



PRISTINE SOVIET SERIES



Rostropovich: Chamber Music Volume 2

The "star" of these two releases is Mstislav Rostropovich. The first disc covers his career from 1948 (the Sinding *Presto*) through 1953 (the two excerpts from *Stücke im Volkston*)—long before he had become an internationally known figure. The second CD contains performances from 1949 (the Chopin *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante*) through 1956 (the Beethoven *Trio for Violin, Viola, and Cello*). Along the way one can partake of the outstanding work of a comparatively youthful Emil Gilels (forty years old in Beethoven's *Trio*, op. 97); Leonid Kogan (thirty-two years old in both the Beethoven *Trios*, op. 3 and op. 97), and of violist Rudolf Barshai before the founding of his Moscow Chamber Orchestra. In all cases, the sound is eminently decent for its vintage.

Beethoven's *Trio No. 1 for Violin, Viola, and Cello in E flat*, op. 3, and his "Archduke" *Trio*, op. 97, are the two main events on these releases. All six movements of op. 3 are given equally robust and sensitive performances—pointed, beautifully intoned, and informed with both vitality and a particularly Russian brand of whimsy. For once this piece of youthful (ca. 1786) Beethoven is given its due...

The other pieces, despite their modest dimensions, or overall worth, are all done as if they are the musical end of the world ... the sonics on these two releases are, by Western standards, fine for their respective ages. To anyone familiar only with those old Coliseum and Bruno releases, these samples of late-1940s-through mid-1950s Soviet recording will prove, in this CD incarnation, astonishing. To those familiar with subsequent Soviet releases distributed in the West, these offerings will be more than merely technically competent—they will prove to be musically satisfying.

Review by William Zagorski, *Fanfare*, Jan/Feb 1993 - excerpts, *Melodiya* CD reissues (also relevant to Vol. 1)

Producer's Note

The original records containing these recordings provide an excellent example of the rapid progress made in recording technology with the advent of tape and the LP, with the *Trio* recording a significant step forward from the sound of the earlier short pieces. The sound quality buried in those 1956 grooves in particular turned out to be astonishingly good when released by an XR remastering. Certainly it is only the mono source that now gives away the age of the recording - though for most listeners I heartily recommend the Ambient Stereo edition and the sense of space around the instruments this creates. The last-minute discover of the 1993 *Fanfare* review answers some questions regarding recording dates with Yampolsky, the initial dullness of which has here been improved upon quite successfully. Elsewhere the reviewer bemoans the incomplete nature of these odd movements. I suspect the recordings were made to fit odd 78rpm sides and the works in question were never recorded in their complete forms. Regardless, they turn out to be older than I imagined, leaving me even more surprised at their inherent sound quality. One truly bizarre anomaly raised its head: in the fourth movement of the Beethoven a tape edit had been made where a few notes had been spliced in backwards! Naturally this has now been remedied. **A.R.**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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РОСТРОПОВИЧ

Chamber Music, Volume 2

Beethoven: String Trio No. 1 in E flat

Leonid Kogan, violin
Rudolf Barshai, viola
Mstislav Rostropovich, cello

Music by Handel, Schumann, R. Strauss, Sinding

Mstislav Rostropovich, cello
Vladimir Yampolsky, piano

Studio Recordings 1948-56

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BEETHOVEN String Trio No. 1 in E flat - HANDEL, SCHUMANN, STRAUSS, SINDING
ROSTROPOVICH, KOGAN, BARSHAI, YAMPOLSKY

COMPACT disc
DIGITAL AUDIO
PACM 092

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Rostropovich

Beethoven Archduke Trio
Recorded Moscow, 1956
Transfer from Melodiya ND 03458-03459

Handel - Schumann - Strauss - Sinding
Recorded 1948-1953
Transfer from Melodiya 33D-027827

Total duration: 60:09

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BEETHOVEN String Trio No. 1 in E flat - HANDEL, SCHUMANN, STRAUSS, SINDING
ROSTROPOVICH, KOGAN, BARSHAI, YAMPOLSKY

ROSTROPOVICH Chamber Music Volume 2

BEETHOVEN String Trio No. 1 in E flat, Op. 3

- 1 1st mvt. - Allegro con brio (10:55)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Andante (11:18)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Menuetto: Allegretto (3:33)
- 4 4th mvt. - Adagio (8:24)
- 5 5th mvt. - Menuetto: Moderato (3:54)
- 6 6th mvt. - Finale: Allegro (6:51)

Leonid Kogan *violin*
Rudolf Barshai *viola*
Mstislav Rostropovich *cello*

- 7 **HANDEL** Violin Sonata in D, Op. 1, No. 13: 3rd mvt. - Largo (3:18)
- 8 **SCHUMANN** 5 Stücke im Volkston, Op.102: 1. Vanitas vanitatum: Mit Humor (3:54)
- 9 **SCHUMANN** 5 Stücke im Volkston, Op.102: 4. Nicht zu rasch (2:31)
- 10 **R. STRAUSS** Stimmungsbilder, Op.9: 2. An einsamer Quelle (3:38)
- 11 **SINDING** Suite im alten Stil in A minor, Op. 10 - 1st mvt. - Presto (1:53)

Mstislav Rostropovich *cello*
Vladimir Yampolsky *piano*