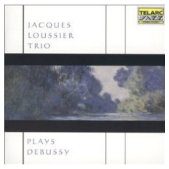
Jacques Loussier Trio – Plays Debussy (2000)



1. Clair De Lune 2. Prelude a l'Apres Midi d'un Faune 3. Arabesque from Deux Arabesques 4. La Fille Aux Cheveux de Lin From Preludes Book I 5. L'Isle Joyeusse 6. Reverie 7. La Cathedrale Engloutie from Preludes Book I 8. Syrinx Jacques Loussier - piano Benoit Dunoyer de Segonzac - bass Andre Arpino - drums

When Jacques Loussier gave the music of Johann Sebastian Bach the jazz treatment (as others, notably the Modern Jazz Quartet, had before him), it worked really well. The tumbling flow of Bach's contrapuntal lines, the square rhythms that just beg to be played with a swing feel -- everything about Bach that makes his music the farthest thing from jazz seems to make jazz adaptations inevitable. The French composer Claude Debussy is a less obvious choice, and on this album you see why. Debussy was a much more impressionistic composer, and his music doesn't have either the rhythmic vitality or the sense of driving tonal logic that fuels the music of Bach. That makes it harder to fit his compositions into a jazz context. That Loussier succeeds as much as he does is a compliment to his sensitivity as a pianist and to his trio's ability to work with him intuitively. Loussier's renditions of "Prelude a l'Apres-Midi d'un Faune" and "Reverie" sound a lot like Bill Evans at his most ethereal; things pick up a bit on "L'Isle Joyeuse," but even that relatively energetic track is pretty well lacking in swing. The final result is music that doesn't sound much like jazz, but is quite enjoyable anyway. ---Rick Anderson, Rovi

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