

# BEETHOVEN

## Grand Symphonies • 1

Arr. Hummel for Flute, Violin, Cello and Piano

## Symphonies Nos. 1 and 3 'Eroica'

Uwe Grodd • Gould Piano Trio



## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

### Symphonies – No. 1 in C major, Op. 21; No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55 ‘Eroica’ Arranged by Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837) for Flute, Violin, Cello and Piano

By 1817, Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837) must have been giving careful consideration to his future since his appointment the previous year, as Kapellmeister at the Württemberg court in Stuttgart, was proving to be disastrous both from the professional and personal dimensions. In some respects, this appointment had represented an important career step for him, prompted perhaps by his marriage to the singer Elisabeth Röckel in 1813. Hummel came highly recommended to the position but unfortunately his employer, King Friedrich, died just one week after his arrival and his son and successor, Wilhelm, was fond neither of music nor Hummel. Hummel was very well established as a composer by this time but he had only recently begun to show an interest again in his career as a virtuoso pianist. The restrictions placed upon him by his new position effectively curtailed his ability to tour and re-establish himself as one of the greatest pianists in Europe. Nonetheless, by the time he severed his connection with the Württemberg court in 1819, Hummel had already established a pattern of professional activity that would flourish during the next phase of his career as Grand Ducal Kapellmeister at Weimar.

At Weimar, Hummel gained immense experience as a conductor of both orchestral works and operas. He continued to compose prolifically and, during his periods of leave, toured extensively throughout Europe as a pianist. His concerts not only included performances of his concertos and other large-scale works for piano and orchestra, but also solo works and improvisations. From the late 1820s Hummel also included in his programmes performances of arrangements he had made of works by his revered teacher Mozart [as featured on 8.572842 and 8.572841], and his rival and great contemporary Beethoven with whom he enjoyed a slightly uneasy acquaintance and whose symphonies he had conducted at Weimar.

The story of Hummel's first professional meeting with Beethoven comes from an account in Anton Schindler's often unreliable biography published after Beethoven's

death. In 1810, Beethoven travelled to Eisenstadt for the premiere of his *Mass in C, Op. 86*, which had been commissioned by Prince Nikolaus II Esterházy to mark the name day of his wife, Princess Marie Hermenegild for whom both Haydn and Hummel had composed brilliant Masses. On visiting the Esterházy Palace after the performance, Beethoven took great offense at Hummel's behaviour:

‘When the composer [Beethoven] entered, the prince said to him, in an indifferent tone, “But my dear Beethoven, what have you been about here again?” in allusion to the work which had just been performed. Disconcerted by this expression of the prince's, Beethoven was still more so when he saw Hummel stand laughing by the side of the prince. Fancying that [Hummel] was laughing [sniggering] at him, and moreover that he could perceive a malicious sneer in his professional colleague, he could stay no longer in a place where his production was ill appreciated. He left the prince's residence the same day ... His hatred to Hummel on this account struck such deep root, that I am not acquainted with any second instance of the kind in the course of his life.’

But the transgressions did not end there. Hummel was Beethoven's rival in romance as well; both musicians were in love with the same woman, the singer Elisabeth Röckel. Again, Hummel triumphed ‘because he had an appointment and had not the misfortune of being hard of hearing’.

By 1813, Beethoven's hostility towards Hummel had softened, perhaps because of the latter's skill at leading the percussion section and canons in a performance of his *Wellingtons Sieg, oder die Schlacht bei Vittoria*. Hummel's excellent playing earned a quick letter of praise – and even a joke – from Beethoven. Their relationship may also have improved because of their mutual friendship with the poet,

artist and politician Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, whom Hummel met after joining the court at Weimar in 1819. Hummel did not see Beethoven again until 1827 when he visited his ailing rival in Vienna. Beethoven was overjoyed and the two reunited like true friends. Beethoven shared with him a picture of Haydn's birthplace and is reported to have said, ‘Look, my dear Hummel, here is Haydn's birthplace; it is a present that I received this morning and it gives me very great pleasure. So great a man born in so mean a cottage!’ Hummel was deeply affected by Beethoven's sickness and wept openly. When he died several days later, Hummel attended him to his grave and played – at Beethoven's request – at his memorial service.

While their relationship was difficult at times, Hummel was clear who was the greater composer. Hummel's student Ferdinand Hiller once asked his teacher why he did not write music in a similar fashion to Beethoven. Hummel is said to have replied: ‘How could I follow in the footsteps of such a genius?’

By the turn of the 19th century, music had firmly moved from the court and church into the public concert hall and composers and performers were now regularly engaging with much larger audiences than had been the case in the previous century. Nonetheless, unless one lived in a major centre with an orchestra, such as Paris, Leipzig, London or Vienna, the opportunity to hear large-scale works by the great composers of the age was well-nigh impossible. But the musical public in these smaller centres were often well informed about the latest musical developments through newspaper reports and specialist publications like the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* and were curious to hear the works they read about. The only way to satisfy this demand was to create new versions of works that kept close to the core of the original compositions but did not require a full orchestra to perform them. This trend was not new: it had begun toward the end of the 18th century but the trickle of published arrangements had now become a flood. By 1844 there were more than 9,000 arrangements of works of various kinds in circulation including symphonies, concertos, overtures and even operas.

Sometime between 1825 and 1835 Hummel worked on arranging Beethoven's *Symphonies Nos. 1–7* and the

*Septet, Op. 20* for pianoforte, flute, violin and violoncello. He clearly favoured this particular combination of instruments, using it on no fewer than 50 occasions. It is not known precisely when Hummel began work on arranging Beethoven's symphonies. We know that the *Septet* was published in August 1827, a few months after Beethoven's death, and it is possible that the symphony arrangements were made after this date. In those last few days together, did Hummel seek Beethoven's approval for these arrangements to be made? It is unlikely that any conversation would have dealt with specific technical details given Beethoven's state of health. Prolonged discussion would also surely have left traces in Beethoven's conversation books or in surviving anecdotal material relating to his last days. But Beethoven would surely not have objected to the arrangements being made and certainly not by a composer and pianist of Hummel's stature; arrangements after all were a perfectly normal part of the 19th-century musical landscape. Beethoven himself made several arrangements of his works including one of *Symphony No. 2* for piano trio. He also authorised his former pupil Ferdinand Ries to publish an arrangement of the same work for string quartet in 1807 which proved very successful. Indeed, Ries also later arranged the ‘*Eroica*’ *Symphony* for pianoforte, violin, viola and violoncello, but this was not published until 1857, some 20 years after his death.

While one cannot discount the notion that Hummel's motivation for undertaking these arrangements was artistically driven, he was far too canny a businessman not to realise the potential profits to be made in publishing his own arrangements of works by the most celebrated composer of the age. Hummel approached the task with great care, making significant changes to Beethoven's scores in bringing new life to them in the chamber music configuration for which he was writing. These changes were all calculated for effect, not only in accommodating the reduced scoring in a way that made the most compelling musical sense, but also ensuring that the pianoforte – and therefore himself – starred as the centrepiece of the ensemble. But there were other, more noble considerations in Hummel's mind: he genuinely

wanted students and composers to understand Beethoven's remarkable symphonies and the only way to bring these into the homes of young artists was through publishing arrangements of them. This is consistent with his strong interest in pedagogy which is evident in his three-volume treatise, *A Complete Theoretical and Practical Course of Instruction on the Art of Playing the Piano Forte* (1828).

Hummel's arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies differ – often strikingly – from those he made of Mozart's symphonies. Mozart was his mentor and friend and he took great care with his teacher's works to remain as close as possible to the text while creating pocket-sized symphonies for flute, violin, cello and piano. The experience and discipline of this work led him to develop an approach to arranging that masterfully preserved the essence of the composition while translating it, to use David Wyn Jones's phrase, into a new medium adjusted to suit the listener in a small venue. With Beethoven's symphonies, however, Hummel clearly felt he had a freer hand, and this can be seen in numerous details in the instrumentation. In spite of having a flute in his new configuration, he repeatedly shifts the original flute melodies to the right hand of the piano, while the violin and cello provide the 'original' string accompaniment. And, as is the case with his Mozart arrangements, he gives all the best melodies to the piano.

It is unclear what source material Hummel used for his edition, and the loss of his autograph scores makes it impossible to assess its accuracy. However, he had no

reservations about choosing an English publisher for the series since we know from Hummel's own account that he preferred working with English publishing houses than their German counterparts. Chappell and Co. published more than 50 of Hummel's arrangements in England including his brilliant arrangements of the six Mozart symphonies referred to on the title page of the Beethoven series. It is possible that J. R. Schultz, who had acted as the composer's intermediary in London for Mozart's symphonies in 1823–24, was once again closely involved in the publication of Hummel's Beethoven arrangements. If this were the case, then it is possible that Chappell had access to either the Hummel's autographs or fair copies of the scores, since the only other printed edition of the works – issued by Schott – are highly inaccurate and clearly based on corrupt sources.

To audiences today, these two works need little introduction for they are among the most famous symphonies ever composed. To Hummel's audiences and his intended market, however, the works would have been far less familiar and even completely unknown. It is difficult for us to imagine such a thing and yet to hear the works in Hummel's arrangements is to hear them with fresh ears. The familiar is presented in a dazzling new setting that enables us not only to experience again the thrill of hearing these extraordinary works, but also to appreciate the musical sensitivity and sheer brilliance of Hummel as arranger.

**Uwe Grodd, Abigail Sperling**



### Gould Piano Trio

The Gould Piano Trio, directly compared to the great Beaux Arts Trio by *The Washington Post*, have remained at the forefront of the international chamber music scene for a quarter of a century. Launched by their first prize at the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition, they were 'Rising Stars', making a highly successful debut at New York's Weill Recital Hall, which was acclaimed by *The Strad* magazine. Their many appearances at London's Wigmore Hall have included the complete piano trios of Dvořák, Mendelssohn and Schubert in the 2017–18 season, and a Beethoven cycle, to celebrate 25 years since their first appearance at this iconic venue. Commissioning and performing new works is an important part of the trio's philosophy of staying creative and freshly inspired. Sir James MacMillan's *Piano Trio No. 2* was written for them in 2014 and premiered at the Bath International Music Festival that season. 2017 featured the Goulds in the Hull: City of Culture, performing *After Avedon*, a work by former BBC Young Musician Mark Simpson, as part of the PRS for Music Foundation's New Music Biennial. Their extensive tours of North America, the Far East, New Zealand, and Europe are interspersed with masterclasses to nurture the next generation, for instance at the Britten–Pears Young Artist Programme at Snape Maltings. In addition to their highly praised recordings of the standard works, the trio have thrown light on neglected gems from the late Romantic British repertoire for Naxos, including the piano trios of Charles Villiers Stanford and John Ireland. [www.gouldpianotrio.com](http://www.gouldpianotrio.com)



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### Uwe Grodd

Uwe Grodd's contributions to classical music have brought him critical acclaim as a flautist, conductor, editor and teacher. He has made world premiere recordings of more than 80 works of 18th and early 19th-century music. Grodd initially gained worldwide attention when he was awarded First Prize at the Cannes Classical Awards 2000 for Best 18th Century Orchestral Recording for his album of Váňhal *Symphonies* (8.554341), and twice earned a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice accolade as well as the *International Record Review* Outstanding Industry Award. A graduate of Mainz University, Germany, Grodd studied with teachers of international repute including André Jaunet, Robert Aitken and Sergiu Celibidache. Uwe Grodd was invited to become music director of the Auckland Choral Society in 2008, and has been music director of the Manukau Symphony Orchestra since its inception in 1993. In 2017 he was invited to become music director of the Albany School of Music and Remuera Music Academy. As Professor Emeritus of the University of Auckland Uwe Grodd's reputation as an inspiring teacher is well documented by his students' international performances and prizes. His editions of music by Váňhal, Hummel, Beethoven and Ries are increasingly in demand.



Beethoven and Hummel's relationship was one of fractious beginnings, but ultimately true friendship. Between 1825 and 1835 Hummel arranged his contemporary's *Symphonies Nos. 1–7* and *Septet, Op. 20* for his favoured combination of pianoforte, flute, violin and violoncello. Beethoven would surely not have objected – arrangements were, after all, a perfectly normal part of the 19th-century musical landscape. To audiences today his symphonies need little introduction but, thanks to the musical sensitivity and sheer brilliance of Hummel's arrangements, it is possible to experience the thrill of hearing these extraordinary pieces afresh.

**Ludwig van  
BEETHOVEN**  
(1770–1827)

**Grand Symphonies • 1**

Arranged by Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837)  
for Flute, Violin, Cello and Piano

**Symphony No. 3 in E flat major,  
Op. 55 'Eroica' (1803–04) 48:06**

- 1** I. Allegro con brio 17:28
- 2** II. Marcia funebre: Adagio assai 13:22
- 3** III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace 5:59
- 4** IV. Finale: Allegro molto 11:08

**Symphony No. 1 in C major,  
Op. 21 (1799–1800) 26:38**

- 5** I. Adagio molto – Allegro con brio 9:42
- 6** II. Andante cantabile con moto 7:34
- 7** III. Minuet: Allegro molto e vivace 3:36
- 8** IV. Finale: Adagio – Allegro molto e vivace 5:36

**Uwe Grodd, Flute  
Gould Piano Trio**

**Lucy Gould, Violin • Alice Neary, Cello • Benjamin Frith, Piano**

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The scores and parts of these works are available from [www.artaria.com](http://www.artaria.com)



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Playing Time  
74:50



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