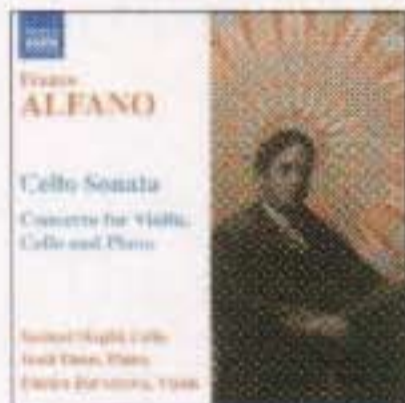


## CDS

**ALFANO** Concerto for violin, cello & piano, Cello Sonata

**Elmira Darvarova (violin) Samuel Magill (cello) Scott Dunn (piano)**

NAXOS 8.570928



Franco Alfano (1875–1954) composed a large number of piano and orchestral pieces, several operas (including a *Cyrano de*

*Bergerac*) and a number of major chamber works, including three string quartets.

Yet despite his considerable prowess as a composer in his own right, he is still principally remembered as the man who completed Puccini's final opera, *Turandot*.

Listening to these hauntingly beautiful scores it seems barely credible that Alfano's music could have fallen into such unwarranted neglect. Middle-period Ravel would appear to be the Italian's stylistic launch pad, most unmistakably in the laid-back central movements of both the Cello Sonata and triple chamber concerto,

although the music's passing modal inflections owe at least as much to the epic 'ancient' style of Respighi and (rather later) Rózsa.

Pianophiles will no doubt already be familiar with Scott Dunn's outstanding Naxos recordings of Foss and Duke, while long-time Metropolitan Opera principals Elmira Darvarova and Samuel Magill sound no less captivated by these expertly written scores. Darvarova produces a silky-smooth, voluptuous sound ideal for the concerto's meticulous opulence, while Magill's husky, dark timbre matches the Cello Sonata's yearning intensity to perfection. The discreetly balanced studio recording allows the players' impassioned advocacy full rein without resorting to sonic spotlighting.

JULIAN HAYLOCK