



Ernst Krenek: Works for Violin

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Schickedanz recorded Krenek's Violin Sonata 1 with Bernhard Fograser a few years ago (Telos 60; S/O 2010, paired with the Korngold); Don O'Connor recommended the performance. Schickedanz gives us performances that are thoughtful and detailed; his tone is slightly on the thin side, but it causes no discomfort. His approach to the slow movements is especially compelling—there's an astounding sense that he's right in the middle of each note mentally; he looks neither behind nor before. That's not to say there's no forward movement, but I'm "dancing about architecture" right now, and you'd just have to hear the music to understand. This is the first recording of the Solo Sonata 1, by the way.

The sonatas are tonally abstract; they are not showy, but they are demanding both of the performers and the listeners. I would never put them on if I wanted some sensual enjoyment.

The Triphantasie is one of Krenek's Schubertian pieces; the notes tell us he pushed the boundaries of tonality, wanting to prove to the atonal composers that the old vocabulary could still be fresh. Even though the other pieces on this program aren't quite down my alley, the Triphantasie is less interesting; the structure is wobbly. (The three performers make up the Johannes-Kreisler Trio, by the way.)

Again, Schickedanz is an exceptional player, and he communicates Krenek's styles well. A cursory internet search reveals no competition for these pieces. The sound is fine, and the other musicians are praiseworthy as well. Notes in English and German.