

BEETHOVEN

Triple Concerto

(arr. C. Reinecke for piano trio)

REINECKE: Piano Trio No. 1

Duccio Ceccanti, Violin • Vittorio Ceccanti, Cello

Matteo Fossi, Piano



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827): Triple Concerto (arr. C. Reinecke for piano trio)

Carl Reinecke (1824–1910): Piano Trio No. 1

Born in Altona, then a fishing port opposite Hamburg on the west bank of the Elbe under Danish administration, Carl Reinecke's life spanned more than eight decades – from Goethe, Friedrich and Beethoven's late quartets to Freud, Kokoschka and Schoenberg's *Erwartung*. His prolific output comprised stage works, three symphonies, four piano concertos, and a volume of chamber music – including five string quartets – besides the familiar '*Undine*' *Sonata* after Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué's novel. A pianist and improviser of bygone North German disposition active into the piano roll era (see Miaoyin Qu, *Piano Playing in the German Tradition, 1840–1900: Rediscovering the Un-notated Conventions of Performance*, PhD thesis, University of Leeds, May 2015), he was one of the foremost conductors of the second half of the 19th century, an editor, copious arranger, writer and painter, and a pedagogue of wide-ranging influence. He stood for the complete musician – cultured, refined and disciplined, a noble, silver-haired knight of 'pure and simple' heart, bearer of the Classical flame whatever the fever of Romanticism about him. 'Art should bring happiness to mankind!' he believed.

With his mother dying of consumption, he was brought up and taught by his father Johann Peter Rudolf Reinecke (1795–1883), an authoritarian taskmaster. Harboured pianistic ambitions (having heard Clara Wieck in 1835 and Liszt in 1841), he received a stipend from King Christian VIII of Denmark to study in Leipzig (1843 to 1846). Here, he met Mendelssohn and Schumann, the former making possible his debut at the Gewandhaus in a programme shared with the young Joachim. 'Be industrious, young man', Mendelssohn told him. 'You have youth, strength and talent ... you will find plenty of admiration and flattery at all the tea-parties of Hamburg and also of Leipzig, but that sort of thing helps no one ... there are never enough of earnest artists, and you have it in you to become one.' (*The Etude*, December 1909). In 1846 he was offered the post of court pianist in Copenhagen, accompanying the violinist Heinrich

Wilhelm Ernst among his duties. Two years later he went to Bremen, and then on to Paris, Liszt having published an article about him in *La France musicale* and furnished letters of introduction to Berlioz and Pierre Égard. He admired Liszt's pianism more than his compositional facility, which didn't prevent him from later constructing his 'Scandinavian' '*Håkon Jarl*' *Symphony* along suggestively Lisztian lines. In turn, Liszt applauded Reinecke's 'beautiful, gentle legato and lyrical touch', requesting that while in Paris he should teach his daughters Blandine and Cosima.

Among musicians Reinecke befriended in the French metropolis was Mendelssohn's boyhood companion Ferdinand Hiller, who in 1851 invited him to teach piano and counterpoint at his newly established Conservatory in Cologne (1851–56), a period which saw fruitfully renewed association with Robert and Clara Schumann, and contact with Brahms and Max Bruch. Two further assignments followed – in Barmen (where he served as Kapellmeister from 1854 to 1859) and Breslau/Wrocław (where he was director of music at the university and conductor of the Singakademie from 1859 to 1860).

The call of Leipzig, however, was strong – the 'El Dorado' he returned to repeatedly. In 1860 he stayed, appointed director of the Gewandhausorchester, a position, necessitating clout and compromise, that he retained for 35 years. Concurrently he accepted a composition professorship at the Conservatory, becoming director in 1897 until his retirement in 1902. Among the lauded Mozart players (and cadenza writers) of his day, he upheld staunchly traditional values, inherited from his father, leading in several quarters to charges of ultra-conservatism and pedantry. (Upon his death Walter Niemann, a former student, opined that because 'Wagner, Liszt, Berlioz and everything that followed them was repugnant to him ... the calamity of Leipzig was that in all essentials it failed to connect with the New Art of Munich, Stuttgart and Berlin.' *Neue Musikzeitung*, 1910.)

Guardian of history and heritage, his programming centred on a Teutonic line running from Bach to Weber, Spohr, Mendelssohn and Schumann. Eight of Beethoven's symphonies featured in his first season. Brahms appeared fitfully, the premiere of *A German Requiem* in 1869 being an early key moment. Schubert, aside from the '*Great*' *Symphony in C major*, was conveyed as broadly a songwriter and miniaturist. Gade flew the Danish flag. Bruckner, like Tchaikovsky, was absent (the first performance of his *Seventh Symphony*, at the Neues Theater in 1884, was under Nikisch). Wagner only a little less so. Liszt was principally a calling card for pianists. Berlioz was scarcely a presence (no *Symphonie fantastique* though *Harold in Italy* three times). Arthur Friedheim, Liszt's Russian pupil, thought him 'despotic'. Fritz von Bose, the 'Leipziger Brahms', disagreed: 'An artist of truly aristocratic and fine feeling, one who as pianist or conductor invariably made his own personality subordinate to the work he was interpreting. All who have heard him in his best years play a Mozart concerto, or the C minor of Beethoven, or have seen him conduct a classical symphony in the Gewandhaus, must have received an impression never to be forgotten.' (*The Musical Times*, May 1910.)

Surviving a relentless theory-grounded work ethic, a famous roll call passed through the Conservatory under his watch, including Isaac Albéniz, Ferruccio Busoni, Frederick Cowen, Fanny Davies, Frederick Delius, Edvard Grieg, Leoš Janáček, Robert Kajanus, Aleksander Michałowski, Karl Muck, Emil von Reznicek, Christian Sinding, Ethel Smyth, Charles Villiers Stanford, Arthur Sullivan, Johan Svendsen, Robert Teichmüller and Felix Weingartner. Of these Grieg was a notable dissenter, to Reinecke's dismay. Stanford, the influential Irish voice of Victorian/Edwardian Cambridge and the Royal College of Music, was similarly opined: 'Of all the dry musicians I have ever known [Reinecke] was the most desiccated. He had not a good word for any contemporary composer ... He loathed Wagner ... sneered at Brahms and had no enthusiasm of any sort.' (*Pages from an Unwritten Diary*, Edward Arnold, 1914.)

'Kapellmeister Reinecke', the American Louis Charles Elson recorded, 'illustrates the modestly great character of ... German musicians of rank. He has no tremendous salary; he does not dictate royal terms for every appearance of himself and orchestra; but he is sincerely honoured ... everyone in Leipzig [takes] off his hat to the simple and good old man; everyone, from nobleman to peasant. It counts for something to be thus ... beloved.' With a comfortable music room, piano by the window (soft-toned Blüthners being the local marque), embracing domesticity was his private refuge. He had three marriages (his first two wives dying young, the second in childbirth) and nine offspring. 'A number of charming young ladies of assorted sizes greeted my view in the drawing room ... Astounded at the rather numerous gathering, I ventured to ask whether any had escaped, and was informed that some of them had – into the bonds of wedlock. The sons, too, seemed especially bright, and the wit and badinage around the dinner table was something long to be remembered.' (Louis Charles Elson, *European Reminiscences, Musical and Otherwise*, T. Presser, 1891.)

The *Triple Concerto* (1803–04), Beethoven's only completed *sinfonia concertante*, occupies a position, along with his arrangement of the *Second Symphony* (published 1805, Naxos 8.570255), roughly between the '*Lichnowsky*' *Trios, Op. 1* (1795) and the *Opp. 70, 97* triptych (1809, 1816). 'A stepping-stone to greater things', Donald Francis Tovey believed, a score by no means easy to bring off, demanding 'from performers and listeners the fullest recognition of the grand manner in every detail'. The solo parts all raise bravura issues, the piano writing less simplistic than commentators often claim. Reinecke's first Gewandhausorchester performance, on 21 March 1861 with Ferdinand David and Karl Davydov, was in a programme flanked by Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture* and Schumann's *First Symphony*. He repeated it again in December 1865. His transcription (published c. 1866–67) is an imaginative, imposingly sonorous realisation in which the three instruments both retain their solo essence and share in the orchestral *tutti*, the keyboard enliveningly so. A re-dimensioned

panorama of concerto, symphony and chamber dynamic, muscular sonata rhetoric, lyrical A flat *Largo* and 'Bohemian' nuanced *Rondo alla polacca*, it makes a physically exultant addition to the repertory.

Precociously crafted, Reinecke's D major *Piano Trio* (1851) – dedicated to Schumann, ghosted by Mendelssohn, pre-dating Brahms – epitomises all that's discursive, gracious and civilised. The first movement comprises a slow introduction, repeated exposition, and varied reprise – here *con passione*, there *pesante*. A jewel of an intermezzo features B minor cello and violin duetting intimately, romanticised mordents heightening the expression, the lowest register of the piano glimpsing at gravitas. A G major *scherzo* of *grazioso* lineage (dots

and slurs characterfully vitalising the briskly motioned main idea) includes two trios, open strings and double-notes colouring the second in rustic fashion. The *Finale, brillante*, orchestrated in signature, contrapuntal as needed, is related in rhythm and figuration to the first movement, as well as containing facets of the second and third. Obvious examples of syncopated dislocation aside, bars 9 to 10, as well as later in the movement, interestingly notate staggered piano effects, with (descending) left-hand octaves placed fractionally before (ascending) right-hand chords.

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Duccio Ceccanti



Photo: Luca Centola

Duccio Ceccanti graduated with honours from the Conservatorio Luigi Cherubini in Florence and continued his studies with Salvatore Accardo, Felix Andrievsky, Stefan Gheorghiu and Boris Belkin. At a young age he was invited to perform at venues around the world, including Carnegie Hall and Columbia University in New York, Teatro Coliseo in Buenos Aires, Auditorium RSI in Lugano, Teatro di San Carlo in Naples and prestigious festivals including Maggio Musicale Fiorentino and the Biennale di Venezia. He has given premiere performances of works, some dedicated to him, by eminent composers such as Luciano Berio, Krzysztof Penderecki, Luca Francesconi, Peter Maxwell Davies, Luis de Pablo and Henri Pousseur. He performs with Quartetto Klimt and Contempo-artensemble, and has made recordings for Brilliant Classics, Naxos, Stradivarius and *Amadeus Magazine*. He teaches violin at the Conservatorio Giacomo Puccini, La Spezia and the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole. In 2017 the Accademia Internazionale Medicea awarded him the Laurentian Medal for artistic merit at the 30th edition of the Lorenzo il Magnifico Prize, held at Firenze, Salone dei Cinquecento of Palazzo Vecchio.

Vittorio Ceccanti



Photo: Niccolò Ceccanti

Vittorio Ceccanti began playing the cello aged five, studying with Mischa Maisky and David Geringas and graduating with honours as a pupil of Natalia Gutman from the Hochschule für Musik in Stuttgart. He made his debut as a soloist aged 17 performing Lalo's *Cello Concerto* conducted by Pinchas Steinberg at the Musikvereinssaal in Vienna, and Saint-Saëns' *Cello Concerto* at the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, which was televised by RAI TV. Since then, he has been invited to perform regularly as a solo artist in Europe, the Americas and Asia. He has made many recordings including the Beethoven cello sonatas for EMI Classics, Chopin's complete works for cello and piano and Sardelli's *Cello Concerto* with Modo Antiquo conducted by the composer for Brilliant Classics, Mendelssohn and Fauré's complete works for cello and piano with the pianist Bruno Canino for *Amadeus Magazine*, plus Peter Maxwell Davies' complete works for cello including his *Cello Concerto* for Naxos. www.vittorioceccanti.com

Matteo Fossi



Photo: Dominique Bollinger

Matteo Fossi began his musical studies at the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, and Piero Farulli, Maria Tipo, Pier Narciso Masi, Alexander Lonquich, Trio di Milano, Mstislav Rostropovich and Maurizio Pollini were among his foremost masters. He started a busy concert career while still very young and is now regarded as one of Italy's most active and versatile chamber musicians. For many years he has played in a duo with violinist Lorenza Borrani. In 1995 he founded Quartetto Klimt and more recently a piano duo with Marco Gaggini, with whom he is recording the complete works for two pianos by Brahms, Bartók and Schoenberg. With these groups, and as a solo performer, he has participated in most of the main concert seasons in Italy and abroad. He is constantly engaged on projects with artists of international standing. He has recorded for Decca, Universal, Nimbus, Hortus, Tactus, Amadeus, Stradivarius and the Brilliant Classics labels. He teaches piano at the Conservatorio di Musica Giovan Battista Martini in Bologna and chamber music at the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole. www.matteofossi.com

Photo: Niccolò Ceccanti



Prolific in every aspect of music throughout his long and distinguished career, Carl Reinecke represented the complete musician with the belief that 'art should bring happiness to mankind'. His imaginative transcription of Beethoven's bravura *Triple Concerto* sees the three instruments retaining their solo essence and sharing in the orchestral *tutti* to create a quintessential addition to the piano trio repertory. Heard here in its world premiere recording, Reinecke's *First Piano Trio* inhabits the passionate and expressive sound world of Schumann and Mendelssohn.

Ludwig van
BEETHOVEN

(1770–1827)

Triple Concerto for Violin, Cello and Piano in C major, Op. 56
(1803–04) (arr. Carl Reinecke for piano trio, pub. c. 1866–67) **35:26**

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------|
| ❶ | I. Allegro | 17:27 |
| ❷ | II. Largo | 4:37 |
| ❸ | III. Rondo alla polacca | 13:19 |

Carl
REINECKE

(1824–1910)

Piano Trio No. 1, Op. 38 (1851)* **28:56**

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-------|
| ❹ | I. Lento – Allegro ma non troppo | 10:05 |
| ❺ | II. Andante | 5:29 |
| ❻ | III. Scherzo: Vivace ma non troppo | 5:14 |
| ❼ | IV. Finale: Allegro brillante | 8:08 |

***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING**

Duccio Ceccanti, Violin • Vittorio Ceccanti, Cello
Matteo Fossi, Piano

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