

TABLEAUX DE PROVENCE  
**WORKS FOR SAXOPHONE**

**DOMINIC CHILDS** SAXOPHONE  
**SIMON CALLAGHAN** PIANO



# Tableaux de Provence

## Works for Saxophone

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Dominic Childs *saxophone*  
Simon Callaghan *piano*

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

Revised Vincent David

**1. Rhapsodie for orchestra &  
saxophone (1903)** [11:50]

(reduction for saxophone & piano)

Fernande Decruck (1896–1954)

**Sonate in C-sharp minor (1943)** [5:38]

2. Très modéré, expressif [3:25]

3. Andante [3:25]

4. Fileuse [2:02]

5. Nocturne et Final [5:09]

Paule Maurice (1910–1967)

**Tableaux de Provence (1954-59)**

6. Farandoulo di Chatouno [2:34]

7. Cansoun per ma Mio [1:55]

8. La Boumiano [1:09]

9. Dis Alyscamps l'amo souspire [5:10]

10. Lou Cabridan [3:44]

François Borne (1840–1920)

Arranged Iwan Roth & Raymond Meylan

**11. Fantaisie Brillante  
sur des airs de Carmen (1900)** [11:50]

Total playing time [54:33]



### **Tableaux de Provence: Works for Saxophone**

The four works on this album have a number of strong ties binding them together – Origin, Orchestration and Women. All have been composed by French composers with three of the four originating from Paris, and they are amongst my absolute favourite works for the saxophone. Intriguingly, despite all being works often programmed in Saxophone and Piano recital programmes, they have all been written with both orchestral and piano accompaniments. Nothing however gives these pieces a stronger link than the women who were central to their creation – two female composers, one determined woman who commissioned the work, and one strong female character – Carmen.

**Rhapsodie** by Claude Debussy (1862–1918) would not have existed without the determination of the American, Elise Hall, who came from a prominent Boston family. For health reasons, she had been told that she should learn a wind instrument and began learning the saxophone aged forty-seven in 1900. Alongside a number of amateur musician friends, Elise co-founded the ‘Orchestral

Group of Boston’, employing the French oboist Georges Longy (1868–1930) as conductor. Throughout this period, she became wholly immersed as a saxophonist and studied intently with Longy who had become a close friend. It was through his contacts she was able to commission a great number of French composers to write works for this relatively new instrument, musicians such as Jean Huré (1877–1930), André Caplet (1878–1925) and of course Debussy to name a few. These works were premiered in recitals in Boston by Elise herself. Her legacy was incredible, and she can be considered one of the first American classical saxophonists. So many of the works Elise commissioned have become part of the standard repertoire.

Debussy was never to hear his work as it remained unpublished and unperformed throughout his lifetime. It is believed that Debussy created a rough sketch of an orchestral score for the piece, which started life as a Fantasy, over a period of eight years. The composer Jean Roger-Ducasse (1873–1954) is thought to have clarified Debussy’s sketches, completing a final version both for saxophone with orchestra and saxophone with piano. Debussy had never thought of this work as a concerto but rather as a balance of the two. One

can hear multiple influences in the music, including Oriental and Moorish characteristics, particularly during the rhythmically free opening of the saxophone part. Debussy doesn't write a virtuoso piece, but instead one gets the impression of a composer exploring new and exciting sound possibilities, which get steadily more decisive throughout. The work is thought to follow Golden Section proportions, where the smaller (the introduction) is to the larger as the larger (the body of the work) is to the whole, thereby meaning that the musical junctures of the introduction are a microcosm of the main body of the piece. Another example of this concept includes Debussy's *Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune*.

Fernande Decruck's (1896–1954) **Sonate** for Alto Saxophone became one of my favourite pieces in the repertoire as soon as I started learning it a number of years ago. Whilst many of her earlier works were harmonically and rhythmically simple, by the time she wrote this wonderful Sonata, the complexity of both the saxophone and piano parts had significantly developed. Contained within the work is a rich blend of impressionistic, neo-classical and Romantic styles. It was the French

impressionists who clearly were Fernande's greatest influence, indicated by her indifference to functional harmony in the work, one can hear Debussy and Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) in particular.

Fernande originated from a small village near Toulouse in southern France. From this humble beginning, she became the first woman to write a piece for a member of the famed Band of the Garde Républicaine, *Chant Lyrique* for saxophonist François Combelle (1880–1953). Whilst researching Decruck, I found this particularly intriguing as for me it demonstrates her talent and quietly determined nature, it was a significant achievement given that she was writing in the early 1930s.

Fernande spent the majority of her life living in New York and Paris. Her husband was a Clarinetist and Saxophonist who at one time was a member of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, a fact that can help us understand why Fernande wrote over forty works for saxophone, and in 1943, wrote this substantial work for the instrument.

Paule Maurice (1910–1967) hailed from Paris and, following a similar path to Fernande Decruck (although some fourteen



years her junior), Paule studied and went on to work at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris. Unfortunately, little is known about Paule Maurice as both a person and a composer, despite composing a multitude of works, she is often bypassed, such as in the 1995 *Norton/Grove Dictionary of Women Composers* where she is sadly not represented.

I am drawn into **Tableaux de Provence** by the vivid images of Provence that Paule creates with such colour and sensitivity. Despite being a Parisian, it is clear to me that this music was written by someone who knows and understands Provence. Paule even wrote in a letter to saxophonist Jean Marie-Londeix (b. 1932), 'My husband is a Southerner, and although I was born in Paris, I'm Provençale at heart'. Spending every summer for twenty-five years in Provence, Maurice became well acquainted with everything she depicts so imaginatively in this work. Beginning with a *Farandole Provençale*, not too dissimilar to a jig, danced in a chain and traditionally played by flutes and drums then comes an enchantingly simple love song. Next we hear a depiction of a Provençal Gypsy, perhaps inspired by the annual pilgrimage made

by Gypsies to Saintes Maries de la Mer. The haunting fourth Movement portrays Alyscamps, the Roman Necropolis which served as the main burial ground for the town of Arles for over 1500 years, and was also the inspiration for Vincent Van Gogh (1853–1890) in his painting *L'Allee des Alyscamps* from 1888. The work ends in a flurry of energy and almost constant semiquavers, representing 'Lou Cabridan', the great flying insect, thought often of as a bee, buzzing through the wild flowers of Provence.

Our exuberant final work on the album, **Fantaisie brillante sur des airs de Carmen**, has a significantly different link to women. The focus not being on the male composer but the well-known fiery and flamboyant character of Carmen. François Borne (1840–1920) uses musical themes written by Georges Bizet, which he adapted in 1875 for his opera *Carmen* from the 1845 novella by Prosper Mérimée (1803–1870). Set in Southern Spain, *Carmen* is a provocative gypsy girl who seduces and ultimately brings upon the ultimate downfall of José, a soldier who falls deeply in love with her.

In the opera, Georges Bizet (1838–1875) composed some of the most memorable and captivating melodies ever written.

Borne was just one of a number of composers and musicians who seized the opportunity to utilise this highly popular material to create what was originally a work for flute. The piece incorporates a number of the most prominent themes from the opera. The 'fate' motif, foreboding Carmen's death appears after a captivating introduction, followed by the prominent and seductive 'Habanera' which diversifies into different variations. Borne concludes the piece with the sparkling 'Gypsy Dance', dynamic 'Toreador Song' and a most exhilarating virtuosic finale.

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*I would firstly like to thank all those involved in the making of this album, it was an honour to work with such talented and conscientious professionals.*

*I would also like to thank the Clarinet and Saxophone Society of Great Britain for their financial support, and Haileybury College for their generous hospitality.*

*Enormous thanks to all my teachers over the years; Malcolm Green, Jim Muirhead, Kyle Horch, Jean Denis-Michat and Daniel Gauthier.*

*Finally I would like to thank my parents for their support throughout.*

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 **D'Addario**



Photography: Greg Childs (www.gregchildsp photography.com)

### **Dominic Childs (saxophone)**

D'Addario artist, Dom is much in demand as a classical saxophonist and music educator who enjoys a multi-dimensional career. As an orchestral musician, Dom has toured, recorded and performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Royal Ballet Sinfonia, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, including live broadcasts for BBC Radio 3 and performing at the 'Last Night of the Proms'.

Since 2010 Dom has been the Alto Saxophonist in the award winning Forseti Saxophone quartet based in Cologne. In October 2011, the Forseti Quartet were awarded the Carl Pontén Prize in the 4th European Chamber Music Competition in Karlsruhe and regularly perform throughout Europe. Dom is a passionate music educator having been the Saxophone Tutor for the National Youth Wind Ensemble, Deputy Saxophone Teacher at the Birmingham Conservatoire of Music as well as giving workshops across the UK including at Chetham's School of Music and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance. In March 2013 he began the role of Saxophone Tutor at Birmingham Conservatoire Junior Department, and in 2015 founded the Saxophone Programme

on the Ingenium Academy International Summer School.

Having been at Chetham's School of Music in Manchester learning with Jim Muirhead, he went on to study at the Royal College of Music with Kyle Horch. During this time he was a winner of the Yamaha European Foundation Scholarship competition and the Jane Melber Saxophone Competition. After completing his undergraduate degree he moved to Cologne, Germany to further his studies at the Hochschule für Musik with Prof. Daniel Gauthier. Initially granted a DAAD Scholarship, he was further awarded a 'Leverhulme Study Abroad Scholarship' which allowed him to complete his Masters degree in the summer of 2012. Coincidentally he was also the first Erasmus exchange student to study at the Conservatoire de Musique in Lyon, where he spent six months studying with Jean-Denis Michat.

On his return to the UK in 2012, Dom was awarded the 2nd Prize in the prestigious 'Tunbridge Wells International Young Artist Competition.'

In 2017, Dom became the first Chair of the Hertfordshire Festival of Music.

[www.domchilds.com](http://www.domchilds.com)



Photography: Kaupo Kikkas

### **Simon Callaghan (piano)**

Steinway Artist Simon Callaghan performs internationally as a soloist and chamber musician. Recent tours have taken him to Asia, Europe and North America and to the UK's major concert halls including Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and St David's Hall Cardiff.

In 2017 he released his debut recording for Hyperion's lauded Romantic Piano Concerto series: the first recordings of Roger Sacheverell Coke's Concerti with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Martyn Brabbins. The disc reached No. 3 in the specialist classical charts, the top ten in the Classic FM chart and garnered enthusiastic reviews across the press. Simon's interest in rarely performed works has also led to invitations to perform concerti by Françaix, Tippett and to give the first UK performance since 1946 of Medtner's 3rd Concerto. His rapidly-expanding discography includes solo works by Brahms, Sterndale Bennett, Parry and Coke. He has also made two recordings of Delius, with Parnassius Duo partner Hiro Takenouchi, on the SOMM label.

Simon has performed frequently on BBC radio and television. Contemporary music performances have included works by Joseph Phibbs, Julian Anderson and Kenneth Hesketh, and he was recently invited by the Royal College of Music to play Boulez's *Dérive II* as part of their *Variable Geometry* series. In addition to his performing schedule, Callaghan is Director of Music at Conway Hall, where he oversees the longest-running chamber music series in Europe. He is also a PhD Researcher at the Royal Northern College of Music, working to bring the oeuvre of Roger Sacheverell Coke into the public domain.

[www.simoncallaghan.com](http://www.simoncallaghan.com)



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