



ALBERT SAMMONS

PIANO TRIO RECORDINGS, 1925/6



Felix Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor, Op. 66 was composed and published in 1845. The work is scored for a standard piano trio consisting of violin, cello and piano. Mendelssohn dedicated the work to the violinist Louis Spohr, who played through the piece with the composer at least once. A notable feature of the finale of this work is its quotation of the melody of a chorale taken from the sixteenth-century Genevan psalter 'Vor deinen Thron tret ich hiermit'. This recording, almost certainly the first electrical recording of the piece, is highly unusual in the use of the viola in place of the cello. Given the paucity of chamber music recordings at the time it is also highly likely to be the world premiere recording, though a recording of the Andante was made in Berlin in 1913 by Dessau, H Günfeld and Mayer-Mahr for German HMV.

The Piano Trio No. 7 in B-flat major, Op. 97, by Ludwig van Beethoven is a piano trio for piano, violin, and cello, published in 1811. It is commonly referred to as the Archduke Trio, because it was dedicated to the amateur pianist and composition student of Beethoven, Archduke Rudolph of Austria. It was written during the "middle" period of Beethoven's compositional career, which spans approximately 1803 until 1814. Composition began in the summer of 1810 and it was completed in March 1811. The first public performance was given by Beethoven himself, Ignaz Schuppanzigh (violinist) and Josef Linke (cellist) at the Viennese hotel 'Zum römischen Kaiser' on 11 April 1814, as his deafness continued to encroach upon his ability as a performer. Of this performance the violinist and composer Louis Spohr wrote: "In forte passages the poor deaf man pounded on the keys until the strings jangled and in piano he played so softly that whole groups of notes were omitted." The performance of the piano part in the "Archduke Trio" in 1814 was Beethoven's last performance in the role of pianist.

These notes from Wikipedia.com Full scores are available for free download at The International Music Score Library Project: <http://imslp.org>

Recording and restoration notes

I am very grateful to collector Paul Steinson for the loan of these rare 78rpm discs used for these transfers. Both sets were in excellent condition and offer a remarkable insight into the technical possibilities of recording opening up for Columbia's engineers in the first months of the age of electrical recording (i.e. with microphones) which had begun just six months prior to the recording here of the Mendelssohn.

We have here two very different recording locations. The first appears to be a typical studio of the time, though the actual location is unknown. The acoustic was rather dry and as a result, although the instruments were clear and direct, the overall sound was not particularly complimentary to the musicians. In order to ameliorate this I've used a small amount of convolution reverb to 'place' the musicians in a more typical performance acoustic - in this case the small hall at Santa Cecilia in Rome seemed most helpful, and the acoustic replicates precisely that of a central seat on the seventh row in the hall.

By contrast, the Columbia engineers opted to record the Beethoven "on location", at London's Wigmore Hall, and one is immediately struck by the presence of the hall acoustic. It's a remarkably successful recording for its era, managing to find a superb balance between the hall acoustic and the direct instrument sound, and clearly very different to the Mendelssohn.

Both sets of discs were quiet British laminated Columbia pressings in superb condition. A degree of swish was present on most of the sides, and occasionally this required the use of a narrow-profile stylus for all or part of a side to find a less swishy height in the grooves. Both have responded incredibly well to XR remastering, and I've been able to bring out an excellent bass response whilst eliminating some rather heavy bottom-end rumble. In both cases the performances themselves are superb!

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MENDELSSOHN

PIANO TRIO NO. 2 IN C MINOR, Op. 66

LIONEL TERTIS, VIOLA WILLIAM MURDOCH, PIANO RECORDED 1925

BEETHOVEN

PIANO TRIO NO. 7 IN B FLAT "ARCHDUKE", Op. 97

WILLIAM H' SQUIRE, CELLO WILLIAM MURDOCH, PIANO RECORDED 1926

Sammons: Piano Trio Recordings, 1925/6

MENDELSSOHN Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor, OP. 66

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro energico e con fuoco (10:46)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante espressivo (6:50)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo: Molto allegro quasi presto (3:30)
- 4 4th mvt. - Finale: Allegro appassionato (8:07)

Lionel Tertis, viola

William Murdoch, piano

Recorded 9 December, 1925

Transfers from UK Columbia L1755-1758

Matrix Numbers AX 1190-1197

BEETHOVEN Piano Trio No. 7 in B flat, "Archduke", OP. 97

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegro moderato (9:20)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Scherzo (Allegro) (6:42)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Andante cantabile ma però con moto - Poco piu adagio (10:42)
- 8 4th mvt. - Allegro moderato - Presto (6:24)

William H. Squire, cello

William Murdoch, piano

Recorded 18-19 December, 1926

Transfers from UK Columbia L1851-1855

Matrix Numbers AX 2170-2179

Albert Sammons, Violin



PACM 073

XR remastering by **Andrew Rose**

We are extremely grateful to Mr. Paul Steinson for the loan of all the discs used for these transfers.

Cover artwork based on a photograph of **Albert Sammons**

Total duration: **62:21**

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