

## **Debussy: His friends and his enemies**

This whimsical program celebrates the life, music and sharp-tongued wit of Claude Debussy, based on his musical criticism and written correspondences. Here, musical friend and foe are pitted against one another in a program highlighting many musical styles and periods, enlivened by Debussy's cunning, caustic and often amusing commentary on his musical idols, contemporaries and adversaries.

"I shall do nothing ... to create adversaries nor anything to convert my enemies into friends. One has to force oneself to be a great artist for oneself and not for others. I dare to be myself and suffer for my truth. These who feel as I do can only love me the more for it. The others avoid me, even hate me, I will do nothing to win them over.

"In all truth that distant day - and one hopes it will be as late as possible - when I shall excite no quarrels, I shall reproach myself severely. In these last works, hypocrisy will have to have won the day - that detestable kind of hypocrisy which causes one to please everybody."

-Claude Debussy

*Contrapunctus I* from *The Art of the Fugue*, BWV 1080      Johann Sebastian Bach

"I acknowledge one great master ... J.S. Bach - a benevolent god to whom all musicians should offer a prayer before commencing work, to defend themselves from mediocrity."  
-CD

Rondo in D major, K. 485

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

"What a pity Mozart was not French. He would have really been worth imitating." -CD

Ständchen

Franz Schubert/Franz Liszt

"Harmless songs these: They seem to have been found in the bottom drawers of some pretty but rather aging provincial girls - pieces of faded ribbon, pressed flowers and photographs of long forgotten people." -CD

Isolde's Liebestod

Richard Wagner/Franz Liszt

"That Wagner, with his endless motifs at every moment that go on forever! ... Oh god, he is such a bore, that one! ... Ah, he had eyes ... my god ... ferocious eyes ... horrible ... terrible ... but Liszt, ... Liszt was goodness itself." -CD

Épigraphes Antiques (selections)

Claude Debussy

Pour l'Égyptienne  
Pour remercier la pluie du matin

"Debussy did not create a style, he cultivated an absence of style, logic, and common sense." -Camille Saint Saëns

Étude Op.52 No.6, "En forme de valse"

Camille Saint-Saëns

"I have a horror of sentimentality and I cannot forget that its name is Saint Saëns." - CD

**-INTERMISSION-**

Suite of Homages:

I. "Les Barricades Mystérieuses" from *Pieces de Claverin* François Couperin

"Couperin's harpsichord pieces ... are marvelous models of grace and innocence long past. Nothing could ever make us forget the subtly voluptuous perfume, so delicately perverse, that so innocently hovers over the *Barricades Mystérieuses*." -CD

II. "Forlane" from *Le Tombeau de Couperin* Maurice Ravel

"It's probably better for us, after all, to be on frigid terms for illogical reasons." - Maurice Ravel

III. "Golliwog's Cakewalk" from *Children's Corner* Claude Debussy

"Certainly my methods of composing - which consists above all of dispensing with 'methods of composing' owe nothing to Wagner." -CD

IV. "La plainte, au loin, du faune" from *Tombeau de Debussy* Paul Dukas

“I hardly need to tell you the value I place on your criticisms as well as on your encouragement.” -CD

Mazurka in F minor, Op. 63 No. 2

Mazurka E minor, Op. 50. No. 2

Frédéric Chopin

“[I] loved Chopin almost from the moment I began to love music ... For with the piano alone he discovered everything.” -CD

Three movements from *Petrouchka*

Igor Stravinsky

“[Stravinsky] says my Firebird, my Sacre [du Printemps] like a child saying: my top, my hoop. And that’s exactly what he is - a spoilt child ... he’s also a young savage who wears noisy ties ... When he’s old, he’ll be intolerable ... but for the moment, he’s amazing.” -CD