

*includes* WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDINGS

GRAND  
PIANO

**SATIE**

COMPLETE PIANO WORKS • 4  
NEW SALABERT EDITION

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**NICOLAS HORVATH**

**ERIK SATIE (1866–1925)**  
**COMPLETE PIANO WORKS • 4**  
**NEW SALABERT EDITION**

**NICOLAS HORVATH, *Piano***

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and the Fondation Erik Satie (Erik Satie Foundation).

## WORKS WRITTEN FROM 1897 TO 1906

<b>1</b>	[SANS TITRE aka 'CARESSE'] (1897)	02:23
<b>2</b>	JE TE VEUX (?1897)	05:37
	JACK IN THE BOX (1899) **	08:07
<b>3</b>	Prélude	02:47
<b>4</b>	Entr'acte	02:46
<b>5</b>	Final	02:31
<b>6</b>	PRÉLUDE DE 'LA MORT DE MONSIEUR MOUCHE' (1900) **	01:32
<b>7</b>	VERSET LAÏQUE & SOMPTUEUX (1900)	00:55
<b>8</b>	THE DREAMY FISH (1901)	07:09
<b>9</b>	THE ANGORA OX (version for piano) (1901)	05:42
<b>10</b>	POUDRE D'OR (1901-02)	05:51
<b>11</b>	TENDREMENT (1901-02) *	03:00
<b>12</b>	ILLUSION (1902) *	04:51
<b>13</b>	LE PICCADILLY. MARCHE (1904)	01:54
<b>14</b>	LA DIVA DE L'EMPIRE (MARCHE CHANTÉE DANS LA REVUE DÉVIDONS LA BOBINE!) (1904) *	01:56
<b>15</b>	LA DIVA DE L'EMPIRE (INTERMEZZO AMÉRICAIN D'APRÈS LA CÉLÈBRE CHANSON DE BONNARD, BLÈS ET SATIE) (1904) **	03:00
<b>16</b>	CHORALE: NUN RUHEN ALLE WÄLDER [HARMONISATION DE SATIE] (JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, 1685–1750) (1906) *	01:17
<b>17</b>	POUSSE L'AMOUR – CHANSON ANDALOUSE (aka 'GAMBADES') (1905-06) **	02:11
<b>18</b>	[EXERCICE] [POUR QUATUOR À CORDES] (c.1905-06) *	00:40
<b>19</b>	FUGUE-VALSE (1906) *	01:34
<b>20</b>	PASSACAILLE (1906)	02:37

\* **WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING**

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**TOTAL TIME: 61:59**

**ERIK SATIE (1866–1925)**  
**COMPLETE PIANO WORKS • 4**  
**NEW SALABERT EDITION**

**ABOUT NICOLAS HORVATH AND THE NEW SALABERT EDITION OF SATIE'S 'OEUVRES POUR PIANO'**

The internationally renowned French pianist, Nicolas Horvath, approached me (as a Satie scholar) about recording Satie's Complete Piano Music in 2014. After I had heard his phenomenal performances of Philip Glass's music, as well as his amazing virtuosity and sensitive interpretations of Liszt, Chopin and others, I realised that his quest for new approaches to both the Classics and modern music would make him an ideal interpreter of the ground-breaking music of Erik Satie. So I agreed to act as his artistic advisor, and when the commission to edit all of Satie's piano music subsequently came from Salabert (Milan), it provided me with a golden opportunity to revisit all of these wonderful works and sort out the many errors that had accumulated and been perpetuated over the years (some due to Satie and his somewhat erratic proof-reading – as in the *2e Sarabande* in particular). As this was one of the pieces that brought Satie sudden fame in 1911 when Maurice Ravel introduced it to the Parisian musical elite in a concert of the Société Musicale Indépendante at the Salle Gaveau, the need for an authentic recording seemed even more obvious.

I also had long discussions with Nicolas about what constituted 'all' of Satie's music for piano. Should we include song accompaniments? Should we include music that may have been written for harmonium (like *uspu*)? Should we include the piano duets in a double recording? Should we include popular songs for which the text and vocal part are either wordless or missing (as in *Imperial Oxford*)? Should we include two early pieces marked as 'String quartets' even though they are obviously conceived both for and at the keyboard? For one never knows quite how much Satie is intending to confuse (or amuse) his audience in his occasional programme notes, or when he is being completely serious in his directions – which is less often than we might imagine. These discussions also helped me make my decisions for the new and entirely revised Salabert Edition and it seemed to me to be in the best interests of Satie (which is what we should all be working towards) if I passed on my corrections and conclusions to Nicolas.

In the end, we decided just to take the music written for solo keyboard, treating the duets as a separate genre. We included Satie's own reductions of his ballets (like *Mercure* and *Relâche*) but not his song accompaniments, or pieces published earlier by Robert Caby that had turned out not to be by Satie at all (like the *Rêverie du pauvre* [MC 399] that was a transposition of the accompaniment to Massenet's song 'Les enfants' made for a parody version [as 'Les éléphants'] by Vincent Hyspa around 1900). Then only complete pieces titled by Satie were included, though I decided to include some first versions of pieces that were complete, identifiable and of special interest, and which were simply superseded by Satie's later visions of them (as in the first versions of 'Le Golf' and 'Le Tennis' in *Sports et divertissements*). However, it was sometimes difficult to decide when pieces were short rather than incomplete, so, for instance, the piece that Caby published as an 'Air' in 1968 has been included as a 'Pièce sans titre' of 1914, whereas *Bévue indiscreète* and *Le vizir autrichien* (both fancifully titled by Satie) have not, because they are simply incomplete minuet-like sketches for what became the more substantial piece titled *Profondeur* around 1909 (which, naturally, is included, even though Satie chose not to publish it during his lifetime). So, in reality, one would have to get Satie back from beyond the grave to decide precisely what went into a 'complete' edition of his piano music. He might well then say 'only what I chose to publish during my career', but that would then deprive us of most of the *Rose+Croix* music (published posthumously by Darius Milhaud). So the problems are never-ending and only capable of individual solutions, of which the present recording constitutes one.

This cycle also contains music that even Satie enthusiasts may not know exists, like what I believe to be the first two movements of the *Petite Sonate* that Satie wrote for Vincent d'Indy at the Schola Cantorum as part of his 'Ille Cours' in 1908–09, and which d'Indy praised (rather to Satie's surprise, I suspect). *Profondeur*, a sort of minuet, may perhaps have been intended as the third movement of this sonata, so the three movements are presented together in this recording. There are various other Schola exercises included to give examples of other things that Satie was working on; some piano reductions of popular songs (when Satie made them himself); some extra trial versions of *Préludes flasques* and *Enfantines* (when they seem to be of equal merit to the pieces Satie chose to publish), and Satie's piano solo versions of the first two movements of *La Belle excentrique* (because they contain important differences from the better known piano duet versions). In retrospect, I have also included

two reconstructions of later pieces that Satie intended to complete: *La mer est pleine d'eau: c'est à n'y rien comprendre* for its wonderful title as much as for its content; and the cellular *7e Nocturne*, as Satie planned to write seven of these pieces in 1919 and this is the only real contender for the title and forms a gentle coda to the set in the same key and spirit as it began.

Thus, there is much to discover and to reappraise alongside familiar favourites like the *Gymnopédies* and *Gnossiennes*. This will become apparent with some of the speeds adopted, about which Satie was sometimes rather vague. All the *Rose+Croix* music is marked 'Slow' or 'Very slow', and pieces like the *Gymnopédies* have had this lethargy applied to each crotchet or quarter note, when Satie surely meant the slow pulse to apply to each complete bar. He chided the conductor Roger Désormière in 1923 for not putting accents on the second beat chords in each bar and thus making them sound sluggish, and his first version of the *1ère Sarabande* had a metronome mark of crotchet/quarter note = 104. Even though Satie later lowered this to crotchet = 84, the *Sarabandes* are often (and erroneously) played more slowly. Musicality has to be the guiding factor here, and anything that sounds like a dirge, or ignores the conceptual spirit of the music, is not as Satie intended it.

## SATIE'S GENIUS AND HIS RELEVANCE FOR THE PRESENT DAY

Erik Satie (1866–1925) was indisputably a genius and John Cage regarded him as 'indispensable' to any modern musician. However, these concepts require some explanation. In the first place, Satie's unhappy years at the Paris Conservatoire (1879-86) – which he was probably made to attend by his stepmother, Eugénie, a budding salon composer with social aspirations – convinced him to reject Romantic expressiveness, directional music leading to grand climaxes, and all forms of emotional excess. So whilst Satie performed works like Chopin *Ballades* and Mendelssohn concertos in his examinations, he was already more concerned with his future identity, and came to reject virtuosity and anything traditional in his own music. It is true that there are odd signs of Chopin in very early works like the *Valse-ballet* and *Fantaisie-valse* of c.1886, which were his only attempts at conventional, appealing 'salon' music. However, if his piano pieces are difficult to perform well, their problems are rarely technical, and they only become 'showy' as a joke (when Satie mimics the repetitive end of Beethoven's *Eighth Symphony* in 'De Podophthalma'), or parodies academic sonata form (in 'D'Holothurie', also from the celebrated *Embryons desséchés [Dried Up Embryos]* of 1913).

Another factor in the equation is that although Satie had a gift for memorable melody and harmony, as well as an excellent ear, his friend and collaborator, the Spanish poet, J.P. Contamine de Latour (1867-1926) recalled in his memoirs that in the 1890s, Satie 'was in the position of a man who knows only thirteen letters of the alphabet, and decides to create a new literature using only these, rather than admit his own insufficiency. For sheer bravado, it was unparalleled at the time, but he made it a point of honour to succeed with his system'. [Il était dans la situation d'un homme qui ne connaîtrait que treize lettres de l'alphabet et déciderait de créer une littérature nouvelle avec ces seuls moyens, plutôt d'avouer sa pauvreté. Comme audace on n'avait pas encore trouvé mieux, mais il tenait à l'honneur de réussir avec son système.] Indeed he only remedied the technical side during his voluntary contrapuntal, compositional, and analytical studies with Albert Roussel, Vincent d'Indy and others at the Schola Cantorum between 1905 and 1912. During this period he (typically) invented the 'new fugue' with its deliberate simplicity (as in *En habit de cheval*). And after it his approach became more linear, and even sparser than before – notably in the 60 or so 'humoristic' piano pieces he composed between 1912 and 1915, of which the best known are the *Sports et divertissements*.

Thus, in his early *Rose+Croix* music the ever-inventive and innovation-seeking Satie took the spirit, but not the letter, of medieval plainsong as the basis for pieces like the four *Ogives* (?1886), which use slow chordal chains, with contrasts of texture and dynamics as a means of both expansion and formal balance. But within this hieratic formula, Satie was always experimenting and inventing new organisational systems – as in the *Fête donnée par des Chevaliers Normands* with its thirteen overlapping harmonic cells divided into melodic categories, or the bi-partite *Prélude du Nazaréen* (also 1892), in which he perfected his concept of what Patrick Gowers has described as musical ‘punctuation form’. Here the complex, cellular music acts as the prose, with the punctuation provided by a series of recurring cadence figures acting as commas, and as full stops when two of them occur together. These have their own distinctive rhythms and more sensuous harmonies to distinguish them from the surrounding musical literature.

In 1917, during the composition of ‘*The Death of Socrates*’ [Mort de Socrate], Satie reflected on his career as a professional composer in a revealing article called ‘Subject matter (Idea) and Craftsmanship (Construction)’ [La Matière (Idée) et la Main d’Oeuvre (Couture)]. At its heart are these two statements:

‘A melody does not imply *its harmony*, any more than a landscape implies *its colour*. The harmonic potential of a melody is infinite... Do not forget that the melody is the Idea, the outline; as much as it is the form and the subject matter of a work. The harmony is an illumination, an exhibition of the object, its reflection’. <sup>1</sup>

‘If there is form and a new style of writing, there is a new craft... The Idea can do without Art. Let us mistrust Art: it is often nothing but virtuosity’. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Une mélodie n’a pas son *harmonie*, pas plus qu’un paysage n’a sa *couleur*. La situation harmonique d’une mélodie est infinie... N’oubliez pas que la mélodie est l’Idée, le contour, ainsi qu’elle est la forme & la matière d’une oeuvre. L’harmonie, elle, est un éclairage, une exposition de l’objet, son reflet.]

<sup>2</sup> [S’il y a forme & écriture nouvelle, il y a métier nouveau... L’Idée peut se passer de l’Art. Méfions-nous de l’Art: il n’est souvent que de la Virtuosité.]

So, for Satie, the Idea was central, both as a melodic initiator of compositions, and as something that could transcend what was normally regarded as high art. By 1917, Satie had achieved the technical expertise necessary to achieve this high and sophisticated art (even if his orchestration was, in reality, closer to instrumentation), but he chose to remain with simplicity, clarity, precision, elegance and economy, which he regarded as quintessentially French traits. However, he principally regarded himself as Parisian, so the elements of sophistication, surprise and chic also come into the equation, and provided his main contribution to the fashionable world of the 1920s as 'godfather' to Les Six and the embodiment of the 'esprit nouveau'.

So one can truthfully say that Satie's genius came from his being a man of Ideas, both in the way that he approached each work, and in the prevalent concept of the Idea itself. He was no intellectual, but few composers can claim to have invented something absolutely original which then influenced others. With Satie such iconoclastic ideas abound, and they had a marked effect on the aesthetic of John Cage and his contemporaries once they became internationally known after World War II. And they mostly arose within his piano music. Thus, underneath the surface of the slow, haunting *Gymnopédies* lies the concept of a music that is divorced from its implied source of inspiration – here celebratory dances by nude Spartan boys. This divorce is compounded by the apocalyptic, prefacing quotation from Contamine de Latour's *Les Antiques*, in which 'shadows of a raging torrent rushed in waves of gold over the polished flagstones'. [Oblique et coupant l'ombre en torrent éclatant/ Ruisselait en flots d'or sur la dalle polie.] Moreover, Satie viewed these sets of pieces in an architectural manner, like walking round a sculpture and viewing it from different angles. If one side looked good, then the whole creation must be good in itself.

This spatial concept of music as architecture or mere scenic backcloth to an utterly divorced text appears even more clearly in Satie's early theatrical works, like *Le Fils des étoiles* or the weird 'Christian' ballet *uspuđ*, whose other claim to fame is its text entirely in lower case letters, long before e.e. cummings. Only very occasionally does Satie remember the theatrical stage in his early works. At the end of his *Prélude à La Porte héroïque du ciel* (1894), he indicates the rise of the curtain and a small musical extension into the first moments of the opening scene. Satie liked this piece so much that he dedicated it to himself! But it still has nothing one could justifiably relate to Jules Bois' effusive and mystical text.

Then, in the previous year (1893), Satie was vexed by the ups and downs of his tempestuous (and only) affair with the artist Suzanne Valadon (1867-1938). He expressed this in two original ways. In the *Danses gothiques*, he composed a huge chunk of cellular music to preserve the 'calm and tranquillity of his soul', which he then divided up arbitrarily into nine separate dances with elaborate religious titles. Sometimes a new dance will start in the middle of a motif, so titles and music are clearly unrelated.

Then Satie wrote an extraordinary, internally repetitive piece called *Vexations*, which began with a (very necessary) period of silent meditation before the whole piece was repeated 840 times. Besides having many connections with the Lucas summation series (1, 3, 4, 7, 11 etc, right up to 840 – the sum of the first twelve numbers up to 322), its theme features 11 of the 12 semitones that make up the chromatic scale. So it is essentially the first piece of organised total chromaticism, as well as being quasi-serial with a hexachordal subdivision, as later favoured by Anton Webern. At the same time, the theme has associations with the keys of E flat, C and F sharp minor and with E major in its last five notes. The tiny song 'Bonjour Biqui, Bonjour!' which Satie composed for Suzanne as an Easter gift on 2 April 1893, uses chords 1 and 13 from the *Vexations* sequence, so *Vexations* begins where the song leaves off. Thus they clearly belong together, and if we remember that 'Vexations' was the subtitle of the *Coelum Philosophorum* by the 16th-century Swiss alchemist, Paracelsus, we can begin to see that most pieces by Satie have hidden depths and mysteries if you know where to look for them, and why John Cage attached so much importance to a strangely chromatic piece that, in itself, lasts less than a minute and is also repetitive in itself. Satie's fascination with medieval history, magic and alchemy means that he would surely have known about this connection.

Then we find Satie inventing another Cageian stand-by, the prepared piano, by placing sheets of tissue paper between the hammers and the strings at the premiere of *Le Piège de Meduse* in 1914. Then comes 'furnishing music' in 1917, the forerunner of muzak, or music not meant to be listened to; the new approach to 'initial choreography' that he proposed to André Derain and Léonide Massine in 1922 (with the music being added later to fit this); leading to the first synchronized score to a silent film with René Clair's *Entr'acte* in 1924 (published as *Cinéma*). Apollinaire coined the term 'sur-réalisme' to apply to Satie's *Parade*, and it goes without

saying that 'minimalism' in modern music stemmed from his repetitive pieces with the occasional surprise, as in 'Aubade' from the *Avant-dernières pensées* (1915), which began life as a one-chord serenade, or 'strange rumour' [étrange rumeur] dedicated to Paul Dukas.

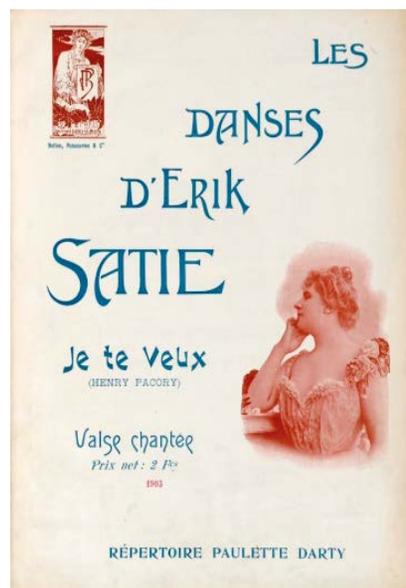
Sometimes with Satie, the Idea behind a work can appear more significant than the music it generated, but that is generally because its full implications have not been taken into consideration. If we imagine that the 21 tiny *Sports et divertissements* are just for entertainment and diversion, then we have to remember that their combination of music, prose poems and Cubist pictures in a mini-*gesamtkunstwerk* with Japanese haiku-like tendencies was remarkable for its time. For, more than any other contemporary composer, Satie sought to demolish the barriers between the arts and to look at music afresh as a vital part in the interaction between the various levels of aesthetic experience; as a contribution towards a larger, and always thoroughly modern, whole. He might be described as the first cross-cultural artist whose quest to publicise and radicalise his latest compositions led him to end up working to commission with elite names like Picasso, Braque, Cocteau, Derain, Diaghilev, Massine, Rolf de Maré and Brancusi in the post-war years. Despite his being vilified by many after his death, Satie's enduring success can be seen in the survival of his influence into the 21<sup>st</sup> century as a living spirit, even as a blueprint for future iconoclasm, in composers as diverse as Virgil Thomson, Steve Reich, Morton Feldman, Howard Skempton, Christopher Hobbs and Harrison Birtwistle, to cite but a few.

## ABOUT THIS RECORDING

In this recording of works written between 1897 and 1906 we first encounter the problem of the piano pieces given posthumous titles by Robert Caby for publication in the late 1960s and '70s. I shall deal with these together in their recording order.

### [Sans titre, aka 'Caresse'] ('March 1897')

In the case of *Caresse*, a gentle, repetitive piece with a tiny flurry of anxiety in the middle, it might have proved even more popular if Satie had given it such a title himself. It appears amid the sketches for the *Pièces froides* in March 1897, and has elements of the 'Gnossienne' about it. So too, has the so-called *Petite ouverture à danser*, except that Satie gave it no dynamics, barlines or phrasing. But at least it is a complete piece, and apart from two changes of metre, it would make a rather haunting slow dance, though not much of an overture.



### Je te veux (I desire you) (?1897)

The date here comes from Roland-Manuel's lecture on Satie in 1916, where the composition list was almost certainly supplied, or verified by the composer, which would mean it was Satie's first successful exercise in the popular waltz genre. However, it was not registered for copyright purposes until November 1902. The song version, which originally had rather risqué lyrics by Satie's friend Henry Pacory, has no trio section, so the piano solo was probably an arrangement from the longer score for brasserie orchestra. In its watered-down published version, *Je te veux* was soon popularised by the 'Queen of the Slow Waltz', the amply the amply bosomed Paulette Darty.

Je te veux, first edition with a Paulette Darty portrait © Priv. Coll.

### **Jack in the box (May-July 1899)**

This was music for a pantomime or 'clownerie' ['cloonerie' as Satie called it] in two acts to a scenario by Jules Dépaquit (later the first Mayor of Montmartre). It was intended for a performance at the Comédie Parisienne theatre in October 1899 that never took place. Satie originally described his score, with its jaunty Scottish dance rhythms, as a *Suite anglaise* and registered the 'Prélude' as a 'Gigue' with SACEM as late as January 1905. There are passing references to Debussy's *Marche écossaise* in the Finale, and Satie is known to have copied out the theme of the so-called *Earl of Ross's March* when Debussy was arranging his commissioned piece in 1891. Also, Satie's mother (née Jane Anton) was of Scottish descent and Satie was conceived during her Scottish honeymoon with Alfred Satie in August 1865. So it is not surprising that Erik was proud of his ancestry and often drew turreted Scottish castles in the margins of his manuscripts as he composed.

### **Prélude de 'La Mort de Monsieur Mouche' ('18 April 1900')**

This lively little overture is all that survives of Satie's incidental music for a three-act play by 'Lord Cheminot', alias Satie's Spanish poet-friend Patrice Contamine de Latour, who continued to work with Satie until 1905. All we know is that Acts 1 and 3 were set in a restaurant in which there may well have been flies in the soup! It also marks Satie's first use of American ragtime rhythms, newly arrived in Paris with John Philip Sousa's famous band. The overture has some abrupt changes of musical direction and some lovely irregular phrasing.

### **Verset laïque & somptueux ('5 August 1900')**

This was the last piece of devotional/Rose+Croix style music that Satie composed, responding to a project by Charles Malherbe to produce a collection of *Autographes de Musiciens Contemporaines 1900* as the Paris Opéra library's contribution to the Exposition Universelle. This was a collection of facsimiles rather than any sort of publication and the piece was never performed in Satie's lifetime. However, it is a concise, rich, sonorous, and cleverly unified piece garnished with Satie's, for once serious, observations as it majestically unfolds.

FLUXUS  
IN  
NOTATION  
MUSIC



VERSET LAIQUE & SOMPTUEUX

Réflexion

Admiration

Sérénité

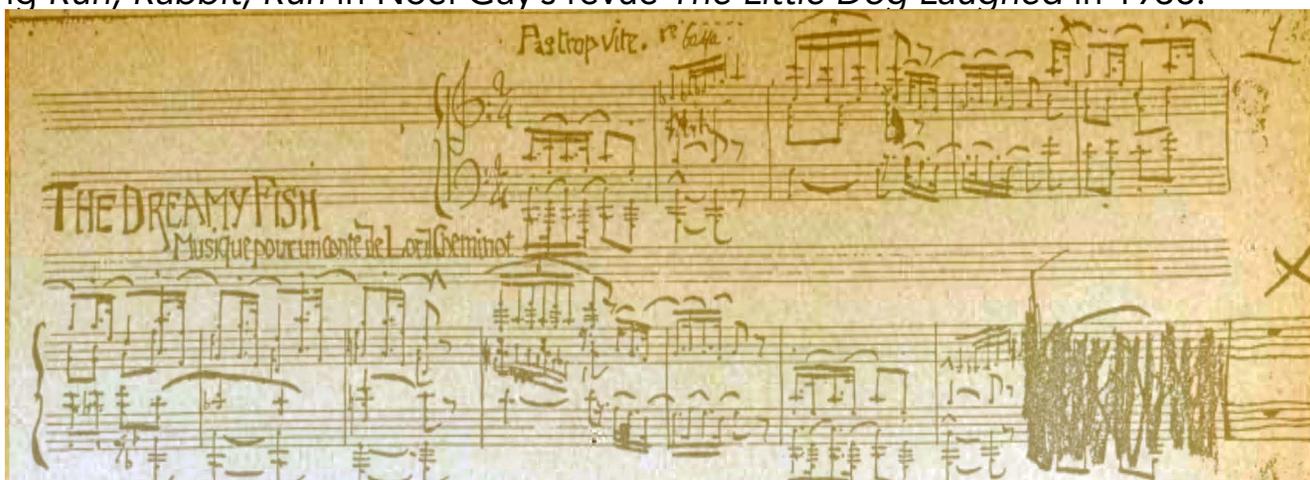
ERIK SATIE

ARVILLE, SEINE, 5 Août 1900.

1900

## The Dreamy Fish (Le Poisson rêveur) ('March 1901')

This was another project with Contamine de Latour (like **The Angora Ox** below) for which the stories they were meant to illustrate have been lost. For Satie it is an unusually symphonic piece with a brief (and very rare) development section which shows him trying to think harmonically along Debussyan lines, as well as orchestrally. In turn, we know Satie discussed the piece with Debussy, who must have remembered the second, more lyrical theme (first heard in bars 19-22) when he wrote the central section of his similarly titled piano *Image* 'Poissons d'or' in 1907. The theme also resurfaces in another most unlikely (and certainly accidental) context as the popular song *Run, Rabbit, Run* in Noel Gay's revue *The Little Dog Laughed* in 1938.



The Dreamy Fish manuscript © BnF

The beautiful melody of the central section is taken from the 'Petit Air de Geneviève', the 14<sup>th</sup> piece in Satie's miniature opera *Geneviève de Brabant* (1899) and the jaunty dotted rhythms remind us of the prelude to *Jack in the box*.

## The Angora Ox (Le Bœuf Angora) (1901 or 1902)

This intriguing piece was transcribed by Johny Fritz from Satie's incomplete and experimental orchestral score and his even less complete short score in 1995, with assistance from the material that Satie used in the final 'Redite' movement of his *Trois Morceaux en forme de poire* in 1903. This curious hybrid piece represents Satie's first attempt at a substantial orchestral work.

## Poudre d'or (1901-02)

This suite of waltzes was written for the fashionable Bal Bullier in the Latin Quarter of Paris and was originally titled 'Pluie d'or' (Golden Rain). It has three strains in different keys as well as a Trio, with (for Satie) a bold introduction and extensive coda. It also exists as an orchestral suite and it was dedicated to Mlle Stéphanie Nantas who is associated with Satie's Spanish painter friend Santiago Rusiñol.

## Tendrement / Illusion (SACEM, 29 March and 19 June 1902)

This **Tendrement** is the piano waltz in C major to which Satie originally gave this title and is *not* to be confused with the sentimental song in A flat major to words by Vincent Hyspa which he published as 'Tendrement' with Baudoux, also in 1902. To further confuse the issue, this song was originally called *Illusion* (in B flat major) and also exists in a piano solo version as performed here. Both are gentle, lyrical pieces, though **Illusion** has some strong romantic surges in its coda.



Tendrement manuscript © Priv. Coll.

**Le Bœuf Angora**  
Musique sur un conte de Paul Cheminot

**Le Bœuf Angora**  
The Angora

ERIK SATIE

Par trop vite

1. Flûte  
2. Flûtes  
1. Hautbois  
1. Cor anglais  
2. Clarinettes en la  
2. Basson  
2. Cors en fa  
Trompettes en ut  
2. Trompes  
Tuba  
Timbales  
Tambour - Caisse  
Viol.  
2. Viol.  
Alto  
Violoncelle  
Basse

Le Bœuf Angora manuscript © BnF

## Le Piccadilly. Marche (1904)

This jolly ragtime march was originally called *La Transatlantique*, after the many rich American heiresses who sailed to France to make a titled marriage with an impoverished aristocrat. The Princesse de Polignac (née Winaretta Singer – of sewing-machine fame) offers a good example of this. Various versions of the introduction exist and Satie originally planned to add a coda. The main theme of the march may have been modelled on the rhythm of the Howard and Emerson hit song of 1899 about the telephone, called 'Hello! Ma Baby!' If you are a collector, this is one of Satie's rarest first editions, especially in its string orchestral version published by Alexis Rouart in 1907.

## La Diva de l'Empire: Marche chantée / Intermezzo américain (February-March 1904, rearranged 1919)

The Empire was a well-known music hall, and the diva in question was Satie's close friend Paulette Darty, although she first tried out this subsequently celebrated song in Berck (Pas-de-Calais) in a revue called *Dévidons la bobine* on 26 July 1904, before risking it in Paris in April 1905.



La Diva de l'Empire manuscript © BnF

Satie's piano version, registered with SACEM as the *Stand-Walk Marche*, was originally in D major. It was also referred to by Satie as the *Little Girl March*. For whatever reason it was not published as a piano solo until 1919, with the sub-title *Intermezzo américain* and with a new trio added by Hans Ourdine [=En sourdine/with a mute], alias Satie's publisher friend and composer of early film music Stéphane Chapelier. Presumably the trio was added with Satie's approval, as it would have been entirely uncharacteristic of him to return to a work in a style of 15 years earlier. Satie's 1904 version is performed first and is simply the piano accompaniment to his cabaret song with two verses and chorus to words by Dominique Bonnaud and Numa Blès, with whom Satie worked at La Lune Rousse for several years.

### **Chorale: Nun Ruhen Alle Wälder [harmonisation de Satie] (1906)**

Also associated with the Schola Cantorum is Satie's harmonisation of Bach's chorale 'Nun ruhen alle wälder' (Riemenschneider no. 289) from 1906, with its wonderfully uncharacteristic cadences, rests and modality. But it is very much in the *spirit* of Bach and is virtually free of consecutives.

### **Chanson Andalouse [aka 'Gambades'] (1905-06)**

Caby's *Gambades* is actually an early draft of the 'Chanson Andalouse' from the farcical operetta *Pousse l'amour* of 1905-06. This piano transcription by Satie may have been made for rehearsals of the opera for the premiere at the Comédie Royale in Paris on 22 November 1907.

### **[Exercice] [pour quatuor à cordes] (c.1905-06) and Fugue-Valse (1906)**

The attractive folksong-like exercise (untitled and originally for string quartet) and the *Fugue-Valse* of 1906 were both written for classes at the Schola Cantorum, the latter being expanded and transformed to make the 'Danse de tendresse' in the ballet *Mercur*e in 1924. It was originally transcribed by Roger Nichols.

### **Passacaille ('July 1906')**

The *Passacaille*, typically of Satie, is not a passacaglia at all, but rather a solid march with a prominent bass line at the start. It is repeated three times around a much shorter Trio section.

**Vintage postcards collection displaying Satie's Arcueil house from all angles © Priv. Coll.**

1. Arcueil: La Rue Emile Raspail, la rue Cauchy et l'Aqueduc
2. Arcueil : Vue d'Ensemble sur la Bièvre
3. Arcueil : Rue Cauchy (high numbers)
4. Arcueil : Vue générale
5. Arcueil : Avenue de la Convention
6. Arcueil : Rue Cauchy (back of La Maison aux quatre Cheminées)
7. Arcueil : Rue Cauchy (low numbers)
8. Arcueil : Rue Cauchy (front of La Maison aux quatre Cheminées)
9. Arcueil : Eglise Saint-Denys et Place du marché
10. Arcueil : L'aqueduc – Rue de la République – Parc Laplace

*His address was 22 (now 34) rue Cauchy and his room was behind the third window from the left on the second floor (see postcard 8 and drawings 2 and 6)*

**Satie by Augustin Grass-Mick © Priv. Coll.**

1. Au Café des Princes (1898)
2. La Maison aux Quatre cheminées (1897)
3. Portrait of Erik Satie (1897)
4. Portrait of Erik Satie (1897)
5. Portrait of Erik Satie (1897)
6. Pacory Satie and Grass-Mick découvrant la Maison aux Quatre cheminées (1897)
7. Portrait of Erik Satie (1897)
8. Portrait of Erik Satie (1897)
9. Erik Satie at Henry Pacory's piano (1897)
10. Portrait of Erik Satie (1897)
11. Au Lapin Agile (1905)



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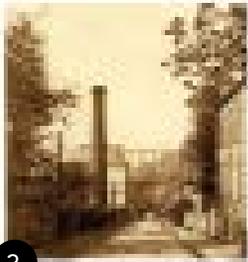
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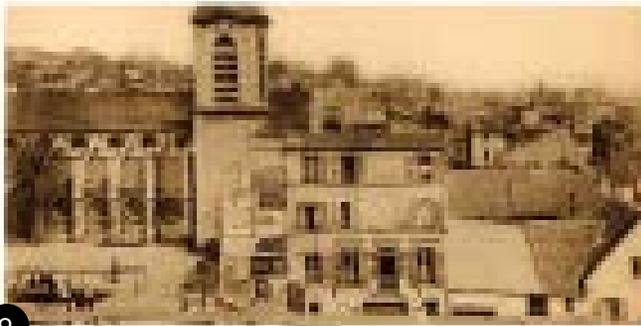
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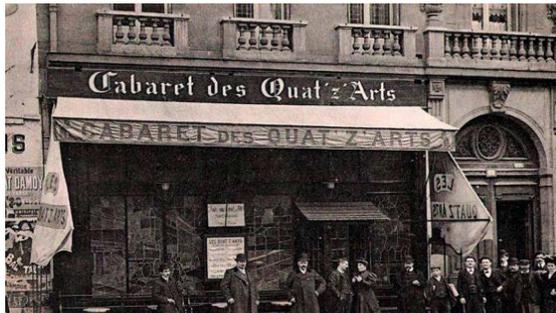
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Vintage postcards collection displaying Satie's Arcueil house from all angles © Priv. Coll.

## ERIK SATIE ON HIMSELF (1897-1906)



La Lune Rousse cabaret c.1904 © Priv. Coll.



Les Quat'z'Arts cabaret c.1909 © Priv. Coll.

Société des Auteurs, Compositeurs & Editeurs de Musique  
 AGENCE GÉNÉRALE : Paris, Rue Chaptal, 10

*Mr. Satie Erik*

Mon compte relatif sur la 216<sup>me</sup> REPARTITION (Avril 1903) dont le montant est de : 429,434,31

Récompilations	1 <sup>er</sup> ...	72 535	29		
	2 <sup>e</sup> ...	19 112	79		
	3 <sup>e</sup> ...	33 779	67		
	4 <sup>e</sup> ...	94 760	58		
	5 <sup>e</sup> ...	67 711	99		
	6 <sup>e</sup> ...	82 806	57		
	7 <sup>e</sup> ...	32 510	75		
	8 <sup>e</sup> ...	04 733	82		
Total		429 434	31		

Net à payer 76

Satie's 76 cents performing rights bill,  
 April 1903 © Priv. Coll.

Looking back on this rather unhappy and directionless period in my life, I think the less said about it the better. I was in search of a new style after my Rose+Croix vein had exhausted itself and my Eglise Métropolitaine d'Art had closed its Abbatiale doors, but I did not realise that I had the basis of a more fluent, smoother style in my *Pièces froides* of 1897. Rather, I descended to the medium of popular music with the cabaret songs I wrote for Vincent Hyspa and Paulette Darty until I found my forward path again in 1912. At least, as a cabaret pianist at La Lune Rousse, Les Quat'z Arts and elsewhere, I was earning some money: by comparison my performing rights for 1903 amounted to only 76 centimes! Yes!

So it was a period of desperate poverty as well: I even had to move from my tiny 'cupboard' [placard] in Montmartre to an even cheaper (but larger) room in the distant suburb of Arcueil late in 1898. My new friends Henry Pacory and Augustin Grass-Mick helped me move my things to the Maison des Quatre Cheminées in the rue Cauchy, into a second-floor room that had belonged to a colourful tramp known as 'Bibi-la-Purée', though his real name was André Salis and he was a relative of Rodolphe Salis as well as a friend of the poet Verlaine. (In passing, Rodolphe Salis had died in March 1897, at which point Le Chat Noir had closed its doors – just as no living thing, except the odd stray dog that I took pity on, came through my door in Arcueil during my lifetime. Not even the concierge. No!)

I finally settled in and began my 10-kilometre daily walks to and from Paris in January 1899, but before then, as I told my brother Conrad on 8 November 1898, *'I am here now to scrub the wooden floor of my room with caustic soda and anoint it with black soap. After this I shall wax polish the said floor myself.'* This purification was necessary to get rid of *'the mosquitos, surely sent by the Freemasons, [that] came to visit me [last month] and deigned to bite me all over; probably because they found me tasty'*.



Satie in the country, summer 1899 © Priv. Coll.

To the outside world, I must have seemed schizophrenic or at least suffering from some form of religious paranoia as I continued to lambast my enemies (theatre directors and critics) in damning pronouncements from my position as self-appointed Parcier of the Eglise Métropolitaine up until 1900. This was also the year when I composed the last of my *'kneeling music'*, the *Verset laïque et somptueux*, for a volume of musical autographs compiled for the Universal Exhibition. A propos of critics, I should perhaps mention that my long and vituperative battle with the critic 'Willy' (Henry Gauthier-Villars) actually came to blows after a Chevillard concert on 10 April 1904 when I intentionally knocked his elegant top hat to the floor and he then struck me with his cane. But it was me that the police took away, perhaps because I was smaller and less famous. Yes!



Satie in 1900 © Priv. Coll.

On the musical side, I had my friend and mentor Claude Debussy's opera *Pelléas et Mélisande* to contend with. I found it *'very chic! absolutely astounding'* as I told my brother in 1902. In comparison, I lamented, *'everything I undertake misfires immediately. I produce dirty rubbish and that will accomplish nothing.'* I had tried using Debussy's new musical language in *The Dreamy Fish* in 1901 but he instead criticised its sprawling form, which eventually led to my *Trois* (originally *Deux*) *Morceaux en forme de poire* for piano duet in 1903. I reckoned that if my pieces were in the form of a pear, they could not be shapeless. In the end, though, I wrote three new

pieces and enclosed them between two pairs of pieces from 1890 onwards, including instrumental music and cabaret songs. A sort of compendium of the best of the past with the best I could then achieve.

As I wrote in the opening *'Recommendations'* on 6 November 1903, not without a final touch of my past paranoia coupled with my whimsical imagination: *'I am at a prestigious turning-point in the History of My life. In this work, I express My appropriate and natural astonishment...Don't play around with the unknown amulets of your ephemeral understanding; sanctify your beloved and verbal phials. God will pardon you, if he sees fit, from the honourable centre of the united Eternity, where everything becomes known with solemnity and conviction...I cannot promise more, even though I have temporarily increased myself tenfold, against all precautions.'*



Compagnie général des omni-bus  
de Paris, c.1905 © Priv. Coll.

But I didn't yet know how to take this *'turning-point'* further, so I reverted to popular music: the song *La Diva de l'Empire* for Paulette Darty (the 'Queen of the Slow Waltz', who became a lifelong friend), *Le Piccadilly* (a ragtime march, very *à la mode* in 1904), plus a rather silly operetta with Maurice de Féraudy and Jean Kolb called *Pousse l'amour* (later retitled *Coco chéri*). And then the song that I had set for Vincent Hyspa in 1905 celebrating the new 'Omnibus-automobile' that Parisians first saw on the streets on 21 November 1904 was published by Enoch in an *Album musical*. Happily, it achieved some success, alongside my humorous setting of *Chez le docteur*. Yes.

However, I knew it was time for a real change in my life. My bohemian 'Velvet Gentleman' period had not brought me any great artistic success or increased recognition as a serious composer, and so I resolved to return to learning at the newly founded (Catholic) Schola Cantorum. I knew that I must learn the techniques of composition from scratch and so I enrolled (with a bursary) to take a course in counterpoint with Albert Roussel in October 1905, at the grand old age of 39 – later studying composition, orchestration and analysis with Vincent d'Indy so as to emerge a fully fledged composer in 1912. My friend Debussy

was against this study. 'At your age', he said, 'you can no longer change your skin.' *'If I fail, too bad',* I replied, *'that would mean that I have nothing in me.'*

So, with the aid of a small inheritance and the help of the wealthy Lemonnier brothers from my native Honfleur, I changed my persona for the last time (also in October 1905) to that of notary or civil servant with starched collar, bowler hat [chapeau melon] and, of course, a rolled umbrella. My ironical sense of humour, my sense of fantasy, and my iconoclasm were still there underneath, but at least I appeared smart and respectable as I set out to mingle with other would-be composers and the rest of bourgeois and high society Paris. Absolutely!

#### **FRENCH ORIGINALS :**

p. 24: 'Je suis ici, ce présent jour, pour ce que je ponce le parquet de ma chambre à l'eau carbonatée et ointe de savon dit noir; après ce travail, encaustiquerai ledit parquet, moi-même' [letter to Conrad, 8 November 1898]

'des moustiques, envoyés certainement par des francs-maçons, vinrent me visiter et daignèrent me piquer peau et poil, pour ce que probablement je leur étais friand'.' [letter to Conrad, 9 October 1898]

p. 24 : 'musique à genoux'

p. 24 : 'Très chic!...absolument épolant' [27 juin 1902]

p. 24 : 'tout ce que j'entreprends, rate immédiatement. Je fais de rudes saloperies et ça ne me réussit pas'.

[letter to Conrad ?1903]

p. 25 : 'Je suis à un tournant prestigieux de l'Histoire de Ma vie. Dans cette oeuvre J'exprime Mon étonnement convenable et naturel....Ne jouez pas avec des amulettes inconnues de votre pénétration éphémère; sanctifiez vos ampoules chéries et verbales: Dieu vous pardonnera, s'il le désire, du centre honorable de l'Eternité conjuncture où tout se sait avec solennité, avec persuasion....Je ne sais promettre davantage, bien que Je Me sois décuplé provisoirement, cela contre toute précaution.' [From Opéra Rés. MS 218, p. 30. 'Recommandations']

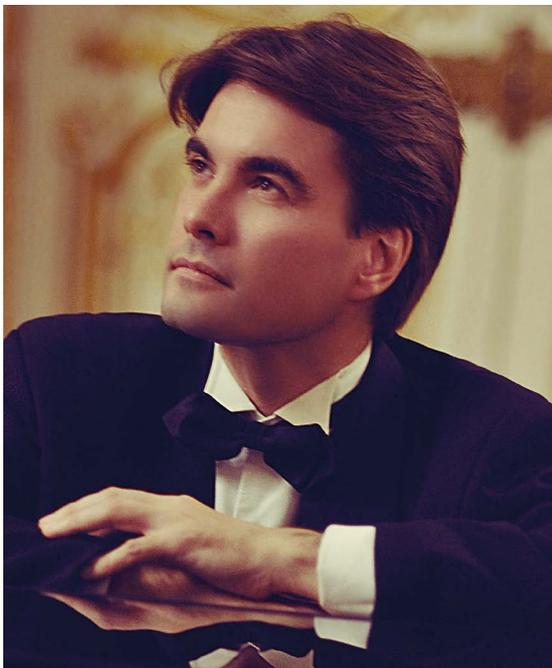
p. 26 : 'A votre âge' lui dit-il, on ne change plus de peau.' 'Si je rate, tant pis, répond Satie. Cela voudrait dire que je n'avais rien dans le ventre.' [Cited in, ed. Ornella Volta: Correspondance presque complète, Fayard/IMEC, 2000, p. 116]

**Robert Orledge**



**ROBERT ORLEDGE** has established himself as a leading scholar of late 19th- and early 20th-century French music, focussing on the music of Satie, Debussy, Fauré and Koechlin. He is a Professor Emeritus of the University of Liverpool and has had a special interest in Satie's music since 1985, writing numerous articles on his music, as well as the major publications *Satie the Composer* (Cambridge, 1990/2010) and *Satie Remembered* (Faber, 1995). In 2016 his completely revised edition of Satie's piano music was published by Salabert in Milan and this has been used as the basis for the present recordings.

## NICOLAS HORVATH



© Perla Maarek

Nicolas Horvath is an unusual artist with an unconventional résumé. He began his music studies at the Académie de Musique Prince Rainier III de Monaco, and at the age 16, he caught the attention of the American conductor Lawrence Foster who helped him to secure a three-year scholarship from the Princess Grace Foundation in order to further his studies. His mentors include a number of distinguished international pianists, including Bruno Leonardo Gelber, Gérard Frémy, Eric Heidsieck, Gabriel Tacchino, Nelson Delle-Vigne, Philippe Entremont, Oxana Yablonskaya and Liszt specialist Leslie Howard who helped to lay the foundations for Horvath's current recognition as a leading interpreter of Liszt's music. He is the holder of a number of awards, including First Prize of the Scriabin and the Luigi Nono International Competitions.

Known for his boundary-less musical explorations, Horvath is an enthusiastic promoter of contemporary music. He has commissioned numerous works and collaborated with leading contemporary composers from around the world, including Philip Glass, Régis Campo, Mamoru Fujieda, Jaan Rääts, Alvin Curran and Valentin Silvestrov – and has rediscovered forgotten or neglected composers such as Champion de Chambonnières, Jacquet de la Guerre, Hélène de Montgeroult, Friedrich Kalkbrenner and K.A. Hermann, to name but a few.

He has become noted for performing concerts of unusual length, sometimes lasting over twelve hours, such as his performances of Philip Glass complete piano music. His overnight performance of the complete piano music of Erik Satie at the Paris Philharmonie in October 2018 drew a cumulative audience of 14,000 people. In May 2019 he was honoured to be invited back to the Paris Philharmonie to perform Philip Glass's *Études*, sharing the stage with the composer himself. Nicolas Horvath is a Steinway Artist and this recording is his 12th album released on the Grand Piano label.

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



ERIK SATIE in 1898  
© Priv. Coll.

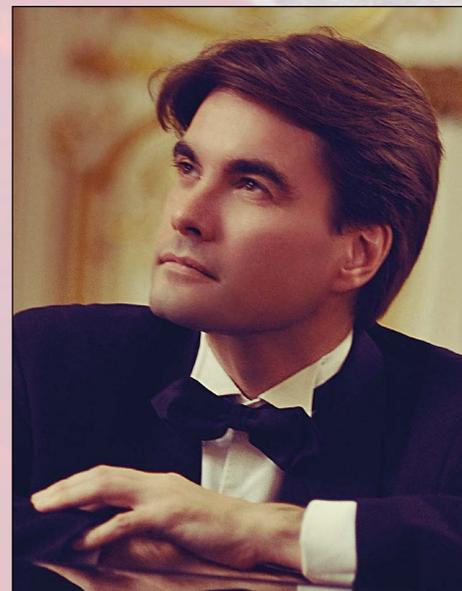
# ERIK SATIE

## COMPLETE PIANO WORKS • 4, NEW SALABERT EDITION

'Everything I undertake misfires immediately. I produce dirty rubbish and that will accomplish nothing.' So wrote Erik Satie in 1903 during a period of transition that saw him produce the last of his Rose+Croix style music in *Verset laïque & somptueux*, but in making a living writing for the music halls, he also created hugely popular songs such as *Je te veux*. The works on this fourth volume of Satie's complete solo piano music were written between 1897 and 1906. They include rare theatre music and tender waltzes that contrast with jaunty ragtime and pantomime dances.

<b>1</b>	[SANS TITRE aka 'CARESSE'] (1897)	02:23
<b>2</b>	JE TE VEUX (?1897)	05:37
<b>3-5</b>	JACK IN THE BOX (1899) **	08:07
<b>6</b>	PRÉLUDE DE 'LA MORT DE MONSIEUR MOUCHE' (1900) **	01:32
<b>7</b>	VERSET LAÏQUE & SOMPTUEUX (1900)	00:55
<b>8</b>	THE DREAMY FISH (1901)	07:09
<b>9</b>	THE ANGORA OX (version for piano) (1901)	05:42
<b>10</b>	POUDRE D'OR (1901-02)	05:51
<b>11</b>	TENDREMENT (1901-02) *	03:00
<b>12</b>	ILLUSION (1902) *	04:51
<b>13</b>	LE PICCADILLY. MARCHE (1904)	01:54
<b>14</b>	LA DIVA DE L'EMPIRE (MARCHE CHANTÉE DANS LA REVUE LA CÉLÈBRE CHANSON DE BONNARD, BLÈS ET SATIE) (1904) *	01:56
<b>15</b>	LA DIVA DE L'EMPIRE (INTERMEZZO AMÉRICAIN D'APRÈS LA CÉLÈBRE CHANSON DE BONNARD, BLÈS ET SATIE) (1904) **	03:00
<b>16</b>	CHORALE: NUN RUHEN ALLE WÄLDER [HARMONISATION DE SATIE] (JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH, 1685-1750) (1906) *	01:17
<b>17</b>	POUSSE L'AMOUR – CHANSON ANDALOUSE (aka 'GAMBADES') (1905-06) **	02:11
<b>18</b>	[EXERCICE] [POUR QUATUOR À CORDES] (c.1905-06) *	00:40
<b>19</b>	FUGUE-VALSE (1906) *	01:34
<b>20</b>	PASSACAÏLLE (1906)	02:37

TOTAL TIME: 61:59



NICOLAS HORVATH



\* WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING

\*\* WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING

SALABERT 2016 EDITION



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