

The bulk of the work was written at a time when the lessons Beethoven reluctantly found himself having to give to Archduke Rudolph were temporarily suspended owing to an injury or infection affecting one of the latter's finger, and to his duties regarding the visit to Vienna of the Princess of Baden.

This is from the introduction's very first paragraph, but the reader is given no background on Archduke Rudolph, nor told why Beethoven was reluctant to teach him and yet dedicated him this trio. By comparison, an introduction that takes care to explain all this in a very cogent and accessible manner is Julia Ronge's Preface to the Henle 2020 facsimile edition of this trio.⁸

Nonetheless, this Bärenreiter Urtext champions accessibility in other important ways. It makes available high-standard textual-critical work at an accessible price and in a slim, portable format. As I type, I have on my desk also the two-volume edition of Beethoven's 'Eroica' Sketchbook, an amazing musicological feat but expensively bound with a thick hardcover and heavy in weight (about 500 pages in total). It is no object to slip into a violin case or studied en route to a rehearsal. But that's just what our Bärenreiter Urtext allows. For this reason, too, Del Mar's edition remains an excellent 'musician's choice'.

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Gabriel Fauré, *Pavane op. 50* (N 100c) piano version, Urtext, edited by Jean-Pierre Bartoli. (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2022). Critical Commentary, BA 11832 vii+8pp.

César Franck, *Mémoires complètes*, introduction and critical edition by Jean-Philippe Navarre. (Lamath: Les Presses du Collège Musical, 2020). Ad Usum Peritorum in Musica, AVPIM26 xli+126pp.

César Franck, *Quatre Mémoires* for piano, first edition by Heribert Koch (Köln: Edition Dohr, 2018). ED10151, 34pp.

Jean Cras, *The Early Songs 1892–1901*, presented by Paul-André Bempéchat (Westland, Michigan: Ayotte Custom Musical Engravings, 2021). x+233pp.

Each of these four volumes in its own way dusts out various corners of the French repertoire at the long turn-of-the-century, bringing the various bypaths of the repertoire a little more into focus. While the piano version of Fauré's delicious *Pavane* would seem to be something of a commercially motivated offprint from the ongoing four-volume *Ceuvres complètes* of which only two volumes are out, its presentation is a welcome addition to his most accessible side: a haunting and memorable melody easily playable by amateurs which would perhaps also make a nice encore piece for recitalists. While the excellently informative introduction is presented in French, English and German, the critical notes are in English only but are well

⁸ Ronge, 'Preface'.

worth reading, not only by those intending to play this piece but by anyone interested in Fauré's own way of playing. Rather than focussing on tiny errors they include remarks on a close listening to a Welte piano roll on a piano with automatic nuances dating from 1913. A year before this version, Fauré had cut another piano roll of the piece on the less-developed Aeolian system (without the 'automatic nuances' which recorded pedalling and voicing of chords) reissued on a Bluthner roll in 1928, not listened to by the editor. In particular the Welte roll yields details about Fauré's pedalling (more abundant than indicated in the score) and also notes differences in articulation and some rhythmic over-dottings. There are a range of printed manuscripts drawn upon for the edition, including Fauré's manuscript of the orchestral version (now in the Pierpont Morgan library) but no autograph manuscript of the actual piano version. Bartoli bases his edition largely on the piano version published in 1889 by Hamelle.

The neat introduction details the circumstances of the conception of the *Pavane*, noting Fauré's unexpected 'shuttle existence' in his unwise renting of a property in the country outside Paris, where the daily commutes to the city exhausted him, as he confessed to Marguerite Baugnies, its dedicatee, in 1887, confirming to her that the *Pavane* was all he had managed to write that year, albeit in an orchestral version for the concert series of Jules Danbé, then director of the Opéra-Comique. This project came to naught, but the piece was revised in a curious way when the poet Robert de Montesquiou was asked to superimpose a text on the completed music, to be sung by a chorus. The choir is divided into two, both men and women cooing sweet nothings to each other about the snares of love: 'It's Lindor, it's Tircis' sing the pseudo-Grecian belles; 'It's Myrtil, it's Lydé, the Queens of our hearts', the men reply. These charming interjections firmly place the piece in the realms of the *Fêtes Galantes*: late nineteenth-century imaginary interpretations of classical antiquity which are found in the many piano pieces by forgotten composers whose works were announced on the covers of piano music of the era. Interestingly, a piano and chorus version was first published as a supplement to the daily newspaper, *Le Gaulois*, in June 1888 and then again by Hamelle late in 1891.

Dances akin to the *Pavane* found a more durable echo in pieces alluding to the dance forms of the Renaissance and Baroque by Fauré, Debussy and Ravel. The word 'antique' is often used to allude to this style, inextricably connected with the paintings of Watteau and with the poetry of Banville and Verlaine. A musical forbear to the *Pavane* is clearly the 'Idylle' from Chabrier's *Pièces pittoresques* which shares a similar technical problem of playing a legato melody against a gently staccato chordal accompaniment, while echoes of the style are found in Ravel's *Pavane pour une infante défunte* and *Le Tombeau de Couperin*. This is an imaginatively edited edition highly recommended for the piano, history and performance-practice shelves.

By contrast, the edition of Franck songs, despite its similar cover to the Debussy *Œuvres complètes*, leaves a lot to be desired in its presentation. Navarre notes that many of the autograph manuscripts of the songs are scattered in inaccessible private collections (which he designates as *mélodies* in the title of his collection but in his text claims they do not really belong to this genre). A table of first editions is given but not of subsequent reprintings, especially of those dating from around the centenary of his birth in 1922. Navarre admits to having consulted only a few of Franck's autographs, claiming that there are few differences between these and the printed editions. Clearer information on them might have been better presented in tabular form rather than buried in texts; for example a table of where

the extant manuscripts are currently located would have been useful, although Navarre's estimation of Franck a careful editor of his own works does ring true. The sources of the poems are well documented as are some pertinent biographical details about the dedicatees, this latter information showing that unlike some other composers, the composer never used celebrity dedicatees to inflate his reputation, instead rather keeping them within his family or close acquaintances.

The musical text is clear and well-presented and, on a play-through, I only found one accidental missing. While there is much useful biographical information in Navarre's introduction, this could have been more focussed and precisely referenced. Its English translation is very poor, often misspelt, ungrammatical and sometimes incomprehensible. The same is unfortunately true of the translation of the poems. To translate the repeated 'mignonne' from 'Le Mariage des roses' as 'cutie' is laughably inappropriate and utterly anachronistic. Much better English translations will be found accompanying the Bru-Zane recording of the complete songs. On the other hand, there is one previously unpublished song in the volume which may validate it as an addition to the shelves of serious music libraries.

Heribert Koch's edition of *Quatre mélodies* also raises the question of the use of the word 'mélodie' in the mid-nineteenth century: clearly a bit of a wild-card, it was sometimes used to delineate popular 'tunes', but here used to describe not songs but piano solos. Only later did it become the term for settings of French texts, so often of contemporary modern poetry. These pieces are of considerable interest in their unveiling of the composer's earlier style: relatively unknown compared to the well-known triptychs of the 1880s. Not only do they throw light on Franck's earlier development, but they are also successful concert pieces in their own right and an advance on the *Souvenirs d'Aix-la-Chapelle* (c.1843) of which Koch also produced the first edition for Dohr.

Although Franck was meticulous about his opus numbering, revising it at the time of the composition of his F-sharp minor piano trio, he never allocated opus numbers to the *Deux mélodies*. 'A Félicité' was written for Félicité Desmousseaux in the year of his marriage to her in 1848 and one surmises that the lack of inclusion in his meticulous numbering indicates their special status as a wedding token. For years they have been unavailable to consult, hidden away in a private collection and only made available to the French musicologist Julien Tiersot (1857–1936) who apparently was only allowed to view the first page. As the last piano piece he was to write for over three decades, Koch's presentation unveils an important juncture in Franck's output. Confirming Navarre's estimation of Franck as a meticulous editor of his own works, Koch sees no need for elaborate critical notes, signalling only a couple of scores in his preface. Also included are the *Deux mélodies* op. 15.

The pieces, like the early piano arrangements of Schubert *mélodies* dating from the earlier 1840s, demand hands which can span wide chordal passages and substantial jumps between low bass octaves and thick middle-register four-part chords: quite tricky, but already demonstrating the 'cathedral of sound' he drew from his pianistic writing with a full use of the piano's compass.

Paul-André Bempéchat has long-championed the music of Jean Cras (1879–1932) and published a revised version of his study of this composer's life and works *Jean Cras, Polymath of Music and Letters* (Ashgate, 2017; second edition, Peter Lang, 2021.) Known as a Breton sailor/musician, and with Duparc as his teacher and mentor, he is of some considerable interest: a post-Franckian whose methods he learnt not from the master himself but from his works and contact

with his pupils. Like many of them, he wrote not only sonatas which sometimes betray Franck's influence, but also a Piano Quintet. Consulting the bibliography in Bempéchat's study, much of interest will whet the appetites of the curious, though there is little to be found in this collection of juvenilia, which is only of marginal interest. Bempéchat's claim that 'we are now able to trace his evolution as one of France's greatest composers of *mélodie* of the post-Romantic and Impressionist eras' seems to me wildly overstated: I cannot imagine any singer programming these pieces, the piano parts of which are naïve in the extreme. The title of the volume indicates Bempéchat as presenter rather than editor, but he admits to the composer's slapdash orthography in the poems which he has silently corrected. The first cataloguer of Cras's works, Annick Le Boterff, devised a siglum for each of his works and this has been retained for all of the works in this volume. Poems set include texts by many reputed poets including Hugo, de Musset, Baudelaire, Maeterlinck and Rodenbach. Dual texts in French and English precede each song. An album of his more mature melodies is awaited.

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