

# **Gnossiennes** after Erik Satie (2002) for four guitars

- 1 **Gnossienne 3**
- 2 **Gymnopédie 3**
- 3 **Gnossienne 4**
- 4 **Gymnopédie 1**
- 5 **Gnossienne 2**

*Gnossiennes* is a set of reworkings of some of Erik Satie's most celebrated piano pieces. The two *Gymnopédies* are simply arrangements of the subtle orchestrations that Debussy made of the pieces, but the three *Gnossiennes* are recast from new stylistic moulds. The title *Gnossienne* is a mysterious one, suggesting the world of Minoan Knossos and the labyrinth. Satie's enigmatic score is littered with surreal and sometimes bizarre instructions for the performer: 'without pride', 'from the tip of the thought', 'with healthy superiority'. The *Gymnopédies* were inspired by classical Greek anapaests (in which naked boys danced formal movements based on wrestling and boxing) and by Flaubert's *Salammbô* (which is set in ancient Carthage). These pieces were originally written in the late 1880's, when Satie was in his early twenties, but they still sound incredibly fresh; they have a timeless and distant quality – not to be heard, but overheard.

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