



## Elena Kats-Chernin Unsent Love Letters – Meditations on Erik Satie

After the death of Erik Satie, dozens of unsent love letters were found in his Paris apartment. Now composer Elena Kats-Chernin and pianist Tamara-Anna Cislowska send those letters off, in 26 meditative and passionate piano miniatures inspired by Satie's extraordinary life and music.

The album is a musical memoir from one composer to another, from the Uzbekistan-born Australian to the French composer whose eccentricities are legendary and music timeless. "Satie's life was a fascinating, fervoursome affair," says pianist Tamara-Anna Cislowska, "from the first strike of love and then lifelong estrangement with artist and muse Suzanne Valadon, to the unexpected celebrity and conflict of his last ten years. After he died, friends gaining access to his apartment, for the first time in almost three decades, found conditions both perplexing and romantically fastidious in their own way: two grand pianos one atop the other, one chair, one table, seven velvet suits and the love letters – many, many unsent love letters."

The album reflects on idiosyncrasies and anecdotes from Satie's life, with music that ranges from seductive orientalism to hypnotic melodies reminiscent of the ground-breaking, transcendent beauty of Satie's own piano pieces: 'imaginary building' reflects on his sketches of imaginary buildings (which he even advertised in the newspaper for rent and purchase); 'very shiny', one of his characteristically opaque performance directions; 'postcard to a critic', after Satie's explosive response to a negative review (leading to a spell in gaol). The buoyant rhythms and rhapsodic harmonic style that have brought Kats-Chernin a reputation as one of the best-loved composers of her generation provide the perfect lens to reflect on a musical great of the previous century.

This world-premiere recording was made in the presence of the composer, with Kats-Chernin's own choice of pianist, the ARIA-Award-winning Tamara-Anna Cislowska, who has been described as "Australian piano gold" by *BBC Music Magazine* and praised for her "profoundly affecting" musicianship by *Gramophone*.

**Album available 3 March 2017**  
**2CD digi | Digital Album | ABC 481 4967**

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## TRACKLISTING

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 love token             | 14 piano tower           |
| 2 unsent love letters    | 15 phonometrician        |
| 3 behind your pearls     | 16 modern romantic       |
| 4 le chat noir           | 17 maple in the evening  |
| 5 threads of grey velvet | 18 tuesday suit          |
| 6 sarabande              | 19 wonder about yourself |
| 7 garden gothique        | 20 patchouli             |
| 8 very shiny             | 21 notebooks             |
| 9 absynthe cocktail      | 22 postcard to a critic  |
| 10 the gymnast           | 23 dance in 7/4          |
| 11 one table, one chair  | 24 biqui                 |
| 12 eggshell              | 25 darkness              |
| 13 imaginary building    | 26 for whom it tolls     |

Tamara-Anna Cislowska *piano*

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### SUGGESTED TRACKS FOR AIRPLAY

- 2. unsent love letters [4'37]
- 4. le chat noir [2'51]
- 21. notebooks [2'39]

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Introduction to 'Unsent Love Letters', by Tamara-Anna Cislowska

#### The sound of dreams on velvet

"In this age where no one has any time, diaries are chock-a-block, schedules bursting and calendars stuffed, it could be said that what is missing is the space to miss things, even space. This album is a first step to redressing some of the balance between the time to think, that we know we don't have, and the frenzy of saving the dates, must-dos and urgent deadlines. I would like to suggest we wind back the clock a moment, or throw out the clock.

Taking Satie's life and work as a central theme, the album is a collection of personal ruminations from Elena Kats-Chernin on the great eccentric Erik Satie. You could think of it as a musical memoir from one composer to another. A folding and unfolding of Elena's thoughts and observations. The 26 pieces outline the concerns, convictions and loves of a man who was sensitive, singular and contradictory. He was also brilliant, unguarded and unconventional and able to mix the devil-may-care with the stiff-upper-lip. Satie's life was a fascinating, fervorous affair; from the first strike of love and then lifelong estrangement with artist and muse Suzanne Valadon, to the unexpected celebrity and conflict of his last ten years. After he died, friends gaining access to his apartment for the first time in almost three decades, found conditions both perplexing and romantically fastidious in their own way: two grand pianos one atop the other, one chair, one table, seven velvet suits and the love letters; many, many unsent love letters."

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Tamara and Elena will perform works from this album at their upcoming concerts, visit:  
<http://www.cinqueartistmanagement.com/calendar/>

Youtube clip of Tamara performing the title track, Unsent Love Letters:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zB3G3YbElyM>

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