

Louise Farrenc (1804-1875) Nonetto Op38 (1849)

adapted for flute&clarinet quintet



Alto Line 2

Louise Farrenc (1804-1875) Louise Farrenc enjoyed a considerable reputation during her own lifetime, as a composer, a performer and a teacher. She began piano studies at an early age with Cecile Soria,[1] a former student of Muzio Clementi. When it became clear she had the ability to become a professional pianist she was given lessons by such masters as Ignaz Moscheles and Johann Nepomuk Hummel, and, given the talent she showed as a composer, her parents decided to let her, in 1819 at the age of fifteen, study composition with Anton Reicha, the composition teacher at the Conservatoire, although it is unclear if the young Louise Dumont followed his classes there, since at that time the composition class was open only to men. In 1821 she married Aristide Farrenc, a flute student ten years her senior, who performed at some of the concerts regularly given at the artists' colony of the Sorbonne, where Louise's family lived. Following her marriage, she interrupted her studies to give concerts throughout France with her husband. In the 1830s Farrenc gained considerable fame as a performer and her reputation was such that in 1842 she was appointed to the permanent position of Professor of Piano at the Paris Conservatory, a position she held for thirty years and one which was among the most prestigious in Europe. Accounts of the time record that she was an excellent instructor. Despite this, Farrenc was paid less than her male counterparts for nearly a decade. Only after the triumphant premiere of her nonet did she demand and receive equal pay. She also produced and edited an influential book, *Le Tresor des Pianistes*, about early music performance style,[3] and was twice awarded the Prix Chartier of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, in 1861 and 1869. Farrenc died in Paris. For several decades after her death, her reputation as a performer survived and her name continued to appear in such books as Antoine François Marmontels *Pianistes celebres*. Her nonet had achieved around 1850 some popularity, as did her two piano quintets and her trios. But, despite some new editions of her chamber music after her death, her works were largely forgotten until, in the late 20th century, an interest in women composers led to the rediscovery - and thence to the performance and recording - of many her works.

Engraved **10-12-2019** with LilyPond 2.19.81 (<http://lilypond.org/>)

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