

Destination Paris: I've been listening to a lot of new CDs by young string quartets, and the playing is scary good. Now, it seems, the same can be said for young string trios.

Enter the Lendvai String Trio, a European ensemble with members from Sweden, Britain, and Holland. They came to my attention because the cover of their *Destination Paris* (CD, Stone 80079) shows the three of them in a Citroën DS sedan, their instrument cases precariously perched atop the car's fiberglass roof. Nice, off-the-beaten-path programming: Martinu°'s two string trios, Françaix's sole effort in the genre, and Enescu's early *Aubade*.

The connecting theme is that all three composers moved to and composed in Paris. I found it curious that they sequenced Martinu°'s second trio first; perhaps they thought the earlier work was not as strong an opener. In any event, while I found Trio 2 as challenging and as rewarding as Martinu°'s String Duo 2, I was pleasantly surprised by the echoes of Dvorčák I heard in Trio 1. The Françaix trio is energetic and a bit of a put-on, like much music from Paris in the 1920s and '30s (think Satie and Milhaud). The late-19th-century, rather romantic Enescu piece rounds out the program. Wonderful sound, recorded in a stately music room in England, and excellent program notes. If you need a break from Beethovenian intensity, this might be just what the bartender ordered. Highly recommended.

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