

## Vreuls

Violin Sonatas – No 1; No 2

Eliot Lawson *vn* Diane Andersen *pf*

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**Two violin sonatas composed  
for two Belgian violin virtuosos**



The First Violin Sonata by the Belgian composer Victor Vreuls (1876-1944) was dedicated to his compatriot, the illustrious violin virtuoso Eugène Ysaÿe; the Second was written for Ysaÿe's disciple, Mathieu Crickboom. As such it is not surprising that both sonatas exploit violin sonority, technique and lyrical potential with

a thoroughly sympathetic ear, qualities that come through with passion and élan in these distinguished performances from the Belgian duo of Diane Andersen and Eliot Lawson. Sometimes the music betrays the odd harmonic device or a knitting of texture reminiscent of César Franck or Vincent d'Indy; on occasion there is a hint of Wagner, too. But in general these influences are absorbed into a personal style, essentially Romantic in temperament.

The two sonatas are separated by more than two decades, the First in B major being composed in 1900, the Second in G major completed in 1923. Vreuls's creative outlook seems not to have shifted drastically in the interim, although there is a suggestion of leaner piano-writing and piquant harmony in the slow central movement and finale of the Second Sonata, perhaps owing something to new developments in French music in the early 20th century. Both sonatas are of roughly the same proportions, with a 10- or 11-minute opening movement, a slightly longer middle one and a shorter finale. But the expressive weight is spread evenly in music that is not only securely structured but also eloquently and ardently voiced. It fully merits such excellent advocacy as this.

**Geoffrey Norris**