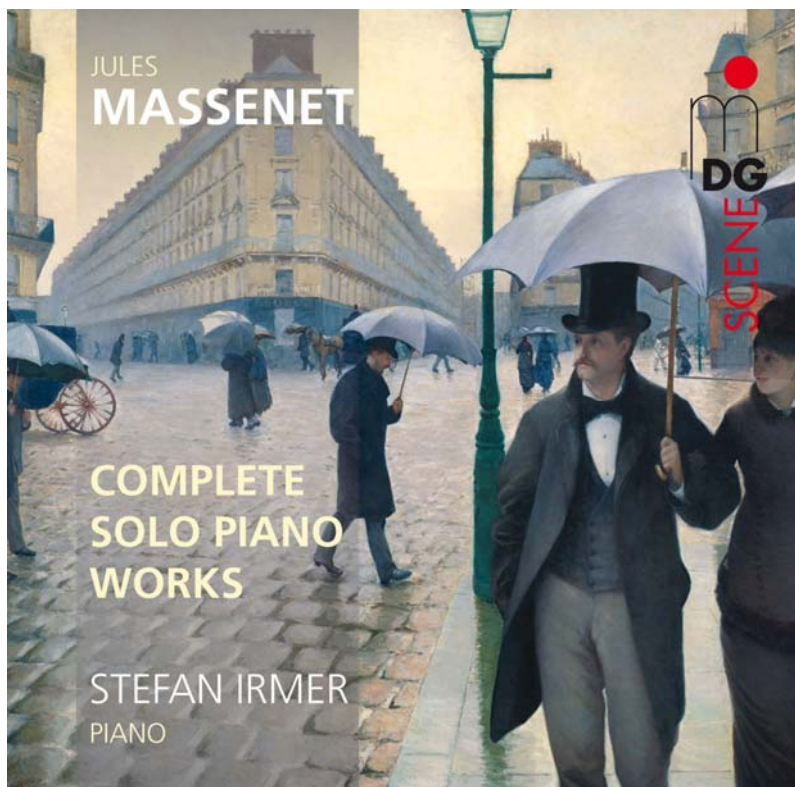


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1/12-(5)

**Jules Massenet** (1842-1912)  
Complete Solo Piano Works

**Stefan Irmer**, piano

1 CD

**Order No.:** MDG 618 1729-2

**UPC-Code:**



LC06768

#### French Taste

Stefan Irmer has a special fondness for French piano music. After his complete overview of the sins of Rossini's old age and a recently released recording of Gabriel Fauré's thirteen nocturnes, he now turns to another chock-full complete recording featuring rather unknown compositions from the piano oeuvre of Jules Massenet.

#### Piano Phase

Massenet became one of the most important French composers for the stage, but during his studies at the Paris Conservatory he received a first prize in piano and was a recipient of the Prix de Rome, whereupon, in 1864, Liszt introduced him to a female pupil who would later become his wife. And did we mention that he earned his living as a timpanist?

#### Opera Stage

Massenet wrote his piano music on the side over a period of forty years, and – no question about it – already in his first *Grande Fantaisie* composed in 1861 after a theme from Meyerbeer's *Pardon de Ploërmel* he moved toward the highly virtuosic sound world of the opera world. In his ten *Genre Pieces* op. 10 the age of the French baroque and rococo gleams, now in witty caricature, now in the style of the typical genre pieces of the nineteenth century. His *Le romain de l'Arlequin* is a simply maintained but charmingly presented pantomime for children. And in *Un Momento musicale* of 1897 he proves to be a master of tonal suggestion.

#### Virtuosic Wealth

Stefan Irmer knows just how and when to draw on the Steinway concert grand piano's tonal shadings. His virtuosity of natural effect never is mere show. Just listen to how he renders the nuanced color, form, and motion of butterfly wings in *Papillons noirs* and *Papillons blancs* (1907)!

#### Gioacchino Rossini:

„Péchés de Vieillesse“

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#### Sigismund Thalberg

12 Etudes op. 26

Fantaisie op. 33 and op. 40

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#### Gabriel Fauré

Complete Nocturnes

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