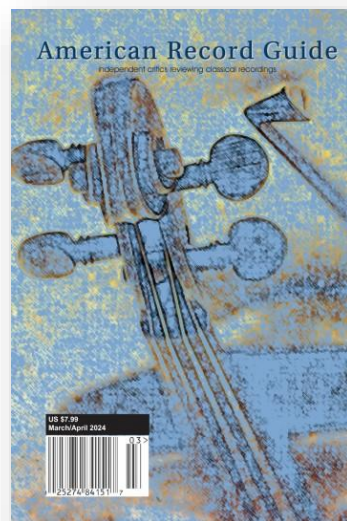


# ***Suites Modernes Pour 4 Mains***

**HOLST: *Mars; Jupiter*; DEBUSSY: *Petite Suite*; BARTOK: *Suite, op 4B***

**Duo Caron, p  
SMD 312—60 minutes**



Since 2020, the Canadian Duo Caron has been Carmen Picard and Josée Caron. For 10 years before that it was Josée and her brother Martin. From the beginning, a mainstay of their repertoire has been orchestral transcriptions for two pianists. Their *British Music for Two Pianos* was a most enjoyable program more than a dozen years ago (Mar/Apr 2010). Here they offer one of the most charming and well-known piano duets, Debussy's *Petite Suite*, framed by big orchestral transcriptions, all from the same basic time era.

Gustav Holst (1874-1934) wrote a 2-piano version of *The Planets* concurrently with the orchestral version in 1914-16. Unlike most similar piano arrangements, it was not an arrangement of the orchestral score. It existed before the orchestration was written out and played a key role in the compositional process. The version we get on this release is by Josée Caron for piano 4 hands and made from the orchestral score. These two movements are perhaps the most recognizable from Holst's suite and certainly have big loud climaxes. While two pianos can generate more orchestral sonorities, I was quite impressed with the arrangement here. Duo Caron has captured the essence of these pieces in their version without being pedantic or trying to get as many notes on the page as possible. They, like Liszt so many years ago, aim for something more pianistic, yet still completely faithful to the composer's original concept.

Bartok is responsible for the 2-piano version of his Suite, Op. 4. It was originally composed in 1905-07, revised in 1921 and 1943, and the 2- piano version is from 1941. He composed a number of pieces for the concerts he and his wife gave, the most famous being the Sonata for 2 Pianos and Percussion. It is in an accessible harmonic vocabulary and based extensively on Bartok's work with Hungarian folk music. Again, Duo Caron does full justice to this fascinating work that is as much for 2 pianos as an orchestral transcription. It finishes off a fascinating recital, well recorded with ample program notes.

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