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BRILLIANT
CLASSICS

J.G. Graun

CHAMBER MUSIC

FROM THE COURT OF
FREDERICK THE GREAT

AND WORKS BY JANITSCH
BENDA & C.H. GRAUN

AUGUSTA MCKAY LODGE *VIOLIN* • GEORGINA MCKAY LODGE *VIOLA*
EVA LYMENSTULL *CELLO* • DAVID SCHULENBERG *HARPSICHORD*

Chamber Music from the Court of Frederick the Great

Johann Gottlieb Janitsch 1708-c. 1763

Trio Sonata in G minor

for Violin, Viola and B.c.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------|
| 1. I. Adagio | 2'44 |
| 2. II. Allegretto | 4'25 |
| 3. III. Allegro assai | 3'36 |

Johann Gottlieb Graun 1702/03-1771

Sonata in C minor GWV Av:XV:20

for Viola and Keyboard

- | | |
|----------------------------|------|
| 4. I. Adagio e mesto | 4'41 |
| 5. II. Allegro non troppo | 7'36 |
| 6. III. Allegro scherzando | 4'55 |

Sonata in B-flat GWV Av:XV:46

for Violin and Keyboard

- | | |
|-----------------|------|
| 7. I. Grazioso | 3'45 |
| 8. II. Allegro | 6'44 |
| 9. III. Allegro | 5'38 |

Carl Heinrich Graun 1703/04-1759

Sonata in C BWV B:XII:53

for Cello and B.c.

- | | |
|----------------------|------|
| 10. I. Largo | 3'18 |
| 11. II. Poco Allegro | 3'58 |
| 12. III. Allegretto | 3'32 |

Franz Benda 1709-1786

Sonata in C minor Lee 3.137

for Viola and B.c.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------|
| 13. I. Adagio | 3'14 |
| 14. II. Allegro | 4'12 |
| 15. III. Allegro moderato | 3'43 |

Johann Gottlieb Graun

Trio Sonata in A GWV Av:XV:42

for Violin, Viola and B.c.

- | | |
|------------------------------|------|
| 16. I. Adagio con tenerezza | 5'03 |
| 17. II. Allegretto cantabile | 4'40 |
| 18. III. Allegro | 3'54 |

Augusta McKay Lodge *violin* · Georgina McKay Lodge *viola*

Eva Lymenstull *cello* · David Schulenberg *harpsichord*

This music belongs to an extraordinary repertory of chamber music from mid-eighteenth-century Germany which remains little known despite its connections to well-known historical personalities, including King Frederick “the Great” and members of the Bach family. The four composers represented here all worked for the Prussian king, who was himself a flautist and composer of professional ability. Although this music probably was not performed for the king himself, it is preserved in manuscripts associated with one of the musical “academies” that sprang up during and after his reign (1740–86) in the Prussian capital city of Berlin. There the roots of the modern concert tradition could be seen in semi-public gatherings that took place in the homes not only of certain professional musicians but of the city’s elite. The latter included, alongside the Prussian aristocracy, members of several inter-related Jewish families, among them Sara Levy and her brother Benjamin Itzig.

Two of our selections are trio sonatas for two melody instruments and basso continuo (here, cello and harpsichord). Despite the participation of four players, at the time these were described as “trios.” Likewise designated “trios” were the two sonatas that include an obbligato or written-out keyboard part, which incorporates not only the bass (as usual) but a melody part as well. All these compositions follow Berlin practice of the time in comprising three movements, of which the first is slow, the second quick, and the last also quick but somewhat lighter and dance-like. Beethoven would still follow this pattern a half-century later when he dedicated his first two cello sonatas to Frederick’s successor, King Friedrich Wilhelm II.

The present works straddle the boundary between what we call the Baroque and Classical styles. They include some of the earliest chamber music to treat the viola as an equal partner of its sister instrument the violin, demanding considerable virtuosity from the players of both. The viola sonata by Franz Benda is preserved uniquely in a manuscript that was once in the collection of Benjamin Itzig, who is thought to have played the instrument. The trio by Janitsch belonged to Itzig’s sister Sara Levy, who was an accomplished amateur keyboard player and musical patron, sponsoring

performances at Berlin into the nineteenth century. A pupil of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach—oldest son of Johann Sebastian—she was also the great-aunt of Felix Mendelssohn, who must have known many of the compositions from her extensive collection.

It is conceivable that Wilhelm Friedemann had a hand in the two “trios” with obbligato keyboard. Both are by Johann Gottlieb Graun, one of two brothers who began working for King Frederick during the 1730s, while the latter was still crown prince; he later became the royal concertmaster or orchestra leader. Earlier in his career, Graun taught violin to Friedemann Bach, and the two are likely to have remained in contact. Certain details in the keyboard parts of these sonatas are reminiscent of sonatas and concertos by Friedemann, suggesting that he might have arranged or elaborated these keyboard parts in some way. But an old edition that names Friedemann as the actual composer of the work for viola is almost certainly mistaken.

Both sonatas are extraordinary even within this exceptional repertory, incorporating lengthy virtuoso passages that resemble the solo episodes of a concerto. The C-minor viola sonata reaches rare heights of expressivity, particularly in its highly chromatic opening movement. The violin sonata in B-flat stands out for the fantasia-like solo passages in both quick movements. Its concluding movement is further notable for being twice interrupted by slow passages; these modulate mysteriously to distant minor keys. Graun’s range as a composer is demonstrated by his A-major trio sonata, which reveals a lighter touch, particularly in its almost comic final movement. It opens, however, with a lyrical Adagio likely inspired by the duets which were among the high points in the operas of his younger brother Carl Heinrich.

From 1741 until his early death in 1759, Carl Heinrich composed roughly one opera each year for the theater built by King Frederick on the famous Berlin avenue Unter den Linden. The younger Graun’s chamber music tends to be more lyrical, less outwardly virtuosic, than his brother’s. Frederick hired him primarily as a singer and

opera composer, but he also played the cello. The present sonata is his only work for the instrument; it might have been composed for one of the royal cellists, such as the famous Ignaz Mara.

The numerous works of both Grauns are listed in a massive thematic catalogue by Christoph Henzel—source of the “GWV” numbers given here. Henzel does not provide dates for most of the Grauns’ instrumental works, but they must be roughly contemporary with the trio sonata by their colleague Janitsch. The latter served with them as bass player in the royal orchestra; he also was the founder of one of the first Berlin concert series. These performances were known as the “Friday Academies,” from the day each week on which they took place in Janitsch’s own house. Janitsch’s trio sonata was until recently attributed to J. G. Graun. It has been reassigned following the recognition that the sole surviving manuscript, for a time owned by Sara Levy, is in the hand of Janitsch himself. In style it recalls the famous trio sonatas published several decades earlier by Corelli, updated to suit mid-century fashion at Berlin.

Although both Grauns enjoyed high status at the royal court, the king’s favorite instrumentalist was the violinist Franz Benda. He earned the rare privilege of leading Frederick’s famous private concerts, in which the king played flute alongside a handful of his best musicians. Benda was a pupil of J. G. Graun, and besides dozens of violin sonatas he left several for viola and continuo, including this work—which was known until recently only in a version for violin. It follows an outline familiar from solo sonatas by both Grauns as well as by Quantz, the king’s flute teacher, incorporating virtuoso passagework into the two quick movements.

For these performances we have prepared our own editions based on the surviving eighteenth-century manuscripts. Several members of Frederick’s court, including the flutist Quantz and Bach’s son Carl Philipp Emanuel—one of the royal harpsichordists—left detailed accounts of how to add embellishments and cadenzas, and how to flesh out the incompletely notated keyboard parts of these compositions.

We have followed their guidelines, which diverge from practice elsewhere during the period to produce a distinctive Berlin style of performance. Although no one at Berlin provided equally detailed instructions for stringed instrument performance, it is clear from the music itself that the art of playing the violin, viola, and cello was as advanced there as anywhere else in Europe at the time.

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Augusta McKay Lodge enjoys a flourishing career as a historically informed violinist. A gold medalist in numerous international competitions, she is firmly established as a soloist and appears as concertmaster of many ensembles such as The American Classical Orchestra, Bach Akademie Charlotte, Les Arts Florissants, and Opera Fuoco. She enjoyed solo appearances in such venues as Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall and Carnegie Hall, and most recently in William Christie's festival Dans les Jardins de William Christie. Her solo albums Beyond Bach and Vivaldi and Corelli's Band (Naxos) are critically acclaimed. At a very young age, McKay Lodge earned a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and postgraduate degrees from Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and The Juilliard School. She also studied at the Moscow Central Special Music School and the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. She is a native of Oberlin, Ohio and resides in Paris, France.

Georgina McKay Lodge has performed on viola with European ensembles Les Arts Florissants, Holland Baroque, Camerata Øresund, Orquestra Barroca Casa da Música, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Experience; and in the USA with Teatro Nuovo, The Sebastians, Voyage Sonique, Grand Harmonie, The Berry Collective, at Boston Early Music Festival, at Oregon Bach Festival, and alongside musicians of Tafelmusik, Concerto Copenhagen, the Cleveland Orchestra, and the Juilliard School, Harvard University, and Universität Mozarteum Salzburg historical performance programs. She won the Best Bach award two years in a row at the Ohio Viola Society Competition. A native of Oberlin, Ohio, she did preparatory studies at the Oberlin Conservatory before receiving her Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music and her Master of Music from Boston University. She currently lives in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Eva Lymenstull enjoys a diverse international career as a soloist, chamber musician, continuo player and orchestral musician, playing baroque cello and viola da gamba. She has performed as concerto soloist and principal cellist with Lyra Baroque Orchestra, guest principal with Atlanta Baroque, Apollo's Fire, and Musica Angelica, and has also appeared with Tafelmusik, Voices of Music, Tesserae, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and Holland Baroque. The winner of the 2017 Voices of Music Bach Competition, she has performed at the Carmel Bach Festival, the Utrecht, Boston, and Berkeley Fringe Festivals, and on the Gotham Early Music and Academy of Early Music series. In addition to performing, she teaches baroque cello and viol as a guest artist at the University of Michigan. She holds degrees from the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, Rice University, University of Michigan, and a doctorate in historical performance practice from Case Western Reserve University.

David Schulenberg is recognized internationally as a performer on early keyboard instruments and an authority on the music of the Bach family. Author of books and articles on the music of J. S. Bach and his sons, he also wrote the textbook and anthology *Music of the Baroque* and has held fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. In addition, he has published critical editions of sonatas and concertos by C. P. E. Bach as well as organ music by J. S. Bach. Previous recordings have featured chamber music of C. P. E. Bach, Quantz, and King Frederick "the Great." Professor of music at Wagner College in New York, he has also taught at Boston University, Rutgers University, Columbia University, and the Juilliard School. Selected publications, editions, and compositions can be found on his website.



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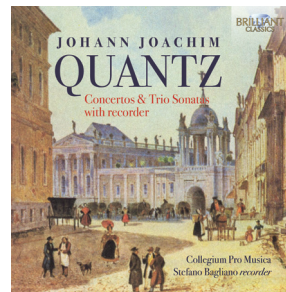
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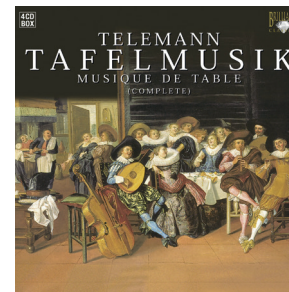
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