



Weiwuying
International Music Festival
衛武營國際音樂節

Artistic Director of Weiwuying International Music Festival Unsuk CHIN
Artistic Advisor Maris GOTHONI

Moonlight on the Eiffel Tower

2025.4.12 Sat. 14:30

Weiwuying Recital Hall

Duration is 50 minutes without intermission.



National Kaohsiung
CENTER for the ARTS

WEI WU YING

衛武營 國家藝術文化中心
國家表演藝術中心 National Performing Arts Center

Program

- C. DEBUSSY: "Des pas sur la neige" from *Préludes*, Book I
- C. DEBUSSY: *Images oubliées*, I. Lent (mélancolique et doux)
- C. DEBUSSY: *Rêverie*
- C. DEBUSSY: "Reflets dans l'eau" from *Images*, Book I
- C. DEBUSSY: *Arabesque*, No. 1
- C. DEBUSSY: "La sérénade interrompue" from *Préludes*, Book I
- C. DEBUSSY: "Passepied" from *Suite bergamasque*
- C. DEBUSSY: "La fille aux cheveux de lin" from *Préludes*, Book I
- C. DEBUSSY: "Prélude" from *Pour le piano*
- C. DEBUSSY: "Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir" from *Préludes*, Book I
- C. DEBUSSY: "Pour l'Égyptienne" from *Six épigraphes antiques*
- C. DEBUSSY: "Clair de lune" from *Suite bergamasque*

Program Notes

Written by LAI Jia-xin

This cross-disciplinary performance blends live piano with real-time animation, transforming the dreamy world of DEBUSSY's Impressionist music into a captivating fusion of sound and visuals. The repertoire spans DEBUSSY's early works, including *Suite bergamasque* (1890) and *Préludes*, Book I (1909–1910), composed during France's Belle Époque, when Paris was the global hub of art and culture, attracting artists and musicians from Europe and Asia. HEMINGWAY once said, "If you're lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast." While his time in Paris (1921–1926) came after DEBUSSY's passing, the pre-World War I Belle Époque Paris was an even more vibrant cultural phenomenon.

During his student years at the Conservatoire de Paris, DEBUSSY mingled with Impressionist painters and Symbolist writers, influencing his compositions. His piano works emulate the shifting light and shadow of Impressionist paintings capturing fleeting moments as eternal impressions. Once considered marginal, Impressionist art became mainstream in early 20th-century Paris, with the works of MANET, MONET, DEGAS, and RENOIR now celebrated worldwide. Deeply inspired, DEBUSSY rose to prominence as a leading musician, leaving a lasting impact on later generations.

DEBUSSY often uses the whole-tone scale, lending his music an otherworldly resonance. Drawing from medieval and Renaissance church modes, his compositions exude a sense of antiquity. The 19th-century World's Fair in Paris also exposed him to Eastern music, infusing his scores with influences from various cultures, enriching his musical palette.

"Des pas sur la neige," from *Préludes*, Book I, is somber and slow (Triste et lent), spanning only 36 bars. The repeating D–E and E–F motifs evoke a solitary traveler treading through a desolate snowy landscape, accompanied only by the sudden sounds of nature.

Images oubliées, composed in 1894, comprises two movements. The first, "slow, melancholic, and sweet" (Lent, mélancolique et doux), opens with a poignant right-hand melody tinged with bittersweet emotion. Following rapid arpeggios, additional voices gradually emerge, building a denser, more somber atmosphere. The opening theme recurs, framed by arpeggiated accompaniment, with fleeting sweetness amid melancholy.

DEBUSSY composed ***Rêverie*** in 1890, early in his career. At this time, the composer was

striving to break free from WAGNER's dense textures and find his own musical voice. Like *Suite bergamasque*, the piece retains tonal clarity but increasingly reflects DEBUSSY's distinct style—light, delicate, and evocative of late 19th-century Paris with its luminous and leisurely ambiance. The music begins with a softly repeated theme, drawing listeners into a drowsy dreamscape. As the texture deepens, the dream becomes more alluring, immersing the audience in a surreal realm.

"Reflets dans l'eau" is the first piece in *Images*, Book I, completed in 1905. In this piece, rippling arpeggios simulate the undulating surface of water, punctuated by occasional parallel intervals that create rises and falls with dramatic musical flow. The music gradually softens, and the ripples fade into stillness.

Composed in 1888, ***Arabesque***, No. 1 is an early work that foreshadows DEBUSSY's later style. Its ornate arpeggios evoke light and shadow, capturing the essence of Impressionism. Moving between church modes and tonality, this piece blends nostalgia and exoticism, also reflecting the Belle Époque spirit of late 19th-century Paris and its flourishing Art Nouveau.

"La sérénade interrompue" is the ninth piece in *Préludes*, Book I, a collection where each piece explores a distinct theme—sometimes involving musical terms, sometimes unrelated to music, capturing landscapes, moods, or scents. For example, "Des pas sur la neige" depicts a solitary traveler in the snow. A critique described it as "ranging from the frolics of minstrels at Eastbourne in 1905 to the American acrobat 'General Lavine' to dead leaves and the sounds and scents of the evening air." (The "Eastbourne minstrels" refer to British street performers, while "General Lavine" was a popular character in late 19th and early 20th-century vaudeville and circus shows, where white performers used blackface for comedic and satirical acts.)

Another type of title relates to musical terminology, as seen in the ninth piece. While it includes "serenade" in the title, it upends the typical impression of a serenade—there is nothing melodic or emotionally rich about it. Instead, it features relentless, percussive repeated notes, later overlaid with fragments of a melodic theme. The lively, animated music incorporates American ragtime rhythms and mechanically rapid leaps, making it far removed from a traditional serenade.

"Passepied" is the fourth piece from *Suite bergamasque*. The suite was composed in 1890, its title referring to the ancient town Bergamo in the Italian Alps, the birthplace of the

commedia dell'arte Harlequin character from 16th-century Italy. "Passepied," written in F-sharp minor, originates from a traditional French Brittany dance. The left hand's rapid note clusters accompany the right hand's melody, maintaining traces of Romanticism. The lively, repeated rhythmic patterns evoke the humor and jest of a clown.

"La fille aux cheveux de lin," the eighth piece in Book I of the *Préludes*, is one of the most well-known works in the set. It is very calm and softly expressive (*Très calme et doucement expressif*). Written in G-flat major, it was inspired by a poem from *Poèmes antiques* (1852) by French Parnassian poet L. de LISLE, depicting a flaxen-haired girl, a symbol of purity and naivety in art. The poem begins: "On lands of purple clover in bloom, who softly sings in the morning? It is the flaxen-haired girl..." DEBUSSY uses succinct, sweet melodies and simple harmonies to portray her innocence, making this a distinctive work from his later years.

"Prélude" is from *Pour le piano*, a suite of three movements—Prélude, Sarabande, and Toccata—completed in 1901. It premiered in 1902 at the Érard Hall in Paris, performed by Spanish pianist R. VIÑES, a Paris Conservatory graduate and an active figure in playing contemporary composers' works. His performance brought acclaim to the suite, with RAVEL later orchestrating the Sarabande. "Prélude" is animated and rhythmic (*Assez animé et très rythmé*), originally dedicated to DEBUSSY's student W. de ROMILLY. Its use of glissandi and whole-tone scales enhances its musical colors.

"Les sons et les parfums tournent dans l'air du soir," the fourth piece from Book I of the *Préludes*, employs whole-tone scales to evoke sensory impressions. Dissonance and strong parallel harmonies depict the atmosphere and scent; this music aligns with the literary style of French Symbolist poets such as BAUDELAIRE, MALLARMÉ, and VERLAINE.

"Pour l'Égyptienne" is the fifth piece of the 1914 piano suite *Six épigraphes antiques*. The suite was originally composed for piano duet and later adapted for solo piano. Inspired by P. LOUÏS' sensual, homoerotic poetry collection *Les Chansons de Bilitis*, this piece unfolds with a heavy and moderate pace. The opening syncopated bass notes mimic heavy footsteps, leading listeners into an ancient and mysterious world. Chromatic intervals, augmented seconds, and major seconds create intricate, floral patterns reminiscent of ancient Egypt. A persistent low E-flat adds mystery, until dotted rhythms in the latter half evoke an old North African dance. The piece concludes in a cadenza style that emphasizes exoticism.

"Clair de lune," from *Suite bergamasque*, was orchestrated by the composer and remains one of the most widely recognized works, often heard in media, films, or coffeehouses. In the 1890 version, its original title was "Promenade sentimentale" ("Sentimental walk"), which was changed to "Clair de lune" in the 1905 revision. The title references P. VERLAINE's Symbolist poem "Clair de lune." The composer uses an expressive andante to convey the lines: "Your soul is a chosen landscape, where charming masks and Bergamask go, playing the lute and dancing, almost sad under their whimsical disguises."

Animator

Grégoire PONT



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An exceptional artistic talent from the tender age of eight, Grégoire PONT attended the Animation Workshop in Paris where he studied Norman MCLAREN's techniques of animation dynamics. He graduated from the Penninghen School of Graphic Arts (ESAG) in 1992 and shortly after directed his first animated film *Le concerto du chat*, with abstract shapes dancing to the sounds of the Orchestre de Paris at Salle Pleyel.

A great lover of classical music, PONT has always been passionate about making classical music more popular and accessible to both children and adults by means of animation. He developed a new performance concept called "Cinesthetics" where he draws and animates live to a musical performance.

He has made appearances at London Royal Festival Hall, Paris Philharmonie, Frankfurt Alte Oper, Tokyo Suntory Hall and Gothenburg Concert Hall, collaborating with conductors such as Kent NAGANO, Kazushi ONO, Alexandre BLOCH and Marko LETONJA.

PONT has also received great acclaim for bringing his innovative animation techniques to the operatic repertoire.

Together with British director James BONAS, he conceived productions at Opéra de Lyon of RAVEL's *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* and *L'Heure espagnole*, as well as premiering a new production of ORFF's *Der Mond* in 2020. The dramatic success of *L'Enfant* resulted in a revival with San Francisco Symphony and performances at Oman's Royal Opera House,

Limoges Opera, Toulon Opera and Cincinnati Symphony, with an upcoming revival at Opéra de Lille. PONT also created animations for the semi staging of BIZET's *Carmen* for Orchestre National de Lille. In 2021, PONT brought Hans ABRAHAMSEN's *Snow Queen* to Opéra National du Rhin and HUMPERDINCK's *Hansel and Gretel* to Cologne Opera.

PONT additionally illustrates books for children, most notably *Les Excalibrius*, and has made numerous animations for TV commercials, educational animated shorts and music video clips. For three seasons, PONT worked with his innovative orchestra Les Siècles on "Presto!" (France Television.) This animated series of musical works was seen by over three million viewers on weekly primetime television. Most recently he has worked on animated effects for the music video "Catch Me," from the color series by New Studios, featuring the Boston ballet dancer My'Kal STROMILE.

Piano
Evan WONG



Praised by the magazine *CHOPIN* in Japan for his “transparent, beautiful tone and thoughtful interpretation,” Taiwanese American pianist Evan WONG is the Silver Medalist and Audience Prize winner of the 6th Sendai International Competition in Japan. He has appeared in recitals and concerts throughout North America, Europe and Asia, in venues such as Carnegie’s Weill Hall and Merkin Hall in New York, Jordan Hall and John Hancock Hall in Boston, Cultural Center and Pick-Staiger Hall in Chicago, Toppan Hall, Hitachi Systems Hall, Kirishima Concert Hall and Itzumity 21 Concert Hall in Japan, Daegu Concert House in South Korea, Flagey Studio 4 in Brussels, Belgium, Richard Jakoby Saal in Hannover, Germany, Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona, Spain, Teatro Marrucino in Italy, Music Centre in Helsinki, Finland, and National Concert Hall, National Taichung Theater and National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (Weiwuying) in Taiwan.

Most recently, in February 2024, he released his second album *Earthing*, which features works by composer CHANG Shiuan and aims to raise mental health awareness. His first album under the Acousence Label was released in Germany in 2020 and has also recorded for radio stations such as the MPR (Minnesota, USA), WFMT (Chicago, USA), KBS (South Korea), Shanghai Classical 94.7 (China), and the Taipei Classical, Radio Taiwan International, National Education, Bravo 91.3 and Voice of Han (Taiwan).

WONG has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including the Sendai Philharmonic, Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie, Orquesta de Cámara de Bellas Artes de México, Southern Illinois Festival Orchestra, Taipei Philharmonic Orchestra, National

Taiwan Symphony Orchestra, Evergreen Symphony Orchestra, Taipei Century Symphony Orchestra, New Sendai Philharmonic, Saga Symphony Orchestra, World Civic Orchestra, Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra and the NEC Philharmonia Orchestra and conductors Pascal VERROT, Julian KUERTI, Victor YAMPOLSKY, Dorian WILSON, Daniela CANDILLARI, Paul MEYER, Yuri NITTA, Edward BENYAS, Kuokman LIO, Seitaro ISHIKAWA, CHUANG Tung-chieh, Gernot SCHMALFUSS and Ludwig CARRASCO.

A frequent guest at several famous festivals, WONG has performed at the Verbier, Lucerne, Ravinia, Aspen, Gilmore, Kneisel Hall festivals where he has worked and collaborated with musicians such as Itzhak PERLMAN, Miriam FRIED, Gary HOFFMAN, Midori, Mihaela MARTIN, Pamela FRANK, Franz HELMERSON, Laurence LESSER, Kim KASHKASHIAN and members of the Cleveland, Takacs and Juilliard Quartets.

WONG holds degrees from the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover in Germany (Konzertexamen), Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music (DMA), The Juilliard School (MM) and the New England Conservatory (BM). His teachers include Matti RAEKALLIO, Jerome LOWENTHAL, Wha Kyung BYUN, Boris SLUTSKY, Mengchieh LIU, Alan CHOW, Ewa KUPIEC and Rolf-Peter WILLE.

Currently, WONG is a full-time assistant professor at Taipei National University of the Arts. He has also taught at Harbin Conservatory of Music in China as their Distinguished Professor and served on the faculties at the University of Taipei and Fu Jen University.

Cultural Development Partner



Weiwuying Online Questionnaire



More 2025 Weiwuying International Music Festival

Countertenor Kangmin Justin KIM and Alphonse CEMIN in Recital *From Baroque to Cabaret*

4.12 Sat. 19:30 Concert Hall

Countertenor | Kangmin Justin KIM / Piano | Alphonse CEMIN

[More information](#)

Inmo YANG Violin Recital - *Sensations of Sound*

4.13 Sun. 14:30 Concert Hall

Violin | Inmo YANG / Piano | WANG Pei-yao

[More information](#)

Weiwuying Contemporary Music Ensemble *Musical Games*

4.17 Thu. 19:30 Recital Hall

Conductor | Brad LUBMAN / Violin | CHANG Ting-shuo / Weiwuying Contemporary Music Ensemble

[More information](#)

Weiwuying Contemporary Music Ensemble *American Innovations*

4.18 Fri. 19:30 Recital Hall

Conductor | Brad LUBMAN / Bassoon | WANG Peng-hui / Weiwuying Contemporary Music Ensemble

[More information](#)

Dezső RANKI: *Piano Cosmos*

4.19 Sat. 14:30 Concert Hall

Piano | Dezső RANKI

[More information](#)

Closing Concert: *The Four Temperaments*

4.20 Sun. 14:30 Concert Hall

Conductor | CHIEN Wen-pin / Piano | Dezső RANKI / Kaohsiung Symphony Orchestra

[More information](#)