

A painting of a woman with dark hair, wearing a yellow dress with a high collar and a red sash, sitting on a grassy field. She is holding a large red umbrella. The background is a lush green landscape with trees and foliage. The overall style is impressionistic, with visible brushstrokes and a soft, dappled light.

ERNEST CHAUSSON
EUGÈNE YSAÏE

MUSIC FOR
VIOLIN, CELLO
AND PIANO

Bruno Monteiro *violin*

Miguel Rocha *cello*

João Paulo Santos *piano*

ERNEST CHAUSSON ^[1855-1899]

Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello in G minor Op.3

1] Pas trop lent – Animé	11:11
2] Vite	04:29
3] Assez lent	08:26
4] Animé	09:18

EUGÈNE YSAÏE ^[1858-1931]

5] Poème Élégiacque for Violin and Piano Op.12 14:14

6] Meditation-Poème for Cello and Piano Op.16 12:10

Bruno Monteiro *violin*Miguel Rocha *cello*João Paulo Santos *piano*

Ernest Chausson was born in Paris in 1855 and died in Limay, close to Mantes, in 1899. Little in his early life pointed to his eventual career in music. Educated at home, by caring parents, Chausson's youth was a solitary one. Perhaps this is why he always faced life with a certain pessimism.

His formal studies were entrusted to a preceptor who imparted an appreciation of arts and letters, as well as a sense of beauty. Although Chausson had begun to study piano at age fifteen, he was torn between two vocations: literature and music. Extremely gifted at painting, this also attracted his interests. Despite these inclinations, his father strongly opposed his pursuit of a musical career.

Chausson began university studies in Law. Much later, after composing several works and discovering the music of Wagner and Schumann in Munich, he enrolled at the *Paris Conservatoire* as an auditor in the class of Massenet (he was admitted formally as a student in 1880) and of Franck, who left a deep influence on the younger man. Chausson would

remain an ardent supporter of Franck throughout his life.

Failure to win the Rome Prize in 1881 had such an impact on Chausson that he left the *Paris Conservatoire*. Between 1880 and 1889 he travelled to Bayreuth several times, where he refined his knowledge of Wagner, who he admired intensely.

Named secretary of the *Société Nationale de Musique* in 1886, Chausson began composing the opera *Le Roi Arthur*, which would occupy the next ten years of his life. In 1896, Eugène Ysaÿe would premiere his acclaimed *Poème* for violin and orchestra.

Chausson died three years later, at age forty-four, as the result of a bicycle accident. Timid and reserved, extremely curious and well-educated, Chausson loved nature and surrounded himself with some of the most prominent artists figures of his time, such as Duparc, d'Indy and Monet, among others.

Several of his chamber works, including the

Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello in G Minor Op. 3 – the work which begins this disc – are among the most beautiful pages from the end of the nineteenth century in France.

After his unsuccessful bid for the Rome Prize, Chausson began to write his Trio in the summer of 1881 and completed it in early September. Premiered on April 8, 1882, at the *Société Nationale de Musique of Paris*, the work was coolly received. It was published by Rouart et Lerolle only in 1919.

A vast work, set in four movements and definitively elaborated based on the counsel of Franck, this Trio is the first of four great chamber works left to us by Chausson. It is noteworthy that the influence of the older composer is present from the beginning.

The first movement, in g minor, is closely related to a sonata form, employing the principle of exposition, development and recapitulation of essential motives. The brief, gently rocking introduction to the movement is almost elegiac in character. The violin sounds the cyclic theme,

above active piano figures. The second part of the movement, characterized by vigorous piano rhythms, contains the string exposition of the two principal motives, beautifully developed in imitation. At the same tempo as the other motives, the cyclic theme reappears in the final phase, in a fantastic and sonorous rapture.

The second movement, constructed as a *Scherzo*, is announced by a short introduction and followed by two motives that chase each other in a frenzied race, set against an ever-changing piano part. A brief *coda* prepares the third movement.

In this slow movement, the piano sounds the cyclic theme in d minor. Later, a new phrase is stated by the cello and retaken by the violin with an intense poetry and harmonic ambiguity evoking Franck and Fauré.

Like the first movement, the finale recalls the construction of sonata form. Following an exposition of the themes with an extraordinary rhythmic intensity, the cyclic perfection of the work is achieved. This marvelous piece contin-

ues to be one of the most spontaneous works by its composer.

The two remaining works on this album are by Eugène Ysaÿe, who was born in Liège, in 1858, and died in Brussels in 1931. He studied violin with his father from age four, and entered the Conservatory of Liège, where he obtained second prize two years later. He made his public debut at age eleven. At the Brussels Conservatory he studied with Wieniawski, and later, in Paris, with Vieuxtemps. Ysaÿe undertook many European tours before becoming professor at the Brussels Conservatory, where he created the “Ysaÿe Concerts” in order to promote contemporary repertoire. He formed his own quartet in 1894 and realized 8 tours throughout the United States. After the First World War, he turned his attention to conducting (from 1918-1922 he was the principal conductor of the Cincinnati Orchestra). He died just before the premiere of his opera written in the Walloon language.

Ysaÿe was known for his intense vibrato, excesses of Romanticism, and the development

of a warm sound for which Kreisler would come to be the great example.

In addition to his Six Sonatas for solo violin, Ysaÿe also composed lesser-known works of great musical quality, such as the two poems interpreted on this CD, one for violin and piano, and one for cello and piano. Both are innovative in terms of form, original in conception, and display a personal harmonic idiom.

The first, for violin and piano, designated *Poème Élégiacque*, and dedicated to Fauré, so impressed Chausson that he decided, after hearing the work, to write his own famous *Poème* for the violinist. In Ysaÿe’s piece, the violin’s G string is tuned down to an F (*scordatura*), making the violin sound darker and intense, in order to create a more funereal and sombre atmosphere. Ysaÿe was inspired by Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and musically by Wagner, but also by the writing of Franck, Saint-Saëns, Debussy, Lekeu and, of course, Chausson.

The *Méditation-Poème* for cello and piano, composed around 1910, was not published un-

til 1921. Ysaÿe was guarded in terms of his own music and admitted to Frederick H. Martens that “*there are many things that I could publish, but I have seen so many things that are banal, poor and unworthy that I was always inclined to distrust the value of my own creations, lest I make the same mistake.*” The work is dedicated to the cellist, Fernand Pollain. The rhapsodic character of the music led Ysaÿe to employ an uncommon notation to show the changes of meter. He uses a single number written above the score – “3,” “5,” “9,” etc. – instead of conventional time signatures.

Bruno Monteiro

Translation by Fredrick Gifford



BRUNO MONTEIRO, VIOLIN

Bruno Monteiro is herald by the daily Público as “*one of Portugal’s premier violinists*”. Fanfare describes him as having a “*burnished golden tone*” and Pizzicato states that his performances are “*technically and expressively outstanding*”. The Strad characterizes his playing as “*ardent and heroic*” and MusicWeb International refers to interpretations that reach an “*almost ideal balance between the expressive and the*

intellectual”. Finally, Gramophone praises his “*unfailing assurance and eloquence*”.

He leads an intense concert career as recitalist, soloist and chamber musician, having performed in all the major musical centers of Portugal, with repertoire spanning composers from Bach to Corigliano. Internationally, he has appeared throughout Europe, the USA, Middle-East and Asia. He has performed in prestigious venues such as the Palácio Cibeles and Casa de America in Madrid, Vienna’s Musikverein, Bucharest’s Cultural Center, Sofia’s Bulgaria Hall and Great Hall of the International Music Academy Pancho Vladigerov, Kiev’s Philharmonic Hall, the Felicja Blumenthal International Music Festival in Tel Aviv, Washington’s Kennedy Center and New York’s Carnegie Hall. In recital, he has performed with João Paulo Santos since 2002. He has been a guest soloist with orchestras such as Orquestra Filarmonia das Beiras, Orquestra do Norte, Orquestra Clásica da Madeira, Orquestra Sinfónica de Palma de Mallorca, Orquestra Sinfónica Portuguesa and the English Chamber Orchestra, among others.

Monteiro’s recent discography includes the complete works for violin and piano and solo violin by the esteemed Portuguese composer Fernando Lopes-Graça for Naxos and for Brilliant Classics, the complete music for violin and piano by Karol Szymanowski and Erwin Schulhoff, as well as a recording of the Violin Sonata and the Piano Trio by Guillaume Lekeu. Etcetera Records published in 2020 his recording of Igor Stravinsky’s music for violin and piano and in 2022 a CD containing the Violin Sonatas by Luís de Freitas Branco, Maurice Ravel and Heitor Villa-Lobos.

Bruno Monteiro attended the Manhattan School of Music in New York and later studied in Chicago under the renowned Israeli violinist Shmuel Ashkenasi.



MIGUEL ROCHA, CELLO

Miguel Rocha began his studies at the Conservatory of Porto with Isabel Delerue. In 1983, he worked abroad with M. Strauss (Paris), Vectomov (Prague), Iankovic (Maastricht), Aldulescu, Pergamenchikov (Basel) and Fallot (Lausanne). Rocha obtained several degrees with the highest classification, including the First Prize for Virtuosity from the *Haute École de Musique*, Lausanne, and the First Prize of the Interna-

tional Music Competition, UFAM.

He was awarded a scholarship from the Gulbenkian Foundation from 1983-85 to study in Paris and at the Superior Academy in Prague.

10 He continued his studies at the Maastricht Conservatory and the Superior Academy in Basel, with funding from the SEC.

Rocha has participated in pedagogical workshops at Manhattan University with Burton Kaplan; in masterclasses with Paul Tortelier, C. Henkel, Janos Starker, P. Muller, and M. Tchaikowskaia.

He has given concerts in France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Mexico, Brazil and the USA.

A soloist of the Lausanne Sinfonietta from 1996-1999, Rocha taught at a number of schools in France, including the National Conservatory of Belfort, Grenoble, Annecy, and at Lausanne, Switzerland, from 1997-2000.

In 2001, he returned to Portugal, where he develops an intense artistic activity as a soloist

and chamber musician as well as a pedagogue, at the Superior School of Castelo Branco – ES-ART.

He has performed in a number of ensembles with Ana Bela Chaves, António Rosado, Luíz Moura Castro, Daniel Rowland, Miguel Borges Coelho, Aníbal Lima, Filipe Pinto Ribeiro, etc.

Rocha has recorded four CD's with the *Duo Contracello*, one disc in France, with *Trio Athena*, of trios by Debussy and Beethoven as well as a solo album with *Duo Sigma* with works by João Pedro Oliveira.

As the baroque cellist of the *Ensemble Avondano*, Rocha participated in the publication and recording of unpublished Portuguese repertoire from the eighteenth century: the four sonatas and two duos by *João Baptista André Avondano* (on the Stradivarius instrument, the "King of Portugal"), and in the recording of a second CD featuring the Trio Sonatas of *Pedro António Avondano* (on the eighteenth century *Galrão* cello).

Miguel Rocha is currently *Professor Coordenador* at ESART and a member of *Duo Contracello*, *Duo Sigma*, *Avondano Ensemble* and *Tesseract Ensemble*.



JOÃO PAULO SANTOS, PIANO

Born in Lisbon in 1959, the pianist João Paulo Santos is a graduate of the Lisbon National Conservatory. With sponsorship from the Gulbenkian Foundation, he completed his

piano studies in Paris with Aldo Ciccolini (1979 – 84).

For the past four decades, he has been associated with *Teatro Nacional de São Carlos* (the Lisbon Opera House), first as Principal Chorus Conductor and now as Director of Musical and Stage Studies.

Artistically Santos has distinguished himself as an opera conductor, concert pianist and researcher of lesser-known and forgotten works by Portuguese composers.

He has conducted operas ranging from Menotti to Sondheim, giving the Portuguese premieres of works by Henze, Hindemith, Hosokawa, Martin and Stravinsky, receiving the *Acarte 2000 Prize* for his musical direction of Henze's *The English Cat*. He has conducted first performances of both orchestral and operatic works by Eurico Carrapatoso, António Chagas Rosa, Clotilde Rosa and António Pinho Vargas.

He has also discovered and revised the full operatic scores for performances of the following

Portuguese operas: *Serrana* and *Dona Branca* by Alfredo Keil, and *Lauriane* and *O Espadachim do Outeiro* by Augusto Machado.

- 12 In 2018, in a joint production between the *Teatro Nacional de São Carlos* and *Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda*, he began to publish a collection of major Portuguese vocal-music scores, from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, entitled *Património Lírico Português*.

In 2019 he conducted performances of Chabrier's *L'Étoile* in the São Carlos Opera House in Lisbon.

As a pianist, he performs as a soloist, in chamber groups, with major singers and in duo, both with the violinist Bruno Monteiro and the cellist Irene Lima. He joined *Trio Aeternus* in 2019.

His discography includes repertoire ranging from 'Chat Noir' songs to classical works by Liszt, Martinu, Poulenc, Saint-Saëns, Satie, Schulhoff and Szymanowski, with António Fragoso, Luís Freitas Branco and Jorge Peixinho numbering among the Portuguese composers.

Ernest Chausson nasceu em Paris em 1855 e faleceu em Limay, perto de Mantes em 1899. Desde a sua infância, nada previa uma carreira de músico. Educado numa redoma por pais afectuosos, Chausson passou uma juventude solitária. Talvez por isso encarou sempre a sua vida com pessimismo.

A sua educação foi confiada aos cuidados de um preceptor que lhe comunicou o gosto pelas letras e artes, para além do sentido do belo. Embora tivesse iniciado os seus estudos de piano com quinze anos de idade, sentiu-se dividido entre duas vocações: a literatura e a música. A pintura, para que era extremamente dotado, também o atraía. Foi contudo, o seu pai, que fortemente se opôs a que prosseguisse uma carreira musical.

Chausson inscreve-se então na Faculdade de Direito. Mais tarde, depois de ter composto as suas primeiras obras e de ter descoberto a música de Wagner e de Schumann em Munique, entrou para o Conservatório como auditor livre na classe de Massenet (tendo em 1880 sido admitido como aluno formal) e de Franck,

cuja influência o marcou profundamente e de quem será um apoiante fervoroso durante toda a sua vida.

O seu fracasso no Prémio de Roma em 1881 afecta-o de tal forma que decide abandonar o Conservatório de Paris. Realizou várias viagens a Bayreuth entre 1880 e 1889, onde aperfeiçoou os seus conhecimentos da música de Wagner, que admirava intensamente.

Nomeado secretário da Sociedade Nacional de Música em 1886, Chausson lançar-se-á na composição da ópera *O Rei Artur*, que ocupará quase dez anos da sua vida; em 1896 Eugène Ysaÿe estreia o seu célebre *Poème* para Violino e Orquestra.

Morre três anos mais tarde, aos quarenta e quatro anos de idade, na sequência de um acidente de bicicleta. Tímido e reservado, extremamente curioso e culto, este amante da Natureza viveu rodeado de muitas das mais proeminentes figuras artísticas do seu tempo como Duparc, d'Indy, Monet, entre outros.

Algumas das suas obras de música de câmara figuram entre as mais belas páginas do fim do século XIX em França, entre elas o Trio para Piano, Violino e Violoncelo em Sol menor Op.3, obra que inicia este disco.

Depois do fracasso do Prémio de Roma, Chausson começa a escrever o seu Trio no decurso do Verão de 1881 e termina-o no começo do mês de Setembro seguinte. Estreado a 8 de Abril de 1882 na Sociedade Nacional de Música de Paris, a obra foi recebida com frieza. Foi apenas editada em 1919 pela *Rouart et Lerolle*.

Obra vasta, em quatro andamentos, definitivamente elaborada depois de conselhos de Franck, este Trio é a primeira das quatro grandes obras de câmara deixadas pelo autor. Aliás, a influência deste afirma-se aqui desde o início.

O primeiro andamento, em sol menor, revela-se próximo da forma sonata, da qual usa o princípio da exposição, do desenvolvimento e da reexposição de dois motivos essenciais. O andamento começa com uma breve introdução

de embalo quase elegíaco. É o violino que impõe o tema cíclico, sobre um piano muito movimentado. A segunda parte do andamento, vigorosamente ritmado pelo piano, expõe nas cordas os seus dois motivos melódicos, que se desenvolvem numa bela escrita em imitações. Ao mesmo tempo que os outros motivos, o tema cíclico reaparece na fase final, num fantástico arrebatamento sonoro.

O segundo andamento, construído como um *Scherzo* é anunciado por uma curta introdução, seguida por dois motivos que se perseguem numa corrida desenfreada, com um piano altamente volúvel. A sua breve *Coda* prepara o terceiro andamento.

Neste andamento lento, o piano expõe o tema cíclico na tonalidade de ré menor. Depois, uma nova frase, enunciada pelo violoncelo é retomada pelo violino com uma intensa poesia e numa ambiguidade harmónica que evocam Franck e Fauré.

Como o primeiro andamento, o final lembra a construção da forma sonata. A seguir à ex-

posição dos temas numa extraordinária intensidade rítmica, atinge-se então a perfeição cíclica. Esta maravilhosa obra mantém-se como uma das mais espontâneas do compositor.

Ysaÿe era conhecido pelo seu intenso vibrato, pelos excessos de romantismo e pelo desenvolvimento de uma sonoridade quente de que Kreisler viria a ser o grande ilustrador.

Para além das suas Seis Sonatas para Violino Solo, compôs obras menos conhecidas, mas de grande qualidade musical, como são os exemplos dos dois poemas interpretados neste CD, um para violino e piano e o outro para violoncelo e piano. Ambos inovadores na forma e originais na sua concepção, mostram uma harmonia pessoal.

O primeiro, para violino e piano, designado *Poème Élégiacque*, dedicado a Fauré, marcou de tal forma Chausson, que este decidiu após a sua escuta, escrever para o violinista o seu célebre *Poème*. Curioso que no de Ysaÿe, a corda Sol do violino é descida para um Fá (*Scordatura*), fazendo com que o som do violino seja mais grave e intenso, criando desta forma uma atmosfera ainda mais fúnebre e sombria. Foi inspirado em *Romeo e Julieta* de Shakespeare e musicalmente influenciado por Wagner, mas também pela escrita Franck, Saint-Saëns, De-

bussy, Lekeu e claro, Chausson.

A Méditation-Poème para violoncelo e piano, composto por volta de 1910, não foi publicado até 1921. Ysaÿe sentia-se reservado sobre sua própria música e admitiu a Frederick H Martens que *'há muitas coisas que eu poderia publicar, mas eu vi tantas coisas serem banais, pobres, indignas, que sempre estive inclinado a desconfiar do valor de minhas próprias criações, em vez de cair no mesmo erro.'* É dedicado ao violoncelista Fernand Pollain. O carácter rapsódico da música levou Ysaÿe a empregar uma notação pouco comum para mostrar as inúmeras mudanças de métrica. Ele usa um único número escrito acima da partitura - '3', '5', '9' e assim por diante - em vez de tempos convencionais.

Bruno Monteiro

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