

La Belle Époque according to Julie Fuchs

TUESDAY

7

JULY
8:00 P.M.

Presented by

ÉGLISE DESAINT-
AMBROISE-DE-
KILDARE

PROGRAM

- **PIERRE-JEAN DE BÉRANGER** (1780-1857)
CE N'EST PLUS LISETTE
- **ERIK SATIE** (1866-1925)
TROIS MÉLODIES
1. « LA STATUE DE BRONZE »
2. « DAPHÉNÉO »
3. « LE CHAPELIER »
DESCRIPTIONS AUTOMATIQUES
3. « SUR UN CASQUE »
- **CLAUDE DEBUSSY** (1862-1918)
PANTOMIME
- **GUSTAVE CHARPENTIER** (1860-1956)
SÉRÉNADE À WATTEAU
- **IGOR STRAVINSKY** (1882-1971)
PASTORALE
- **EMMANUEL CHABRIER** (1841-1894)
BOURRÉE FANTASQUE
- **ERIK SATIE**
MÉLODIE SANS PAROLES « LES OISEAUX »
- **CÉCILE CHAMINADE** (1857-1944)
MA PREMIÈRE LETTRE
- INTERMISSION – 20'
- **ERIK SATIE**
GNOSSIENNE N°1
- **ARISTIDE BRUANT** (1851-1925)
LE CHAT NOIR
- **ERIK SATIE**
CHEZ LE DOCTEUR
DESCRIPTIONS AUTOMATIQUES
« SUR UNE LANTERNE »
JE TE VEUX
- **LÉON XANROF** (1867-1953)
LE FIACRE
- **ARISTIDE BRUANT**
TU NE MANIERAS PAS MES TÉTONS
- **GEORGES AURIC** (1899-1983)
SUR LE PAVÉ DE PARIS

ARTISTS

Julie Fuchs, soprano

Alphonse Cemin, piano

PROGRAM NOTE

Erik Satie was never a teacher; and yet his aura was immense for an entire generation of young composers in the 1910s — the aura of a mentor, even of a breaker of conventions, an iconoclast. He was, all the same, a friend of Claude Debussy: on Debussy's death in 1918, he dedicated to him an *Élégie* set to a brief extract from a poem by Lamartine, ending thus — *Un seul être vous manque et tout est dépeuplé* («One being alone is missing, and all is depopulated»). But being his friend was no sinecure, for Satie was touchy to say the least, and envious of the success of certain of those who had known and loved him — Ravel in particular, of whom he wrote, in 1920, this murderous line: «Ravel refuses the Légion d'honneur, but all his music accepts it.» His fallings-out were often final, and every member of *Les Six* — represented here by Georges Auric, with *Sur le pavé de Paris*, drawn from the 1952 film *La Fête à Henriette* — fell victim to his wrath.

The recital program of Julie Fuchs and Alphonse Cemin sets out to reveal the many links that exist between works and «atmospheres» of Satie's time; humour is the unifying element, even in the purely pianistic pieces. Only, perhaps, Cécile Chaminade's touching *mélodie Ma première lettre* (1893), set to a poem by Rosemonde Gérard — wife of Edmond Rostand — departs from this irony to approach the nostalgic emotion of a lost childhood, and yet one recognized as our own.

The greatest of the popular singers of nineteenth-century Paris, Pierre-Jean de Béranger — admired by Victor Hugo himself — opens the recital with a song from 1821 which, as was the custom of his day, uses a timbre, that is, a well-known existing tune; the one he borrows came from a 1807 book by the songwriter Armand Gouffé: *Épigramme contre les coiffures à la Ninon*. Gouffé had prefigured what would make Béranger famous: his nonconformism and his style!

Then appears the sardonic Verlaine, a habitué of the cabarets, with Debussy's *Pantomime* (1883) and Gustave Charpentier's *Sérénade à Watteau* (1896, the year of the poet's death); if

Debussy is a recognized composer of *mélodies*, it is as the composer of the opera *Louise* that Gustave Charpentier has remained popular — though he too wrote a great many *mélodies*. He was also the founder of the *Conservatoire de Mimi Pinson* in Montmartre, which strove to open music to the working classes.

Emmanuel Chabrier, a friend of Verlaine, was perhaps the first to blend musical genres deliberately in his work. A committed Wagnerian, he also served as a cabaret pianist. A native of the Massif Central, he draws on a folk dance from his home region to play, with humour, on the rustic and popular.

Then come songs that were very nearly Satie's daily fare as a cabaret pianist, where he accompanied famous singers such as Paulette Goddard, known as «the Queen of the Waltz,» who premiered a number of his songs: *Je te veux* (1887) and *La Diva de l'Empire* (1904), for example.

The songs of Aristide Bruant and of Léon Fourneau, known as *Xanrof* — *fornax*, in Latin, means «furnace» (*fourneau*) — belong to the same world, joined by «poets» of the day: Léon-Paul Fargue, René Chalus, and Mimi Godebska, niece of Misia Sert, the great patron of the *Ballets Russes*.

Igor Stravinsky, a friend of Debussy, also shared in the «Parisian life»; he quoted Émile Spenser's song «*Elle avait une jambe de bois*» in his ballet *Petrushka* (1910–1911).

Let us travel, then, through a seething Parisian world in which styles and «atmospheres» mingled with ease: the world of Erik Satie.

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