

Editor's Choice

James Inverne's pick of this month's outstanding new discs - hear excerpts online



CHAUSSON

Concert for Violin, Piano and String Quartet

MATHIEU

Piano Trio. Piano Quintet

David Lefèvre *vn* Alain Lefèvre *pf* Alcan Quartet

Analekta AN2 9286

Most attention here will focus on the works by André Mathieu. Alain Lefèvre has been a leading advocate for the music of the man they once called "the Canadian Mozart" but whose work then fell out of the public eye. Mathieu was only 39 when he died and here is the music of an imagination still in the first rush of invention.

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Chausson · Mathieu



Chausson Concert for Violin, Piano and String Quartet, Op 21^a **Mathieu** Piano Trio^b. Piano Quintet^c

^{ab}David Lefèvre *vn* Alain Lefèvre *pf*

^{ac}Alcan Quartet (Laura Andriani, Nathalie Camus *vns* Luc Beauchemin *va* ^bDavid Ellis *vc*)

Analekta © AN2 9286 (78' • DDD)

A 'Canadian Mozart' with links to French music of earlier decades



André Mathieu (1929-68), dubbed a Canadian Mozart by his contemporaries, seems to have been completely untouched by any of the radical European trends

of the mid-20th century but the fact that his Piano Trio of 1950 has points of contact with French music of several decades earlier does not of itself lessen its allure. Maybe just the opposite. It also provides a cue for coupling the Trio with Chausson's *Concert* of 1892 as well as with Mathieu's own Piano Quintet of 1953. With nods to Debussy in the Trio's slow first movement and perhaps to Honegger in the more angular contours and rhythms of the second, the music nevertheless establishes a sound world of its own, blending evocative Romantic dreaminess with a punchier angst. The same qualities characterise the Quintet, a work which, like the Trio, is written with a refined ear for instrumental timbre and a secure sense of dramatic shape. Both works merit attention, the more so in performances, led by the pianist Alain Lefèvre, that are so eloquently expressive, so sure in ensemble and so alert to the music's arresting fluxes of mood. There seems to be an underlying narrative to this music, which the performers convey with animation, tenderness and urgent passion. Mathieu's links with the French past are all the more apparent alongside Chausson's *Concert*, which Lefèvre and his string partners play with discretion, fluency and palpable feeling for its heartfelt substance. A warmly recommended disc. **Geoffrey Norris**