

Claude Debussy - Preludes arranged for Orchestra (2010)

Written by bluesever

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CD1 1. *Brouillards* (Book II, No.1) 2. *Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Ouest* (I, 7) 3. *Minstrels* (I, 12) 4. *Canope* (II, 10) 5. *Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir* (I,4) 6. *La Puerta del Vino* (II, 3) 7. *Général Lavine – excentric* (II, 6) 8. *Feuilles mortes* (II, 2) 9. *Les tierces alternées* (II, 11) 10. *La danse de Puck* (I, 11) 11. *Le vent dans la plaine* (I, 3) 12. *La fille aux cheveux de lin* (I, 8) CD2 1. *Danseuse de Delphes* (Book I, 1) 2. *La sérénade interrompue* (I, 9) 3. *Des pas sur la neige* (I, 6) 4. *'Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses'* (II, 4) 5. *Voiles* (I,2) 6. *Hommage à S. Pickwick Esq., P.P.M.P.C.* (II, 9) 7. *La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune* (II, 7) 8. *Bruyères* (II, 5) 9. *Ondine* (II, 8) 10. *Les collines d'Anacapri* (I, 5) 11. *Feux d'artifice* (II, 12) 12. *La cathédrale engloutie* (I, 10) Colin Matthews 13. *Postlude: Monsieur Croche*

Hallé Orchestra Colin Matthews - Arranger, Composer, Producer Mark Elder - Conductor

Musical literalists may not be pleased with Colin Matthews' free orchestral arrangements of the 24 movements of Debussy's two books of *Préludes pour le piano*; this is certainly not the equivalent of Ravel's faithful orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. Fans of impressionist orchestral music and some fans of the piano originals, though, may well experience a thrill, as if a lost Debussy orchestral piece had been rediscovered. Matthews has a consummate, almost uncanny understanding of Debussy's orchestrational style, and the occasional sonorities that betray the work's modern provenance clearly sound like intentional artistic decisions and not miscalculations. Debussy was a composer whose language and orchestration were always evolving, and it requires no stretch whatsoever to imagine that these orchestrations could have been his own. Listeners who know the piano preludes will be fascinated to hear the ways in which Matthews has reimagined them, sometimes even adding material, extending their length, and altering note values to make the music fit the orchestral idiom with complete naturalness. Matthews reorders the preludes, mixing the two books, opening with *Brouillards*, the first prelude from the second book and ending the set with a gorgeous, grand, radiant version of *La cathédrale engloutie*. He also adds an original postlude, titled *Monsieur Croche* (the composer's pen name as a music critic), which he describes as being closer to Debussy's style than he had "intended or expected." The commissioners of the arrangement, Mark Elder and the Hallé Orchestra, perform it with luminous transparency and

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idiomatic sensitivity to roots in Impressionism. The sound is clean, clear, and present. Highly recommended. --- Stephen Eddins, AllMusic Review

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