • en sol mineur
No. 4 from Incidental Music for *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*
Adapted 1898 for Cello and Piano
À Monsieur W.H. Squire
Edited by Jacques Larocque

Andantino

Mel [Mélanie Hélène Domange, née] Bonis (1858 – 1937)

Sonata, Op. 67 (1904) **14:44**
in F major / B flat major • in F-Dur / B-Dur • en fa majeur / si bémol majeur
for Piano and Cello
À Monsieur Maurice Demaison

6 I Moderato quasi Andante – Allegretto – Più lento –
Tempo I – Più lento – Tempo I 5:41

7 II Très lent 3:14

8 III Final. Moderato molto – Allegro con fuoco –
Quasi Andante molto cantabile con sentimento – Lento –
Mouvement de l'allegro – Più lento – Vivo –
Mouvement de l'allegro – Maestoso –
Mouvement de l'allegro sans presser 5:48

Darius Milhaud (1892 – 1974)

9 **Élégie, Op. 251** (1945) **3:45**
for Cello and Piano
À Edmond Kurtz
Modéré

César Franck (1822 – 1890)

Sonata, M 8 (1886) **27:18**
in A major • in A-Dur • en la majeur
for Piano and Violin
Transcribed 1888 for Piano and Cello by Jules Delsart (1844 – 1900)
À Eugène Ysaÿe

10	1	Allegretto ben Moderato	6:02
11	2	Allegro – Quasi lento – Tempo I. Allegro – Poco più lento	8:30
12	3	Recitativo-Fantasia. Ben Moderato – Molto lento	6:38
13	4	Allegretto poco mosso	6:08

Jules Massenet (1842 – 1912)

14 **Méditation** (1894) **4:45**
from *Thaïs*
Comédie lyrique in Three Acts
Transcribed 1894 for Cello and Piano by Jules Delsart

Andante religioso – Animato – Poco a poco appassionato –
Poco più appassionato – Più mosso agitato

TT 64:36

Laura van der Heijden cello
Jâms Coleman piano



Raphaël Neal Photographer

Laura van der Heijden

Lumière

Franck: Violin Sonata

The Violin Sonata by César Franck (1822 – 1890) was composed in 1886 as a wedding present for the brilliant Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe, who, with the pianist Marie-Léontine Bordes-Pène, gave an impromptu performance to the assembled guests at the reception, having received the manuscript on the morning of the ceremony. The first public performance – offered by the same musicians – took place in Brussels four months later, on 16 December 1886. Given in the Musée moderne de peinture (which allowed no artificial lighting), it came at the end of a long concert and, as night fell, most of it had to be played from memory in near darkness. In spite of these inauspicious circumstances, it was immediately recognised as one of the most original violin sonatas of the nineteenth century. Franck himself sanctioned the transcription for cello and piano by the cellist Jules Delsart (1844 – 1900), a highly effective arrangement which required no alteration of the piano part. Delsart was inspired to make this after hearing an early Paris performance of the sonata at a concert of the Société nationale, in December 1887, in which he was also playing. He asked Franck's permission and this was willingly given. Delsart worked quickly, mostly transposing the violin part down an octave, and Hamelle published the arrangement early in 1888. This magnificent work was described by the cellist Steven Isserlis as 'a journey of the soul' and the handling of cyclic form, which Franck developed from the technique of thematic transformations used by Liszt and others, can be heard at its most subtle and refined in this sonata, unifying the whole work.

Massenet: Méditation from 'Thaïs'

Delsart enjoyed a distinguished career as a solo cellist, and as a sought-after quartet player. He was also an important figure in the revival of early music, playing the viola da gamba and founding the Société des instruments anciens with the pianist Louis Diémer (dedicatee of Franck's *Variations symphoniques* and teacher of Alfred Cortot). As well as Franck's sonata, his transcriptions included the 'Méditation' from *Thaïs* by Jules Massenet (1842 – 1912). Set in fourth-century Egypt, this opera was composed in 1894,

based on Anatole France's 1890 novel (also called *Thaïs*) which depicts the life of Thaïs, a courtesan from Alexandria, who finally turns to Christianity with the encouragement of the monk Athanaël. The celebrated 'Méditation' comes at a pivotal moment in the drama: up to this point, Thaïs has resisted Athanaël's entreaties, but during the orchestral 'Méditation' (complete with wordless chorus at the end of the original, operatic version) she changes her mind, forsakes her earlier life, and joins a convent. Many arrangements appeared soon after the opera's première, but two of the most interesting are the present transcription by Delsart and another, for violin and piano, by Martin Pierre Marsick, the first violinist of Delsart's quartet.

Fauré: Sicilienne

Gabriel Fauré (1845 – 1924) originally wrote his *Sicilienne* in 1893 as part of the incidental music for a production of Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, but the theatre went bust and the music was not used. It was another five years before Fauré returned to the *Sicilienne*, giving it new life as a piece for cello and piano. The first edition – published in April 1898 – carried a printed dedication to the British cellist William Henry Squire (1871 – 1963). At the same time, Fauré inserted this movement into his incidental music for the first London production of Maeterlinck's play *Pelléas et Mélisande*, which opened in June 1898 (for which he was helped with the orchestration by his pupil Charles Koechlin), but the cello and piano version is perhaps the most effective and authentic adaptation of this gentle, understated piece.

Bonis: Cello Sonata

Mel Bonis (1858 – 1937) composed her Cello Sonata in 1904 and it was published the following year by the Paris firm of Demets – a small company which also issued some of Ravel's most important early works (including *Miroirs*) as well as several pieces by Satie. The first performance was given on 14 February 1906 at the Salle Pleyel as part of a concert arranged by the Société des compositeurs de musique; it was played by the cellist Louis Feuillard with Bonis herself at the piano. The published score bears a dedication to Maurice Demaison, an art critic, writer, and amateur musician. The Cello Sonata comes from a fruitful period in Bonis's career, particularly in terms of chamber music: in 1904 the Flute Sonata was published (with a dedication to Louis Fleury), and 1905 saw the publication of her Piano Quartet. What marks out the Cello Sonata is its use of cyclic techniques pioneered by César Franck, who had encouraged the young Bonis to become

a composer. Not only does the work rely on a tightly controlled family of related themes and leading motifs (each starts with a falling phrase), but Bonis also explores a bewildering range of keys: the opening *Moderato quasi Andante* begins with an imperious quadruple-stopped chord of F major, but after many harmonic excursions, the movement ends in C major. The central slow movement, marked *Très lent*, is in B flat minor / D flat major, while the finale, after a bold introduction in D minor, launches the main *Allegro con fuoco* in B flat major. Later in the movement, episodes in D major and a brief move into E major (marked *Quasi Andante molto cantabile con sentimento*) lead back to B flat major and a *Maestoso* peroration.

Boulanger: Trois Pièces

Revered as a teacher, conductor, early music pioneer, and trusted adviser to the likes of Stravinsky and Poulenc, Nadia Boulanger (1887 – 1979) was also a gifted composer. Fiercely self-critical, she always claimed that her own music was nothing like as significant as that of her brilliant younger sister, Lili, but with the rediscovery of her music it has become clear that Nadia was a remarkable talent in her own right. She entered the Paris Conservatoire at the age of nine and subsequently studied composition with Fauré. Most of her music dates from between 1904 and 1918 (the year in which Lili died), including the *Trois Pièces* (Three Pieces) for cello and piano, composed in 1914 and first published the following year. The first, in E flat minor, presents a song-like melody on the cello over a hushed piano part marked *doux et vague*. After a brief climactic central section, the opening music returns for a serene close in E flat major. The second piece, in A minor, treats a deceptively simple tune – almost a folksong – in an ingenious canon between the cello and the piano. The last piece, in C sharp minor, is quick, its middle section providing a contrast in both rhythm and texture to the playful but muscular mood of the rest.

Sohy: Paix

Charlotte Sohy (1887 – 1955) was a friend of both Mel Bonis and Nadia Boulanger. She was a composition pupil of Vincent d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum, in Paris, where she also studied the organ with Guilmant and Vierne. From before World War I and into the 1920s, her music was regularly performed in Paris and she was a frequent guest at the salon of Marguerite de Saint-Marceaux where her work was admired by Dukas, Fauré, and Ravel. More recently, after many years of neglect, her work has started to emerge from the

shadows. *Méditations*, a set of three songs on Sohy's own poems, was composed in 1922 and first performed at a concert of the Société nationale de musique on 13 January 1923, sung by the soprano Louise Matha with the composer at the piano. 'Paix', the first of the three songs, evokes an idyllic scene by the river as the poet reflects on the joy of divine peace. Sohy beautifully conjures this scene by means of a rippling piano part, mobile harmonies, and a fluid melodic line. The present transcription was made by Laura van der Heijden and Jâms Coleman.

Milhaud: Élégie

Darius Milhaud (1892 – 1974) composed his *Élégie*, Op. 251, in 1945, during his enforced American exile (from 1940 to 1947): as a Jew, he had been forced to leave France after the Nazi invasion. His American years (and regular visits after he was able to return to France) involved extensive teaching at Mills College, where his pupils included Dave Brubeck and Burt Bacharach. His prolific composing continued unabated, and the *Élégie* was written for the cellist Edmund (or Edmond) Kurtz (1908 – 2004), to whom it is dedicated. Born in Russia, Kurtz was principal cellist at the Prague German Theatre (1932 – 36), then moved to the United States where he became principal cellist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a post he held until 1944. After this, he decided to concentrate on his solo career and performed several new works, dedicated to him by Krenek, Ginastera, and others. Milhaud wrote two pieces for him: Cello Concerto No. 2 (first performed in 1947) and the present *Élégie*. Dated 'Mills, 21 January 1945', it received its première by Kurtz on 16 November 1945 at the Town Hall, New York and this tender, nostalgic work was published by Boosey & Hawkes the following year.

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A note by the performers

The idea for *Lumière* (light, in French) grew from a conviction that what we wanted to record next was music of consolation and warmth. Every composer on this album lived and worked within the French musical world. Our repertoire choices started with the Violin Sonata by César Franck. The cellist Jules Delsart made his transcription of the violin part for cello in 1888, with Franck's explicit blessing, leaving the piano part untouched, and it has been a cornerstone of the cello repertoire ever since. The piece is not without dramatic intensity, but its singing melodies and luscious harmonies produce an overarching mood of tenderness and radiance. As in the case of our

previous discs, we then spent many months researching music from the period, that is the decades around the turn of the twentieth century, which would fit the atmosphere we wanted to evoke, honing and reshaping the programme. Mel Bonis's Cello Sonata, composed under the direct influence of Franck whose classes she had attended at the Paris Conservatoire, proved a remarkable discovery. We are eager to share our interpretation of this unjustly neglected work. The piece that best encapsulates the mood of the disc is the stunning song *Paix* (Peace) by Charlotte Sohy. We came across a beautiful recording by the tenor Cyrille Dubois and pianist Tristan Raës and were completely taken by the opening of the piano part, which sounds like rippling water and dappled light. Our rendition of *Paix* transfers the vocal line to the cello without alteration, the piano part unchanged from Sohy's original. It opens the album, and we hope it will invite you into a world of stillness, reflection, and, most of all, warmth.

© 2026 Laura van der Heijden and Jâms Coleman

Laura van der Heijden is recognised as 'a shining role model to musicians of her generation' (*The Guardian*). Recipient of both the 2025 Royal Philharmonic Society Instrumentalist Award and the 2024 Critics' Circle Instrumentalist Award, she continues to captivate audiences and critics with her deeply perceptive interpretations, imaginative programming, and engaging stage presence. Since winning the competition BBC Young Musician in 2012, at the age of fifteen, she has built a thriving international career, working with distinguished conductors including the late Sir Andrew Davis, Alpesh Chauhan, Nick Collon, Richard Egarr, Gemma New, and Karl-Heinz Steffens. She has performed with such leading orchestras worldwide as the London Symphony Orchestra, Antwerp Symphony Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, Philharmonie Zuidnederland, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Filharmonie Brno, Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. She has also appeared with the BBC Concert Orchestra, at the 2018 BBC Proms, and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, in the opening concert of the inaugural BBC Proms Australia, in 2015.

A sought-after chamber musician, she is a member of the critically acclaimed Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective and collaborates regularly with musicians

including Timothy Ridout, Max Baillie, Misha Mullov-Abbado, and Hélène Clement, as well as the Doric String Quartet, Redon Quartet, and Brodsky Quartet. She has enjoyed recital engagements at Wigmore Hall, the Concertgebouw and Muziekgebouw, Amsterdam, Pierre Boules Saal and Spiegelsaal, Berlin, Leoš Janáček International Music Festival, Helsinki Seriös, and Kissinger Sommer. Her 2018 début album, *1948*, won the Edison Klassiek Award and the *BBC Music Magazine* Newcomer of the Year Award. Her growing Chandos discography includes *Pohádka: Tales from Prague to Budapest* (2022), her first duo album with the pianist Jâms Coleman, a recording of Mozart's Piano Quartets (2023) with Francesca Dego, Timothy Ridout, and Federico Colli, and *Path to the Moon* (2024) with Jâms Coleman. In 2023, she gave the world première of Cheryl Frances-Hoad's *Earth, Sea, Air* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Ryan Wigglesworth, reprising the work at the 2024 BBC Proms. Her début concerto disc, *Earth, Sea, Air*, was released by Chandos in 2024, featuring the première recording of this work alongside Bridge's *Oration* and Walton's Cello Concerto. Laura van der Heijden performs on a late-seventeenth-century cello by Francesco Ruggieri, of Cremona, on generous loan from a private collection.

From Anglesey, North Wales, the pianist **Jâms Coleman** performs as a soloist, chamber musician, and vocal accompanist. He read Music at Girton College, Cambridge, where he was a Choral Scholar, and took a Master's at the Royal Academy of Music. The magazine *BBC Music* noting that 'Coleman's playing is outstanding, with thrilling variety, exquisite touch and imagination at the piano', he appears regularly at leading festivals and venues across the UK and internationally, among them the Aldeburgh, Cheltenham, Lammermuir, and Ryedale festivals, BBC Proms, Edinburgh Fringe, Leeds Lieder, Oxford International Song Festival, Kings Place, LSO St Luke's, Royal Concertgebouw and Cello Biënnale Amsterdam, and Wigmore Hall. He will take up his post as Artistic Director of the Fishguard Festival of Music, in Pembrokeshire, in 2027. Founded in 1969, this is one of the flagship festivals of music and the arts in Wales. His first season, running for ten days in July 2027, will open with the Welsh National Opera Orchestra and soprano Natalya Romaniw at St Davids Cathedral. In the 2026 / 27 season, highlights include recitals with Johan Dalene, Edgar Francis, James Gilchrist, Fenella Humphreys, Braimah Kanneh-Mason, Peter Moore, Jennifer Pike, Colin Scobie, Sir Bryn Terfel, and Maria Włoszczowska, as well as the Marmen Quartet, alongside a tour

of Sweden, playing piano trios with Camerata Nordica. At Wigmore Hall he joined the oboist Armand Djikoloum in October 2026 and returned in November with the cellist Laura van der Heijden to launch their third album, *Lumière*. In February 2026 he released an album with the soprano Claire Booth, *Life Stories*, centred round Zoë Martlew's *Hôtel Babylon* and also including songs by Poulenc, Eisler, Gershwin, and Adès. He has recorded works by Bacewicz with the Karski Quartet and by Pamela Harrison with James Gilchrist, Alice Neary, and Robert Plane, as well as lieder by Fanny Hensel at the Mendelssohn-Haus, in Leipzig, and by Loewe with the baritone Nicholas Mogg. He has performed chamber music with the Britten Sinfonia and the Carducci, Elias, Kleio, Marmen, and Maxwell quartets. In 2023 Jâms Coleman was made an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM).



Raphaël Neal Photographer

Jâms Coleman

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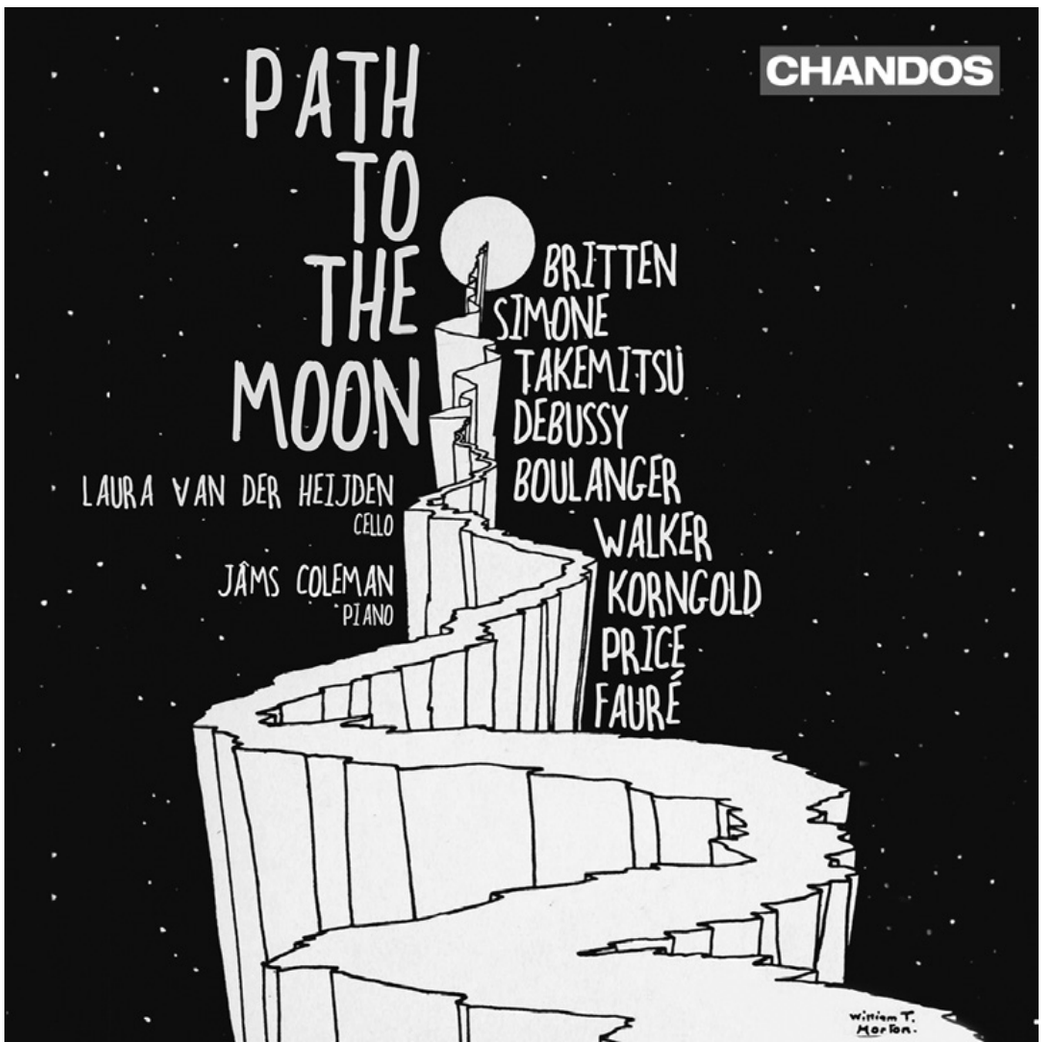

Path to the Moon
CHAN 20274

Also available



Pohádka: Tales from Prague to Budapest
CHAN 20227

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Chandos 24-bit / 96 kHz recording
The Chandos policy of being at the forefront of technology is now further advanced by the use of 24-bit / 96 kHz recording. In order to reproduce the original waveform as closely as possible we use 24-bit, as it has a dynamic range that is up to 48 dB greater and up to 256 times the resolution of standard 16-bit recordings. Recording at the 44.1 kHz sample rate, the highest frequencies generated will be around 22 kHz. That is 2 kHz higher than can be heard by the typical human with excellent hearing. However, we use the 96 kHz sample rate, which will translate into the potentially highest frequency of 48 kHz. The theory is that, even though we do not hear it, audio energy exists, and it has an effect on the lower frequencies which we do hear, the higher sample rate thereby reproducing a better sound.

Steinway Model D Concert Grand Piano (serial no. 592 087) courtesy of Potton Hall
Piano technician: Alexander Warcaba-Wood, Alex Wood Piano Services

Dedication
Laura van der Heijden would like to dedicate this album to the memory of my grandmother Thea, who brought an unbelievable amount of light and joy into the world.

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Sound engineer Jonathan Cooper
Editor Jonathan Cooper
A & R administrator Karen Marchlik
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