

Thibaud and Cortot French Violin Sonatas

This is a re-recording of the old DB785-8. Each movement is on one side (*he means to say "disc" here!*). This is grand chamber-music playing and thinking. Our usual regret has to be expressed : Cortot does not record as well as many pianists of smaller capacity of mind and heart. Yet in the most vigorous work in this sonata he will, I think, be esteemed as highly as the finest recorder, for he has a great brain and a nervous sensibility of uncommon power and penetration. Those who do not know the work may perhaps try the second and fourth records. There is a queer harmonic in the piano's final chord. In the breadth of the rhapsodical playing, and the right appreciation of the work's size and scope, these two players seem to me splendidly matched. Cortot perhaps taking first place for his intellectual grasp. It is a pity that the tone with which the first side opens is not very good. That must not be allowed to put people off, nor must the thought of the music, much of which is gloriously direct. That last canonic tune, for example, is the sort of thing that sticks ; you find yourself humming it days afterwards.

W. R. ANDERSON - The Gramophone, March 1930 (*review of original 78rpm issue of the Franck*)

The French duo remind us that Fauré's music has a very considerable toughness of character, and Cortot in particular brings this quality out by the rhythmic strength of his playing, and by ensuring that each note in the piano part is given its full value and importance. Fauré was an economical composer and every detail of his scoring tells effectively. The expressive, almost passionate quality of the music is also superbly realized, yet Thibaud and Cortot know how to balance the Sonata's emotional content with its classicism and Gallic restraint.

Debussy's startlingly original, pathetic, ironic Sonata, the last work of a mortally ill genius in despair at the events of the First World War, is brilliantly caught by Thibaud and Cortot, who respond with great sensitivity to the work's rapid changes of pulse and mood. In the Franck Sonata Thibaud's portamento, slowish vibrato and warmth of tone suit the piece to perfection, and again he and Cortot illuminate the work with their insight into the composer's world. These two players spent their formative years in a musical environment which all three composers inhabited and their performances are immensely satisfying and highly authoritative.

A.S. - Gramophone, July 1989 (*review of CD release - excerpt*)

Producer's Note

The sources for the transfers were pre-war American Victor shellacs: "Z" pressings for the Franck and Debussy items and "Orthophonic" pressings for the scarce Fauré Sonata and the Berceuse.

Mark Ober-Thorn

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THIBAUD and CORTOT play

FRENCH VIOLIN SONATAS FRANCK • FAURÉ • DEBUSSY



Studio Recordings 1927 - 1931

 **bert-Thorn**

FRANCK Violin Sonata in A major

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegretto ben moderato (6:25)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Allegro (7:28)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Recitativo-fantasia: Ben moderato (7:01)
- 4 4th mvt. - Allegretto poco mosso (5:54)

Recorded 27 & 28 May 1929 in the Salle Chopin, Paris
Matrix nos.: CS 3724-1, 3725-2, 3726-2, 3727-1, 3728-2, 3729-2, 3730-1 and 3731-3
First issued on HMV DB 1347 through 1350

FAURÉ Violin Sonata No. 1 in A major, Op. 13

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegro molto (6:56)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Andante (6:41)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Allegro vivo (3:44)
- 8 4th mvt. - Allegro quasi presto (4:45)

Recorded 23 June 1927 in Queen's Hall, London
Matrix nos.: CR 1420-2, 1421-1, 1422-2, 1423-1, 1424-3 and 1425-3
First issued on HMV DB 1080 through 1082

9 **FAURÉ Berceuse, Op. 16** (3:16)

Recorded 2 July 1931 in the Salle Chopin, Paris
Matrix no.: 2G 982-1. First issued on HMV DB 1653

DEBUSSY Violin Sonata in G minor

- 10 1st mvt. - Allegro vivo (4:01)
- 11 2nd mvt. - Intermede (3:57)
- 12 3rd mvt. - Finale (3:39)

Recorded 7 June 1929 in Small Queen's Hall, London
Matrix nos.: Cc 16962-2A, 16963-2 and 16964-2
First issued on HMV DB 1322 and 1323

13 **DEBUSSY (arr. Hartmann) - Minstrels (from Preludes - Book I)** (2:07)

Recorded 7 June 1929 in Small Queen's Hall, London
Matrix no.: Cc 16965-2. First issued on HMV DB 1323

Jacques Thibaud violin
Alfred Cortot piano



PACM 080



Producer and Audio
Restoration Engineer:
Mark Ober-Thorn

Cover artwork based
on photographs of
Thibaud & Cortot

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providing the Fauré discs

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