

SELECTED PIANO WORKS BY
ROBERT CASADESUS
AND **HENRI DUTILLEUX**

CICILIA YUDHA *piano*



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FINE MUSIC

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The works in this album include selected post-Second World War (1945-51) piano compositions by French composers Robert Casadesus and Henri Dutilleux. The two contemporaries each developed a unique voice and musical language, independent of the major shifts into modernism or serialism. With heartfelt gratitude, I dedicate this recording in memory of two extraordinary men; James D. Ireland III, a Cleveland philanthropist, who generously supported my studies at the Cleveland Institute of Music, and Slamet Abdul Sjukur, the founding father of Indonesian contemporary music and one of my formative teachers, who had studied with Henri Dutilleux in 1960s.

ROBERT CASADESUS

SONATA No. 3, Op. 44

Written in 1948 and dedicated to his daughter, Thérèse Casadesus Rawson, this sonata exhibits the quintessential qualities of Casadesus' spirit as a pianist and a composer. The writing is incisively descriptive of the neoclassical style. The prestissimo movement's energy derives from the rhythmic drive of its basso ostinatos. Casadesus' careful craftsmanship shows in the balance of perpetual motion of the first theme and the contrasting texture and character of the second theme.

The second movement, "Lento e tristamente," is the heart of the piece where Casadesus explores the myriad of colors possible from the piano. Poignantly written and set in chorale-style counterpoint, this movement also exhibits his preference for a pure style of writing and the influence of J.S. Bach in his compositional language. The last movement, "Rondo giocoso," is a jovial finale. Casadesus' Iberian roots are evident in this movement, as is his predilection for strong pulse essential in dance rhythms.

TOCCATA, Op. 40

A fertile ground of creativity and youthful energy, the *Toccata*—written for Casadesus' son, Jean, in 1946, and premiered by his wife, Gaby in 1950—was perhaps his most popular piece among pianists in the 1980s, due to it being a requirement of the Casadesus International Piano Competition (now the Cleveland International Piano Competition). Casadesus' *Toccata* conforms clearly to the genre of perpetuo mobile toccatas started in the nineteenth century with *Schumann's Op. 7* (1830) and extending into the 20th century with *Prokofiev's Op. 11* (1912) and Ravel's toccata from *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (1914-1917). The toccata's sophisticated writing demands that a pianist negotiate its rapid tempo and endless sixteenth-note momentum with a highly developed technique and also produce a variety of attacks, sounds, and nuances.

HENRI DUTILLEUX

BLACKBIRD

Written in 1950 and published the following year, this short and charming character piece was intended for young pianists and was included in a volume published by Billaudot. Although one might perceive it as an homage to Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992), another significant French composer and ornithologist, biographer Pierrette Mari has suggested that *Blackbird* might have been inspired by Dutilleux's own pet Shama, an Indian robin with black and orange plumage.

AU GRÉ DES ONDES: 6 PETITES PIÈCES POUR PIANO (ALONG THE WAVES: 6 LITTLE PIECES FOR PIANO)

Au gré des ondes, or "Along the Waves," is a cleverly titled collection of six little pieces that were commissioned in 1945-1946 as short interludes for French radio broadcasts. Much to his regret, an "overly insistent publisher" published the suite Dutilleux regarded as "mere pastiche."

Each of the pieces shows incredible discernment in its pithy, economical style, and was dedicated to a pianist in his circle of friends. The suite also points to the tonal and harmonic language, characters, and pianistic writing that are expanded in Dutilleux's piano sonata. "Prélude en berceuse," a prelude in the style of a lullaby, is reflective and calm, yet also mysterious. "Claquettes," or "Tap Dancing," is a joyous and rhythmical interlude. The constant eighth-note accompaniment provides a scherzando feel to the dance while the melody explores the full range of the keyboard. "Improvisation," contrary to the title, is quite static in its movement. However, it is harmonically and dynamically spacious. It's magical end leaves listeners enchanted. "Mouvement perpétuel," "Perpetual Motion," is a lighthearted miniature toccata that calls for a colorful range of accents and nuances. "Hommage à Bach" is marked *calme et recueilli* ("calm and collected"). This introspective and lyrical piece is accompanied by a constant triplet accompaniment that outlines a clear contrapuntal bass line. Its key of D minor might recall a familiar work by Bach, such as the "Chaconne," last movement of the *Partita in D minor for Unaccompanied Violin*, BWV 1004. The brilliant "Étude" concludes the set in a playful manner as the texture alternates from a linear single line and homophonic passages. This piece also recalls the *meccanico* style and rhythmical ostinato trend that were subjects of fascination for composers in the early 1900s.

SONATE POUR PIANO

Although Dutilleux composed almost exclusively for chamber music and for orchestra; he enjoyed the piano and its ability to create infinite harmonic nuances and timbres. He considered the *Piano Sonata* (1947-8) as his first opus. It is indeed a masterpiece that displays thorough understanding of classical forms and pianistic writing. The entire work not only sums up traditional Western music history, it also draws images and pays homage to the French musical genre paved by Debussy, Ravel, Roussel, Poulenc, and Messiaen. Like the "Étude" in *Au gré des ondes*, this piece was dedicated to Dutilleux's wife Geneviève Joy. She was a gifted pianist, especially noted for her ability to evoke orchestral colors and resonances from the piano.

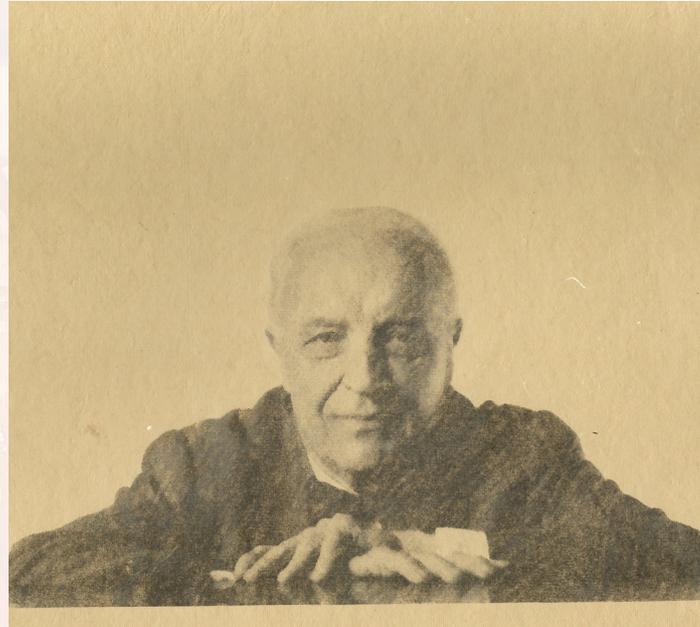
The first movement, "Allegro con moto," begins with perpetual motion. Its ceaseless ticking and tight rhythmic unity shows the influence of Poulenc, Bartók, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev.

The beautiful simplicity of the second movement, "Lied," marked *assez lent*, is inspired by the French *mélodie*, or art song. The third movement, "Chorale et variations," is long and complex. Dutilleux remarked that this made a particularly virtuosic and effective finale, "a sonata within a sonata."

- **Cicilia Yudha**

ROBERT CASADESUS (1899-1972)

Most music lovers need no introduction to Robert Casadesus as one of the greatest pianists of the twentieth century. His recordings of Mozart concerti with George Szell and the Cleveland Orchestra are his most celebrated. Much has been written about this world-renowned French concert pianist, his life, and his lasting contribution to the piano legacy as a pianist and teacher. However, Casadesus was also a prolific composer. As was common in European musical training of his time, Casadesus studied harmony and composition, at the Paris Conservatory. His composing career paralleled his performing career, yet he enigmatically chose not to promote his compositions, or publicly introduce himself as a composer, until the 1940s. Casadesus' music grew from certain seeds within Impressionism, Neoclassicism, and the Meccanico style. His output for solo piano, composed between 1916 and 1967, is particularly noteworthy. In quality, these works stand alongside those of Poulenc, Prokofiev, Copland, and their contemporaries.



Photograph courtesy of Gréco Casadesus by Jennifer Axner

HENRI DUTILLEUX (1916 - 2013)

Like Robert Casadesus and many other notable musicians, Henri Dutilleux was born into a family of artists and musicians. The Dutilleux family was associated with painters such as Delacroix and Corot, and musicians such as Fauré and Roussel. Henri Dutilleux grew up studying harmony, counterpoint, and piano in Douai in the north of France, and continued his studies at the Paris Conservatory at age seventeen. Even though he won the Prix de Rome in 1938, he felt insufficiently trained as a musician. He continued to explore d'Indy's treatise in composition, and after the war he familiarized himself with the works of Stravinsky, Roussel, the Second Viennese School (represented by Schoenberg, Berg and Webern), and Bartók. After World War II, Dutilleux directed music production at a French radio station, but he retired in 1963 to dedicate himself to composing. As a composer, Dutilleux was perhaps as self-critical as Brahms: his catalogue is extremely selective. His exacting perfectionism extended beyond the compositional content of his oeuvre to even the visual presentation of his manuscripts.



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by Jennifer Axner

CICILIA YUDHA

A versatile solo pianist and avid chamber musician, Cicilia Yudha has given performances in the US, Austria, Cambodia, Canada, France, Germany, and Indonesia. She has performed with the Cleveland Orchestra in Severance Hall and is a frequent soloist with the Duke University Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Harry Davidson. She has given master classes and presentations across the United States and Southeast Asia. As a creative artist, she has enjoyed collaborations with musicologist Ewelina Boczkowska, tap dancer Claudia Rahardjanoto, and Polish Folk Dance specialists Christine Cobb and Staś Kmiec.

Thanks to the Robert Casadesus grant that enabled her to attend Ecoles d'Art Americaines in Fontainebleau, France, Yudha discovered the music of the renowned pianist Robert Casadesus. In an effort to promote Casadesus' oeuvre, she was a guest artist at David Dubal's classes, "The World of the Piano" at Juilliard, and "Homage to Robert Casadesus" at La Maison Francaise, New York University. She focused her doctorate dissertation on several of Casadesus' works, and actively performs his lesser-known works. She has also presented lecture recitals at TEDx Talks, the Ohio Music Teachers Association Conference, the College Music Society (CMS) National Conference, and CMS Regional Conference. Passionate in music education and community service, Yudha taught in the Piano Preparatory Department at the Cleveland Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory Preparatory School, and successfully established a class piano program for the Youngstown City Schools. Yudha earned a Doctorate in Piano Performance from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree and an Artist Diploma from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and a Master of Music degree and a Graduate Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Music. She is a Nationally Certified Teacher of Music (NCTM) and joined the faculty of the Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University in 2012.

www.ciciliayudha.com



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In memory of **James D. Ireland III** (1950-2015) and **Slamet Abdul Sjukur** (1935-2015)

All tracks recorded February 2016 at Clonick Hall, Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Oberlin OH
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CICILIA YUDHA *piano*

ROBERT CASADESUS

SONATA No. 3, Op. 44

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|------|
| 1 | Prestissimo..... | 4:29 |
| 2 | Lento e tristamente..... | 6:34 |
| 3 | Rondo giocoso..... | 4:16 |
| 4 | TOCCATA, Op 40 | 5:07 |

HENRI DUTILLEUX

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|---|------------------------|------|
| 5 | BLACKBIRD | 1:43 |
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AU GRÉ DES ONDES: 6 PETITES PIÈCES POUR PIANO
(ALONG THE WAVES: 6 LITTLE PIECES FOR PIANO)

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|----|--------------------------|------|
| 6 | Prélude en berceuse..... | 3:06 |
| 7 | Claquettes..... | 1:09 |
| 8 | Improvisation..... | 1:28 |
| 9 | Mouvement perpétuel..... | 1:54 |
| 10 | Hommage à Bach..... | 3:42 |
| 11 | Étude..... | 1:19 |

SONATE POUR PIANO

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|----|---------------------------|-------|
| 12 | Allegro con moto..... | 8:52 |
| 13 | Lied..... | 7:10 |
| 14 | Choral et variations..... | 11:28 |

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