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'Five Pieces'

Hindemith Violin Sonata in E Janáček Violin
Sonata Silvestrov Five Pieces Takemitsu

Distance de fée

Duo Gazzana

ECM New Series © 476 4428 (47' • DDD)



Lauded sibling duo from
Italy debuts on ECM

Graduates in visual arts and literature respectively, Natascia and Raffaella Gazzana convey no mean musical chemistry in a recital that has evidently been conceived as an overall unity. Certainly the modally inflected harmony and the taciturn interplay of Takemitsu's *Distance de fée* (1951) suggest a reaching out for 'what lies beyond' that was never to leave the ruminative and impressionistic language of his maturity, while Hindemith looks back less in anger than regret to an overtly Classical stability in his Violin Sonata (1935) – the flowing anxiety of its first movement contrasting with the purposeful alternation of 'song' and 'dance' in its successor. A fusion such as Janáček's Violin Sonata (1921) pointedly rejects as it moves from a fractured sonata *allegro*, via an impassioned *Ballada* and an impetuous *scherzo*, to an *Adagio* in which the stark dissociation of violin and piano is absolute – not least in a reading which mirrors that of the work in being the sure highlight of this disc.

After which the wistful melancholy of Silvestrov's Five Pieces (2004) feels the more remote, for all that these players have underlined the subtle differences in mood and pace that give these miniatures a focus (even more relevant in the 70-minute *Melodies of the Moments* from which they are taken). A recital that makes absolute sense on its own terms (for all that Paul Griffiths's note ties itself in knots explaining why), though an additional work – Enescu's *Impressions d'enfance*, maybe – might further have enhanced this already auspicious debut. **Richard Whitehouse**