

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black blazer and blue jeans, stands in profile looking upwards towards a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The background is filled with green foliage.

ELENA FONT

IMAGES

DEBUSSY - RAVEL - FALLA



TRACKLIST

Claude Debussy

Images – Book 1

- 1 **i** Reflets dans l'eau **5.20**
- 2 **ii** Hommage à Rameau **7.05**
- 3 **iii** Mouvement. **3.37**

Claude Debussy

Images – Book 2

- 4 **i** Cloches à travers les feuilles **4.48**
- 5 **ii** Et la lune descend sur
le temple qui fût **5.08**
- 6 **iii** Poissons d'or **4.24**

Manuel de Falla

El amor brujo

- 7 **i** Pantomima **4.46**
- 8 **ii** Romance del Pescador. **2.27**
- 9 **iii** Danza ritual del fuego **4.04**

Maurice Ravel

Le Tombeau de Couperin

- 10 **i** Prélude **3.31**
- 11 **ii** Fugue. **4.04**
- 12 **iii** Forlane **6.59**
- 13 **iv** Rigaudon **3.40**
- 14 **v** Menuet **5.07**
- 15 **vi** Toccata **4.14**

Maurice Ravel

- 16 Pavane pour une
infante défunte **6.31**

Total running time **75.47**

INTRODUCTION

IMAGES

Images is Elena Font's first solo recording album, recorded in Paris, released by Convivium Records and distributed internationally by Naxos.

Conceived as a recording and a live performance, *Images* features music by Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel and Manuel de Falla in a program centred around beauty, atmosphere and the experience of travel. Each work of the programme is related with a visual landscape inspired by Elena Font's artistic journeys across Europe, Asia and America – not as a literal representation of

a place, but as an artistic translation of the emotions, atmospheres, and experiences connected to it.

Developed across different international stages and cultural contexts, *Images* has evolved through the experience of performance itself, allowing encounters with audiences and places to become part of its artistic identity. *Images* is, ultimately, an invitation to beauty to listen beyond the visible – to enter a space where sound and vision merge, and where each piece becomes a landscape of its own.

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NOTE FROM THE ARTIST - ELENA FONT

This recording was born from a journey, not only through music, but through places, atmospheres, and inner landscapes. Over the past months, while preparing this repertoire, I found myself moving across different countries and continents. Each place left a trace: a light, a texture, a silence, a rhythm.

Rather than documenting the places I visited literally, this project seeks to translate them into a more intimate language, one that resonates with sound. The images accompanying each piece are not representations of specific locations, but reflections of how those places were perceived, remembered, and transformed through music.

Claude Debussy's *Images* unfolds in a world of fluidity and light, where sound dissolves into colour and movement. This universe naturally echoes the atmospheres of Asia – water, reflections, suspended time – spaces where perception becomes subtle and almost immaterial.

With Maurice Ravel, the landscape shifts. In *Le Tombeau de Couperin* and the

Pavane pour une infante défunte, form, memory, and clarity emerge. These works evoke a more architectural sensibility, one rooted in Europe, where structure and emotion coexist in delicate balance.

Finally, Manuel de Falla brings us back to the earth. In *El Amor Brujo*, rhythm, fire, and ritual take shape through a deeply physical and ancestral energy. Here, the music is grounded, instinctive, and intimately connected to the landscapes of America.

These three worlds – water, form, and fire – do not stand apart, but rather reflect different ways of perceiving and inhabiting sound. The journey that connects them is both external and internal: a continuous dialogue between place, memory, and musical expression.

Images is, ultimately, an invitation to beauty to listen beyond the visible – to enter a space where sound and vision merge, and where each piece becomes a landscape of its own.

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PROGRAMME NOTE - PASCAL ROGÉ

For someone who has spent a lifetime immersed in the music of Debussy and Ravel, one of the greatest pleasures is to encounter an artist who approaches this repertoire not through imitation, but through curiosity, imagination and the courage to seek her own path.

The title *Images* naturally evokes Debussy's world, yet it also reflects something deeply personal in Elena's artistic approach. The photographs accompanying this project – inspired by places discovered during her travels – reveal how strongly visual impressions, landscapes, changing light and memories feed her musical imagination. For her, sound and image constantly nourish one another.

What I admire most in Elena's playing is this balance between spontaneity and thoughtfulness. Her curiosity leads her to search endlessly for colour, atmosphere and character, while reflection gives shape and coherence to that instinctive world. The result is an interpretation that feels personal, natural and deeply sincere.

Debussy Images

Debussy's *Images* open the door to an imaginary and poetic world where mystery and colour are inseparable.

What has always fascinated me in this music is that the piano writing is never virtuosic in the traditional sense. Everything is based on colour, atmosphere, light and suggestion – rather like a painting by Monet, where forms dissolve into impressions and changing reflections.

Even the titles invite us into a poetic universe without ever becoming truly descriptive. Debussy does not tell stories; he evokes sensations, perfumes, shadows, distant bells, movements of water or air. The listener remains free to dream and imagine their own inner images.

Images Book 1

Reflets dans l'eau

Water was always a central element in Debussy's imagination: the sea, submerged cathedrals, islands of joy, waves, mist, reflections, even mythological creatures emerging from water such as Ondine.

But in *Reflets dans l'eau*, Debussy is

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not trying to describe water itself. What fascinates him is something far more elusive and poetic: reflection.

What is reflected on the surface of the water? Trees? The face of a young woman? The light of dawn or perhaps the golden atmosphere of sunset? Debussy never tells us. He leaves this imaginary world entirely open to the performer and the listener.

The music itself seems constantly in motion, changing shape like light moving across water. Harmonies appear and disappear, contours dissolve, colours merge into one another. As in Impressionist painting, nothing is fixed; everything is suggestion, atmosphere and fleeting sensation.

Hommage à Rameau

With *Hommage à Rameau*, Debussy turns toward the great roots of French music and pays tribute to the man he considered one of its spiritual fathers.

Far from any academic exercise, this is a deeply personal meditation on French classicism seen through the eyes of a

musical innovator. Beneath the apparent serenity of the piece lies an immense refinement of harmony and colour that could only belong to Debussy himself.

As Ravel would later honour Couperin in *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, Debussy here reconnects with the elegant and noble tradition that helped shape his own creative universe. The past is not imitated nostalgically; it is transformed into something timeless, suspended between memory and modernity.

The music unfolds with great dignity and inner calm, almost like a distant procession emerging through soft light and shadow.

Mouvement

At first sight, *Mouvement* may appear to be the most abstract or technical title of the cycle. One could almost imagine an étude or a purely pianistic exercise. But with Debussy, appearances are always deceptive.

What kind of movement is this? Water? Air? Wind? Light? In nature, everything is in perpetual motion, impossible to grasp or to fix permanently into form. And this is perhaps the paradox Debussy subtly

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suggests here: movement is everywhere, yet it can never truly be captured in a single image.

Behind the extraordinary fluidity and brilliance of the piano writing, Debussy is once again not describing, but evoking something invisible and elusive. The music seems to shimmer, circulate and dissolve continuously, like energy itself becoming sound.

This ambiguity – between the visible and the invisible, between image and movement – is profoundly Debussyste.

Images Book 2

Cloches à travers les feuilles

Bells occupy a very special place in Debussy's sound world. They evoke resonance, distance, mystery and memory. We often hear bells without ever seeing them clearly, as though their sound were arriving from another world.

In *Cloches à travers les feuilles*, this sensation becomes almost magical. The bells seem hidden behind the trees, their distant resonance mingling with the rustling of leaves moved gently by

the wind. Once again, nature is never described literally; it remains suggested, half-visible, half-imagined.

The piano writing creates an extraordinary impression of layered sound: resonances floating in space, blurred harmonies, subtle vibrations of air and light. Everything appears veiled, elusive and poetic.

And once more, movement is present everywhere – not as virtuoso display, but as the invisible breath animating the entire landscape.

Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fût

The title alone – *Et la lune descend sur le temple qui fut* – opens an entire world of poetry and mystery. Few composers could evoke such a powerful atmosphere with words so simple and elusive.

Once again, Debussy offers us not a description, but an imaginary and abstract vision suspended somewhere between dream, memory and disappearance. The temple no longer exists; it belongs already to the past, perhaps even to a forgotten civilisation. The moon itself is

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slowly descending toward the horizon and will soon vanish into darkness.

What will remain then? Absence? Silence? Emptiness?

Debussy's music possesses a unique ability to suggest natural elements – water, wind, light, distant resonances – but here it seems also to suggest something even more fragile and unsettling: the sensation of disappearance itself, of time dissolving into silence.

The harmonies move slowly like shadows across ruins. Everything feels suspended, motionless and infinitely distant, as though the music were emerging from another world already fading away.

Poissons d'or

Debussy once explained that *Poissons d'or* had been inspired by a Japanese lacquer panel decorated with golden fish. It is fascinating that the source of inspiration was not living fish moving freely through water, but rather a fixed and motionless object.

This reveals something essential about Debussy's imagination. He does not seek to reproduce reality directly. Instead, it

is his own poetic vision that transforms stillness into movement, silence into life, and visual impression into sound.

From this immobile image emerge shimmering reflections, flashes of light, flowing water and constantly changing colours. The piano writing sparkles with extraordinary freedom and fantasy, yet always avoids simple virtuoso display for its own sake.

As so often in Debussy, the visible world becomes only the starting point for an inner, imaginary landscape where movement, light and mystery are endlessly recreated by the listener's imagination.

Manuel de Falla – El amor brujo

The presence of Manuel de Falla in this programme is a key element to its artistic vision. Few composers embody so beautifully the meeting point between Spanish identity and French refinement. During his years in Paris, Falla formed close relationships with Debussy and Ravel, whose influence can be heard not as imitation, but in his extraordinary sensitivity to colour, atmosphere and

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instrumental sonority. In the transcription from *El amor brujo*, Elena finds another world of images: more earthy, more rhythmic, more instinctive perhaps – yet deeply connected to the same search for colour and imagination that unites this entire programme.

Ravel – Le Tombeau de Couperin

Debussy and Ravel have so often been compared – sometimes even opposed – throughout musical history.

I still remember one day when my harmony teacher told me that Debussy was ultimately the more important composer. I was almost shocked by this remark, because since my earliest childhood Ravel has always been the composer closest to my heart.

And yet, with time, I came to understand what my teacher meant. Debussy profoundly transformed piano writing and opened the doors to an entirely new musical language. In many ways, he was looking toward the future and toward the possibilities of modern music itself.

Ravel, by contrast, often turned more

willingly toward the past: *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, *Menuet antique*, *Pavane pour une infante défunte*... His imagination was deeply nourished by earlier French traditions, by elegance, clarity and classical form.

But *Le Tombeau de Couperin* is far more than a nostalgic tribute either to the eighteenth century or to the friends Ravel lost during the First World War. It is also a profound homage to the classical French style that he admired throughout his life. Each movement evokes the spirit of an old dance or Baroque form, yet Ravel never writes "in the style of" the past. Instead, he absorbs these influences completely into his own unmistakable musical voice.

This fusion between tradition and innovation is perhaps one of the greatest miracles of Ravel's art.

Pavane pour une infante défunte

Ravel once admitted that he found the title only after composing the work itself. This is important, because here again we should not search for descriptive music or attempt to imagine a precise narrative.

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What matters above all is the atmosphere: an elegant and distant nostalgia that seems to float throughout the entire piece.

The pavane was originally a slow ceremonial dance of the Renaissance, associated with aristocratic refinement and courtly grace. But in Ravel's hands, it becomes something far more poetic and stylised – not a reconstruction of the past, but the dreamlike evocation of a

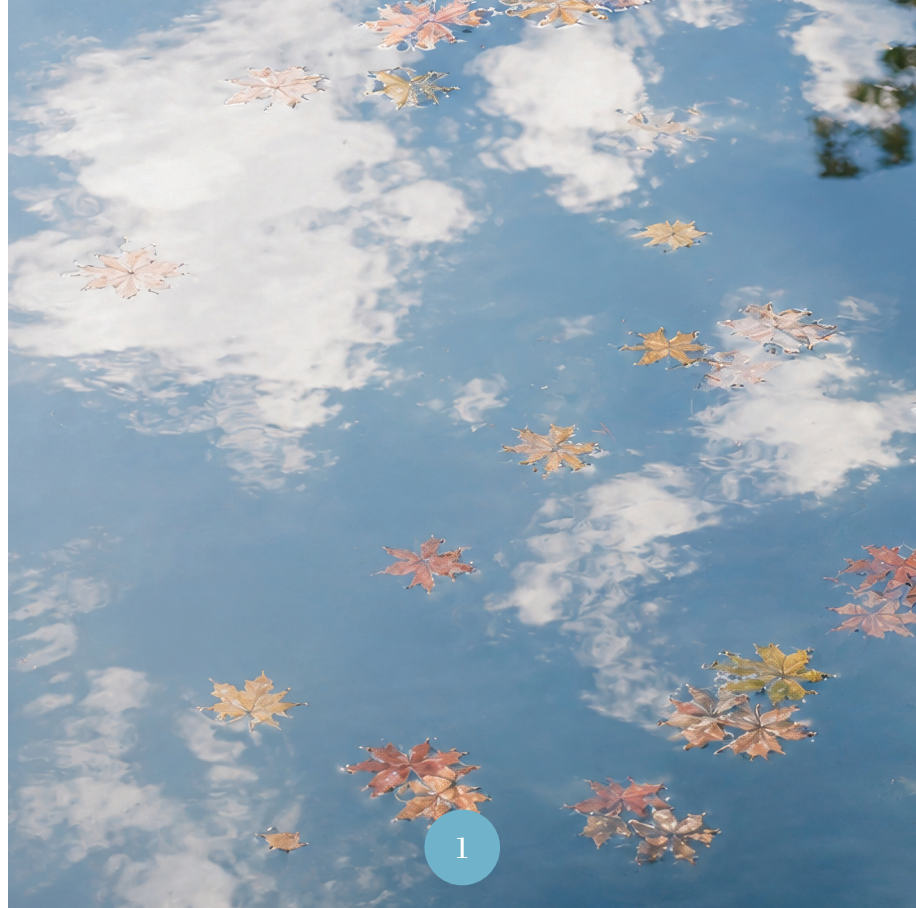
vanished world.

Everything in the music suggests restraint, elegance and melancholy touched by tenderness. The beauty of the piece lies precisely in this ambiguity between memory and imagination, between simplicity and sophistication, between intimacy and distance.

Like so much of Ravel's music, the emotion is never expressed directly; it remains veiled, discreet and often secret.

PHOTOGRAPHER CREDITS

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|---|---|----|--|
| 1 | Reflets dans l'eau Ryutaro Tsukata | 9 | Danza ritual del fuego |
| 2 | Hommage à Rameau Alice Silver | | James Colasacco |
| 3 | Mouvement | 10 | Prélude Talha Kugu |
| | Willian Justen de Vasconcellos | 11 | Fugue Céline |
| 4 | Cloches à travers les feuilles 袁勇博 | 12 | Forlane Pegah Sharifi |
| 5 | Et la lune descend | 13 | Rigaudon Sude Akpinar |
| | sur le temple qui fût Ron Lach | 14 | Menuet Céline |
| 6 | Poissons d'or Satoshi Hirayama | 15 | Toccata Jan Van der Wolf |
| 7 | Pantomima Joshua McKnight | 16 | Pavane pour une infante défunte |
| 8 | Romance del Pescador | | Marek Piwnicki |
| | Emmanuel Hernández | | |



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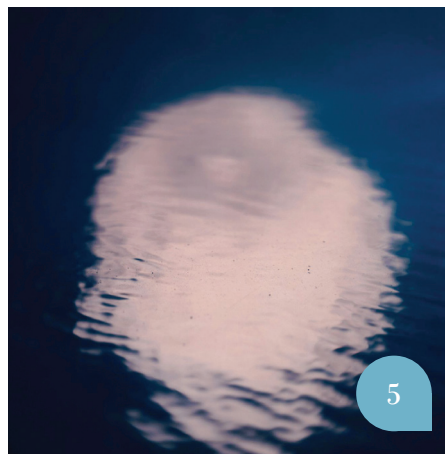
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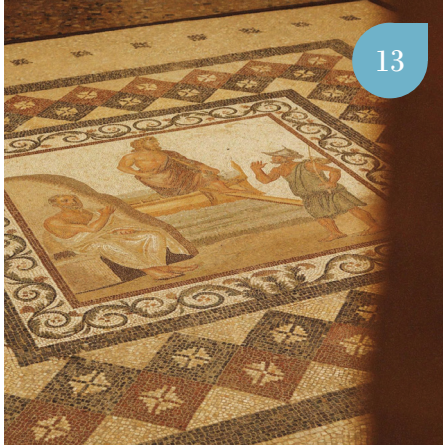
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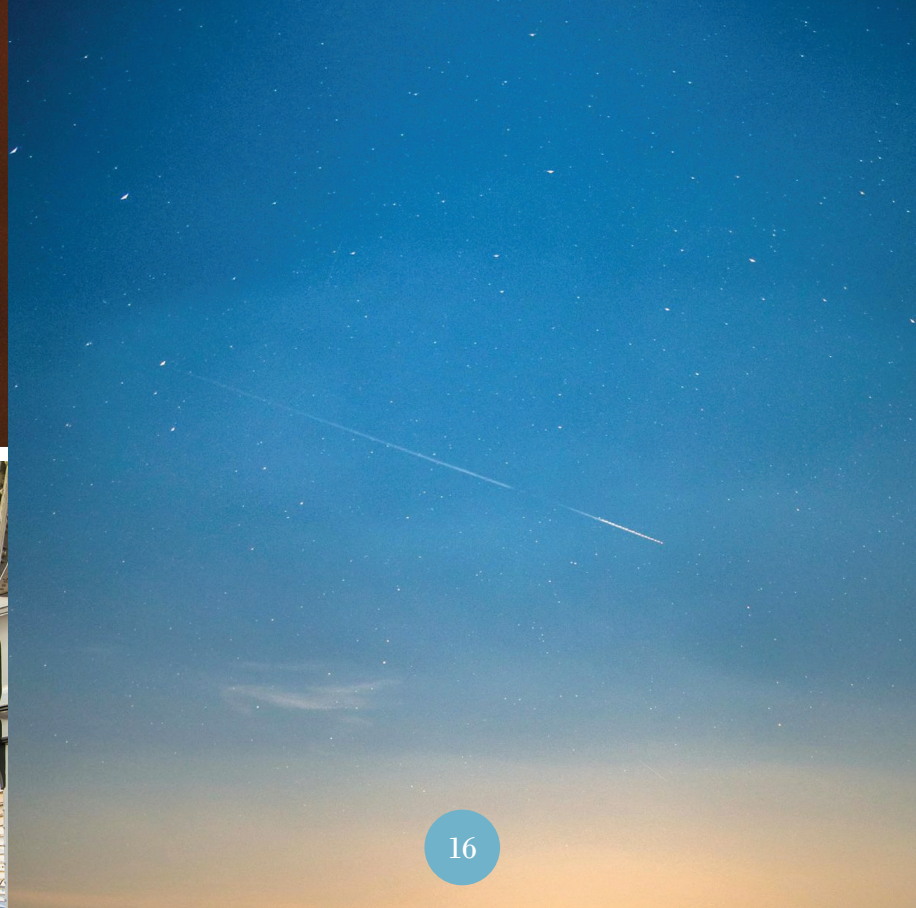
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BIOGRAPHY

Elena Font

Spanish pianist Elena Font enjoys an active international career as a soloist, performing regularly throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas. Her artistic identity is distinguished by a particular affinity with the French repertoire, which forms a central part of her concert activity and artistic vision.

After completing her studies in Spain, she continued her artistic training at the École Normale de Musique de Paris Alfred Cortot under the guidance of Denis Pascal. Since then, she has appeared at renowned international venues and festivals including Salle Cortot in Paris, Reading Town Hall, the Bellapais Music Festival, Festival Serenates, the Nice Classic Festival, Hong Kong City Hall and Theatro José de Alencar in Brazil, among others, while establishing an expanding

artistic presence in Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Alongside her solo career, she enjoys a close artistic collaboration with the distinguished French pianist Pascal Rogé, with whom she performs internationally and records regularly. Their collaborations have been widely praised for their musical rapport and stylistic refinement.

Her discography includes recordings for Onyx Classics and DECCA Classics, and her performances have been broadcast by the BBC and Radio France. Elena Font is also Co-Founder and Artistic Director of the ARC Clàssica Festival in Spain.

Her commitment to performance and to the exploration of new artistic formats continues to shape a distinctive and highly personal artistic voice.



CREDITS

Piano

Elena Font

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Musical Supervision and artistic advice

Pascal Rogé and Antonio Font

General Supervision

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