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# HEIFETZ, PRIMROSE, PIATIGORSKY

## Beethoven String Trios, Opus 9

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I haven't any information about the provenance of these recordings, which despite an appearance in the USA in the early sixties have not been generally available in this country before, and can only guess that they coincided with public performances. They bear the traces of having been made fairly hastily. The sound is dry and hard and so close to the instruments, particularly to the violin, that one has the impression of microphones devouring it before an acoustic can intervene. Either that or it has been passed through some kind of drying agent to remove all reverberation.

If you can get over this—and frankly I couldn't, since the DG set by the Italian String Trio was at my side as a reminder of what the textures of these pieces should sound like—you can hear three of the century's most illustrious string players striving to bring as much brilliance and intensity to pre-1800 Beethoven as the music can be made to bear... From time to time the restless urgency seems in place: in the quick movements of the C minor Trio of Op. 9, for instance, of which this performance could have been enjoying a good deal, I am sure, had it been given a chance to sound well... Again one comes back to the sound—cohering so imperfectly that one feels the players must in some way be dissatisfied with the string trio as a medium...

S.P. Gramophone, October 1976 - review of 3-LP UK issue on RCA, including these three recordings

### Producer's Note

I have taken the somewhat unusual step of including here excerpts from a generally negative review of these recordings (from what appears to have been their first official British release as part of a 3-LP RCA box set in 1976), to illustrate the overwhelmingly negative effect on the listener's judgement of a series of performances caused by getting things wrong, technically-speaking, in the recording studio.

The Gramophone reviewer correctly identifies a lack of reverberation in the originals. This doesn't mean that dropping his LPs into some kind of echo chamber is going to help! Long before I found this review I felt on first hearing the recordings that some modicum of sympathetic and authentic room acoustics would complement the players to their overall advantage. Happily one is now able to take the acoustics of any number of renowned concert venues around the world and bring something of their unique sound to a recording such as this. The effect is as subtle as you would wish to be, but suddenly the recordings spring into a life you wouldn't have expected.

What the reviewer identified as "dry and hard" was also a product of frequency imbalances in the recordings. The correction of these using XR remastering also makes a huge difference to the immediate appeal of the sound. Without altering any of the actual notes, the subtle changes I have been able to make in remastering these trio recordings have turned them into recordings and performances you might really want to listen to - for the first time perhaps in over half a century. **Andrew Rose**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT [WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM](http://WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM)  
SARL Pristine Audio, 144 Rue de l'Eglise, 24610 St. Méard de Gurçon, France

# Beethoven

## Three String Trios, Opus 9

Heifetz • Primrose • Piatigorsky

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Studio recordings, 1957 & 1960

## BEETHOVEN *Three String Trios, Opus 9*

XR remastering by Andrew Rose

Cover artwork based on a photograph of Heifetz, Primrose & Piatigorsky

### BEETHOVEN Trio in G major, Op. 9 No. 1

- 1 1st mvt. - Adagio – Allegro con brio (7:17)
- 2 2nd mvt. - Adagio ma non tanto and cantabile (6:09)
- 3 3rd mvt. - Scherzo – Allegro (2:33)
- 4 4th mvt. - Presto (5:05)

### BEETHOVEN Trio in D major, Op. 9 No. 2

- 5 1st mvt. - Allegretto (6:54)
- 6 2nd mvt. - Andante quasi allegretto (4:28)
- 7 3rd mvt. - Menuetto – Allegro (3:55)
- 8 4th mvt. - Rondo – Allegro (5:32)

### BEETHOVEN Trio in C minor, Op. 9 No. 3

- 9 1st mvt. - Allegro con spirito (7:39)
- 10 2nd mvt. - Adagio con espressione (5:45)
- 11 3rd mvt. - Scherzo – Allegro molto e vivace (3:03)
- 12 4th mvt. - Finale – Presto (5:13)

Jascha Heifetz *violin*

William Primrose *viola*

Gregor Piatigorsky *cello*

#### String Trio Op. 9 No. 1

Recorded at Radio Recorders, Hollywood, USA, 27 March 1957  
Originally released as RCA LM-2186  
Presented in Ambient Stereo

#### String Trio Op. 9 No. 2

Recorded at RCA Studios, Hollywood, USA, 17/22 August, 1960  
Originally released as RCA LSC-2563  
Presented in Stereo

#### String Trio Op. 9 No. 1

Recorded at Radio Recorders, Hollywood, USA, 29/30 March 1957  
Originally released as RCA LM-2186  
Presented in Ambient Stereo

Total duration: 63:33

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