

**Debussy** Images I – No. 2, Hommage à Rameau; Images II – No. 2, Et la lune descend; No. 3, Poissons d'or; Préludes, Livre 2 – No. 3, La Puerto del vino; No. 7, La terrasse des audiences; No. 12, Feux d'artifice<sup>a</sup>. **D. Scarlatti** 13 Keyboard Sonatas<sup>b</sup>.

**Marcelle Meyer** (pf).

St Laurent Studio © ⊕ YSL78-062 (58mins; ADD); rec. <sup>b</sup>11/46; <sup>a</sup>20/5/47 ([www.78experience.com](http://www.78experience.com)).

In her day, Marcelle Meyer moved in significant circles – Les Six, in particular. Satie, no less, introduced her to the Princess de Polignac. Collectors may be aware of Tahra's sterling efforts to bring Meyer to the attention of the record buying public. Of particular relevance is ⊕ TAH564 ("Inédits Marcelle Meyer"), which includes the Debussy *Images* (both books) recorded in 1957; while Meyer's Chabrier on ⊕ TAH591 offers a delicious selection of little-known delights.

Meyer recorded two sets of Scarlatti sonatas for Disques Français. The present disc contains 13 of them, impeccably chosen by the disc's producer. Meyer's Scarlatti, expressive, impressively delicate and yet on occasion full of energy, is shot through with dignity and a depth that many present day players cannot hope to equal. The St Laurent transfers allow in a comfortable modicum of surface noise (this includes the odd pop). The prime triumph of the transfers is to retain the tonal gradations that Meyer delights in. Pianophiles will revel in Meyer's sublime *legato* (the *dolente* B minor, Kk87) as much as they will in the evenness of delivery of the scampering G major (Kk125). Meyer captures the core of each sonata, from the pomp of the D minor, Kk64 to the quasi-improvised A major, Kk279.

It is instructive to compare these 1947 Debussy *Images* with the later RAI readings (the

Tahra release presents both books complete). Interestingly, the less harsh recording from 1947 is preferable. Interpretatively, the earlier "Hommage à Rameau" is fresher and a deeper experience than the later. If the two versions of "Et la lune..." are equally fine, it is the fluency of the earlier version, and its fuller recording, that triumphs in "Poissons d'or".

The three *Préludes* exhibit higher levels of surface noise, but deliver playing of the utmost character. Meyer's awareness of the power inherent in the chords of "La terrasse..." is palpable; some might find her dryness in "Feux d'artifice" off-putting, but there is no denying the atmosphere of the final moments. **Colin Clarke**