

**Poème for Violin and Orchestra**  
**Ernest Chausson (1855-1899)**

This piece for violin and orchestra is not only famous in the repertoire it is one of the few pieces, if not the only one, that makes Ernest Chausson famous at all. The early part of his musical output favors distinctly vocal forms, his first piece an opera *Les Caprices de Marianne*, written at the ripe age of 25 is one of three. He wrote a few chamber works of varying size, a symphony and number of works that can be described as symphonic poems, or more realistically orchestral pieces with descriptive titles. It is his short but creative lifestyle and those with whom he had contact that are just as much pointers to his music.

Born in Paris he studied law at the University of Paris and then entered the Conservatory, as a pupil of Massenet, for composition and Franck, for organ; after a few months he withdrew from the Conservatory to become a private pupil with Franck. His house was to become a rendez-vous for the well-known writers, musicians and painters of the day. It was in these circumstances that he developed a great friendship with Debussy, often helping him financially, though it is not clear that the musical greatness of his friend, wore on to him. The life of this "renaissance" man was cut short in a bicycle accident in Limay, whilst on holiday.