

well for our purposes. Halvorsen's passacaglia bass idea is only four measures long, and in this 110-measure piece we have 25 iterations, including a couple of extensions. I for one love to see a composer's inventive mind unleashed within the constraints of this form. The G minor key gives added seriousness to the journey in this intermediate-level setting.

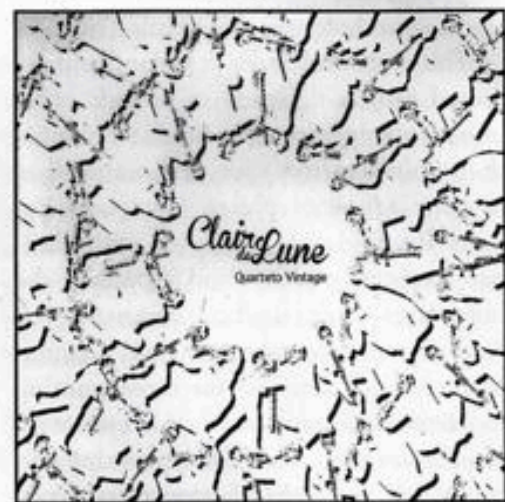
Franz Schubert. *Sonate arpeggione en la mineur pour clarinette en la et piano.* Transcription by Florent Héau. Gérard Billaudot Éditeur, 2011. Distributed in the U.S. by Fischer/Presser Distribution. \$37.95

The numerous arrangements of this work since its birth is no doubt due to the dearth of anyone who plays an arpeggione (a six-string bass viol). Clarinet arrangements are no exception. [Please see Joseph Messenger's review in Vol. 37 #4.] This latest from Florent Héau uses the A clarinet and retains Schubert's original key of A minor.

CD REVIEWS

by Wesley Ferreira

Claire de Lune – Quarteto Vintage. Iva Barbosa, clarinet/E-flat clarinet; João Moreira, clarinet; José Eduardo Gomes, clarinet/basset horn; Ricardo Alves, bass clarinet/contrabass clarinet; Eduarda Melo, soprano; António Durães, narrator. Pierre Passereau: *Il est bel et bon*; Jacques Bondon: *Movimenti*; Ravel: *Suite ma mère l'oye*; Thoinot Arbeau: *Belle que tiens ma vie*; Roger Boutry: *Dedicace*; Debussy: *Claire de lune* and *La fille aux cheveux de lin*; Françaix: *Petit Quatuor*; Satie: *Je te veux*. Independently produced. Total time 59:29. Email: quartetovintage@gmail.com



Quarteto Vintage is comprised of four successful Portuguese clarinetists who have been prize winners at competitions around the globe. Together, and after more than a decade of collaboration, Quarteto Vintage has now released their second full-length album, **Claire de Lune**. Containing works of French repertoire from various eras, both original and arranged, this album demonstrates an ideal of musical interpretation and artistry at a level not often achieved by clarinet quartets. *Il est bel et bon* by Passereau, arranged by Frank Amet, is presented first on the disc. One is immediately and acutely aware of the group's unified sound concept and sense that the four members act as one.

This approach continues throughout the remaining works on the disc. An original clarinet quartet by Jacques Bondon, *Movimenti*, appears next, a work which the ensemble prepares with fresh and intuitive musical ideas. From E-flat clarinet to bass clarinet, the musicians perform with incredible clarity of articulation and blend of tone.

Following these opening works, the quartet ventures into some truly artistic territory. Ravel's suite *Ma mère l'oye* (Mother Goose) was composed originally for piano (four hands) and dedicated to the two children of a family friend. It has since been arranged for solo piano and orchestrated and further expanded into a ballet, among other transcriptions. In this recording, the quartet has solicited Portuguese author Mário João Alves to compose text to introduce each movement, narrated by the sophisticated voice of António Durães. Alves's texts fit the narrative implied by Ravel's descriptive titles well. With translations in both English and French within the liner notes, listeners will surely welcome this added dimension to the storytelling of the performers.

Perhaps the most unique and impressive track on the disc comes from the performance of a 16th-century pavane, *Belle que tiens ma vie* by Arbeau. The quartet is joined by Portuguese soprano Eduarda Melo. Together the ensemble performs with flowing lines and a beautiful tonal color. The polyphony of the lines is in fact so accurate and well balanced that the listener could easily imagine hearing an organ accompaniment rather than four clarinets.

Two other original quartet works from the French repertoire appearing on this album are Boutry's *Dedicace* and Françaix's

Petit Quatuor. The quartet's performance of both works easily serves as a model for great chamber music playing. The ensemble performs note lengths similarly, balances tonal colors and dynamics, moves with unity of direction in phrases and all the while each individual voice is clear. What is most appreciated by this listener is the ensemble's ability to convey a single musical character and color so unified that the idiosyncrasies of the instruments disappear. One is left with only music. This idea is similarly presented in the remaining works on the album, arrangements of *Je te veux* by Satie, and *La Fille aux cheveux de lin* and *Claire de Lune* of Debussy. In these shorter works, the quartet invokes the piano with its performance style, color, balance and movement.

There are several layers to this album, and it may take more than one listening to truly appreciate and discover the quality of the Quarteto Vintage's performances on **Claire de Lune**. However, simply put, this might be the best clarinet quartet recording you have ever heard.

by Marguerite Levin

Favorite Pages. Ivan Stolbov, clarinet; Kim Ja Ran, piano. Debussy: *Rhapsody*; A. Grechaninov: *Sonata No. 2*; Hindemith: *Sonata*; Poulenc: *Sonata*; S. Taneyev: *Canzone*. MEL CD 10 02152. Total time 61:46. www.shop.melody.su



Clarinetist Ivan Stolbov has won numerous competitions in Russia, Romania and Japan. He is the soloist for the famed Mariinsky Theater in St. Petersburg and maintains a busy career performing chamber and solo concerts and giving master classes around the world. His undergraduate studies were with Professor Valery Bezruchenko at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, and his