

Recordings to celebrate the world of the oboe

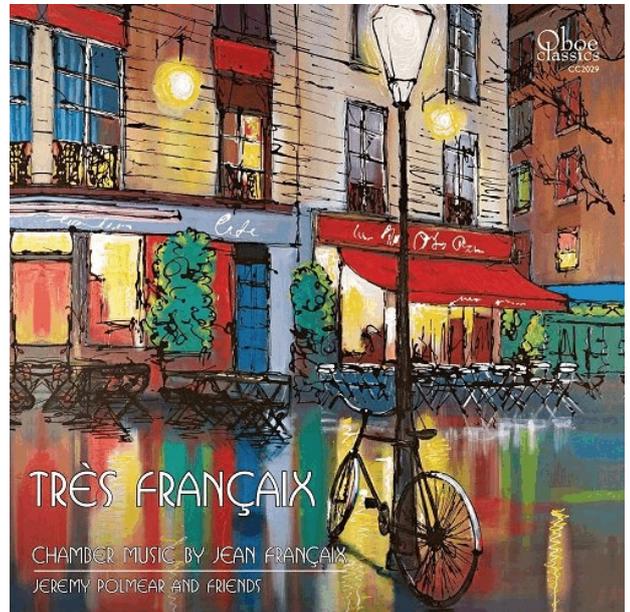
Très Français

Chamber Music by Jean Françaix

"Good humour is indispensable to the well-being of humanity." So wrote Jean Françaix of his **Quatuor** for cor anglais and strings, and all the music on this CD demonstrates his ability not just to entertain, but to lift the spirits.

Like his models Ravel and Poulenc, Françaix was masterful in his writing for instruments, and his particular delight in writing for winds lasted the sixty years of his compositional life.

Wit is ever-present, except in the **Elégie**, a meditation on what Françaix called the 'catastrophe' of Mozart's early death. In the piano **Variations**, each of the nine variations illustrates a different aspect of Françaix' style, from American rumbustiousness to beautiful, touching miniatures.



The 24-page **booklet** includes a discussion (in English & French) of the philosophy and attitudes underlying 20th Century French wind music, with many photos.

Anthony Robb (flute), Sandra Skipper (flute, alto flute)
 Jeremy Polmear (oboe, cor anglais)
 Christopher Hooker (oboe, cor anglais)
 Neyire Ashworth (cl, bass cl), Alan Andrews (cl, bass cl, basset horn)
 Philip Gibbon (bassoon), Damian Brasington (bassoon, contra-bn)
 Susan Dent, Alexia Cammish (horns)
 David Juritz (violin), Martin Outram (viola), Rebecca Knight (cello)
 Diana Ambache (piano)



- 1 **Variations sur un thème plaisant** (1976) for piano and ten wind
- 2-6 **Quatuor** (1971) for cor anglais, violin, viola and cello
- 7-11 **Sixtuor** (1992) for flute, oboe, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon & horn
- 12 **Elégie** (1990) pour commémorer le Bicentenaire de la mort de W A Mozart, for ten wind
- 13-15 **L'Heure du Berger** (1947) for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn & piano

"Jean Françaix's chamber music, whose great charm is difficult to analyse, is delightfully French, with its wit, lightness of touch, quixotic changing of moods, and blending of colours.

"It is most sympathetically played here, helped by a believable balance, with each wind group felicitously blended.

"Altogether a most infectious and enjoyable collection." *Ivan March, Gramophone*



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