



R. Schumann: Piano Quartet & Piano Quintet

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Sunday Times (David Cairns - 27.06.2010)

Three of Brahms's most substantial works, the Piano Quintet and the first two piano quartets, were surely inspired by the example of his beloved mentor, Schumann, who composed the two works recorded on this disc in the year (1842) dedicated to chamber music that also produced his three string quartets.

As in some other fields, the pupil surpassed the master. Schumann's Piano Quartet, despite beautiful and characteristic moments, is no match for Brahms's. Written for his pianist wife, Clara, it is overdominated by the keyboard; the string parts lack independence.

The same is often said of the Piano Quintet, but here the force and felicity of Schumann's invention sweep away all such cavils. Le Guay and the Mandelring respond to its genius with obvious enjoyment.