

RAVEL

LE TOMBEAU DE COUPERIN FOR THE PIANO

EDITED BY NANCY BRICARD

Contents

Foreword	Page
About This Edition	1
The Piano Music of Ravel	
Style	2
Interpretation.	4
Technique.	5
Le Tombeau de Couperin	
Events.	6
Stylistic Origins: The Suite.	7
Ornamentation	7
About the Music	9
Acknowledgments	15
LE TOMBEAU DE COUPERIN	
I. Prélude.	16
II. Fugue	24
III. Forlane.	28
IV. Rigaudon	36
V. Menuet.	42
VI. Toccata	49

This edition is dedicated to my beloved husband, Sherwyn M. Woods, M.D., whose continued love, support and encouragement made the production of these editions possible.

Nancy Bricard

Second Edition
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Cover art: *Rue du Mont-Cenis, 1914*
by Maurice Utrillo (French, 1883–1955)
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Foreword

ABOUT THIS EDITION

Le Tombeau de Couperin is unique in that it is Ravel's first published post-World War I composition and the austere harmonic style reflects a distinct change from the rich textures of his pre-war

compositions. This critical edition should be of value to teachers, students and performing artists as it addresses in-depth matters of tempo, fingering, pedaling, translation and printing errors as well as stylistic considerations. Some of the material in the sections on **Style**, **Interpretation**, and **Technique** are taken from my previous publications of other masterworks of Maurice Ravel, *Gaspard de la Nuit*¹ and *Miroirs*,² with modifications appropriate for *Le Tombeau de Couperin*.

Ravel began composing *Le Tombeau de Couperin* in 1914 and completed the work in 1917. It was published in 1918 by Durand et Cie.³ The autograph is in the private collection of Madame Alexandre Taverne of Monte Carlo, Monaco and consists of 18 pages signed and dated July 1914 and June–November 1917. The first performance was given on April 11, 1919 by Marguerite Long in Salle Gaveau, Paris.

Unfortunately, for the first printing of the Alfred Masterwork edition of *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, all attempts to contact Madame Taverne (owner of the autograph) for the purpose of consulting and studying the autograph were unsuccessful. However, the original sketches and drafts are located at the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City and, thanks to the generous help of Mr. J. Rigbie Turner, Mary Flagler Cary Curator of Music Manuscripts and Books, I was able to study photocopies of these drafts and sketches. They were of immense value. Since that time, an individual, who wishes to remain anonymous, has provided me with a photocopy of Ravel's autograph manuscript.

The first printing of this edition was based on one of the earliest engraved editions as well as three subsequent reprints. All these reprints were issued by the original publisher, Durand et Cie, with no additional corrections or changes in any of them. A few omissions occurred, however, probably caused by the age and wear of the plates used for engraving. These omissions are mentioned in the footnotes as they appear in the score. After an in-depth study and comparison of the autograph to the first printings of *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, I have found very few differences between them. When any contradictions do occur, they are mentioned in this second and subsequent printings.

There are very few errors to be found in the original edition of *Le Tombeau de Couperin* in contrast to the multiple errors existing in

1 Nancy Bricard (Ed.), *Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit* (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing Company, 1990).

2 Nancy Bricard (Ed.), *Ravel: Miroirs* (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing Company, 1993).

3 Maurice Ravel, *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (Paris: Durand et Cie, 1918).

Le Tombeau de Couperin

I. Prélude

à la mémoire du lieutenant Jacques Charlot
(in memory of First Lieutenant Jacques Charlot)


Duration: 2:45 minutes

(Lively)

Vif, ♩. = 92

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

The musical score for the first system of 'Le Tombeau de Couperin, I. Prélude' by Maurice Ravel. It is in G major and 12/16 time. The tempo is 'Vif' with a quarter note equal to 92 beats per minute. The score is for piano, with a treble and bass clef. The right hand plays a melodic line with various ornaments and fingerings. The left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings like 'pp' and 'p', and performance instructions such as '(Lively)' and 'Vif'. There are also specific annotations for ornaments and fingerings throughout the piece.

(a) This line  means to keep the damper pedal depressed, thus allowing the strings to vibrate.

(b) *Les petites notes doivent être frappée sur le temps* (the ornaments must be struck on the beat). Ravel's instruction applies to all ornaments in the Prélude. This ornament should be played as a simultaneous acciaccatura, i.e., almost as a second quickly rolled or broken upward toward the auxiliary note, which is released immediately (see section on Ornamentation). Execute the ornaments in measures 2, 4, 10, 12, 31, 33, 38, 40, 50, 52, 55, 58–60, 87 and 89 in the same manner. All other ornaments are played on the beat.



(c) Written out mordent.

IV. Rigaudon

à la mémoire de Pierre et Pascal Gaudin
(in memory of Pierre and Pascal Gaudin)

Duration: 3:15 minutes

(Quite lively, ♩ = 112–116) (a)
Assez vif

The score is written for piano in 2/4 time. It begins with a tempo marking of 'Assez vif' and a metronome marking of 112–116. The piece is marked with various dynamics: *ff* (fortissimo), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *f* (forte), and *più f*. There are several accents and slurs throughout. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. Specific measures are marked with circled letters (a) through (e). Measure numbers 5, 9, 13, and 17 are indicated in boxes. The score ends with a fermata and a final chord.

(a) The metronome markings in the Rigaudon are provided by the Editor. This is the only piece in *Le Tombeau de Couperin* where Ravel did not provide a metronome indication.

(b) All the 16th notes in the A section must be nonlegato.

(c) I prefer using the thumb crossing over in the left hand, so as not to turn the hand, thereby maintaining a fixed position.

(d) Ravel asked Vlado Perlemuter for a brassy sound in these passages. It is scored for trumpet in Ravel's transcription for orchestra.

(e) In new reprints issued by the publisher Durand, this B-sharp is faded to the point of being unreadable.