



César Franck: Complete Organ Works Vol. III

aud 91.520

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The composer and organist César-Auguste-Jean-Guillaume-Hubert Franck was born in Liège in 1822 and studied music there before going to the Paris Conservatoire. He briefly returned to Belgium, but went back to Paris in 1844 and remained there for the rest of his life, making his living by teaching and as an organist. In 1858, he became organist at the basilica Sainte-Clotilde, where he remained until his death. His first organ compositions were published in 1868, when he was 46 years old. He was also professor of Organ at the Paris Conservatoire, where his pupils included Vincent d'Indy, Ernest Chausson, Louis Vierne, and Henri Duparc. As an organist he was particularly noted for his skill in improvisation, but it is on the basis of twelve major works that Franck is considered the greatest organ composer after J S Bach. Although his output of compositions was small, it was hugely influential, laying the groundwork for the French great symphonic organ style. This new double SACD contains his masterful Trois Chorals, written in 1890 after the composer was involved in the serious traffic accident that eventually resulted in his death. The album, subtitled 'Fulfilment and Farewell', also includes 7 Pièces pour Orgue ou Harmonium and completes an exemplary three-volume series from Audite that features all of César Franck's organ music together for the first time. VOL. 1 is titled 'From Prodigy to Composer' (AUDITE 91.518) and VOL. 2 is 'Unrecognised Greatness' (AUDITE 91.519). In addition to all the major works, the series has many smaller treasures and at least 40 minutes of first recordings, including two works discovered during the 1970s and 1980s and the works for harmonium in their entirety in their versions for organ. Hans-Eberhard Roß, Cantor of the Deanery St. Martin in Memmingen, plays the Goll Organ - its warm, soft sound, resulting from widely constructed pipes, creating an unobtrusive power and fullness.