

Ariettes Oubliées of Claude Debussy: An Interpretive Approach of Two Songs of the Composer's Compilation through a Comparative Study of Four Contemporary Recordings

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Abstract : This study examines the songs compilation of Claude Debussy Ariettes Oubliées for voice and piano and especially the songs C'est l'extase langoureuse and Chevaux des bois of the compilation in order to present some interpretational suggestions for the singer and the piano accompanist for a more complete knowledge of the style of French singing of this period. First, the historical frame of the French song (in which this compilation is integrated) is introduced, as well as the historical frame of this work, and then, the most predominant interpretational parameters of the impressionistic French song are presented from testimonies of Claude Debussy and his contemporaries. Moreover, a brief analysis of the verses that turned into music by Debussy from the collection of poems by the famous French poet Paul Verlaine for subsequent interpretative suggestions is integrated into the research. The purpose of this work is not to elucidate the work from a harmonic or morphological point of view. Instead, this research primarily attempts to delve into performance issues through a comparison of four contemporary recordings of the work, from which it will be proved whether the principles of impressionism that were established are respected and how they affect these songs, as well as how much the personal viewpoint of each interpreter intervenes. The latter intends to fill the research gap in the interpretation of Debussy's songs and to guide the performers. To conclude, it will be discovered whether there is any recording closest to a French song's interpretation principles and how a complete interpretation of a French song should be.

Keywords : Ariettes Oubliées, Claude Debussy, comparison, French song, impressionism, interpretation, performance practice, music performance, piano, recordings, singing, voice

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