



Eduard Franck: String Quartet and Piano Quintet

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Audite rescued the music of Breslau-born composer Eduard Franck from oblivion. At the invitation of Ferdinand Hiller, Franck became one of the eminent lights of Cologne's musical life. Hiller rejuvenated the cathedral city's music with other figures too, Theodor Pixis and Carl Reinecke amongst them. Franck, a pupil of Mendelssohn, was lured to the city from Berlin. Franck conducted the choral society. His own works were included in the Concert Society's programmes.

The String Quartet in F minor Op. 49 is Mozartian but infused with a more modern Mendelssohnian sensibility. It has a swimmy sense of flow with fugal activity (4.48 in I) and something of the Viennese flâneur in the last two (of four) movements. The Adagio Molto Espressivo has the Olympian calm of the Schubert String Quintet. The Piano Quintet has the tempestuous nature of the first Brahms Piano Concerto offset somewhat by the sort of childlike simplicity we have come to associate with Mozart's simple sets of variations. The later movements track through sturdy village dances, weighty hymnal seriousness and rude virtuoso energy. There is much more Schumann in the last movement which sports a conventional 'flashed' ending.

Civilised chamber music partly in the shadow of Schumann and Mendelssohn.