

A black and white photograph of Nadia Boulanger, an elderly woman with short, light-colored hair and glasses. She is wearing a dark jacket over a patterned scarf and is seated at a piano. Her hands are resting on her lap. The piano is visible in the foreground, and the background is softly blurred.

MADemoiselle

- *Première Audience*

Unknown Music of
NADIA BOULANGER

DE 3496



MADemoiselle – *Première Audience* Unknown Music of NADIA BOULANGER

SONGS: Versailles* ♦ J'ai frappé ♦ Chanson* ♦ Chanson ♦ Heures ternes* ♦ Le beau navire* ♦ Mon coeur* ♦ Doute ♦ Un grand sommeil noir* ♦ L'échange ♦ Soir d'hiver ♦ Ilda* ♦ Prière ♦ Cantique ♦ Poème d'amour* ♦ Extase* ♦ La mer* ♦ Aubade* ♦ Au bord de la route ♦ Le couteau ♦ Soleils couchants ♦ Élégie ♦ O schwöre nicht* ♦ Was will die einsame Thräne? ♦ Ach, die Augen sind es wieder* ♦ Écoutez la chanson bien douce

WORKS FOR PIANO: Vers la vie nouvelle ♦ Trois pièces pour piano*

WORKS FOR CELLO AND PIANO: Trois pièces

WORKS FOR ORGAN: Trois improvisations ♦ Pièce sur des airs populaires flamands

**Nicole Cabell, soprano • Alek Shrader, tenor
Edwin Crossley-Mercer, baritone • Amit Peled, cello
François-Henri Houbart, organ • Lucy Mauro, piano**

A 2-CD Set • Total Playing Time: 1:48:27

* World Premiere Recordings

MADemoiselle – *Première Audience*

Unknown Music of NADIA BOULANGER

CD 1 (54:12)

SONGS

- + 1. Versailles* (3:05)
- + 2. J'ai frappé (1:59)
- + 3. Chanson* (1:26)
- + 4. Chanson (2:02)
- + 5. Heures ternes* (2:49)
- + 6. Le beau navire* (3:04)
- + 7. Mon coeur* (3:05)
- § 8. Doute (2:47)
- § 9. Un grand sommeil noir* (2:02)
- + 10. L'échange (3:24)
- + 11. Soir d'hiver (3:40)
- + 12. Ilda* (3:29)
- + 13. Prière (3:38)
- + 14. Cantique (2:03)
- + 15. Poème d'amour* (3:50)
- + 16. Extase* (2:36)
- + 17. La mer* (2:53)
- § 18. Aubade* (2:00)
- § 19. Au bord de la route (2:18)
- § 20. Le couteau (1:57)

CD 2 (54:15)

- + 1. Soleils couchants (2:24)
- + 2. Élégie (3:30)
- + 3. O schwöre nicht* (2:03)

- + 4. Was will die einsame Thräne? (2:32)
- + 5. Ach, die Augen sind es wieder* (2:09)
- + 6. Écoutez la chanson bien douce (6:03)

WORKS FOR PIANO

- 7. **Vers la vie nouvelle** (4:30)
- Trois pièces pour piano*** (3:22)
- 8. Pièce No. 1 in D Minor (1:05)
- 9. Pièce No. 2 in D Minor (1:26)
- 10. Pièce No. 3 in B Minor (0:51)

WORKS FOR CELLO AND PIANO

- Trois pièces** (8:33)
- 11. Modéré (3:14)
- 12. Sans vitesse et à l'aise (2:21)
- 13. Vite et nerveusement rythmé (2:58)

WORKS FOR ORGAN

- Trois improvisations** (11:11)
- 14. Prélude (5:22)
- 15. Petit Canon (2:32)
- 16. Improvisation (3:57)
- 17. **Pièce sur des airs populaires flamands** (7:18)

* World Premiere Recordings

Total Playing Time: 1:48:27

† **Nicole Cabell, *soprano***
‡ **Alek Shrader, *tenor***
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Amit Peled, *cello*
François-Henri Houbart, *organ*
Lucy Mauro, *piano*

"Nothing is better than music; when it takes us out of time, it has done more for us than we have the right to hope for: it has broadened the limits of our sorrowful life, it has lit up the sweetness of our hours of happiness by effacing the pettinesses that diminish us, bringing us back pure and new to what was, what will be, what music has created for us.

"In music everything is prolonged, everything is edified, and when the enchantment has ceased, we are still bathed in its clarity; solitude is accompanied by a new hope between pity for ourselves — which makes us more indulgent and more understanding — and the certitude of finding something again, that which lives forever in music."

— Nadia Boulanger, from the May 1919 issue of *Le Monde Musical* • quoted in *The Tender Tyrant, Nadia Boulanger: A Life Devoted to Music* by Alan Kendall

The above quote represents the essence of the legendary Nadia Boulanger's message to all who had the privilege of knowing and working with her, as I once did. It expresses the passion that drove "Mademoiselle," as everyone called her, to be an inspired teacher, and was the foundation of the high standards for which she was celebrated internationally. This unique album of Mademoiselle's unknown and seldom-heard compositions began with an in-

quiry in 2013 from pianist Lucy Mauro, whose suggestion struck a resonant chord with me for a number of reasons. As the director of Delos, I'm thrilled, both personally and professionally, that we can help bring Mademoiselle's own music to light, at last. One hearing convinced me that singers and art song enthusiasts would be especially excited about the songs, thirteen of which are receiving world premiere recordings.

I first met Nadia Boulanger in the summer of 1955, when I was her student at the American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. Her gray-white hair was drawn back into an ascetic bun, and her eyes burned with the intensity of her devotion to music. She listened carefully as I played through piano works I was preparing for some competitions and pointed out a few musical connections she thought I might have missed. She asked me many questions in her French-accented English, and then said, to my delight, "You will go far!" But a couple of weeks later, without warning, I was stricken with paralytic polio. And since polio targets those neuromuscular areas most highly developed and most strenuously in use immediately before the attack, the paralytic virus had destroyed my entire pianistic neuromuscular structure.

Suddenly, I had become a worry to Mademoiselle rather than a student under her guidance. She began acting as my *pro tem* guardian, even

sending her own doctor to assess the damage along with the medical staff at the American Hospital in Paris. She communicated by cable and phone with my parents in Detroit and suggested a place to recuperate. Once I was able, with assistance, to get to her apartment at 36 rue Ballu – an address revered to this day by many a classical musician – she invited me there for some special study sessions.

It was the kindest, most reassuring, and inspirational thing anyone could have done. First, she would make sure that I was comfortable, carefully arranging cushions so that I could be in a semi-reclining position. Then she would sit at the piano and ask what I would like to “work on.” In those memorable sessions, we explored together the wonders of late Beethoven and other major piano works, discussing structural and tonal relationships. I clung to our sessions — to the opportunity to “live inside” great music — despite my enormous loss. Over those months, I learned of her devotion to her younger sister, Lili, who had died in her early 20s, and who had probably been the source of Mademoiselle’s special sensitivity to a seriously ill young person.

Mademoiselle made it clear to me that she considered Lili the talented composer in the family. She was self-deprecating about her own early compositions, almost as if they had been a youthful folly. Since she had been the revered teacher of some of the greatest 20th-century composers, I wondered at her dismissal of her own work. Here were people like Igor Stravinsky asking her opinion or advice (she took a phone

call from him during one of our sessions). But since she was known by many to be a stern taskmaster, holding everyone to the highest standards, I suspected that she was applying her strongest criticism to her own compositions. She spoke lovingly of her teacher Gabriel Fauré, and when the time came for me to leave Paris, gave me a personal, autographed copy of his 13th Nocturne, and asked me to stay in touch.

It was in late 1970, some fifteen years later, when Mademoiselle and I met again. By then, against all odds, I had found a way to reconstruct a piano-playing apparatus and was able to tour once again as a concert pianist. A European tour took me to Paris, where Mademoiselle came to hear me play at the Salle Gaveau. Our emotional reunion after the performance said it all.

Little did I know that a few years later I would be invited to record for Delos, the then-new American label, nor that I would eventually become involved in the “other side of the microphone” work of recording production. Amelia Haygood (1919-2007), Delos founder and my dear friend, loved the stories about Mademoiselle and would have been excited and honored, as I am, to be releasing this special world premiere collection of Mademoiselle’s deeply affecting compositions.

— Carol Rosenberger

Discovering Nadia Boulanger’s beautiful music and creating this tribute to such a legendary musician has involved the enthusiastic support of several

people, including Alexandra Laederich of the Nadia and Lili Boulanger International Center in Paris; Carol Rosenberger at Delos; Stephen Schmidt, pianist and conductor as well as a former student of Boulanger; and Michael Benchetrit of Columbia Artists Management (who happened to grow up near Boulanger's famous rue Ballu home).

With the aid of my university (West Virginia University) and state research grants, this exciting project included not only recording Boulanger's music, but also transcribing eleven of her unpublished works (eight songs and three piano pieces) from her manuscripts and incorporating Boulanger's revisions to her published songs in preparation for this recording and future publications.

In a sense, music tells the real story of a composer's life. While Nadia Boulanger composed for only a comparatively short time in her 92 years, from 1901-1922, her works offer a rare look into her life from her teenage years to her mid-thirties. After 1922, Nadia Boulanger stopped composing altogether and devoted herself to her students, becoming one of the most influential teachers of the 20th century. Her music, however, represents in part what made her such a renowned teacher: an impeccable command of musical language and a keen sense of color and sensitivity to conveying emotion through music. As she once said, "Music was not invented by the composer, but found." In Nadia Boulanger's music, we find not just glimpses of the musician she became, but gems – and indeed, a treasure.

— Lucy Mauro

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Upon hearing the almost entirely unknown music of Nadia Boulanger revealed in this release, one could only wish that "Mademoiselle" hadn't stopped composing. If only she had listened to none other than Gabriel Fauré, her former teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, when she visited him many years later. She recounted that he said to her, "I'm not sure you did the right thing in giving up composition." We at Delos can only agree with him ... strongly!

But Mademoiselle could not be convinced that her own compositions were worth performing and promoting. Alexandra Laederich (mentioned above) provided us with a telling quote, spoken late in Boulanger's life in response to a query about her compositions: "I realized that my music had the worst of all faults: that it was useless, and fortunately I did not leave it to anyone else to tell me!" Yet Ms. Laederich also pointed out that Boulanger "... had made sure to retain all her manuscripts, as well as the proof corrections and first editions of her works. Thus it is possible today to make her works public and to leave it to us to appreciate them." Could she therefore have hoped that her music would eventually find its way into the standard repertoire?

One could definitely characterize Boulanger as a "Renaissance woman" of sorts, with boundless musical curiosity and a seemingly endless array of practical skills. Born into a highly musical family, she was a true prodigy and consistently

brilliant student, quickly mastering every area of musical study germane to composition. As a performer, she first made a name for herself as a concert pianist and accompanist; also as a marvelous organist. She later became known as a pioneering woman conductor of both choral and orchestral works, both in her native Paris and abroad.

She began teaching (privately) at age sixteen, winning her first official academic appointment at twenty. Renowned for her keen intellect, lofty standards and charismatic teaching style, she successfully taught all of the various musical disciplines that composers must master. She was a founding member (and later director) of the American Conservatory at Fontainebleau, which drew her into the American musical scene. She toured widely – both performing and lecturing – in the United States, where she also spent the World War II years, teaching at several top schools and conservatories (including Juilliard) and conducting the nation's most distinguished orchestras.

Boulanger's teaching career – spanning 75-plus years and nearly 1,200 students from around the world – remains the stuff of legend. American music would not be what it is today without her: to name but a few, she taught Aaron Copland, David Diamond, Virgil Thomson, Walter Piston, Roy Harris and Elliott Carter ... also Ned Rorem, who summed up her place in music history thusly: "So far as musical pedagogy is concerned – and by extension of musical creation – Nadia Boulanger is the most influential person who

ever lived." She continued teaching until just a few months before her death in 1979.

And now, at long last, the fruits of Mademoiselle's own compositional labors can be savored by the musical public at large. The works on this album comprise her complete oeuvre – published and unpublished – in these genres: songs, solo piano, cello and piano, and organ.

Boulanger's other works during the years she composed are various choral pieces (unaccompanied, with piano, and with orchestra); a concerto for piano and orchestra, and another orchestral work; sketches of three pieces for two pianos; and eight songs plus an opera that were composed in collaboration with her mentor Raoul Pugno. In addition, she also orchestrated some of her songs. But while she produced some transcriptions after 1922, no other original compositions are extant.

An early 20th-century composer, Nadia Boulanger wrote meticulously crafted works in a late romantic style: essentially tonal, with often profuse chromatic elements and occasional dissonance, as quite a few of her contemporaries did. Her music at times also shows impressionistic elements and the influence of Debussy and Fauré. Yet her music is highly original, revealing a compositional voice that was entirely her own. Her works convey a convincing array of moods, effects, and potent emotions – while revealing a keen sense of harmony, color, and artistic impact.

The organ works are performed on the great Cavaillé-Coll organ at the Madeleine church in Paris. Built in 1845-46, it's one of the most famous organs that Mademoiselle played as a substitute organist during the time she composed for that instrument. While the Madeleine organ has undergone updates and additions since then, organist François-Henri Houbart performed the works for this recording as closely as possible to the way Boulanger would have heard (and played) them in the early twentieth century. It's interesting to note that she had her own compact Cavaillé-Coll instrument at her rue Ballu apartment.

In assembling the works for this album, the artists suggested that rather than presenting the pieces (especially the songs) in chronological order, they should be arranged in a way that allows listeners to experience and enjoy Boulanger's beautiful music for its intrinsic – not its historic – value.

They also created a program sequence that further reflects some of the variety and intimacy of salon concerts: then-popular home entertainment events that Boulanger participated in many times, and that were an integral part of her performing career.

Some songs are presented together as Nadia Boulanger originally programmed them: sometimes for premieres, either in their original form with piano or in her orchestrated versions for salon and public concerts. The arrangement of works was also guided by the types of teaching and concert programming that Mademoiselle

practiced later in life, such as juxtaposing works from a variety of periods that demonstrate underlying connections. For example, each of the three singers on this album performs published as well as unpublished songs, drawn variously from Boulanger's early, middle, and later works.

NOTE: To read more comments from Alexandra Laederich of the Nadia and Lili Boulanger International Center in the original French, with English translations, go to the special Nadia Boulanger page on the Delos website at delosmusic.com/mademoiselle.

WORKS PRESENTED IN THIS ALBUM

SONGS

Among the songs included here, Boulanger's piece "Soir d'hiver" is the only setting of her own text. For the other texts, she selected the verses of such famous poets as Heinrich Heine, Paul Verlaine, and Victor Hugo as well as those of contemporary French poets – some of whom were family friends with political views that weren't necessarily in keeping with her own, mostly conservative leanings. (The music critic and socialist author Camille Mauclair, four of whose texts she set, is one such example.) The three German songs with texts by Heinrich Heine were also translated into French, but are performed in the original German for this recording (Boulanger composed these particular songs in a 19th-century German style). Mademoiselle's choices of poetic themes are

wide-ranging, and often reveal religious inspiration. Her first song, "Extase," was composed in 1901, when she was just fourteen years old; her final effort in the genre, "J'ai frappé," came in 1922, when she was thirty-five.

CD 1

SONGS

1. Versailles – 1906, published, text by Albert Samain. A simple, gently undulating piano part underscores the almost impressionistically dreamy and melancholic text.

Ô Versailles, par cette après-midi fanée,
Pourquoi ton souvenir m'obsède-t-il ainsi?
Les ardeurs de l'été s'éloignent, et voici
Que s'incline vers nous la saison surannée.
Je veux revoir au long d'une calme journée
Tes eaux glauques que jonche
Un feuillage roussi,
Et respirer encore,
Un soir d'or adouci,
Ta beauté plus touchante au déclin de l'année.
Comme un grand lys tu meurs,
Noble et triste, sans bruit;
Et ton onde épuisée au bord
Moisi des vasques
S'écoule, douce ainsi qu'un sanglot
Dans la nuit.



O Versailles, by this faded afternoon,
Why does the memory of you obsess me
like this?
The passion of summer is passing, and here
Comes the bygone season leaning toward us.
I want to see again throughout a quiet day
Your murky waters strewn with
A singed foliage,
And to breathe again,
During a sweet, golden evening,
Your beauty more touching at the decline of
the year.
Like a great lily you die,
Noble and sad, without sound;
And your tired worn-out water at the edge of
Moldy ponds
Flows, gently like that of a sob
In the night.

2. J'ai frappé (I knocked) – 1922, published, text by Jean-François Bourguignon. Dissonant piano chords and doleful vocal phrases alternate with more lyrical passages, as the brief text's mood-shifts lead to a desolate finish.

Ma main a frappé les portes closes
Et d'autres mains au loin ont répondu.
Mon front a frappé les portes closes
Et d'autres fronts au loin ont répondu.
Mon coeur a frappé les portes closes
Mais l'écho de mon coeur seul a répondu.



My hand knocked on the closed doors
And other hands in the distance answered.
My forehead knocked on the closed doors
And other foreheads in the distance responded.
My heart knocked on the closed doors
But only the echo of my heart answered.

3. Chanson (Song) – 1909, published, text by
Georges Delaquys. This is a love song with a
sense of joyful intoxication – reminiscent of a
madrigal, in both structure and effect.

Les lilas sont en folie,
Cache-cache
Et les roses sont jolies,
Cachez-vous.

Tirez les rideaux, tirez les rideaux!
Et sous les vertes feuilles
Cachez-vous!

Ah ah! Ah ah! Ah ah!

Lilas et rosiers Ah ah!
La belle, Ah ah! Ah ah!
La plus belle, c'est toi!

Beaux seigneurs et dames belles,
Aime, aime,
Dans vos atours de dentelles,
Aimez-vous.

Tirez les rideaux, tirez les rideaux!
Qui voudra de mon âme?

Aimez-vous! Ah ah! ah ah! ah ah!
Amours et baisers, ah la belle,
Ah ah! ah la plus belle, c'est toi!



The lilacs are in plenty,
Hide and seek
And the roses are pretty,
Hide!

Draw the curtains, draw the curtains!
And under the green leaves
Hide!

Ah ah! Ah ah! Ah ah!

Lilacs and rosebushes Ah ah!
Beautiful one, Ah, ah! Ah ah!
The most beautiful, it is you!

Fine lords and beautiful ladies,
Love, love,
In your lace attire,
Love.

Draw the curtains, draw the curtains!
Who will want my soul?

Love! Ah ah! Ah ah! Ah ah!
Loves and kisses, ah beautiful one!
Ah ah! Ah the most beautiful, it is you!

4. Chanson (Song) – 1922, published, text by Camille Mauclair. The piano sets an irritated, rueful tone, later punctuated by crashing chords as the singer gives voice to bitter feelings of betrayal.

Elle a vendu mon cœur
Pour une chanson:
Vends mon cœur à la place,
Ô colporteur
À la place de la chanson.

Tes chansons étaient blanches,
La mienne est couleur de sang;
Elle a vendu mon cœur,
Ô colporteur,
Elle a vendu mon cœur
En s'amusant.

Et maintenant chante mon cœur
Sur les places,
Aux carrefours,
Tu feras pleurer colporteur
En racontant mon grand amour.

Pendant qu'elle fera rire
Les gents à sa noce venus
En chantant la chanson pour rire,
Pour qui elle a mon cœur vendu.



She sold my heart
For a song:
Sell my heart instead,
Oh peddler
Instead of the song.

Your songs were white
Mine is the color of blood;
She sold my heart,
Oh peddler
She sold my heart
While having fun.

And now sing my heart
In the squares,
At the crossroads,
You will cause crying, peddler
While telling of my great love.

While she will cause to laugh
The people who had come to her wedding,
While singing the song for fun,
For which she had sold my heart.

5. Heures ternes (Dull hours)– 1910, unpublished, text by Maurice Maeterlinck, programmed by Boulanger with "Le beau navire." The piano creates an opening tone of quiet desolation, growing in intensity as the singer expresses fatalistic grief over lost hopes and bygone illusions.

Voici d'anciens désirs qui passent,
Encor des songes de lassés,
Encor des rêves qui se lassent;
Voilà les jours d'espoir passés!

En qui faut-il fuir aujourd'hui!
Il n'y a plus d'étoile aucune:
Mais de la glace sur l'ennui
Et des linges bleus sous la lune.

Encor des sanglots pris au piège!
Voyez les malades sans feu,

Et les agneaux brouter la neige;
Ayez pitié de tout, mon Dieu!

Moi, j'attends un peu de réveil,
Moi, j'attends que le sommeil passe,
Moi, j'attends un peu de soleil
Sur mes mains que la lune glace.



Here are the old desires that pass,
Again, dreams of tired people,
Again, dreams that weary themselves;
These the days of past hope!

In whom must we flee today!
There is no more star:
But ice on boredom
And blue cloths under the moon.

Again sobs trapped!
See the sick without fire,
And the lambs graze on the snow;
Pity all, my God!

Me, I await a little alarm,
Me, I await that sleep passes,
Me, I await a little sunlight,
On my hands that the moon ices.

6. Le beau navire (The beautiful ship) – 1910,
published, text by Georges Delaquys (music
based on the earlier "Poème d'amour"). This ro-
mantic song depicts a wistfully dreamy – then ec-
static – allegory of a soul being borne by a lovely
ship to the prospect of love at journey's end.

Si lourd, si tranquille et si brave
Le beau navire au rêve clair
Porte son espoir sur la mer
Comme un fanal à son étrave.

Au loin, le ciel est plein d'extase
Et de féerie et plein de jour,
Et c'est mon âme qui s'embrase
Et défaille vers tant d'amour;

Mon âme seule qui désire
A toutes voiles, son reveil,
Et qui luit comme un beau navire,
Dans le sillage du soleil!

Prends-la cette âme illuminée
Et prends aussi, prends à pleins bras
Ainsi le veut la destinée
Ma vie a jamais entraînée
Vers toi qui m'appelle là-bas!



So heavy, so peaceful and so brave
The beautiful ship with the clear dream
Carries his hope on the sea
As a beacon to his bow.

In the distance, the sky is full of ecstasy
And enchantment and full of day,
And it is my soul that sets itself ablaze
And swoons toward so much love;

My soul alone which desires
In full sail, its awakening,
And which shines like a beautiful ship,
In the wake of the sun!

Take it this soul illuminated
And take also, take with both arms
This is how fate wants it
My life forever pulled
Toward you who calls me there!

7. Mon coeur (My heart) – 1906, unpublished, text by Albert Samain. Piano and voice alike speak with sorrowful reflection of a vulnerable heart's fragility, barely tempered by a sense of uncertain hope.

Mon coeur, tremblant des lendemains,
Est comme un oiseau dans tes mains
Qui s'effarouche et qui frissonne.

Il est si timide qu'il faut
Ne lui parler que pas trop haut
Pour que sans crainte il s'abandonne.

Un mot suffit à le navrer,
Un regard en lui fait vibrer
Une inexprimable amertume.

Et ton haleine seulement,
Quand tu lui parles doucement,
Le fait trembler comme une plume.

Et quand tu le ferais souffrir
Jusqu'à saigner, jusqu'à mourir,
Tu pourrais en garder le doute,
Et de sa peine ne savoir
Qu'une larme tombée un soir
Sur ton gant taché d'une goutte.



My heart, trembling of tomorrows,
Is like a bird in your hands
Who is frightened and shivers.

He is so timid that one must
Only speak to him not too loudly
So that without fear he lets go.

A word is enough to upset him,
A glance makes him quiver inside
An inexpressible bitterness.

And only your breath,
When you talk to him gently,
Makes him tremble like a feather.

And when you would make him suffer
Until bleeding, until dying,
You could keep doubting it,
And of his pain only know
Of a tear fallen one evening
On your glove stained with a drop.

8. Doute (Doubt) – 1922, published, text by Camille Mauclair. The piano sets a poignant mood, reflected at first by the singer, until we hear a dissonance-supported outcry of dashed hopes and the futility of waiting for lost love to return.

Il y a si longtemps
Que ton âme est en chemin,
A ce que m'ont dit les anges,
Vers moi qui l'attends

En joignant les mains,
Il y a si longtemps
Que peut-être elle perdit la route
Puisque je ne vois rien
Au lointain des quatre chemins
Qui font croix au carrefour du doute.
Voici venir le souffle froid
Qui chasse oiseaux, soleil et feuilles,
Et ramène brouillard et deuil
Sur mon espoir et sur ma foi:
Faudra-t-il m'en aller comme un qui n'attend
Et s'en retourne, en la nullité de la nuit,
Vers la maison et vers l'ennui?



It has been for so long
That your soul is on the way,
According to what the angels told me,
To me who waits for it
With clasped hands,
It has been for so long
That maybe she lost the road
Since I do not see anything
In the distance beyond the four paths
Which make a cross at the crossroads
of doubt.
Here comes the cold breath
Which chases away birds, sun and leaves,
And brings back fog and mourning
On my hope and my faith:
Will I need to go away as one who does not wait
And returns in the nullity of the night,
To the house and to the boredom?

9. Un grand sommeil noir (A long black sleep) – 1906, unpublished, text by Paul Verlaine. The music softly expresses tragic feelings of hopelessness, interrupted by an angry outburst before sinking back into black depression.

Un grand sommeil noir
Tombe sur ma vie:
Dormez, tout espoir,
Dormez, toute envie!

Je ne vois plus rien,
Je perds la mémoire
Du mal et du bien
Ô la triste histoire!

Je suis un berceau
Qu'une main balance
Au creux d'un caveau:
Silence, silence!



A long black sleep
Falls on my life:
Sleep, all hope,
Sleep, all desire!

I do not see anything anymore,
I lose the memory
Of the bad and the good
O sad story!

I am a cradle
That a hand is rocking
In the hollow of a vault,
Silence, silence!

10. L'échange (The exchange) – 1922, published, text by Camille Mauclair. An ominously plodding, minor-hued sense of grief builds into a dissonant surge of anger at the unfair exchange of pure love for betrayal.

Lorsqu'il fut ivre et désolé
D'avoir donné le plus beau de son âme
A des gens méchants ou pressés
Il donna le reste à une pauvre femme
Qui lui donna la sienne en échange
La sienne pure comme un ange.

Échange, triste échange,
Anneau de fer contre anneau d'or.

Lorsqu'il eut bien pleuré sur ses genoux
Lorsqu'elle eut dit tous ses mots doux,
Ceux qu'elle avait appris dans son enfance,
Ou devinés dans la douleur.
Il s'en alla chanter ailleurs,
En quittant sa pauvre amante
Qui mourut de son attente
Elle hénit en dernière heure.

Échange, triste échange,
Il la pleura comme un ange,
Anneau de fer contre anneau d'or
Comme s'il l'aimait encor.



Once he was drunk and sorry
To have given the best of his soul
To the vicious people
He gave the rest to a poor woman
Who gave him hers in return

Hers as pure as an angel.

Exchange, sad exchange,
Iron ring for gold ring.

Once he had wept enough on his knees
Once she had said all her sweet words,
Those she had learned in her childhood,
Or guessed in pain.
He went away to sing elsewhere,
Leaving his poor lover
Who died of her waiting
She brayed during the last hour.

Exchange, sad exchange,
He cried for her as if she were an angel,
Iron ring for gold ring
As if he still loved her.

11. Soir d'hiver (Winter evening) – 1914-15, published, text by the composer. A song of contrasts: empty sadness at first, then dissonant outrage from the mother of an infant whose father has abandoned them.

Une jeune femme berce son enfant.
Elle est seule, elle pleure, mais elle chante,
Car il faut bien qu'il entende
La chanson douce et tendre pour
qu'il s'endorme.

"Voici Noël, mon petit enfant bleu.
Les cloches sonneront
Pour que tu sois joyeux."

Celui qu'elle aime est parti...
Et la chanson s'arrête!

Elle dit:
"Où est-il à cette heure?
Entend-il ma voix?
Et sait-il que je vis?"
Elle pleure si simplement
Que le coeur en a mal.
Elle regarde son fils
Et cherche s'il ressemble
À celui qu'elle attend inlassablement,
De toute son âme, de toute sa tendresse!

Elle pleure, mais elle espère!
Elle entend de loin la Victoire,
Elle devine la lutte sans merci,
Mais elle croit à la Justice,
Elle sait que toute une vie s'est donnée,
Joyeuse et fière, et elle attend,
Auprès de ce berceau si petit,
Qui tient le coeur d'un homme.



A young woman rocks her child.
She is alone, she cries, but she sings,
Because he should hear
The sweet and soft song for him to fall asleep.

"Here is Christmas, my little blue child.
The bells will ring
So that you will be happy."

The one whom she loves is gone
And the song stops!
She says:
"Where is he at this hour?
Does he hear my voice?"

And does he know that I live?"
She cries so simply
That the heart aches.
She gazes at her son
And looks if he resembles
The one she awaits tirelessly
With all her soul, with all her tenderness!

She cries, but she hopes!
She hears from afar the Victory,
She imagines the merciless fight,
But she believes in Justice,
She knows that a whole life is given,
Joyous and proud, and she waits,
By this cradle so small,
That holds the heart of a man.

12. Ilda – 1906, unpublished, text by Albert Samain. This is a gentle musical study in cool Nordic melancholia as evoked by a woman's mysterious and inscrutable face and demeanor.

Pâle comme un matin de septembre en Norvège,
Elle avait la douceur magnétique du nord;
Tout s'apaisait près d'elle en un tacite accord,
Comme le bruit des pas s'étouffe dans la neige.

Son visage, par un étrange sortilège,
Avait pris dès l'enfance et gardait sans efforts
Un peu de la beauté sublime qu'ont les morts;
Et le rire semblait près d'elle sacrilège.

Triste avec passion, sur l'eau de ses grands yeux
Le songe errait comme un rameur silencieux.
Tout ce qui la touchait s'imprégnait d'un mystère.

Et si douce, enroulant ses boucles à ses doigts,
Avec une pudeur farouche de sa voix,
Elle vivait pour la volupté de se taire.



Pale as a September morning in Norway,
She had the magnetic sweetness of the north;
All things calmed down beside her in a
silent agreement,
Like the sound of footsteps muffled in the snow.

Her face, by a strange spell,
Had taken since childhood and kept effortlessly
A bit of the sublime beauty that the dead have;
And laughter seemed near her a sacrilege.

Sad with passion, on the water of her wide eyes
The dream wandered like a silent rower.
Everything touching her was immersed in a mystery.

And so gentle, wrapping her curls around her fingers,
With the shy modesty of her voice,
She was living for the delight of staying silent.

13. Prière (Prayer) – 1909, published, text by Henri Bataille, programmed by Boulanger with "Cantique." The first of this program's quasi-sacred songs, this piece is especially lovely: filled with a sense of yearning for the holy ecstasy that can only come from the gift of the Virgin Mary's spirit, in whatever form it may take.

Ô Marie! soyez-moi Marie, et mon cœur vivra
Qui me séparera de l'amour de Marie?
Les ténèbres ne m'empêcheraient pas
De sentir sa douceur. Ô Marie,

Vous m'avez fait perdre la paix, et pourtant
Je vous ai aimée d'une charité éternelle...
Peut-être si Dieu, qui nous entend certainement,
M'avait créé selon elle,
On aurait été bien heureux!
Mais ce n'est pas pour être heureux,
Ce n'est pas pour cela que je l'ai attirée
Qu'elle vive sur mes volontés comme elle veut!
Je n'en demande pas tant, et s'il vous agrée.
Simplement douce ou tendre ou pas,
Soyez-moi Marie et mon cœur vivra.



O Mary! be me Mary, and my heart will live
Who shall separate me from the love of Mary?
The darkness would not prevent me
From feeling her sweetness. O Mary,
You made me lose peace, and yet
I have loved you with an everlasting charity...
Perhaps if God, who hears us certainly,
Had created me according to her,
One would have been happy!
But it is not to be happy,
It is not for that reason that I draw her to me
May she live out my wishes as she wants!
I do not ask so much, and if it pleases you.
Simply sweet or tender or not,
Be me Mary, and my heart will live.

14. Cantique (Canticle) – 1909, published, text by Maurice Maeterlinck. Another religious inspiration, this song evokes a simple sense of assurance: a gentle affirmation that love conquers all.

À toute âme qui pleure,
À tout péché qui passe,
J'ouvre au sein des étoiles
Mes mains pleines de grâces.

Il n'est péché qui vive
Quand l'amour a parlé;
Il n'est âme qui meure
Quand l'amour a pleuré.

Et si l'amour s'égare
Aux sentiers d'ici-bas,
Ses larmes me retrouvent
Et ne s'égarent pas...



For every soul that cries,
For every sin that passes,
I open within the stars
My hands full of graces.

There is no sin which lasts
When love has spoken;
There is no soul that dies
When love has cried.

And if love goes astray
On paths here below,
Her tears find me
And do not get lost.

15. Poème d'amour (Poem of love) – 1907,
unpublished, text by Armande Silvestre (later
reworked to become "Le beau navire"). This
soft but confident expression of religious fervor
perhaps speaks of the "supreme intoxication" of

love that only the sacrament of Holy Commu-
nion can bring.

Je veux que mon sang, goutte à goutte,
Monte à ta lèvre lentement.
Comme un flot limpide et calmant,
De ton coeur il prendra la route.

Bois-le: mon âme y sera toute
Dans un suprême enivrement,
Car le seul mal que je redoute,
C'est de survivre à mon tourment,

Bois-le sans honte et sans peurs vaines:
Ce trésor sacré de mes veines,
Toi seule pourras la tarir.

Avec mon coeur, avec mon âme,
Ce sang que ta bouche réclame,
Bois-le! car j'ai soif de mourir!



I want that my blood, drop by drop,
Go up to your lips slowly.
As a limpid stream and calming,
From your heart it will take the path.

Drink it: my soul there will be all
In a supreme intoxication,
Because the only evil I dread,
Is to survive my torment,

Drink it without shame and vain fears:
This sacred treasure of my veins,
Only you will be able to run dry.

With my heart, with my soul,
This blood that your mouth claims,
Drink it! for I am thirsty to die!

16. Extase (Ecstasy) – 1901, unpublished, text by Victor Hugo; composed on Mademoiselle's fourteenth birthday. The singer basks serenely in the wondrous beauties of nature, before realizing – as a sparkling piano affirms – a rapture of faith in the God of all creation.

J'étais seul près des flots, par une nuit d'étoiles.
Pas un nuage aux cieux, sur les mers pas de voiles.

Mes yeux plongeaient plus loin que le monde,
le monde réel.

Et les bois, et les monts, et toute la nature,
Semblaient interroger dans un confus murmure
Les flots des mers, les flots des mers, les feux
du ciel.

Et les étoiles d'or, légions infinies,
À voix haute, à voix basse, avec mille
harmonies,
Disaient, en inclinant leurs couronnes de feu;
Et les flots bleus, que rien ne gouverne et
n'arrête,
Disaient en recourbant l'écume de leur crête:
C'est le Seigneur, le seigneur Dieu!



I was alone near the waves, by a night of stars.
Not a cloud in the skies, on the seas no sails.
My eyes viewed beyond the world, the real world.
And the woods, and mountains, and all of nature,

Seemed to question in a confused murmur
The waves of the seas, the waves of the seas,
the fires of the sky.

And the stars of gold, infinite legions
Aloud, in a whisper, with a thousand harmonies,
Said, inclining their crowns of fire;
And the blue waves, that nothing governs
nor stops,
Said bending the foam of their crest:
It is the Lord, the Lord God!

17. La mer (The sea) – 1910, published, text by Paul Verlaine. Another serenely calm, then rhapsodic confirmation of God in nature, embodied – as in the previous song – by the restless, yet constant sea (wondrously portrayed by the piano) as it extols the eternal rewards of faith.

La mer est plus belle
Que les cathédrales,
Nourrice fidèle,
Berceuse de râles,
La mer qui prie
La Vierge Marie!

Elle a tous les dons
Terribles et doux.
J'entends ses pardons
Gronder ses courroux.
Cette immensité
N'a rien d'entêté.

O! si patiente,
Même quand méchante!

Un souffle ami hante
La vague, et nous chante:
"Vous sans espérance,
Mourez sans souffrance!"

Et puis sous les cieux
Qui s'y rient plus clairs,
Elle a des airs bleus.
Roses, gris et verts
Plus belle que tous,
Meilleure que nous!



The sea is more beautiful
Than the cathedrals,
Nurse faithful,
Lullaby of groans,
The sea which prays
The Virgin Mary!

It has all the gifts
Terrible and sweet.
I hear its pardons
Rumbling its wrath.
This immensity
Has no insistence.

O! so patient,
Even when evil!
A friendly breath haunts
The wave, and to us sings:
"You without hope,
Die without suffering!"

And under the skies

Which laugh there, lighter,
It had shades of blue.
Pinks, grays and greens
More beautiful than all,
Better than we!

8. Aubade (Dawn serenade) – 1902, unpublished, text by Louis Tiercelin. This piece speaks – with tranquil contentment – of romantic love as ushered in by the return of springtime, even if the season's promise should prove false.

Le printemps fleurit les buissons;
Les nids palpitent de chansons
Et de bruits d'ailes;
Au soleil on voit voltiger
L'escadron joyeux et léger.

Adieu le coin du feu si doux,
Lorsque j'embrassais entre nous
Vos lèvres roses!
L'amour courra par les chemins
Où nous prendrons à pleines mains
Lilas et roses.

L'hiver a passé doucement
Et sans mêler aucun tourment
A notre ivresse;
Malgré moi j'ai peur de printemps!
M'aimerez-vous encore longtemps,
Enchanteresse?



The springtime flowers the shrubs;
The nests flutter with songs

And the sound of wings;
In the sun is seen flitting
The joyful and light flock.

Farewell fireside so sweet,
Between us when I kissed
Your pink lips!
Love will run by the paths
Where we will take handfuls of
Lilacs and roses.

The winter passed slowly
And without mixing any torment
With our drunkenness;
In spite of myself, I'm afraid of spring!
Will you love me still, for long,
Enchantress?

19. Au bord de la route (At the Roadside)

– 1922, published, text by Camille Mauclair. A doleful piano supports the sad tale of a man's tragic life, pointlessly lived without love.

Cet homme ne voulait plus vivre
Voyons de quoi vous mêlez vous?
Monsieur, madame, en vérité,
Cet homme en avait assez.

Son cœur était comme une pierre
Mais si quelqu'un l'avait ouvert
Peut-être dans ce cœur d'amant
Aurait-il vu le diamante.

Mais la pierre était si pesante
Qu'il s'est couché sur le chemin
En serrant sur elle ses mains

Et il est mort de son attente.

Cet homme en avait assez
Avec lui le joyau mourra
Monsieur, madame, il se fait tard,
Un signe de croix et passez.



This man did not want to live anymore
Come along, what are you getting involved in?
Sir, Madam, truly,
This man had had enough.

His heart was like a stone
But if someone had opened it
Perhaps in this heart of a lover
Would he have seen the diamond.

But the stone was so heavy
That he lay down on the road
Squeezing his hands on it
And he died in his waiting.

This man had had enough
With him the jewel will die
Sir, Madam, it is getting late,
A sign of the cross and go.

20. Le couteau (The knife) – 1922, published, text by Camille Mauclair (subtitled "Populaire"). A relentlessly pounding piano enhances the poetry's lament at unrequited love's "knife" planted in a grieving heart – wounding a man who does not want to let go of his love or his pain.

J'ai un couteau dans l'coeur.
Une belle l'a planté.
J'ai un couteau dans l'coeur
Et ne peux l'ôter.

C'couteau c'est l'amour d'elle.
Une belle l'a planté.
Tout mon coeur sortirait
Avec tout mon regret.

Il y faut un baiser.
Une belle l'a planté.
Un baiser sur le coeur
Mais ell'ne veut l'donner.

Couteau, reste en mon coeur
Si la plus belle t'y a planté.
J'veux bien me mourir d'elle
Mais j'veux pas l'oublier.



I have a knife in my heart.
A beauty planted it.
I have a knife in my heart
And cannot remove it.

This knife is the love of her.
A beauty planted it.
All my heart would go out
With all my regret.

It requires a kiss there.
A beauty planted it.
A kiss on the heart
But she does not want to give it.

Knife, remain in my heart
If the most beautiful planted you there.
I am willing to die because of her,
But I do not want to forget her.

CD 2

SONGS

1. Soleils couchants (Sunsets) – 1907, published, text by Paul Verlaine, programmed by Boulanger with "Élégie." This delicate, then more forceful musical panorama of the setting sun has a pervasive sense of melancholy as the sinking red orb seems to take the day's "strange dreams" along with it.

Une aube affaiblie
Verse par les champs
La mélancolie
Des soleils couchants.
La mélancolie
Berce de doux chants
Mon coeur qui s'oublie
Aux soleils couchants.
Et d'étranges rêves,
Comme des soleils
Couchants sur les grèves,
Fantômes vermeils,
Défilent sans trêves,
Défilent, pareils
À des grands soleils
Couchants sur les grèves.



A feeble dawn
Pours through the fields
The melancholy
Of sunsets.
The melancholy
Lulls of sweet songs
My heart which forgets itself
At sunsets
And strange dreams,
Like suns
Setting on the shores,
Ruby ghosts,
Process unceasingly,
Process, similar
To the great suns
Setting on the shores.

2. Élégie (Elegy) – 1906, published, text by Albert Samain. The almost impressionistic music evokes images of dark splendor under starry skies, recalling sensual memories of love – and inspiring pity for those earthbound souls who have no beloved name to remember.

Une douceur splendide et sombre
Flotte sous le ciel étoilé.
On dirait que là-haut dans l'ombre
Un paradis s'est écroulé.

Et c'est comme l'odeur ardente,
L'odeur fiévreuse dans l'air noir
D'une chevelure d'amante
Dénouée à travers le soir.

Tout l'espace languit de fièvres.
Du fond des coeurs mystérieux
S'en viennent mourir sur les lèvres
Des mots qui font fermer les yeux.

Et de ma bouche où s'évapore
Le parfum des bonheurs derniers
Et de mon coeur vibrant encore
S'élèvent de vagues pitiés.

Pour tous ceux-là, qui, sur la terre
Par un tel soir tendant les bras
N'ont point dans leur coeur solitaire
Un nom à sangloter tout bas.



A sweetness splendid and somber
Floats under the starry sky.
It looks as if above in the shadow
A paradise has collapsed.

And it is like the ardent fragrance,
The feverish fragrance in the black air
Of a lover's hair
Unraveled through the night.

All space languishes in fevers.
From the depths of the mysterious hearts
Coming to die on the lips
Words which closed the eyes.

And from my mouth, where evaporates
The scent of the past pleasures
And from my still vibrant heart
Arises vague pities.

For all of those, who, on earth
By such an evening arms outstretched
Have not in their lonely heart
A name to sob quietly.

3. O schwöre nicht (O swear not) – 1908,
published, text by Heinrich Heine. This is a
study in musical contrasts, as piano and singer
alike move from blithely doubting the sincerity
of a woman's words to joyfully accepting them
as true evidence of unending love.

O schwöre nicht und küsse nur,
Ich glaube keinem Weiberschwur!
Dein Wort ist süß, doch süßer ist
Der Kuß, den ich dir abgeküßt!
Den hab ich, und dran glaub ich auch,
Das Wort ist eitel Dunst und Hauch.

O schwöre, Liebchen, immerfort,
Ich glaube dir aufs bloße Wort!
An deinen Busen sink ich hin,
Und glaube, daß ich selig bin;
Ich glaube, Liebchen, ewiglich,
Und noch viel länger, liebst du mich.



O do not swear, only kiss
I believe no woman's oath!
Your words are sweet, but sweeter still
Is the kiss, that I kissed you with!
That I have, and I also believe in it,
A word is naught but misty breeze.

O swear, darling, evermore,
I'll take you at your simple word!
I sink down upon your breast,
And I believe, that I am blessed;
I believe, darling, that you love me,
Even much longer than forever.

4. Was will die einsame Thräne (What means this lonely tear?) – 1908, published,
text by Heinrich Heine. As both voice and piano
rise in volume and intensity, we may hear their
expression as a growing realization: It's futile to
cry over lost pleasures and love.

Was will die einsame Thräne?
Sie trübt mir ja den Blick.
Sie blieb aus alten Zeiten
In meinem Auge zurück.

Sie hatte viel leuchtende Schwestern,
Die alle zerflossen sind,
Mit meinen Qualen und Freuden
Zerflossen in Nacht und Wind.

Wie Nebel sind auch zerflossen
Die blauen Sternelein,
Die mir jene Freuden und Qualen
Gelächelt ins Herz hinein.

Ach, meine Liebe selber
Zerfloß wie eitel Hauch!
Du alte, einsame Träne,
Zerfließe jetzunder auch!



What means this lonely tear?
It so clouds my gaze.
For so long it has remained
trapped deep within my eye.

She had many shining sisters,
Who have all melted away,
Flowing into night and wind.
With my torments and joys.

The little blue stars,
Like mist, have also faded
Smiling into my heart.
Through my joys and sorrows

Oh, my love itself
Melted away like vain breath!
Now, you old and lonely tear,
Melt away too!

5. Ach, die Augen sind es wieder (Oh, there again are the eyes) – 1908, published, text by Heinrich Heine. An upbeat piano supports the poet's sweet and happy memories – but the mood turns dark and ominous when, upon his return home, he realizes that his feelings for his former beloved have changed.

Ach, die Augen sind es wieder,
Die mich einst so lieblich grüßten,
Und es sind die Lippen wieder,
Die das Leben mir versüßten!

Auch die Stimme ist es wieder,
Die ich einst so gern gehöret!
Nur ich selber bins nicht wieder,

Bin verändert heimgekehret.

Von den weißen, schönen Armen
Fest und liebevoll umschlossen,
Lieg ich jetzt an ihrem Herzen,
Dumpfen Sinnes und verdroßen.



Oh, there again are the eyes,
That once greeted me so sweetly,
And there again are the lips,
That sweetened my life!

Also there's again the voice,
That once I loved to hear!
But I'm no longer the same,
As changed, I return home.

Firmly and lovingly embraced,
By those lovely, pale arms
I lie now at her heart,
Sullen and of gloomy spirit.

6. Écoutez la chanson bien douce (Listen to the very sweet song) – 1905, unpublished, text by Paul Verlaine. A gentle, lighthearted feeling again pervades the song's opening verse before the music turns momentarily darker, as if regretful. But then the opening mood returns as we are wistfully reminded to sing sweet songs, even in times of suffering.

Écoutez la chanson bien douce
Qui ne pleure que pour vous plaire,
Elle est discrète, elle est légère:
Un frisson d'eau sur de la mousse!

La voix vous fut connue (et chère?)
Mais à présent elle est voilée
Comme une veuve désolée,
Pourtant comme elle encore fière,

Et dans les longs plis de son voile,
Qui palpite aux brises d'automne.
Cache et montre au cœur qui s'étonne
La vérité comme une étoile.

Elle dit, la voix reconnue,
Que la bonté c'est notre vie,
Que de la haine et de l'envie
Rien ne reste, la mort venue.

Elle parle aussi de la gloire
D'être simple sans plus attendre,
Et de noces d'or et du tendre
Bonheur d'une paix sans victoire.

Accueillez la voix qui persiste
Dans son naïf épithalame.
Allez, rien n'est meilleur à l'âme
Que de faire une âme moins triste!

Elle est en peine et de passage,
L'âme qui souffre sans colère,
Et comme sa morale est claire!
Écoutez la chanson bien sage.



Listen to the very sweet song
Which cries only for your pleasure,
It is discreet, it is light:
A shiver of water on the moss!

The voice was known to you (and dear?)
But now it is veiled
Like a desolate widow
Yet like her, it is still proud,

And in the long folds of her veil,
Which flutter in the autumn breezes.
Hides and shows to the heart which is surprised,
The truth like a star.

It says, the voice recognized,
That goodness is our life,
That of hatred and of envy
Nothing remains, once death is come.

It speaks also of the glory
To be simple without more expectation,
And weddings of the gold and the tender
Happiness of a peace without victory.

Welcome the voice that persists
In its innocent epithalamium,
Come, nothing is better for the soul
Than to make a soul less sad!

It is in pain and passing through,
The soul that suffers without anger,
And how clear is its morality!
Listen to the very wise song.

*Translations of French song texts by Lucy Mauro
and German song texts by Lindsay Koob.*

WORKS FOR SOLO PIANO

7. *Vers la vie nouvelle* (*Toward the New Life*), 1917, published in 1919. Written for a charitable organization, "The Society for Regeneration," this masterly piece first projects a somber aura of utter gloom, evoking World War I's effects of devastation and displacement. But the minor-key despair lifts, gradually pierced by rays of major-key relief and fresh hope.

8, 9, 10. *Trois pièces pour piano*, 1914, unpublished. This charming trio of miniature pieces – the first two in D Minor, the third in B Minor – all seem very "French" in style and sound. The first casts a sadly pensive, but not-too-serious mood. Despite its mostly minor tonality, the next piece is quite lively and harmonically ingenious, with the saucy, almost flippant nature that Parisian composers of the day captured so well. The final, brief number expresses a breezy, almost-poignant air. One might say that all three can perhaps be heard as musical evocations of the *commedia dell'arte* figures Pierrot and Columbine, who had long since become entrenched in French culture.

WORKS FOR CELLO AND PIANO

11, 12, 13. *Trois pièces*: "Modéré," "Sans vitesse et à l'aise" and "Vite et nerveusement rythmé" were composed in 1914. The first two of these are Boulanger's reworkings of two earlier organ pieces from 1911 ("Improvisation" and "Petit Canon"), also heard in this album. Published in 1919, Boulanger later omitted the second of the three pieces, presenting just the first and third

and renaming the work *Diptyque*. In this performance, Amit Peled plays a French cello – a Vuillaume, ca. 1865: the "Servais Stradivarius Copy."

The opening piece is mournfully somber: a yearning, aching romantic work that still seems to end on a vaguely positive note. The second also projects a sorrowful tone, seeming to take on an almost Celtic harmonic flavor. The third piece in C-sharp Minor is lively, with an underlying sense of nervous agitation, somewhat atypical of Boulanger's other compositions. A fascinating rhythmic anomaly appears in the slower middle section, where the composer employs an irregular 5/4 meter. In this final piece, Boulanger manages the exchange of melodic material between cello and piano in a particularly adroit manner.

WORKS FOR ORGAN

14, 15, 16. Boulanger composed ***Trois improvisations*** (*Three Improvisations*) for organ in 1911 for the *Anthologie des Maîtres Contemporains de l'Orgue*, (*Anthology of Contemporary Masters of the Organ*). The three movements are Prélude, Petit Canon, and Improvisation.

The first piece, "Prélude," reflects a somewhat celestial nature, with a questing upper melody floating over a bed of shifting three-chord figurations; it also contains a contrasting, less-insistent central episode. The second, "Petit canon," is a cunningly interwoven tapestry of related polyphonic themes and textures. Much of the final piece, "Improvisation," revolves around

a rather mystery-laden melody that develops beneath an airy and persistent tonal umbrella.

17. *Pièce pour orgue sur des airs populaires flamands* (*Piece for organ on popular Flemish airs*) dates from 1915. Mademoiselle dedicated this work “à ma petite Lili” (“for my little Lili”), and she performed its premiere in March 1915 for the Union des Femmes Professeurs et Compositeurs de Musique: one of the very few occasions that Mademoiselle associated with any feminist organizations or causes. This very impressive piece has the sound and feel of an anthem, with something of an emphatic, insistent air to the essentially homophonic first section. This transitions into a polyphonic episode before the opening textures return, leading into an ancient-sounding modal interlude before a dramatic – even heroic – finish makes the rafters ring.

— Notes by Lindsay Koob and Lucy Mauro

Soprano Nicole Cabell, the 2005 Winner of the BBC Singer of the World Competition in Cardiff, is one of today’s most sought-after lyric sopranos. Ms. Cabell is heard in opera houses around the world, including the Grand Théâtre de Genève, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Metropolitan Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Opéra National de Paris, and Deutsche Oper Berlin, among many others. In concert, she has appeared in New York, London, Chicago, Cincinnati, Toronto, Atlanta, San Diego and St Petersburg – and her orchestral performances include the Acca-



demia di Santa Cecilia, the New York Philharmonic, the Cleveland Orchestra and the BBC Symphony. Nicole Cabell’s recordings have received the 2007 Georg Solti Orphée d’Or from the French Académie du Disque Lyrique and an Echo Klassik Award in Germany.

The brilliant lyric **tenor Alek Shrader** continues to impress audiences with the “luxury of his phrasing, the clarity of his diction and the sensitivity and expressiveness of his characterizations.” Mr. Shrader’s 2015-2016 season began with performances of Alfredo in *La Traviata* with Opera Philadelphia, followed by a return to the San Francisco Opera to sing David in Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Later in the season he sang Count Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* at Baltimore Lyric Opera and Tom Rakewell in Stravinsky’s *The Rake’s Progress* with the Pittsburgh Opera. Highlights of the 2016-2017 season include a solo recital at Wigmore Hall, Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* in Ovie-



do, Endimione in Martin y Soler's *Diana's Garden* with the Minnesota Opera, Ramiro in *La Cenerentola* with the Arizona Opera, and a return to the Santa Fe Opera as Oronte in Handel's *Alcina*.

Baritone Edwin Crossley-Mercer has won worldwide acclaim for his opera and concert performances. As one critic wrote: "Edwin Crossley-Mercer makes us appreciate the great French baritone tradition again with his original singing, precise expression and simple vocal beauty. His timbre reminds us of a young Gérard Souzay; one need say no more." (Jean-Charles Hoffelé, *Concert Classique*.) Mr. Crossley-Mercer's recent opera and concert appearances include performances at the Staatsoper in Munich, Opera du Rhin, Teatro Petruzzelli in Italy, the Dallas Opera,



Los Angeles Philharmonic with Gustavo Dudamel, the Paris Opera, Moscow's Dom Mus, Carnegie Hall, Aix-en-Provence, Opéra de Lille, the Paris Opera, Bayerischer Rundfunkorchester, the Orchestre Nationale de France, and the Berliner Philharmoniker. Edwin Crossley-Mercer is the recipient of the 2007 HSBC Foundation Award and the Lili and Nadia Boulanger Prize.

Israeli **cellist Amit Peled**, a musician of profound artistry and charismatic stage presence, is acclaimed internationally as one of the most exciting instrumentalists on the concert stage today. Recognized by *Musical America* as one of the key influences in today's performing arts industry, Peled often surprises audiences with the ways in which he breaks down barriers between performers and the public, making classical music more accessible to wider audiences. Mr. Peled has performed as a soloist with many orchestras and in the world's major concert halls, including Carnegie Hall and Alice Tully Hall.



Hall, New York; Salle Gaveau, Paris; Wigmore Hall, London; Konzerthaus, Berlin; and Tel Aviv's Mann Auditorium. Mr. Peled plays the historic cello of Pablo Casals. Mrs. Marta Casals Istomin, the widow of Maestro Casals, personally handed him the instrument, a Goffriller, ca. 1733.

Organist François-Henri Houbart has been the *organiste titulaire* at the Madeleine in Paris since



1979, succeeding Camille Saint-Saëns, Théodore Dubois, and Gabriel Fauré. As a soloist, he has given more than 1300 concerts and recitals throughout Europe, the United States, Canada, and Japan. He is also recognized as one of today's greatest improvisers. François-Henri Houbart is a soloist at Radio France and a member of the artistic committee of the International Organ Competition of Chartres as well as the author of a book on the cathedral organ in his native city of Orléans. He has made more than seventy recordings, and his awards include an Officier of l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the Médaille de Vermeil of the City of Paris.



The Journal of Singing calls **pianist Lucy Mauro** "a perfect partner, whether called upon for thundering power or the tenderest whisper." Her recordings of the music of Margaret Ruthven Lang

for Delos have been hailed in *Gramophone* (*New Love Must Rise*) and *American Record Guide* (*From the Unforgetting Skies*) and selected as a Recording of the Year 2011 by *MusicWeb International* (*Love Is Everywhere*), which called it "the revelation of the year" and a 2013 Naxos Critics' Choice (*From the Unforgetting Skies*), among other recognitions. Lucy Mauro has been heard

at the Esterházy Festival in Austria and on Thomas Hampson's national radio program *Song of America*. Her latest publication, *Master Singers: Advice from the Stage* from Oxford University Press, includes interviews with many of today's top opera singers. She currently serves on the music faculty at West Virginia University.



Mademoiselle playing her home organ at rue Ballu, circa 1920

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Nicole Cabell: December 16-19, 2015, Bloch Hall, West Virginia University (WVU)

Alek Shrader: May 20-21, 2016, Bloch Hall, WVU

Edwin Crossley-Mercer: April 2-3, 2016, Bloch Hall, WVU

Amit Peled: September 10, 2016, Bloch Hall, WVU

Lucy Mauro (solo piano): July 28, 2016, Bloch Hall, WVU

François-Henri Houbart: October 12, 2015, The Madeleine Church, Paris

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(707) 996-3844 • Fax (707) 320-0600 • (800) 364-0645

contactus@delosmusic.com • www.delosmusic.com

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