



César Franck: Complete Organ Works

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Organists' Review (Martin Clarke - 01.12.2012)

Organists' Review

This box-set of the complete organ works of Franck, previously released as three double CDs, is an excellent set of recordings. Hans Eberhard Roß's playing is persuasive and engaging throughout, from the miniature works of L'Organiste to the large-scale works such as the Trois Chorals and Six Pieces pour Grand Orgue. The Goll organ is ideally suited to this repertoire, with its broad, smooth colours and huge tonal palette; Roß handles it expertly, his sonorous registrations bringing the music to life. As well as providing excellent recordings of Franck's most famous works, one of the most attractive features of this collection is the opportunity it provides to hear the many shorter works Franck wrote for liturgical use in the two collections of L'Organiste. These show Franck's expertise in working on a small scale, distilling the expressiveness found in the large-scale works in a highly concentrated form. Of the larger works, the Six Pieces pour Grand Orgue stand out; in the more meditative movements, Roß creates a fine balance between a sense of purpose and spaciousness, while the more dramatic works bristle with excitement and energy, none more so than the Final, Op.21. The box set is beautifully produced, the liner notes are thorough, with an extensive biographical essay that is both scholarly and readable. Those wanting more information on the organ are directed to www.audite.de, which includes a downloadable document listing all the registrations used in these recordings. This is wonderful music, expertly played on a fine instrument.