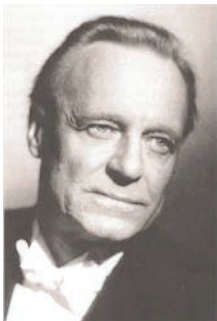


André Cluytens was among the leading French conductors of his time. His father, Alphonse Cluytens, was also a conductor, and recognized the boy's musical talents. André was enrolled in the Royal Flemish Conservatory at the age of nine. He studied in the piano class of Emile Bosquet, and received first prize for piano at the age of 16. The next year he won first prize in harmony, theory, counterpoint, and fugue.

His father was conductor at the Royal French Theater of Antwerp. André became his assistant and a choirmaster there. When an illness prevented Alphonse from conducting, André made his performance debut in 1927 in Bizet's *Les Pêcheurs de perles*. After that experience he devoted his efforts to orchestral and opera conducting rather than choral work, and he became a resident conductor in the house.

In 1932 he accepted a position as the musical director of orchestral concerts at the Capitole de Toulouse, and he became a French citizen. In 1935 was appointed the opera director in Lyons. He was an assistant of Josef Krips in a summer series in Vichy and, once again, was called on to substitute when that conductor could not perform. He became musical director of the Lyons Opera in 1942, conductor of the Conservatoire Concerts and the French National Radio Orchestra in Paris in 1943, and in 1944 conducted at the Opéra de Paris. From 1947 to 1953 he was music director of the Paris Opéra-Comique, and in 1949 was appointed as principal conductor of the Conservatory Concerts. He retained that position for the rest of his life. In 1955 he was invited to conduct *Lohengrin* at the Bayreuth Festival, the first French person to appear on the podium there. He debuted in the United States in 1956, and in Britain in 1958, when he substituted for Otto Klemperer. He formed a close relationship with the Vienna State Opera, which he first conducted in 1956, becoming a permanent guest conductor in 1959. In 1960 he became conductor of the Belgian National Orchestra in Belgium, also holding that post until his death. He also formed a close link with the Berlin Philharmonic, with which he made a notable recording of the Beethoven symphonies. However, he was primarily known for French repertoire, premiering works by Françaix, Jolivet, Messiaen, Milhaud, Tomasi, Büsser, and Bondeville. He was invited back to Bayreuth in 1965.

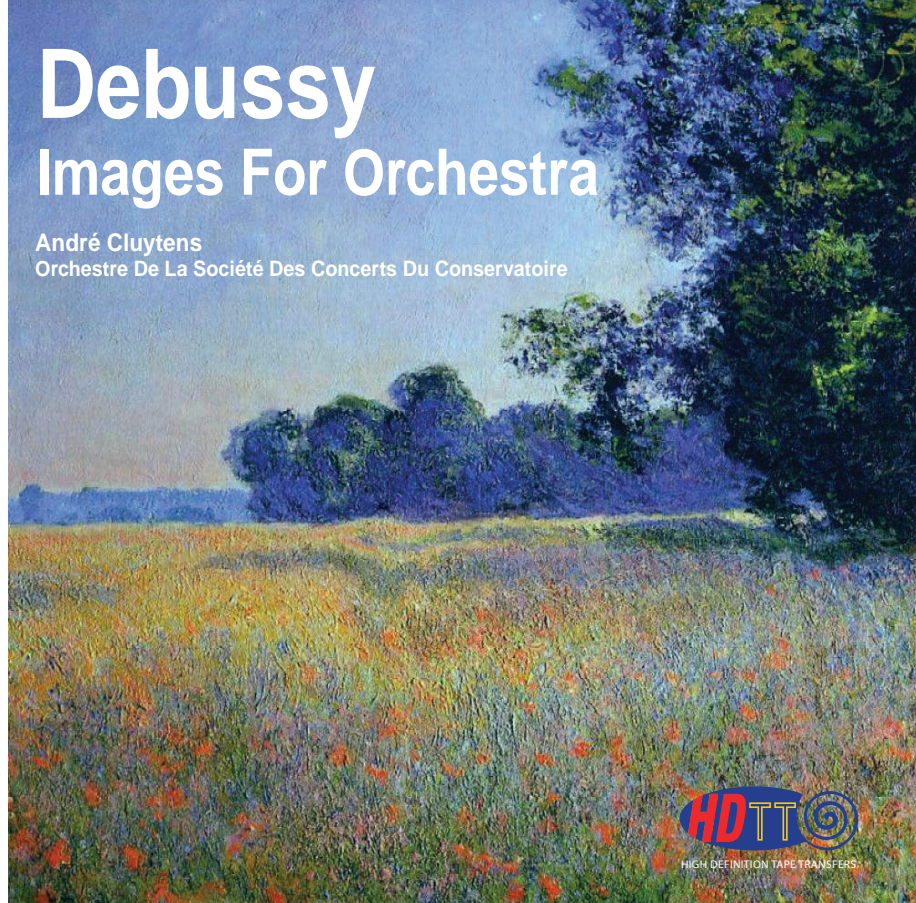


Debussy

Images For Orchestra

André Cluytens

Orchestre De La Société Des Concerts Du Conservatoire



Embracing nontraditional scales and tonal structures, Claude Debussy is one of the most highly regarded composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and is seen as the founder of musical impressionism. Claude Debussy was born into a poor family in France in 1862, but his obvious gift at the piano sent him to the Paris Conservatory at age 11. At age 22, he won the Prix de Rome, which financed two years of further musical study in the Italian capital. After the turn of the century, Debussy established himself as the leading figure of French music. During World War I, while Paris was being bombed by the German air force, he succumbed to colon cancer at the age of 55.

Achille-Claude Debussy was born on August 22, 1862, in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France, the oldest of five children. While his family had little money, Debussy showed an early affinity for the piano, and he began taking lessons at the age of 7. By age 10 or 11, he had entered the Paris Conservatory, where his instructors and fellow students recognized his talent but often found his attempts at musical innovation strange.

In 1880, Nadezhda von Meck, who had previously supported Russian composer Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky, hired Claude Debussy to teach piano to her children. With her and her children, Debussy traveled Europe and began accumulating musical and cultural experiences in Russia that he would soon turn toward his compositions, most notably gaining exposure to Russian composers who would greatly influence his work.

In 1884, when he was just 22 years old, Debussy entered his cantata *L'Enfant prodigue* (The Prodigal Child) in the Prix de Rome, a competition for composers. He took home the top prize, which allowed him to study for three years in the Italian capital, though he returned to Paris after two years. While in Rome, he studied the music of German composer Richard Wagner, specifically his opera *Tristan und Isolde*. Wagner's influence on Debussy was profound and lasting, but despite this, Debussy generally shied away from the ostentation of Wagner's opera in his own works.

Debussy returned to Paris in 1887 and attended the Paris World Exposition two years later. There he heard a Javanese gamelan—a musical ensemble composed of a variety of bells, gongs, metallophones and xylophones, sometimes accompanied by vocals—and the subsequent years found Debussy incorporating the elements of the gamelan into his existing style to produce a wholly new kind of sound.

The music written during this period came to represent the composer's early masterpieces—*Ariettes oubliées* (1888), *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun; completed in 1892 and first performed in 1894) and the *String Quartet* (1893)—which were clearly delineated from the works of his coming mature period.

Debussy's seminal opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, was completed in 1895 and was a sensation when first performed in 1902, though it deeply divided listeners (audience members and critics either loved it or hated it). The attention gained with *Pelléas*, paired with the success of *Prélude* in 1892, earned Debussy extensive recognition. Over the following 10 years, he was the leading figure in French music, writing such lasting works as *La Mer* (The Sea; 1905) and *Ibéria* (1908), both for orchestra, and *Images* (1905) and *Children's Corner Suite* (1908), both for solo piano.

Around this same time, in 1905, Debussy's *Suite bergamasque* was published. The suite is comprised of four parts—"Prélude," "Menuet," "Clair de lune" (now regarded as one of the composer's best-known pieces) and "Passepiéd."

Claude Debussy spent his remaining years writing as a critic, composing and performing his own works internationally. He died of colon cancer on March 25, 1918, when he was just 55 years old, in Paris. Today, Debussy is remembered as a musical legend, whose uniquely structured compositions have served as a base for musicians over the past century, and will undoubtedly continue to inspire musical creation for decades to come.

Debussy

Images For Orchestra

André Cluytens

Orchestre De La Société Des Concerts Du Conservatoire

1 No. 1 Gigues 7:15

2 No. 2 Iberia. Par les rues et par les chemins 7:13

3 No. 2 Iberia. Les parfums de la nuit 8:05

4 No. 2 Iberia. Le matin d'un jour de fête 4:25

5 No. 3 Rondes de printemps 7:51

Total Time: 34:49

Recorded 1964 by EMI records



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or visit our website:
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