



Felix Mendelssohn: Piano Trios

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Crescendo Jg. 14, Nr. 2 (März-Mai 2011) (Antoinette Schmelter De Escobar - 2011.03.01)



Swiss Piano Trio

WIE MEDELSOHN SELBST

Swiss Piano Trio

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[Der Landbote](#) 27. Januar 2011 (Herbert Büttiker - 2011.01.27)



Im innersten Zirkel

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Ensemble - Magazin für Kammermusik März 2011 (Carsten Dürer - 2011.03.01)



Mit Spannung weiterhören

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My first reaction to receiving this release for review was, "Oh no, not another recording of Mendelssohn's piano trios!" This now makes 22 versions I can lay claim to, at least three or four of which I've had occasion to review in these pages. I must cede pride of place, however, to Burton Rothleder who claims to have reviewed no fewer than 10 versions. Of those I have in my collection which he happens to have covered, I find myself in agreement with his conclusions about 90-percent of the time. I was favorably impressed and still am, for example, with the Wanderer Trio's performances on Harmonia Mundi, and I've also found much to enjoy in recordings by the Mendelssohn Piano Trio on Centaur and the Amsterdam Piano Trio on Brilliant Classics. To this list, but reviewed by others, I would add the Florestan Trio on Hyperion and the Nash Ensemble on Onyx. With regard to one recent release, however, Burton and I will have to agree to disagree, and that is the Sony recording with Perlman, Ma, and Ax, which made Rothleder's 2010 Want List. I found these performances to be sluggish, lumpish, and heavy-handed, their slowness in comparison to others quite easily proved by the timings. For me, they miss Mendelssohn's quicksilver pulse and puckish humor.

I wasn't quite sure what to expect from the Swiss Piano Trio, an ensemble I'd not previously encountered, though to confess, I did begin my listening with the difficult-to-dislodge idea in my head that Mendelssohn's piano trios did not need another recording, no matter how good it might be. Imagine then my shock to have all of my doubts and reservations instantly swept away by the most captivating performances of these works I think I've ever heard.

Swift in tempo and fleet of foot, but not rushed or breathless; leggiero in bowing and phrasing, but not lightweight or thin in tone; rascally but not roguish in the Scherzo movements; emotionally expressive but not cloying in the Andantes; and strongly persuasive without making over-earnest pie of Mendelssohn's opening Allegros, the Swiss ensemble plays these works with surpassing elegance, beauty, and absolute technical control and perfection.

In no small measure, this gorgeously recorded hybrid surround-sound Audite SACD is a glory to modern recording technology. The instruments are perfectly placed and perfectly balanced, and the sound is state-of-the-art. I'm not usually one to say, "Throw out all other recordings you have of these works," but if I were so inclined, this new release would come perilously close to prompting me to say it. These magnificently recorded fantastic performances are urgently recommended.

Fono Forum 06/11 Juni 2011 (Ole Pflüger - 2011.06.01)

FONO FORUM
KLASSIK JAZZ HI-FI

Gar schön?

Wie schön muss Mendelssohns erstes Klaviertrio klingen? "Nicht zu sehr", scheint die Antwort des Schweizer Klaviertrios zu sein. Es ist etwas dran. Jedenfalls betreibt Angela Golubeva auf ihrer Geige keine Schöntönerei: Kratzig, rauchig, rau ist der Ton, den sie dem Trio vorgibt. Vor allem dem Kopfsatz von Mendelssohns d-Moll-Klaviertrio ist damit sehr geholfen. Er entrinnt der Gefahr, sich zu sehr in seliger Melodiesingerei aufzulösen. Stattdessen wirkt er offen und emotional. Leider schaden die rauen Tonfarben dann dem zweiten Satz des Trios. Wenn Golubeva und der Cellist Sébastien Singer in die Klaviereinleitung von Martin Lucas Staub einsteigen, vernichten sie alle Innigkeit. Es ist ehrenwert, dass das Schweizer Klaviertrio auf eitlen Schönklang und Wabervibrati verzichtet. Manchmal hätten sie – in kleinen Dosen – aber auch nicht geschadet.

Robert Schumann nannte das Werk einmal eine "eine gar schöne Komposition, die nach Jahren noch Enkel und Urenkel erfreuen wird". Golubeva, Singer und Staub widersprechen Schumann, indem sie ihm eine Menge derben Witz und schroffe Melodiebrocken abgewinnen. Bei ihnen ist Mendelssohn mehr als nur "gar schön", er darf auch mal schreien und keifen. Aus dem Kopfsatz von Mendelssohns zweitem Klaviertrio machen die Schweizer dann ein mitreißendes Perpetuum mobile. Vom ersten Klavierton an ist diese Musik nicht aufzuhalten. In den halsbrecherischen Läufen des Scherzos bekräftigen die Musiker diesen Eindruck und beweisen dabei auch noch einmal, wie schön es sein kann, auf Schönheit zu verzichten.

<http://theclassicalreviewer.blogspot.de> Saturday, 28 April 2012 (- 2012.04.28)



Mendelssohn - a lightweight composer?

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International Record Review May 2011 (Mark Tanner - 2011.05.01)



That Schumann considered Mendelssohn to be a natural successor to Beethoven, and went on to prize his piano trios so ardently, was a strong indication that these works were set to assume a prestigious place in the chamber music repertory. In Schumann's eyes, at least, Mendelssohn's was truly the music of the present, if not the future. Schumann would compose piano trios of his own, of course, albeit rather more brooding and emotionally driven.

Written six years apart, in 1839 and 1845, Mendelssohn's trios are cast in four movements and have a similar duration. Additionally, they are both in minor keys, suggestive of something rather splendid or perhaps even narrative in vein. Wolfgang Rathert, author of the erudite if slightly scholarly notes, reminds us of the especial function of minor keys in Beethoven, as well as in Mozart, and argues that Mendelssohn's particular use of minor tonality holds a mirror to the nineteenth century's increasingly sophisticated tastes. Interestingly, both trios, which in general make rather more of the piano part than of the strings, are radiant and optimistic in their dramatic gestures, not in the least bit introspective or doleful, even in their second movements. This new recording from the Swiss Piano Trio is beautifully presented by Audite, with sharp graphics and a nicely contemporary feel to the fold-out cardboard box.

The Trio in D minor, Op. 49 is confidently captured by the players – a nicely impulsive opening movement with a good sense of lyricism and a clear overview in place. Pianist Martin Lucas Staub drives the impetus assertively with an ambitious tempo, and the strings sustain a robust connection with the music's agitated under current. The individual contributions are strong, although I feel the ensemble's best intentions have not always been fully realized in this region of the recording as regards balance. I'd like a fraction more of the piano when all parts are busy, and indeed when there are short-lived soloistic interjections to enjoy (the opening and closing sections to the Andante con moto tranquillo are good examples of this, too). Conversely, the violin seems to be just a little too forward in the mix, overall, particularly during the more impassioned sections, so that the equally important piano and cello textures come over as a little hemmed in. That said, there are some precious softer moments in the ensemble, both in this movement and in the

conclusion to the Scherzo, which is ably done. The finale has good drive and the overall impact improved here quite noticeably – the ensemble seemed to relax , introducing greater ingenuity and freedom into this amiable Schubertian melody. There can be no doubting the youthful verve of these musicians, and the closing stages to this movement are as fiery and effervescent as you could hope for , if perhaps slightly missing some of the opportunities to drop the dynamic before picking up the intensity once again.

The Op. 66 Trio, dedicated to Louis Spohr, is in C minor, and it was in this key that Mendelssohn first explored the idea of a piano trio while still a young man; it emerged as more of an experiment than an accomplished work, however. As I hinted at earlier, the similarities in approach to the formal construction and sense of dramatic destiny in both the published trios are such that Mendelssohn clearly felt satisfied with what he had achieved in his D minor Trio. The Swiss Trio seems more at ease with the elasticity of this slightly later work, grabbing my attention rather more quickly than in the D minor. I particularly enjoy the Andante espressivo, which has a lovely serenity to it and some delightful coupling from the strings. The Scherzo is very successful too , with sterling work from Staub, whose glycerine fingerwork carries the momentum without any hint of compromise; here too, a better sense of balance and of the leggiero lines emerges, and the sudden switches in temperament are very well thought through.

My impression of the playing, and indeed of the recording as a whole, grew quite significantly during my survey of this disc. I would very much like to hear these players in the flesh , where I am sure they are capable of even greater vitality and communication.

Kulimu 37. Jg. 2011, Heft 1 (uwa - 2011.04.01)



Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Klaviertrio Nr. 1 u. 2

Schweizer Klaviertrio

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Klaviertrio Nr. 1 u. 2

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Kulturspiegel März 2011, Heft 3 (Johannes Saltzwedel - 2011.03.01)



Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: "Klaviertrios" (Audite)

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[La Liberté](#) 12 février 2011 (EH - 2011.02.12)



L'INSPIRATION PUISSANTE DU TRIO AVEC PIANO

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[Musik & Theater](#) April 2011 (Fritz Trümpi - 2011.04.01)



Feinfasriger Mendelssohn

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Pizzicato N° 212 - 4/2011 (Alain Steffen - 2011.04.01)



Ein Meisterstreich

Gerade bei Aufnahmen wie dieser ist es eine Freude für den Rezensenten, die Bestnote Supersonic zu vergeben. Ich muss zugeben, dass ich diese Einspielung der Klaviertrios von Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy mit allergrößtem Vergnügen gehört habe. Wieder einmal bestätigt ein junges Ensemble, dass man Kammermusik mit Spielfreude und Engagement von seinem etwas verstaubten und intellektuell-bürgerlichen Image befreien kann.

Dem Schweizer Klaviertrio (Angela Golubeva, Violine, Sébastien Singer, Cello und Martin Lucas Staub, Klavier) gelingt auf Anhieb ein Meisterstreich und der gefährliche Spagat zwischen Unterhaltung, Virtuosität, technischer Versiertheit und kunstvoller Gestaltung. Sicher, Mendelssohns Trios sind dankbare Stücke, aber was das Schweizer Klaviertrio aus dieser Musik macht, mit welcher Dynamik sie diese Werke angehen und mit welcher hervorragender Technik sie das Opus 49 und das Opus 66 auszuloten verstehen, ist eindeutig große Kunst. Ja, Kammermusik kann tatsächlich Spaß machen und ebenso intensive wie aufregende Momente beschieren. Eigentlich bräuchte man bei dieser übrigens hervorragend transparent und präsent klingenden SACD-Aufnahme überhaupt keine Worte zu verlieren. Musik und Interpreten sprechen für sich.

[Spiegel online](#) Montag, 28. Februar 2011 (Johannes Saltzwedel - 2011.02.28)



Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: "Klaviertrios" (Audite)

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Stereo 6/2011 Juni (OPf - 2011.06.01)



Klaviertrios Nr. 1 + 2

Schweizer Klaviertrio

Klaviertrios Nr. 1 + 2

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Südkurier Nr. 15 (20. Januar 2011) (Martin Preisser - 2011.01.20)



Fiebrig-feuriger Mendelssohn

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[Tagblatt Online](#) 11. Januar 2011 (Martin Preisser - 2011.01.11)

TAGBLATT

Start mit Mendelssohn

Start mit Mendelssohn

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[Thurgauer Zeitung](#) 11. Januar 2011 (Martin Preisser - 2011.01.11)

Thurgauer Zeitung

Schweizer Klaviertrio mit fiebrig-feurigem Mendelssohn

Schweizer Klaviertrio mit fiebrig-feurigem Mendelssohn

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[Thurgauer Zeitung](#) 11. Januar 2011 (Martin Preisser - 2011.01.11)

Thurgauer Zeitung

Start mit Mendelssohn

Start mit Mendelssohn

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Westdeutsche Zeitung Samstag, 9. April 2011 (wall - 2011.04.09)



Dynamisches Trio

Dynamisches Trio

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www.jazzstore.com (Mike D. Brownell - 2010.11.30)



Composed in 1839 and 1845, respectively, the two mature piano trios of Felix...

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www.musicweb-international.com Tuesday March 29th (Kevin Sutton - 2011.03.29)



Felix Mendelssohn

Robert Schumann, in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, hailed Felix Mendelssohn as the Mozart of the nineteenth century, the "brightest musician who sees through the contradictions of our time most clearly and is the first to reconcile them, and he will not be the last artist." This is high praise and a bold prediction coming from one of the foremost musicians of the day. Such praise is borne out in these near perfect piano trios. This is music that is replete with every emotion. Even as they are set in minor keys with somewhat turbulent opening movements, they sound sunny and hopeful, full of wit and charm and no small amount of youthful joie de vivre.

Mendelssohn's own piano playing must have been remarkable, given the sheer virtuosity of the piano writing in these works. The c minor trio opens with a rollicking theme and the piano never quits. A beautifully lyrical Andante follows, and Mendelssohn shows his ability to create a gorgeous melody that, while somewhat sentimental, is never over the top or maudlin. A fleeting scherzo is followed by a jaunty finale. The second trio is no less a masterpiece, flashy without being gaudy, packed full of the wonderful tunes that only a Schubert could match. It struck me as amusing that the theme of the Scherzo is remarkably similar to Legrenzi's *Che fiero costume*, known the world over to beginning students of singing.

The Schweizer Trio is nothing less than superb in these performances. Particular kudos goes to Martin Lucas Staub, whose keyboard skills are beyond reproach. It is fairly evident that Mendelssohn was thinking beyond the salon when he composed these works. They are so full in scope and rich in tone that he must have had a concert hall in mind. Having said that, Mr. Staub never lets the formidable piano parts overwhelm his string playing colleagues, who by the way, play with spotless intonation, elegant phrasing and youthful panache. I particularly admired the manner in which this ensemble was able to take the fast movements at an almost roller-coaster tempo, yet never leave the listener feeling out of breath. The playing is of such high quality that the music just flows out effortlessly. One is left believing that there is no other way to play this music, and this is a delightful quality. I was thrilled by repeated listening to this disc.

www.ResMusica.com 28 avril 2011 (Jean-Luc Caron - 2011.04.28)



Une lecture probe de Mendelssohn

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Inhaltsverzeichnis

Crescendo Jg. 14, Nr. 2 (März-Mai 2011).....	1
Der Landbote 27. Januar 2011.....	1
Ensemble - Magazin für Kammermusik März 2011.....	1
Fanfare May/June 2011.....	2
Fono Forum 06/11 Juni 2011.....	2
http://theclassicalreviewer.blogspot.de Saturday, 28 April 2012.....	3
International Record Review May 2011.....	3
Kulimu 37. Jg. 2011, Heft 1.....	4
Kulturspiegel März 2011, Heft 3.....	4
La Liberté 12 février 2011.....	5
Musik & Theater April 2011.....	5
Pizzicato N° 212 - 4/2011.....	5
Spiegel online Montag, 28. Februar 2011.....	6
Stereo 6/2011 Juni.....	6
Südkurier Nr. 15 (20. Januar 2011).....	6
Tagblatt Online 11. Januar 2011.....	6
Thurgauer Zeitung 11. Januar 2011.....	7
Thurgauer Zeitung 11. Januar 2011.....	7
Westdeutsche Zeitung Samstag, 9. April 2011.....	7
www.jazzstore.com	7
www.musicweb-international.com Tuesday March 29th.....	8
www.ResMusica.com 28 avril 2011.....	8