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## PRÉLUDE

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The introductory and improvisatory character of the baroque prélude is retained by Debussy. The joyous feeling of this prélude establishes the festive “bergamasque” setting and prepares the listener for what is to follow. The form is more complete than the usual prélude, containing first and second subjects, development, recapitulation and coda. Devices of the baroque period are in ample evidence: appoggiaturas, pedal point, development by episode, etc. This movement contains motifs that are developed in the following movements.

## MENUET

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The various moods of the menuet are the subject of this movement. It is not confined to “stateliness” or “daintiness,” the words commonly applied to the dance. It is, in short, not for dancing but is a free and imaginative treatment, containing the elements of the menuet, charmingly varied and developed by means of fresh and original rhythmic and harmonic subtleties. The classical menuet-trio-menuet treatment is ignored in favor of a concise single movement, consisting of exposition, development, and a short, condensed recapitulation.

## CLAIR DE LUNE (Moonlight)

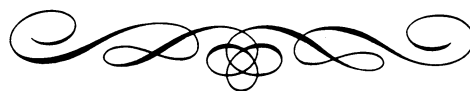
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Debussy’s most popular work fits like a rare gem into this setting. To hear this movement performed in its proper context may be a revealing experience. The popularity of *Clair de lune* is well deserved. It is highly original, and in this setting it is utterly perfect. It is at once a delicate and luminescent picture of half-light and half-shadow, and a warmly lyrical expression of moods suggested by the title and by the poetic lines that inspired it.

## PASSEPIED

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The early passepied was written three-in-a-measure. In 17th-century France it was second in popularity only to the menuet. It is gay and rapid in movement. The name “pass foot” is an obvious reference to one of the physical features of the dance. Debussy’s *Passepied* is in common time, but more than any of the other movements of this suite, it is reminiscent of the style of the French clavecinists. Like some of the early passepieds, it is characterized by a light, repetitive staccato figure in the accompaniment, which continues throughout the piece. In the suite it serves to restore the festive mood of the opening movement, after the introspective *Clair de lune*, rounding out the work with the logic of form so integral in all the music of Debussy.



# SUITE BERGAMASQUE

## PRÉLUDE

Claude Debussy  
(1890)

Moderato (*tempo rubato*)

The musical score is written for piano in G-flat major and common time. It consists of four systems of two staves each. The first system includes the tempo marking 'Moderato (tempo rubato)' and dynamic markings 'f', 'sf', and 'p'. The score features a complex texture with overlapping melodic lines and chords, characteristic of Debussy's style. The piece concludes with a final chord in the right hand and a sustained bass note in the left hand.

