



## R. Franck: Violin Sonatas Nos 1 & 2, Three Pieces Op. 52

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### The Strad (Tully Potter - 2005.01.01)

The Audite label is busy reviving the music of Eduard and Richard Franck. In the case of Eduard, whose lovely sextets I reviewed recently (July 2004), I am already won over. I would not make judgments on Richard (1858-1938) on the basis of one CD. But these works are not in the same class as his father's sextets.

Both sonatas are in the four-movement form of Brahms's D minor Sonata, which dates from two years before Richard Franck's D major one here – a lyrical work of charm and sweetness but little substance. The C minor Sonata starts more arrestingly and has a very attractive slow movement. In each case Franck departs from Brahms's scheme by placing the scherzo second.

I am glad to have heard both sonatas but feel no urge to repeat the experience. It may be that Richard Franck's other chamber music – four more works have been recorded – has more staying power. The three short pieces here are pleasant.

The performances, with one proviso, do about as much for the music as you could wish. Christoph Schickedanz and Bernhard Fograscher are a regular duo and work well together, with a light touch where needed, agreeable tone from both instruments and a genuine sense that a conversation is going on. The only problem is that Franck likes leaps over wide intervals and Schickedanz does not always land cleanly on the upper note – but most of the problems concern short notes, so are soon past! The recordings are good, the SACD sounding fine on my normal set-up.