

EDVARD GRIEG

THE VIOLIN SONATAS

HAIK KAZAZYAN, violin
PHILIPP KOPACHEVSKY, piano



DE 3523



EDVARD GRIEG

THE VIOLIN SONATAS

VIOLIN SONATA NO. 1 IN F MAJOR

Allegro con brio: Andante ♦ Allegretto quasi andantino ♦ Allegro molto vivace

VIOLIN SONATA NO. 2 IN G MAJOR

Lento doloroso: Allegro vivace ♦ Allegretto tranquillo ♦ Allegro animato

VIOLIN SONATA NO. 3 IN C MINOR

Allegro molto ed appassionato ♦ Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza ♦ Allegro animato

HAIK KAZAZYAN, violin
PHILIPP KOPACHEVSKY, piano

Total Playing Time: 68:25

EDVARD GRIEG

THE VIOLIN SONATAS

Violin Sonata No. 1 in F Major, Op. 8 (23:35)

1. Allegro con brio: Andante (9:26)
2. Allegretto quasi andantino (5:05)
3. Allegro molto vivace (9:04)

Violin Sonata No. 2 in G Major, Op. 13 (21:08)

4. Lento doloroso: Allegro vivace (8:56)
5. Allegretto tranquillo (6:46)
6. Allegro animato (5:25)

Violin Sonata No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 45 (23:40)

7. Allegro molto ed appassionato (9:10)
8. Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza (6:41)
9. Allegro animato (7:49)

Total Playing Time: 68:25

HAIK KAZAZYAN, violin
PHILIPP KOPACHEVSKY, piano

Mention the name **Edvard Grieg** to many classical music fans, and they'll probably tell you how much they enjoy his *Peer Gynt Suite* or his ubiquitous *Piano Concerto in A Minor*. Although they aren't nearly as well-known, Grieg's three sonatas for violin and piano have made their way into the chamber repertoire – especially the magnificent third sonata. All three violin sonatas not only have great appeal as works of genius but also help reveal Grieg's evolution as a composer.

The youthful ***Violin Sonata No. 1 in F Major, Op. 8*** – written in 1865, when Grieg was only twenty-two – offers abundant charm, compositional sophistication, and exceptional freshness. Though his fellow Norwegian composer Gerhard Schjelderup described it as “The work of a youth who has known only the sunny side of life,” the piece contains many instances of stark contrast between brightly optimistic sections and darker, more turbulent ones.

One might describe Grieg's first sonata as a budding genius's quest in search of his true voice. At the time, Grieg was not yet able to reconcile traditional classical formulas (like the sonata form) with either his profuse lyrical outpourings or the

nationalistic ingredients that would color his later compositions more strongly. Still, attentive listeners may detect echoes of traditional Norwegian music in the outer movements, often from the occasional modal flavors of the melodies as well as their characteristically sudden major-minor shifts.

The first movement's cunning (and ardent) interplay of three contrasting themes often displays lyrical qualities. The only overt folk element is found in the trio section of the sonata's central movement, where one hears simulations of the unique droning sounds of the hardanger fiddle (Norway's best-known folk instrument) as well as the rhythmic patterns of Norway's traditional “springar” dance form. The finale is an exhilarating tumble of glittering melodies, again built upon three varied themes.

It's interesting to note that Grieg's first attempt at a violin sonata is what brought him to the attention of Europe's venerable Romantic-era icon Franz Liszt. After reading through the sonata's score in 1868, Liszt penned a letter to the young Norwegian, praising his compositional facility and describing the work as “... vigorous, reflective, inventive, and full of excellent

material." Liszt ended his note with an invitation to visit him in Weimar, in the hope that they could get to know each other – which they soon did.

The ***Violin Sonata No. 2 in G Major, Op. 13*** followed the first by just two years, in 1867 – a month after Grieg had married his beloved cousin, the singer Nina Hagerup. While he wrote that it had been composed in "the euphoria of my honeymoon," the piece – written in just three weeks – often projects the characteristically pensive and coolly melancholic – even tragic – nature of the Scandinavian musical idiom.

Those characteristics are a by-product of the second sonata's far greater dependence upon Norwegian folk elements. Inspired in part by the eminent Norwegian violinist Ole Bull, Grieg had resolved to lend his music a more nationalistic quality by infusing it with his homeland's more traditional idioms. The Danish composer Niels Gade (also one of Grieg's teachers) even criticized the work as being "too Norwegian" in nature – to which the increasingly confident young master testily responded that his next sonata would be "even more Norwegian."

It's indeed this characteristic of the piece that proved Grieg's new-found ability to effectively marry folk elements and classical form. Like his contemporary, the great Czech nationalist composer Antonin Dvořák, Grieg only rarely quoted actual folk material, instead favoring ingenious simulations of it.

The first movement stands as convincing evidence of Grieg's mastery of more extended musical forms. It begins with an aching sad and poignant *Lento doloroso* lament, eventually relieved by a much more upbeat section that – like the first sonata's middle movement – evokes the traditional rhythms of the springar dance and the droning sounds of the hardanger fiddle. But from there on, the mood shifts back and forth between the poignant lyricism of the opening and the more urgent passages of soaring rhapsodic motifs, leading into a magnificent coda.

The piano leads off the second movement, setting its pensively reflective mood. But the theme soon grows in power and intensity, interspersed with variants of the minor-hued melancholic opening theme. A contrasting middle section shifts into the major mode, bringing an air of calm and quiet contentment before giv-

ing way to fresh elaborations of the opening theme.

The dancing final movement emerges as a cleverly built sonata-form rondo, again introducing a traditional droning effect in the exposition as it builds into a waltzlike interlude. The meltingly lovely major-mode central section comes almost as a surprise before morphing into minor-key fluctuations. The bold and brashly virtuosic coda brings the work to a resounding close.

Twenty years passed before Grieg composed his final **Violin Sonata No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 45** in 1887. It took him much longer to complete: several months, as compared with just a few weeks apiece for his two previous efforts. While it was his favorite of the three sonatas, he regarded them all as being among his finest works. And the third sonata turned out to be the last chamber piece he wrote.

Grieg – who first won critical and public acclaim as a concert pianist – regularly toured Europe performing recital programs consisting of his own music, usually piano pieces, songs (often sung by his wife), and one of the violin sonatas – of which No. 3 eventually earned the status among violinists (and chamber buffs)

as one of the supreme works within the genre's mainstream repertoire.

The essential character of this work is perhaps best summarized by an inscription (not necessarily the composer's) found on the original manuscript: "Bold and exuberant, the way I like it." Sonata No. 3 is also a work with a more somber and mysterious tone than that of the sunnier and more folk-influenced sonatas one and two. Grieg himself described the piece as one that reaches beyond the nationalism of many of his earlier works to a "wider horizon."

The opening *Allegro molto ed appassionato* is a bracing blend of four primary themes that share the same triadic foundation, lending the movement an almost subliminal feeling of musical unity. Together, these themes create a relentless, sometimes dizzying onslaught of passionate melodic material that keeps listeners on the edge of their seats – leading into an ingenious coda that at first seems to champion lyricism before shifting to a dark and dissonant ending.

Contrast soon comes with the radiant melody that begins the mostly lighthearted and laid-back second movement, *Al-*

legretto espressivo. The middle section – despite its minor-inflected harmonic kinship with the movement's opening section – makes for a restlessly reflective interlude before the prevailing luminous mood is restored.

Grieg was never one to remain entirely faithful to the strictures of the classic sonata form, and – in the *Allegro animato* finale – he again bent its rules to suit his purposes: in this case, dispensing with the prescribed development section. After a restless introduction, the movement begins in earnest with an emphatic march leading into a sometimes rhythmically disjointed stretch of urgent back-and-forth dialogue between violin and piano. An expansive sense of melodic longing then follows before returning to the opening march. In the recklessly speedy and virtuosic coda, the march theme evolves into a triumphant paeon as it surges to a feverish finish.

– Lindsay Koob

Violinist Haik Kazazyan has performed as a soloist with many European and Russian orchestras, including the Orchestra of Marinsky Theater, the Scottish Royal National Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, Russian National Orchestra, Moscow Philharmonic and Moscow Symphony Orchestras, Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, Dublin National Orchestra, Kaunas City Symphony Orchestra, Poznan Philharmonic Orchestra, Katowice Radio Symphony Orchestra, Munich Chamber Orchestra and Moscow Chamber Orchestra.

Kazazyan has worked with conductors Valery Gergiev, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Teodor Currentzis, Andrew Litton, Alexander Liebreich, Alexander Lazarev, Constantine Orbelian, Jonathan Darlington, Ricardo Averbach, Alan Buribayev, Jac van Steen, David Brophy, Pavel Kogan, and Alexander Polianichko. As a chamber musician, he has collaborated with many prominent musicians of his generation, including pianists Freddy Kempf, Eliso Virsaladze, Alex Kobrin, Ekaterina Mechetina, and Rem Urasin; violinists Pavel Vernikov, Gordan Nikolitch, and Boris Brovtsyn; and cellists Natalia Gutman, Alexander Bouzlov, Sergey Antonov, and Boris Andrianov.



Kazazyan's career has taken him to great concert halls around the world, including the Stern Auditorium of Carnegie Hall in New York; the Great, Small, and Rachmaninov Halls of the Moscow Conservatory; Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow; Victoria Hall in Geneva; Wigmore Hall in London; Usher Hall in Edinburgh; and the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow. His concerts have been broadcast on television and radio programs in Russia and Europe, including the BBC Radio (London), the Kultura television channel in Russia, Bruxelles TV, Polskie Radio, and Mezzo. In addition, Kazazyan has performed at a number of festivals: the Verbier Festival (Switzerland), Festival International de Musique Sion Valais (Switzerland), Arts Square Festival (St. Petersburg), Moscow-Kremlin and Primavera Classica (Moscow), and the Tongyeong International Music Festival (South Korea), among others.

Haik Kazazyan began his violin studies at the Sayat-Nova Music School in Yerevan with Levon Zoryan. He continued his education at the Gnnessin Music School and the Moscow Conservatory in the class of Eduard Grach, also studying chamber music with Alexander Bonduriansky. From 2006 to 2008, Kazazyan was a student of Itzhak Rashkovsky (violin) and Levon

Chilingirian (chamber music) at the Royal College of Music in London. In addition, Kazazyan has played in master classes for Shlomo Mintz, Ida Haendel, Pamela Frank, and others.

Kazazyan is a laureate of several international competitions, including the XII International Wieniawski Competition (Third Prize and Special Prize for best performance of a Wieniawski polonaise), the XII International Tchaikovsky Competition (Fourth Prize and three Special Prizes), the 2007 ISANGYUN Competition in South Korea (First Prize and Special Prize for best interpretation of Isang Yun's piece), and, most recently, the 2011 Enescu International Competition (First Prize). Between the years 1993 and 2000, Kazazyan won awards at numerous competitions in Russia and Europe, including the Grand Prix at the Amadeus-95, Second Prize at the Yampolsky Competition, and the Grand Prix in the New Names Competition (Russia).

In 2010, Kazazyan released his album *Opera Fantasies* on the Delos label. Since 2002, he has been a soloist of the Moscow Philharmonic Society. Haik Kazazyan is currently a member of the faculty at the Moscow Conservatory.

Pianist Philipp Kopachevsky, a soloist of the Moscow State Academic Philharmonic and a prizewinner at several international competitions, had already won great audience acclaim by the age of twenty-three. He regularly appears in recital in Great Britain, Germany, the United States, the Netherlands, France, Italy, Greece, Poland, and Spain as well as throughout Russia. Kopachevsky has won particular popularity in Japan, where he recorded a disc of piano music by Chopin for NHK TV.

Philipp Kopachevsky was born in Moscow in 1990. He graduated from the Central School of Music of the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory and is currently a student at the Moscow Conservatory (class of Professor Sergei Dorensky). He has been a prizewinner at eight prestigious international competitions, among them the Tenth International Franz Schubert Piano Competition (Germany).

Kopachevsky has performed with many great orchestras in Russia and abroad, among them the English Chamber Orchestra, the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Moscow Philharmonic, the Symphony Orchestra of the Kolobov Novaya Opera Theatre in Moscow, the

Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra, the Russian National Orchestra, the National Philharmonic Orchestra of Russia, the Moscow State Academic Symphony Orchestra, the Novaya Rossiya State Symphony Orchestra, the Yevgeny Svetlanov State Symphony Orchestra of Russia, and the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic.

He has also collaborated with such illustrious conductors as Mstislav Rostropovich, Vladimir Spivakov, Mikhail Pletnev, Yevgeny Kolobov, Yuri Simonov, Alexander Dmitriev, Andrew Gurlay, William Noll, Bjarte Engeset, Charles Olivieri-Munroe, Yevgeny Bushkov, Maxim Vengerov, Paul Watkins, Jan Latham-Koenig, Dorian Wilson, and Dmitry Liss, among others.

In addition, Kopachevsky has appeared at numerous international festivals, including the Andrei Sakharov Festival, the Vera Lotar-Shevchenko Memorial competition, the Steinway Festival, the Miami Piano Festival, the Arts Naples World Festival, the Colmar International Festival, the Mstislav Rostropovich Memorial Festival, the Baltic Seasons Festival, Vladimir Spivakov Invites, Stars on Baikal, Crescendo, and Denis Matsuev Invites.

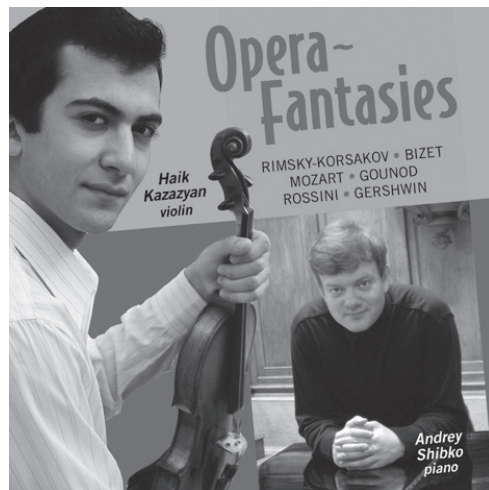


In 2008, he performed for the world premiere of choreographer Benjamin Millepied's ballet *Without* at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. More recently,

he has been involved in the Moscow State Academic Philharmonic's project *Stars of the 21st Century*.

Recorded in December 2014 at Mosfilm Studio, Moscow
Producer: Gennady Papin
Engineer: Gennady Papin
Editing/mastering: Elena Sych
Kazazyan photo: Ira Weinrauch
Kopachevsky photo: Evgeny Evtukhov
Booklet editors: Lindsay Koob, Anne Maley
Art design and layout: Lonnie Kunkel
Violin: Stradivarius "Ex-Wieniawski," 1723
Piano: Steinway
Cover photo: A Norwegian fjord near Bergen, Grieg's native city

Also Available



Opera-Fantasies

Rimsky-Korsakov • Bizet • Mozart
Gounod • Rossini • Gershwin
Haik Kazazyan, violin
Andrey Shibko, piano
DE 3384

© 2016 Delos Productions, Inc., P.O. Box 343, Sonoma, CA 95476-9998
(707) 996-3844 • Fax (707) 320-0600 • (800) 364-0645
contactus@delosmusic.com • www.delosmusic.com
Made in USA



DE 3523