

CÉDRIC TIBERGHIE

GRAMOPHONE

Luglio 2009

Szymanowski

Lullaby, 'La berceuse d'Aïtacho Enia', Op 52.
Mythes, Op 30. Nocturne and Tarantella, Op 28.
Three Paganini Caprices, Op 40. Romance, Op 23.
Violin Sonata, Op 9

Alina Ibragimova *vn* Cédric Tiberghien *pf*
Hyperion © CDA67703 (77' • DDD)

**A compelling case for the rarefied
and sinuous music of Szymanowski**



Szymanowski's violin and piano works owe much to the example of his violinist compatriot Paweł Kochański, clearly an artist of uncommonly probing intellect as well as

phenomenal technique if this and his other collaborations (with the likes of Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Bax) are anything to go by.

The main item here is the three-movement cycle *Mythes*, which is less of a stranger to the concert hall than the other works on this fine new disc. A product of 1915, it falls stylistically alongside late Debussy, mid-period Ravel and early Bartók in its *recherché* combination of hallucinogenic chromaticism and sensual sinuosity. Much the same description could be applied to the *Nocturne and Tarantella*, which has an additional compactness and outward display, making it entirely appropriate as the disc's opening work.

Alina Ibragimova has become Hyperion's violinist of choice for sensual-esoteric 20th-century repertoire, and she and the



super-sensitive Tiberghien make a winning combination, both in the sweltering sensuality of those central works and in the more conventional late-Romantic effulgence of the warm-hearted Sonata of 1909, which breathes something of the same air as Elgar's 1918 Sonata (to add to the various affinities noted in Francis Pott's astute essay).

Their programme moves back chronologically towards the Sonata via the rhapsodic 1913 Romance, and away from it into Szymanowski's re-imaginings of three Paganini caprices – hardly the most resourceful examples of their kind but still well worth hearing in this context. Finally the *Berceuse* of 1925 strikes a more rarefied, desolate note. All in all, this repertoire should be high on the priority list for all those interested in 20th-century violin music, and it's not easy to imagine a stronger case being made for it than here.

David Fanning