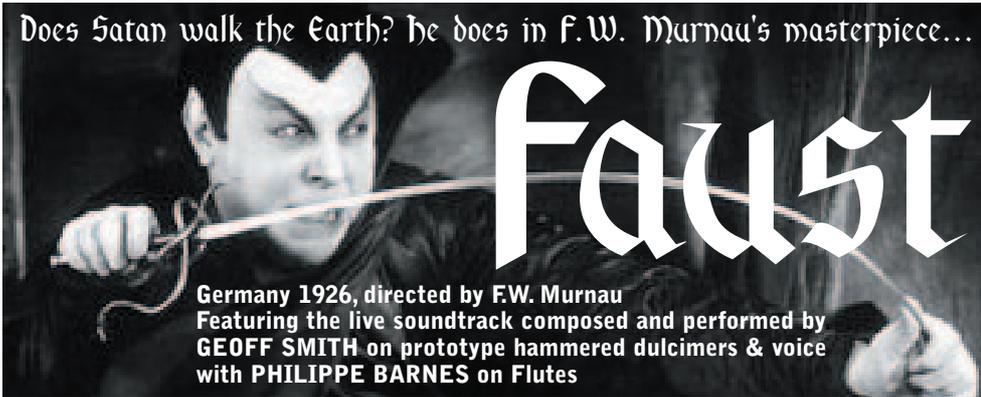


PRESS RELEASE: GEOFF SMITH

Does Satan walk the Earth? He does in F.W. Murnau's masterpiece...



Germany 1926, directed by F.W. Murnau
Featuring the live soundtrack composed and performed by
GEOFF SMITH on prototype hammered dulcimers & voice
with **PHILIPPE BARNES** on Flutes

Following GEOFF SMITH's internationally acclaimed score to The Cabinet of Dr Caligari which proved to be the most successful live cinema event since the end of the 'silent' era, he now returns with his next live film soundtrack project: Faust.

F.W. Murnau was the genius that myths grew around, he did nothing to discourage them, and still they grow. He knew both the dangers of temptation and its delights. This is clear in his adaptation of Goethe's (1749–1832) legend of **Faust** which was filmed a minimum of fifteen times during the silent era. His 1926 silent version remains the definitive motion picture version of the legendary tale. Although less known in the UK than his earlier film **Nosferatu**, Murnau's **Faust** – alongside **Sunrise**, is arguably his highest achievement and can be ranked among the greatest of the silent masterpieces. Murnau's vision echoes and embraces Rembrandt and Mantegna, Durer and Altdorfer, Goethe and Marlow and the tale unfolding on the screen blossoms from darkness into light as his enormous artistic ambitions are realised.

Geoff Smith's new score for **Faust** further explores his groundbreaking approach to composition, performance and design that was exemplified in **The Cabinet of Dr Caligari**. As well as a composer, performer, orchestrator, designer, vocalist, songwriter and percussionist Geoff Smith is acknowledged both as a world-leading virtuoso and a unique innovator in composition, technique and performance on the hammered dulcimer. He is also a pioneer in dulcimer design.

Geoff's new score has been inspired and led by Murnau's genius: he accomplishes what simply could not be realized in the operatic stage versions of the **Faust** legend. There is a palpable atmosphere of excitement, evil, temptation and perversion: enabled by inspirational direction of a highly talented ensemble cast, virtuoso camera work, innovative lighting techniques as well as absolutely astounding special effects that were decades ahead of their time and which are all the more impressive when viewed from a 21st century perspective. Every shot is an artistic masterpiece underlining Murnau's creative and inspirational obsession with achieving the complete aesthetic for every single moment of the film. When Murnau made **Faust** for the 'big screen' he brought Goethe's legend to life as only the cinema can.

For the performance of **Faust** Geoff uses three different prototype dulcimers two of which are historic innovations in instrument design: one being the first UK fixed position chromatic dulcimer, the other being the first microtonal dulcimer incorporating his revolutionary **Microtonal Fluid Tuning Mechanism** patent.

It would have been impossible to compose and perform the soundtrack for **Faust** without Geoff's invention – the **Microtonal Fluid Tuning Mechanism**. For further information regarding this invention, its wider applications and some of its historic implications, refer to the **Guardian** newspaper article, ['Composer Reinvents the Piano'](#).

The hammered dulcimer is an ancient percussion instrument struck by small wooden hammers, sticks or mallets. The largest dulcimers have well over 100 strings. Each country has its own indigenous dulcimer which peculiarly reflects its respective culture – England, Scotland, Hungary, Greece, Italy, Iran, Iraq, India, Germany, Egypt, Tibet, China, Korea, Mexico and so on. There is much debate as to the instrument's origins before it spread around the world (if it did). Dulcimers are referred to in the King James Version of the bible. According to information available in the west, the oldest known depiction of a dulcimer is from a 12th century ivory book cover made in Byzantium for the wife of the Count of Anjou (1139). Until today the dulcimer has been seen as a traditional instrument and has usually been used in folk and classical musics in respective cultures.

Geoff Smith's new score for FAUST is a revelation in the composition and performance of live music for film. Now for the first time, FAUST, a classic of world cinema, has a musical soundtrack worthy of its place in the history of film. This immensely dynamic score illuminates Murnau's aesthetic obsession, the juxtaposition of terror with dark humour, the exploitation of human vulnerability and the ultimate triumph of the spirit.

"It's a tribute to Smith that his music was able to bring this wonderful movie to life."

The Financial Times

"The musical equivalent of splitting the atom." – **The Guardian**

"This isn't just an innovative soundtrack, as its echoes positively enhance the melancholic and menacing moods of this intense, psychological masterpiece."

BBC Radio Times

"Caligari's protagonists convey a barely suppressed horror, which Smith's eerie and exotic score perfectly complements."

The Wire

"A fascinating combination of disturbing images and otherworldly sounds which yanks the tradition of silent movie accompaniment spectacularly back to the future. Smith is a virtuoso percussionist who has revolutionised a forgotten instrument."

– **The Sunday Times**

"The Hammered Dulcimer has been waiting for someone like Geoff Smith to come along."

Fiona Talkington, BBC Radio 3

"Like the famous Roy Budd theme for 'Get Carter', or the zither music from 'The Third Man' but stripped down and fed through a haunted house, the music draws out the peculiar textures and angularities of the story with real precision."

The Big Issue

"Turbo charged and disturbingly good."

The Independent

"Immense passion and power... quite honestly breathtaking."

New Musical Express

Critic's Choice

Time Out



info@dulcimer.co.uk
www.dulcimer.co.uk

