

**Cleveland Chamber Music Society:
Edgar Moreau & Jessica Osborne (Apr. 17)**

by Daniel Hathaway



In conjunction with Young Concert Artists and with the support of Maison Française de Cleveland, the Cleveland Chamber Music Society brought the young French cellist Edgar Moreau and American pianist Jessica Osborne to Plymouth Church on Tuesday, April 17 for spirited performances of sonatas by Prokofiev, Poulenc, and Franck.

Beginning with Prokofiev's C-Major Sonata (Op. 119 from 1949), Moreau and Osborne shared an easy chemistry

that made their collaboration a delight. The expressive, 24-year-old cellist plays with wonderful sonority, the dynamic pianist with pristine articulation and an attractive physicality. High points in the Sonata were the magical cello harmonics at the end of the first movement, and the strong, upward flourish borrowed from the first movement that ends the third.

Poulenc's Sonata, finished a year before Prokofiev's, is a musical excursion with many interesting sights to take in along the way. Especially fun, the third movement "Ballabile" or dance imbibes the spirit of the jazz age and visits both the insouciant and the sober aspects of the composer's emotional personality. Moreau might have been just a bit too serious during some of the former passages.

César Franck's Violin Sonata is frequently poached by cellists — and sometimes even by flutists. That practice was smiled upon by the composer in this case, after his Paris Conservatory confrère, cellist Jules Delsart, arranged it for himself, but it's difficult to say which version is the more successful. The opening lies low for the

violin and high for the cello, creating two different varieties of focused, musical energy.

After floating its hazy, magical introduction, Edgar Moreau and Jessica Osborne made the Sonata an intense experience. In the Allegro, Osborne created a well-articulated French toccata, juxtaposed against Moreau's urgent, craggy lines. The third-movement canon was alluring, the ending triumphant.

For an encore, Moreau purloined another violin piece — the Meditation from Massenet's *Thaïs*. Fiddle players will just have to forgive him. It was another gift from France, and it was lovely.

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