

Claude DEBUSSY

CENTENARY EDITION 2018

S U I T E

B E R G A M A S Q U E

IV P A S S E P I E D



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Musical Health Warning : please be aware that these editions are definitely not urtext and should be consulted together with a traditional version. They have been devised purely to help solve musical and technical problems at the piano.

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Claude DEBUSSY 1862 - 1918

S U I T E B E R G A M A S Q U E

I V P A S S E P I E D

By 1890 Debussy was deeply involved in the poetry of Verlaine – “*charmant masques et bergamasques quasi tristes sous leurs déguisements fantasques*”¹. He once confided to Marguerite Long: « it is not the *comédie italienne*, but the tragic expression of existence. »

The suite was shelved for 15 years during which time his compositional technique and fame had developed and grown, and in 1905 he was persuaded to revise and publish the set of four pieces. Although it is open to conjecture how much was conceived earlier, we do know that the *Passepiéd* probably started life as a *Pavane*.

Unlike the *Bergamasque*, a clumsy rustic dance, this movement requires



“I believe more and more that music in its essence is not a thing that can be poured into a rigorous and traditional mould. It is made of colours and rhythmical beats. Music is a mysterious mathematical process whose elements partake of infinity, capturing mysterious relations between nature and the imagination”.

much delicacy of step and expression. The title seems to have no reference to a true *passepied*² and some mystery surrounds the tempo description and choice of common time. *Allegretto ma non troppo* – what does that really mean? Fairly quick without excess? Generally performed as a typical fast movement to end the suite, a lively *allegro alla breve* seems most likely. Does *passepied* perhaps refer to the light use of our delicate feet at the pedals? Indeed a successful performance of this neo-classical work does require sensitive footwork! Whatever its origins and meaning, it makes a delightful (no pun intended) contrast to the ever popular *Clair de Lune*, which precedes it.

In addition to some suggested fingering, redistribution between the hands comes under close scrutiny to make certain passages easier or more persuasive.

Three pieces published separately in 1903-04 may form a possible second *Suite Bergamasque* :

Masques – d'un Cahier d'Esquisses and l'Isle Joyeuse ...

They are united in one volume by PPE, possibly for the first time, where their interconnection as a group can be readily appreciated.

1. beguiling masks and bergamasks feigning sorrow beneath their whimsical disguises
2. French court dance, adapted in the 16th century, found frequently in 18th-century French opera and ballet, also in baroque instrumental suites. Most examples are in triple time.

The metronome speed is editorial

9-10 editorial modification of time-signatures

13 absence of phrasing

17 possible misprint

26 G♯ semibreve

36-38 editorial modification of time-signatures

55-58 alto voice tenuto marks removed

62 possible misprint

102 *f* seems likely in view of the *molto diminuendo* at **104**

106-109 editorial bass phrasing

<https://pianopracticaleditions.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/3-morceaux.pdf>

PASSEPIED

allegretto ma non troppo [♩ = 88]

p

p

simile

p

2

4

7

10

3

1

1

3

4

1

2

3

4

12

Musical score for measures 12-14. The piece is in A major (three sharps). Measure 12 features a treble clef with a melodic line starting on G4 and a bass clef with a bass line starting on C3. Measure 13 has an asterisk above the treble staff and a '1' below the first note. Measure 14 has a fermata over the treble staff.

15

Musical score for measures 15-17. Measure 15 has a '2' below the first note in both staves. Measure 16 has a '2' below the second note in the bass staff. Measure 17 has an asterisk above the treble staff and the instruction *più f* below the bass staff.

18

Musical score for measures 18-20. Measure 18 has a *f* dynamic marking and a fermata over the treble staff. Measure 19 has a '3' below the last note in the bass staff. Measure 20 has a '2' below the second note and a '1' below the last note in the bass staff.

21

Musical score for measures 21-23. Measure 21 has a '1' below the first note in the bass staff. Measure 22 has a '2' below the second note in the bass staff. Measure 23 has a '1' below the first note in the bass staff.

24 *mf*

sempre staccato

27

30 *p*

33

36 *1*

sfz

p *m.d.*

39 *più p*

42 *rall.* *mf* *a tempo*

45

48

Musical score for measures 51-53. The piece is in A major (three sharps). Measure 51 starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with a long slur over measures 51-53, and a fermata over the final note. The left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. Measure 53 ends with a piano (*p*) dynamic.

Musical score for measures 54-56. Measure 54 includes a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, marked with a '3' and a slur. Measure 55 has a piano (*p*) dynamic with an asterisk (*). The right hand continues with a melodic line and a fermata over the final note. The left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

Musical score for measures 57-59. Measure 57 has a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with a slur and a fermata. The left hand has a bass line with fingerings 1 and 2. Measure 59 shows a change in the right hand to a block chord texture with fingerings 1 and 4, and the left hand with fingerings 2, 2, and 1.

Musical score for measures 60-62. Measure 60 has a fortissimo (*sfz*) dynamic. The right hand has a block chord texture with a slur and a fermata, marked with a '4'. The left hand has a bass line with fingerings 3, 2, and 1. Measure 62 ends with a fermata and an asterisk (*).

63 *pp*
sempre staccato

66 *mf*

69 *sfz*

72

74 *f*

8^{va}

76 *pp*

legato

4 3 5 2

rall.

79

rall.

5 4 4 5 1 4 1

a tempo

82

pp

a tempo

-2 -5 4 2 1 2 1

rit

85

rit

3 5 1 3

a tempo

Musical score for measures 88-89. The piece is in A major (three sharps). Measure 88 features a piano introduction with a *ppp* dynamic. The right hand plays a series of chords, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note bass line.

Musical score for measures 90-91. Measure 90 continues the piano introduction. Measure 91 shows a change in the right hand's accompaniment, with a crescendo hairpin indicating a gradual increase in volume.

Musical score for measures 92-94. Measure 92 begins with a *ppp* dynamic. The right hand plays chords, and the left hand plays a melodic line. The instruction *simile* is written below the left hand part.

Musical score for measures 95-96. The right hand features a melodic line with slurs and ties, while the left hand provides harmonic support with chords.

Musical score for measures 97-98. The right hand continues with a melodic line, and the left hand plays chords. A crescendo hairpin is present above the right hand part.

pp

99

** f*

102

104

molto diminuendo

tempo primo

legato

106

p

1

4

1

1

108

staccato

111

114

117

120

123

sempre staccato

126

4/4

4/4

1 2

129

sempre p

5/4

3 2 1 3 3

132

sfz

mf

3/4

3 4 3

v

135

p

più p

4/4

4/4

138

pp

4/4

4/4

141

rit a tempo

pp

144

pp *m.s.*

S^{va}

147

legato *ppp*

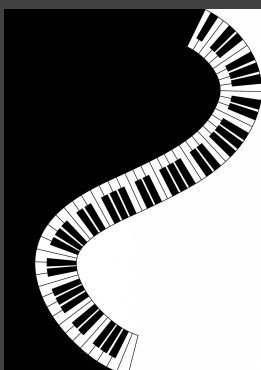
(S^{va})

150

153

ppp

S^{va}



D E B U S S Y
S U I T E B E R G A M A S Q U E

Passepiéd

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