

Ysaÿe - Music for violin and piano (2003)

Written by bluesever

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1. *Caprice d'apres l'etude en forme de Valse de Camille Saint-Saens, Op. 52* 2. *Sonate en fa mineur 'au tombeau' d'apres la sonate de Pietro Antonio Locatelli* 3. *Paganini Variations op. posth. d'apres le caprice no. 24 de Niccolo Paganini* 4. *Saltarelle Carnavalesque Op. 11 posth.* 5. *Poeme Elegiaque Op. 12* 6. *Reve D'enfant Op. 14* 7. *'Dans Le Lointais' tempo di Mazurka* 8. *Mazurka* Sandrine Cantoreggi - violin Bruno Canino – piano

The 500-pound gorilla in the room inasmuch as the compositions of Belgian violinist-composer Eugène Ysaÿe is concerned are the set of six solo violin sonatas he composed in 1924; all six are widely performed and have been recorded numerous times. The reputation of these pieces is so gargantuan that little else of Ysaÿe's output has been recorded, and a quick look at his known output demonstrates that the six sonatas are merely the tip of what is a very large iceberg. Belgian violinist Sandrine Cantoreggi, assisted by pianist Bruno Canino, attempts to lift the veil a little further through her Turtle Records disc Ysaÿe.

Of the eight works presented here, only *Saltarelle Carnavalesque*, Op. 11 -- composed when Ysaÿe was 18 -- is previously unrecorded, and some others visited in the course of the program are reasonably well covered, though in the context of mixed recitals of various composers. It is certainly a plus to hear all of these things together, and away from the context of the monolithic solo sonatas; usefully, Cantoreggi includes both of the only two original pieces Ysaÿe himself recorded.

Canino's playing is sensitive and restrained in the main, but when the accompaniment calls for fireworks, he certainly can deliver them. Some of these pieces are technically some of the toughest nuts to crack in the violin literature, though Cantoreggi makes them sound easy, and while that's amazing, this recording seems at times a little too smooth and effortless, somewhat lacking in the passionately gutty attack that Ysaÿe employs in his own recordings. It is clear her

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interpretation is her own, not an attempted re-creation of what Ysaÿe might have played -- and that's fine -- though when she lets her hair down a little, as in the concluding Mazurka, the playing has a bit more sparkle and brightness in such cases than is the norm throughout this disc. Nevertheless, Turtle's Hybrid SACD sounds great, and for those who need a bit more depth in their Ysaÿe beyond his set of six, this should prove a pleasing answer to the call. ---
Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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