

Reimagining Delécluse's *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire*

By Frédéric Macarez

This November, PASIC50 will host a session that promises to be both a tribute to tradition and a bold step forward in the world of percussion. Titled Frederic Macarez and Friends, this session will feature a groundbreaking reinterpretation of Jacques Delécluse's iconic *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire*. Accompanied by three of my esteemed French colleagues and friends, we will present these celebrated études in a completely new light, transforming them from technical exercises into full-fledged concert works with the addition of percussion accompaniments composed by Franck Dentresangle.

For decades, Delécluse's *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire* have been a cornerstone of percussion pedagogy, revered for their technical rigor and educational value. Yet, beneath their surface lies a profound musicality that has often been overshadowed by their reputation as practice-room staples. With this project, we aim to elevate these études to the concert stage, showcasing their intrinsic artistry and honoring the genius of Jacques Delécluse.

THE LEGACY OF JACQUES DELÉCLUSE

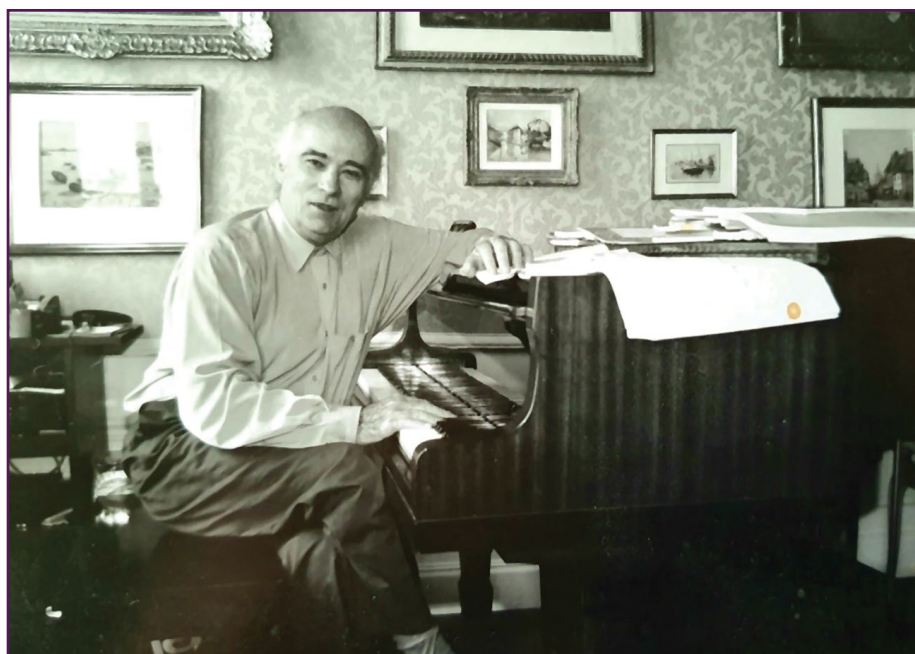
To understand the significance of this project, one must first appreciate the man

behind the études. Jacques Delécluse was not only a master percussionist but also a musician of extraordinary breadth and depth. Born into a musical family — his father a renowned clarinetist — Delécluse began his career as a virtuoso pianist before transitioning to percussion. His early professional experiences were as diverse as they were formative: timpanist for the Paris Opera and the Société des Concerts du Conservatoire, chamber musician with Pierre Boulez's *Domaine Musical*, and a pianist in chamber music ensembles. This eclectic background

gave Delécluse a unique perspective on music, one that seamlessly blended technical precision with artistic expression.

It is this rich musical heritage that permeates the *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire*. Each étude, while ostensibly a technical exercise, carries subtle references to the vast repertoire Delécluse knew so intimately. From operatic drama to symphonic grandeur, from chamber music delicacy to avant-garde innovation, these études are imbued with a musicality that transcends their pedagogical purpose.

Jacques Delécluse



A NEW VISION FOR THE ÉTUDES

The idea for this project was born out of a desire to explore the full artistic potential of Delécluse's études. What if these works, long confined to the practice room, could be reimagined as concert pieces? What if their inherent musicality could be brought to the forefront, allowing audiences to experience them not as exercises but as dynamic, engaging performances?

To bring this vision to life, I turned to Franck Dentresangle, a composer and percussionist whose creativity and sensitivity made him the ideal collaborator. Dentresangle has crafted accompaniments for three percussionists that complement and enhance the original snare drum parts, transforming the études into multi-dimensional works of art. These accompaniments do not merely add texture or color; they engage in a dialogue with the snare drum, amplifying its expressive potential and highlighting the musical ideas embedded in Delécluse's writing.

The result is a series of pieces that retain the technical challenges of the original études while elevating them to a new level of artistic expression. By presenting these works in a concert setting, we hope to shift the perception of Delécluse's études from technical exercises to masterpieces worthy of the best stages.

FRÉDÉRIC MACAREZ AND FRIENDS

An exceptional ensemble of world-class percussionists, Frederic Macarez and Friends brings together four masters of their craft, all teachers at the Paris Conservatory-CRR, for the highly anticipated PASIC50.

The group is led by Frédéric Macarez, a former student of Jacques Delécluse, who served as the Principal Timpanist of the Orchestre de Paris (beside Delécluse) and is the Director of Percussion Studies at the Paris Conservatory-CRR. Macarez, who shared a close professional and personal relationship with Delécluse

for over 40 years, is joined by three of his own accomplished students:

Franck Dentresangle, a jazz vibraphone virtuoso and composer specializing in Brazilian and jazz music, merges his diverse musical expertise with his teaching roles in Paris.

Vitier Vivas, originally from Caracas, Venezuela, brings a wealth of experience from his international orchestral career, which includes collaborations with some

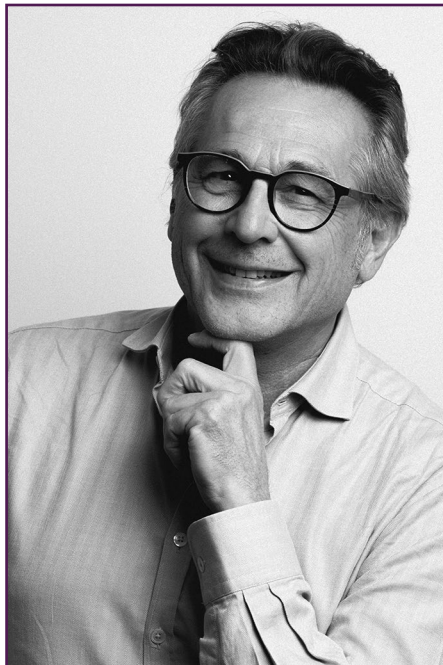
of the world's most renowned conductors.

Frédéric Gauthier, a marimba player and member of the France Air Force Orchestra, combines his performance career with teaching at the Rosny-sous-Bois Conservatory.

Together, this ensemble represents a unique blend of technical mastery, artistic vision, and pedagogical excellence, making their PASIC performance a must-see event.

HONORING THE PAST, INSPIRING THE FUTURE

This project is not just about reinterpreting Delécluse's work; it is also about celebrating his enduring legacy. For generations of percussionists, the *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire* have been a rite of passage, a benchmark of technical and musical development. By reimagining



Frédéric Macarez



Vitier Vivas



Franck Dentresangle



Frédéric Gauthier

these études as concert pieces, we aim to honor Delécluse's genius while ensuring that his work continues to inspire future generations.

At the same time, this project is a testament to the evolving nature of percussion as an art form. It reflects a broader trend in the percussion community: the blurring of lines between pedagogy and performance, between technical mastery and artistic expression. In this sense, Frederic Macarez and Friends is not just a tribute to Delécluse but also a celebration of the creativity and innovation that define our field.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT PASIC

Our PASIC session will feature live performances of several études from the *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire* in their new arrangements. Each performance will be accompanied by insights into the creative process behind the project, including the challenges and opportunities of adapting Delécluse's work for a chamber ensemble. We will also explore the musical references and inspirations that shaped Delécluse's writing, offering a deeper understanding of these études and their place in the percussion repertoire.

For those unable to attend PASIC, this article serves as both an introduction to the project and an invitation to reexamine Delécluse's études in your own practice and performance. Whether you are a student, educator, or performer, we hope this new vision of the *Douze Études pour Caisse Claire* will inspire you to approach these works with fresh eyes and ears.

Frédéric Macarez is a renowned percussionist, educator, and conductor. Former Principal Timpanist of the Orchestre de Paris, he is a passionate advocate for the advancement of percussion as an art form. Macarez has performed and taught around the world, inspiring generations of percussionists with his artistry and dedication. **PN**

DRUMSET

Greg Hersey

Drumset Clinic / Performance

A Fresh Approach to Multi-Percussion

Discover the art of blending drumset and auxiliary percussion in this session that explores the intersection of drumset, orchestral percussion, and auxiliary percussion instruments. This clinic emphasizes the significance of being a versatile and well-rounded musician and how various multi-percussion setups will challenge you as a percussionist and drumset player.

Greg Hersey is a percussionist and educational artist who is the Director of Instrumental Music and Performing Arts Department Chair at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville. He is a graduate of the University of North Florida School of Music and holds a master's degree in Percussion Performance. Greg performed at the 2023 Essence Music Festival of Culture in New Orleans with hip-hop legend Doug E. Fresh. He is an artist for YurtRock music loop library. His social media presence with over 420k followers has significantly impacted the hip-hop and drumming communities.

Brandon Green

Virtual Drumset Masterclass

Play Pain-Free: The Science of Drumming Ergonomics

This session is designed to help drummers play smarter, stronger, and pain-free for life. This hands-on workshop combines ergonomics, anatomy, and physics, giving you tools to optimize your setup, prevent injuries, and build the resilience needed for long-term success. You'll receive real-time assessments and tailored solutions to address your specific challenges. We'll evaluate your setup, posture, and technique to fix inefficiencies and solve discomfort or pain on the spot. This event is for drummers of all levels who want to play with greater ease and efficiency, address pain or discomfort with real-time solutions, and build strength, endurance, and longevity behind the kit.

Brandon Green is a biomechanics expert, fitness professional, and drumming enthusiast with over 20 years of experience helping individuals optimize their performance and longevity. As the founder of Drum Mechanics and the Drum Forever Fitness program, he specializes in blending science-based fitness, ergonomics, and drumming-specific training to help drummers play pain-free and sustainably for life.

Murray Piper

Drumset Clinic

Rhythm, A Way of Life

The rhythm of life is the way of life that brings our needs, desires, and talents into harmony. The result of this is passion and energy. Five key points I will break down about Rhythm, A Way of Life. 1. It's not just routine. 2. Natural cycles. 3. Mindful awareness. 4. Balance. 5. Personalization. I will also break down research provided by Johns Hopkins University. Studies show having music and rhythm in everyday life provides a better and healthy way of living. Based on research and my studies, I've created grooves that help and address the positive emotional effects and attitudes.

Murray S. Piper is a performer, instructor, clinician, and adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University Peabody Institute. He is the founder and director of Passionate Drumming & Music Lessons, and he is a teaching artist for the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Orch-kids & Arts Everyday program. Piper has led percussion programs for the University of Maryland Baltimore County dance department. Piper is an Emmy-nominated drummer for his role in the Stage Musical *Oh Gospel*, *The Evolution of Gospel Music*.