

## CASSETTE INFORMATION

### **Cassette 1, Side 1 . . . . . (40:48)**

Reynaldo Hahn sings Offrande, 1909

Three fictional creative artists: a composer, a painter and an author

Proust's episodes of 'involuntary memory' were a means of digging into sensation in order to reach the heart of it

The Franco-Prussian War

The birth of Marcel Proust, January 10, 1871

The goodnight kiss

Military service

### **Cassette 2, Side 1 . . . . . (41:17)**

The Dreyfus Case (cont)

Pleasures and Days

Jean Santeuil, the early, autobiographical novel

Anna de Noailles

Marcel Proust and John Ruskin

More work: Ruskin's The Bible of Amiens

The move to 102 Boulevard Haussmann

Time Lost, Time Regained; involuntary memory

### **Cassette 3, Side 1 . . . . . (41:28)**

Proust and Agostinelli (cont)

The publication of Swann's Way

The First World War begins, August 3, 1914

The year of 1915

The poet Paul Morand

Proust begins to go out again into the world

Proust changes publishers - and joins

Nouvelle Revue Française - the NRF

The Armistice - a meeting with Harold Nicholson and a move to Rue Hamelin

### **Cassette 1, Side 2 . . . . . (38:59)**

Military service (cont)

The first short story

Influential drawing rooms

Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac

Reynaldo Hahn

Lucien Daudet

The Dreyfus Case

Total Time on Cassette 1: 1:19:47

### **Cassette 2, Side 2 . . . . . (38:15)**

Time Lost, Time Regained; involuntary memory (cont)

Alfred Agostinelli

Sergei Diaghilev, Jean Cocteau,

Pablo Picasso and friends

Looking for a publisher

The manuscript is delivered to Grasset

Proust and Agostinelli

Total Time on Cassette 2: 1:19:32

### **Cassette 3, Side 2 . . . . . ((38:17)**

Within a Budding Grove published in 1919, winning the Prix Goncourt, and then

The Guermantes Way

The meeting with James Joyce

Proust and Music

The Guermantes Way Part 2 and Sodom and Gomorrah published 1921

Colette remembers

People and characters

Worsening health and death

Total Time on Cassette 3: 1:19:45

Total Time on Cassettes 1-3: 3:59:04

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THE LIFE AND WORK OF MARCEL PROUST • ISBN 9-62634-752-X / NA325214

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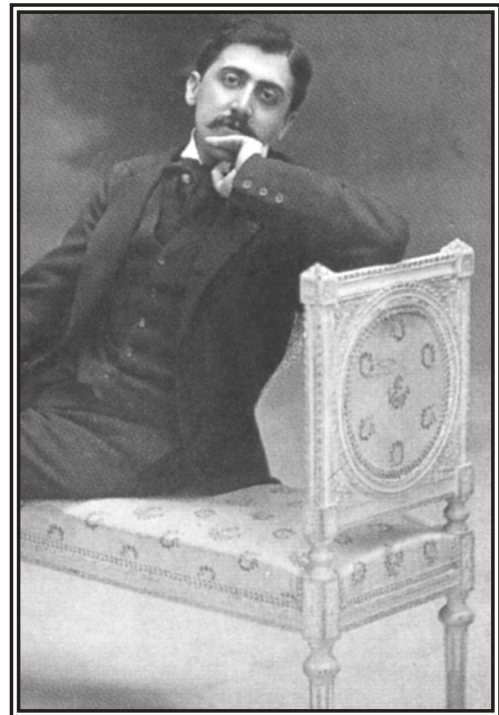


3 CASSETTES

**NON-FICTION  
BIOGRAPHY  
UNABRIDGED  
AUDIO-ORIGINAL**

# The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

WRITTEN & READ BY NEVILLE JASON



DIGITAL  
NA325214

**CLASSIC LITERATURE WITH CLASSICAL MUSIC**

# The Life and Work of Marcel Proust

WRITTEN & READ BY NEVILLE JASON  
BIT PARTS READ BY ELAINE CLAXTON,  
GORDON GRIFFIN & DENYS HAWTHORNE



Marcel Proust at Illiers

Few authors have attracted as many biographers as Marcel Proust. And yet, to the best of my knowledge, *The Life and Work of Marcel Proust* has the distinction of being the first audio biography.

To avoid any confusion, it may be wise to point out that Proust's great work, *À La Recherche du Temps Perdu*, was originally translated into English by Charles K. Scott-Moncrieff and published in 1922 under the title, *Remembrance of Things Past*.

It has subsequently been re-translated by Terence Kilmartin and appeared in 1981 as *In Search of Lost Time*. Naxos AudioBooks' abridged version has been prepared from the Scott-Moncrieff text (except for *Time Regained*, which was translated by myself), and references to the work in this audio biography use the original English title.

My own contact with Proust began when, as a seventeen-year-old schoolboy, I first read *Swann's Way*. I could not have guessed then that many years into the future Proust would take over my life for a period of some six years, during which time I would abridge, adapt for audio and record his three-thousand-page masterpiece, *Remembrance of Things Past*.

Having once embarked on this daunting but exciting task, it occurred to me that although the people on whom Proust based his characters were no longer living, the places he wrote about were still there, and so I set off to see them.

I was delighted to discover that Illiers, where Marcel Proust spent his holidays as a child, and which figures in the book as Combray, is now marked on the maps as Illiers-Combray, in official recognition of the reason for this sleepy village's wider fame. In a narrow street just off the market square is the house in which Proust's father, Adrien Proust, was born, and further along is the house of his Aunt Élisabeth, now a Proust museum, where Élisabeth's fictional counterpart, the bedridden Aunt Léonie, watched the world from her bedroom window. Around the corner from the house is a little boulangerie

with a sign in the window announcing proudly that 'This is where Aunt Léonie bought her madeleines'.

It only occurs to me as I buy a packet of the scallop-shaped cakes, that Aunt Léonie is a creature of fiction. Never mind, Aunt Élisabeth might well have patronized the establishment, or one very like it. Up the hill there is a real house called Tansonville, the name of the house occupied by Charles Swann, and later by his daughter Gilberte and her husband Robert de Saint-Loup, and further on there is a real village called Méréglise, a name almost identical to the fictional Méséglise.

Water lilies are still reflected in the glassy surface of the river Loir, which in the book bears the more poetic name of the Vivonne, and beyond the stream lays the Pré Catalan, the enchanting park created by Proust's horticultural-minded Uncle Jules.

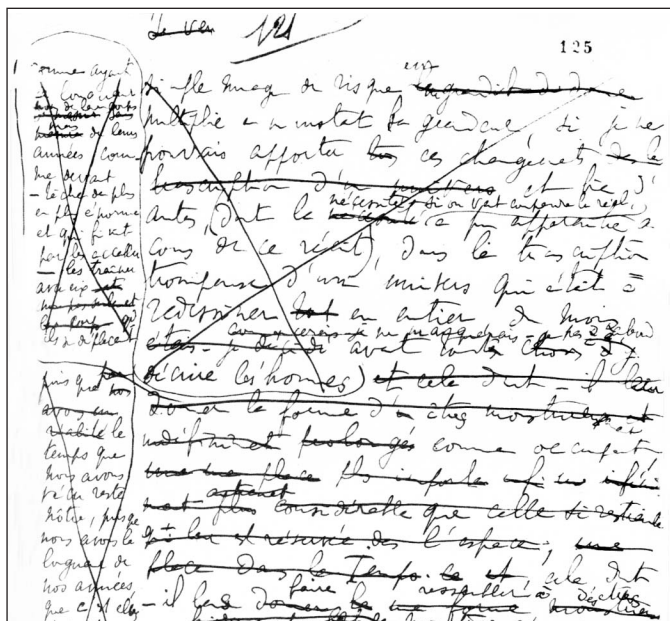
Each spring a group of members of The Society of Friends of Marcel Proust gather in Illiers on a Proustian pilgrimage, following a tradition originated by Marcel Proust's brother Robert who, during the 1930s, started bringing friends here every May to enjoy the hawthorn blossom. I join them as they climb the gently sloping hawthorn path, which borders the Pré Catalan. In the book this is the route to Charles Swann's estate – Swann's Way. From time to time the little group comes to a halt while someone reads out loud an excerpt from the text, which describes the scene before us.

My own pilgrimage has an additional aim – to record a radio program on Proust for the BBC, and so having said goodbye to my fellow pilgrims, I travel on to Cabourg, a seaside resort on the Normandy coast, and the original of the fictional Balbec. Here the Grand Hotel, in its Edwardian splendor, has remained much as Proust describes it as the setting for his summer holidays with his grandmother. The great glass windows of the restaurant look out over the promenade to the beach below, and with a little imagination that group of budding young girls in bikinis is transformed into the little band of *jeunes filles en fleurs* outlined against the sea.

On to Paris, and 102 Boulevard Haussmann – Proust's home for many years, and where he wrote so much of *Remembrance of Things Past*. The building is still owned by the same bank that purchased it from Proust's aunt, when her inconsiderate decision to sell it forced him to move. His bedroom is still there, but unfurnished, and to see the room as it was, I visit the Musée Carnavalet, where his bed, chaise-lounge and other effects are displayed in a reconstruction of the famous cork-lined room.

A walk to the gardens of the Champs Élysées brings me to an area with a sign, which tells me I am in the Allée Marcel Proust. Children chase each other – perhaps playing the modern equivalent of ‘prisoner’s base’, the game played by Gilberte and her friends. This is where the real Marcel played as a child with the real Marie de Benardaky, with whom he fell in love, just as the fictional Marcel falls in love with the fictional Gilberte Swann.

In the real world, different people occupy the same spaces now. Time has moved on, but places remain, and we have the privilege of entering, not only the imaginary world Proust created, but that portion of the real world that had a part in its creation. His presence in the places he passed through left behind a trace of magic, and we see them differently, because we see them through his eyes. One day, those places too will have crumbled into dust, as will we ourselves, and the space we now consider ours will be occupied by others. But as long as civilization remains, those who come after will be able to share Proust’s vision and enter into his world. Proust was aware that art is the only true reality, and that through his creations the artist continues to live after his death, beyond space and beyond time.



The final page of *Remembrance of Things Past* in Proust's hand

## A PROUST CHRONOLOGY

1871	July 10: Marcel Proust born
1873	May 24: Robert Proust born
1878-1886	Holiday visits to Illiers (now Illiers-Combray)
1880	Spring: Marcel's first attack of asthma
1882-1888	Attends the Lycée Condorcet
1888	Contributes to <i>La Revue Lilas</i> and <i>La Revue Verte</i>
1889-1890	Military service at Orléans
1890	January 3: Death of maternal grandmother, Adèle Weil August: Holiday at Cabourg November: Enrolls as a student in the Faculty of Law and at the École Libre des Sciences Politiques
1890	November -
1891	September: Contributes to <i>Le Mensuel</i>
1892	March: First edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893	March: Last edition of <i>Le Banquet</i>
1893	April 13: Meets Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac Contributes to <i>La Revue Blanche</i> ; Degree in law
1894	May 22: Meets Reynaldo Hahn December: Trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus
1895	March: Degree in philosophy Summer: Holiday in Brittany with Reynaldo Hahn
1896	Publication of <i>Les Plaisirs et Les Jours</i> ; Writing <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1897	February 6: Duel with Jean Lorrain
1898	January 13: Emile Zola's article <i>J'Accuse</i> published
1899	Begins translation of Ruskin's <i>Our Fathers Have Told Us</i> (La Bible d'Amiens) Summer: Holiday at Évian-les-Bains; Visits the Brancovan family at Amphinon
1900	June and October: Visits Venice
1902	Abandons work on <i>Jean Santeuil</i>
1903	November 26: Death of Adrien Proust
1904	Publication of <i>La Bible d'Amiens</i>
1905	September 26: Death of Jeanne Proust
1906	June: Publication of <i>Sesame and Lilies</i> (Sésame et les Lys) July: Dreyfus declared innocent

	December: Moves to 102 Boulevard Haussmann
1907	Summer: Holiday at Cabourg, where he will spend the next seven summers; Meets Alfred Agostinelli
1908-09	Begins writing <i>À la Recherche du Temps Perdu</i>
1913	Agostinelli re-enters Proust's life; Employs Celeste Albaret November: <i>Du Côté de Chez Swann</i> (Swann's Way) published
1914	May 30: Alfred Agostinelli dies in an aircraft accident
1918	June: Publication of <i>À l'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs</i> (Within a Budding Grove), <i>Pastiches et Melanges</i> and new edition of <i>Swann's Way</i>
1919	June: Moves to 8, rue Laurent-Pichat December: <i>Within a Budding Grove</i> awarded the Prix Goncourt
1920	April: <i>Le Côté de Guermantes II</i> and <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe I</i> (Cities of the Plain I) published October: Moves to 44, rue Hamelin; <i>Le Côté de Guermantes I</i> (The Guermantes Way I) published
1921	December 11: Death of Montesquiou
1922	April: <i>Sodom et Gomorrhe II</i> published October: Awarded the Légion d'Honneur November 18: Death of Marcel Proust
1923	<i>La Prisonnière</i> (The Captive) published
1925	<i>Albertine Disparue</i> (The Fugitive/The Sweet Cheat Gone) published
1927	<i>Le Temps Retrouvé</i> (Time Regained) published
1952	<i>Jean Santeuil</i> published
1954	<i>Contre Sainte-Beuve</i> (Against Sainte-Beuve) published

Further suggested biographical reading available in English:

*Marcel Proust, A Life* by Jean-Yves Tadié, Viking Penguin 2000

*Marcel Proust, A Life* by William C. Carter, Yale University Press 2000

*Marcel Proust* by George D. Painter, Chatto & Windus 1959, 1965, revised  
Chatto & Windus Pimlico 1996

*Proust* by Edmund White, Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1999

*Proust* by Samuel Beckett, Grove Press Inc./Chatto & Windus 1931

*Proust: A Biography* by Ronald Hayman, Heinemann 1990

*Monsieur Proust* by Céleste Albaret, Collins/McGraw-Hill 1976

*The Quest for Proust* by André Maurois, Jonathan Cape 1950

*The Translation of Memories* by P.F. Prestwich, Peter Owen 1999

*Proust* by William Sansom, Thames and Hudson 1973

Notes by Neville Jason

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Just as the abridged readings of *Remembrance of Things Past* may lead some listeners to read the original novel in its entirety, it may be that this spoken word overview of Proust's life and work will encourage some to turn to the more comprehensive works which are available. The most important of these are *Marcel Proust, A Life*, by Jean-Yves Tadié and *Marcel Proust, A Life*, by William Carter. Both are works of enormous diligence and scholarship, and I freely own my indebtedness to them in the preparation of this spoken word biography. I should also like to acknowledge my debt to George D. Painter's *Marcel Proust*, which I found deeply moving, and which has waited thirty-five years before being surpassed in scope and accuracy by the works of Tadié and Carter. Other works on Proust I have consulted for the purpose of this work are included in the brief bibliography.

My gratitude is also due to those who have helped, directly or indirectly, towards the completion of this project: to Nicolas Soames who commissioned it, and who has led me patiently and skillfully not only through this recording, but through twelve studio sessions of *Remembrance of Things Past*; to Dr. Cynthia Gamble, who has been immensely helpful in providing texts, checking the accuracy of certain facts, and in advising me in the translation of Proust's poetry; to Dr. Hugh Griffiths for reading the text and making useful suggestions; to John Theocharis for making the BBC program *Proust's Way* such a memorable event; to Anne Borrell and Mireille Naturel of Les Amis de Marcel Proust for showing me around Illiers-Combray; to Barbara Bray and Emily Eels for introducing me to Proust's Paris. Finally, my most important 'thank you' is to my wife Gillian for her support and encouragement throughout this project, as in all my endeavors.

Neville Jason

## NEVILLE JASON



NEVILLE JASON trained at RADA where he was awarded the Diction Prize by Sir John Gielgud. He has worked with the English Stage Co., the Old Vic Company and the Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as in films and musicals. Jason has appeared in popular television serials such as *Maigret*, *Emergency Ward 10* and *Dr. Who*, as well as playing classical roles such as Orestes and Horatio. Formally a member of the BBC Radio Drama Co., he can be frequently heard on radio. Jason's passion for *Remembrance of Things Past* comes alive in his adaptation and reading of the series, for which he has received worldwide praise.

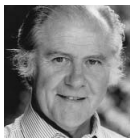
## ABOUT THE READERS



ELAINE CLAXTON has worked extensively in the theater, including London's Royal National Theatre where she appeared in *The Children's Hour*, *The Machine Wreckers* and *Richard II*. She has twice been a member of the BBC Radio Drama Company, during which time she participated in over 200 broadcasts.



GORDON GRIFFIN has recorded over 220 audiobooks. His vast range includes nine Catherine Cookson novels, books by Melvyn Bragg, David Lodge, the entire Wycliffe series by W J Burley and his award-winning recording of *A Tale of Two Cities*. Gordon also appears regularly on television and in films. He was dialogue coach (Geordie) on *Byker Grove* and *Kavanagh QC*.



DENYS HAWTHORNE's long and distinguished career has encompassed extensive work in theater, television and film both in England and Ireland. Drama has included Shakespeare and Chekhov, as well as many contemporary plays, while he has been seen in popular television series including *Inspector Morse* and *Father Ted*, and *The Russia House* and *Emma* on the wide screen. Throughout, radio performance has been a constant theme, notably in drama and poetry.

## REMEMBRANCE OF THINGS PAST

(*À la Recherche du Temps Perdu*)

By Marcel Proust · Adapted & Read by Neville Jason

Remembrance of Things Past I

SWANN'S WAY

(*Du Côté de Chez Swann*)

*Swann's Way*, set in the village of Combray, introduces the reader to Marcel's family, their servants including the redoubtable Françoise, and their neighbor Charles Swann, the scholarly man of fashion. There are two country walks favored by Marcel's family — Swann's Way, which lies in the direction of Swann's property, and the Guermantes Way, which skirts the estate of the Noble Guermantes family. ISBN 9-62634-553-5 / NA305314 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-053-3 / NA305312 (3 CDs)

Remembrance of Things Past II

SWANN IN LOVE

(*Du Côté de Chez Swann*)

Set in the degenerate demi-monde of the 19th century Paris as well as in the fashionable drawing rooms of the aristocracy, *Swann in Love* tells the story of man-about-town Charles Swann's passionate, tormented love affair with the courtesan Odette de Crécy, and Marcel's childish love for their daughter Gilberte. ISBN 9-62634-556-X / NA305614 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-056-8 / NA305612 (3 CDs)

Remembrance of Things Past III

WITHIN A BUDDING GROVE, PART I

(*À L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*)

*Within a Budding Grove, Part I* sees the end of Marcel's infatuation with Gilberte. Following an illness, he is sent to recuperate at the seaside of Balbec, together with his grandmother, who renews her acquaintance with an old school friend, the Marquise de Villeparisis. ISBN 9-62634-588-8 / NA308814 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-088-6 / NA308812 (3 CDs)

Remembrance of Things Past IV

WITHIN A BUDDING GROVE, PART II

(*À L'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs*)

*In Within a Budding Grove, Part II*, Marcel meets a band of charming young girls, to one of whom, Albertine, he is particularly attracted. He encounters the painter Elstir, whom the reader had met earlier as a member of Mme. Verdurin's bohemian circle. He is also introduced to the sinister Baron de Charlus, and to Mme. de Villeparisis' nephew, Marquis Robert de Saint-Loup. ISBN 9-62634-606-X / NA310614 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-106-8 / NA310612 (3 CDs)

Remembrance of Things Past V

THE GUERMANTES WAY, PART I

(*Le Côté de Guermantes I*)

*The Guermantes Way, Part I* finds Marcel's family installed in an apartment, which forms part of the Paris mansion of the Guermantes family. Marcel becomes obsessed with the Duchesse de Guermantes, who does not reciprocate his interest. At a reception given by the Marquise de Villeparisis, Marcel discovers that his father's colleague, the former diplomat M. de Norpois, has been the lover of Marquise for many years. ISBN 9-62634-616-7 / NA311614 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-116-5 / NA311612 (3 CDs)



## Remembrance of Things Past VI THE GUERMANTES WAY, PART II

(*Le Côté de Guermantes II*)

*The Guermantes Way, Part II* sees the death of Marcel's beloved grandmother following a stroke. Now that Marcel is no longer in love with the Duchesse de Guermantes, her attitude toward him changes, and she invites him to dine. Seeing nobility at close quarters, Marcel is made aware of the fallibility of his fantasies about them. He received an invitation from the Baron de Charlus, and is outraged by the manner of his reception. Charles Swann announces that he is suffering from a terminal illness.

ISBN 9-62634-641-8 / NA314114 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-141-6 / NA314112 (3 CDs)

## Remembrance of Things Past VII SODOM AND GOMORRAH, PART I

(*Sodom et Gomorrah I/Cities of the Plain*)

*In Sodom and Gomorrah, Part I* Marcel observes a homosexual encounter between the Baron de Charlus and the tailor Jupien, which leads to the author's meditations on the theme of homosexuality.

Marcel continues to rise in the haute monde as he receives an invitation to a ball given by the Prince and Princesse de Guermantes. He pays a second visit to Balbec, where feelings of grief for the death of his grandmother vie with those of his desire for Albertine.

ISBN 9-62634-661-2 / NA316114 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-161-0 / NA316112 (3 CDs)

## Remembrance of Things Past VIII SODOM AND GOMORRAH, PART II

(*Sodom et Gomorrah II/Cities of the Plain*)

*In Sodom and Gomorrah, Part II* Madame Verdurin has taken a house for the summer in the locality of Balbec and invites Marcel and Albertine to join her 'Wednesdays'. The violinist Charles Morel, whose father was valet to Marcel's uncle, becomes intimate with the Baron de Charlus.

Marcel's suspicions regarding Albertine's lesbian tendencies are revived when he learns of her friendship with Mlle. Vinteuil, who is due to arrive in Balbec. To avoid their meetings he decides to take Albertine with him to Paris.

ISBN 9-62634-667-1 / NA316714 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-167-X / NA316712 (3 CDs)

## Remembrance of Things Past IX THE CAPTIVE, PART I

(*La Prisonnière*)

*The Captive, Part I* continues the story of the Narrator's obsession with Albertine. Having established his friendship with her during his second visit to Balbec, Marcel is tortured by fears regarding her sexual orientation. From this moment he is determined to keep Albertine from satisfying her desires by whatever means necessary, even if it entails marrying her. Marcel's jealous suspicions gradually turn her into a virtual prisoner in his Paris apartment.

ISBN 9-62634-690-6 / NA319014 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-190-4 / NA319012 (3 CDs)

## Remembrance of Things Past X THE CAPTIVE, PART II

(*La Prisonnière*)

The fractured relationship between Albertine continues in *The Captive, Part II*, with Marcel's pathological fixations of his lover's outside interest driving the affair to a bitter conclusion, while the Baron de Charlus, obsessed with the young violinist Charles Morel, receives an unexpected shock. A deeply perceptive study of love and jealousy.

ISBN 9-62634-703-1 / NA320314 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-203-X / NA320312 (3 CDs)

## Remembrance of Things Past XI THE FUGITIVE

(*Albertine Disparue/The Sweet Cheat Gone*)

Albertine has finally escaped her 'imprisonment' from Marcel's Paris apartment, in *The Fugitive*.

Not only is Marcel quite unprepared for the effect on him of her flight, but also soon he is devastated by news of an even more irreversible loss.

ISBN 9-62634-711-2 / NA321114 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-211-0 / NA321112 (3 CDs)

## Remembrance of Things Past XII TIME REGAINED

(*Le Temps Retrouvé*)

*In Time Regained*, the final volume of *Remembrance of Things Past*, as the various threads which have emerged through the vast novel are brought together, and sometimes resolved, Marcel considers the nature of Time and its effect on himself and the people he has known. 'For after death Time leaves the body, and memories - indifferent and pale - are obliterated in her who exists no longer and soon will be in him they still torture, memories which perish with the desire of the living body.'

ISBN 9-62634-720-1 / NA322014 (3 Cassettes) • ISBN 9-62634-220-X / NA322012 (3 CDs)

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

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**HAHN** Offrande, Paris, 1919

Reynaldo Hahn, baryton

**HAHN** La barchèta from Venezia - in Venetian dialect by Pietro Buratti

Reynaldo Hahn, Paris circa 1911

**DEBUSSY** Voici ce qu'il écrit à son frère Pelléas

(Act 1 Sc 2)

Maggie Teyte (soprano); Gerald Moore, piano

London, October 5, 1947

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Restored by K&A Productions

Other music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogs

**CIURLIONIS** Piano Works

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8.223549

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Takako Mishizaki, Violin, Jenő Jandó, Piano

8.550417

**SAINT-SAËNS** French Violin Sonatas

Dong-Suk Kang, Violin; Pascal Devoyon, Piano

8.550276

*Music programming by Neville Jason*