

CHANDOS

IN HER HANDS

CHAMINADE • CLARA SCHUMANN • PEJAČEVIĆ
~ PIANO TRIOS ~



NEAVE TRIO



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Cécile Chaminade, c. 1890

In Her Hands

Clara Schumann (1819 – 1896)

Trio, Op. 17 (1846) **28:04**
in G minor • in g-Moll • en sol mineur
for Piano, Violin, and Cello

- | | | |
|---|---|-------|
| 1 | Allegro moderato | 11:04 |
| 2 | Scherzo. Tempo di Menuetto – Trio – [Scherzo] | 4:43 |
| 3 | Andante – Più animato – Tempo I | 4:43 |
| 4 | Allegretto | 7:33 |

Dora Pejačević (1885 – 1923)

Trio (No. 2), Op. 29 (1910) **34:49**
in C major • in C-Dur • en ut majeur
for Piano, Violin, and Cello
Dem Kammervirtuosen Prof. Walther Bachmann dankbarst zugeeignet

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 5 | I Allegro con moto – [] – Tempo I | 11:43 |
| 6 | II Scherzo. Allegro – Presto – Trio – Scherzo da capo | 5:39 |
| 7 | III Lento – Allegretto – Tempo I – Allegro molto – Lento –
Tempo I – Allegretto – Tempo I | 7:35 |
| 8 | IV Finale. Allegro risoluto – Più mosso | 9:51 |

Cécile Chaminade (1857 – 1944)

Trio No. 2, Op. 34 (1886) 22:22

in A minor • in a-Moll • en la mineur

for Piano, Violin, and Cello

À Monsieur J. Delsart, Professeur au Conservatoire

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|
| 9 | I Allegro moderato | 8:46 |
| 10 | II Lento – Animato – Tempo I – Poco più mosso – Tempo I | 7:41 |
| 11 | III Allegro energico | 5:54 |
| | | TT 85:16 |

Neave Trio

Anna Williams violin

Mikhail Veselov cello

Eri Nakamura piano



Jacob Lewis Lovendahl

Neave Trio

In Her Hands

Clara Schumann: Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17

Clara Schumann (1819–1896) wrote her Piano Trio under trying circumstances. She began to work on it in Dresden during May 1846 but that summer the Schumanns travelled to Nordency, in the Frisian Islands, with the aim of helping Robert recover his health. During their time on the island, Clara suffered a miscarriage but after their return to Dresden, she managed to complete the Trio, in September. A private performance of the work was given at the Schumanns' house on 2 October after which Clara confided to her diary that the experience of hearing it performed had delighted her. But she was far from convinced that the work had any real value, writing that

There are some pretty passages in the Trio, and I believe it is quite successful in its form; of course, it will always be a woman's work, always lacking in power and, here and there, inventiveness.¹

¹Es sind einige hübsche Stellen in dem Trio, und wie ich glaube, ist es auch in der Form ziemlich gelungen, natürlich bleibt es immer Frauenzimmerarbeit, bei denen es immer an der Kraft, und hie und da an der Erfindung fehlt.

Her lack of self-confidence should not colour our own view of the G minor Trio. Clara gave one of her rare performances of it at a concert in Vienna on 15 January 1847, and it was published by Breitkopf & Härtel later that year. One of its most enthusiastic early supporters was Johannes Brahms, who played it at a concert in Hamburg on 17 December 1854. Another was Joseph Joachim, but as Clara's biographer Nancy Reich noted, even praise from such an esteemed colleague... could not convince her of the Trio's worth. She played her husband's trios far more often than her own.

The first edition bears no dedication, but Clara's original intention had been to dedicate the work to Fanny Mendelssohn (Hensel) whose own Piano Trio was composed at the same time. However, Fanny died suddenly, in May 1847, aged only forty-one, while the edition was in preparation.

The first of the four movements, *Allegro moderato*, is in sonata form and not only are the musical ideas memorable, but so is the thorough and resourceful working-out of them in the development section. While the tempo is quite fast, the melodies themselves are

often tinged with melancholy, though never at the expense of a strong sense of forward momentum. Despite the fact that this is her only major chamber work (and her only four-movement composition apart from the earlier Piano Sonata in G minor), throughout the Trio Clara demonstrates superbly assured handling of form, and her instrumental writing is equally confident. The second movement (in B flat major) is rather ambiguously headed both *Scherzo* and *Tempo di Menuetto* and it is, indeed, a rather playful and idiosyncratic minuet. Its substantial central Trio (in E flat major) is particularly attractive thanks to some alluring cross-rhythms. The *Andante* (in G major) opens with a piano solo, the main theme then taken up by the violin and cello in turn. A more animated central section plunges into G minor before an exquisite return to the opening material on the cello, initially accompanied by *pizzicato* violin chords and piano arpeggios. This gives way to a coda which seems to embody blissful tranquillity. The *Allegretto* finale (in G minor) is another movement in sonata form and it maintains a predominantly serious mood; it includes a noteworthy *fugato* passage which demonstrates Clara's contrapuntal skill. Only in the last four bars does the music move from minor to major.

Cécile Chaminade: Piano Trio No. 2 in A minor, Op. 34

Though Cécile Chaminade (1857 – 1944) is best remembered for her large output of shorter, often charming, solo piano pieces, it is her large-scale works – mostly written in the earlier part of her career – which reveal a composer of greater stature. In the early 1880s she composed the four-movement *Suite d'orchestre*, Op. 20 (dedicated to her teacher, Benjamin Godard), given its première at the Société nationale de musique (SNM) on 4 April 1881, conducted by Édouard Colonne. In the same year, Durand published Chaminade's Piano Trio No. 1, Op. 11 (CHAN 20238). When that was played at the Salle Érard, in February 1880, the critic in *Le Ménestrel* (15 February 1880) wrote that it was

written by a hand that is already firm
and assured, revealing profound and
serious skill.²

Chaminade's Piano Trio No. 2 in A minor was published by Enoch frères & Costallat in 1887, with a dedication to the great French cellist Jules Delsart – famous for his cello arrangement of Franck's Violin Sonata (and also the dedicatee of works by Massenet,

² d'une main déjà ferme et assurée et témoigne d'un savoir profonde et sérieux

Saint-Saëns, Widor, among others). The successful première had been given at the Salle Érard on 4 February 1886. On that occasion Chaminade herself was the pianist, with Martin-Pierre Marsick (violin) and Célestin-Ernest Cros-Saint-Ange (cello). Chaminade went on to play the A minor Trio regularly during the 1890s. On 14 February 1897 she gave it at Épinal, in the Vosges, prompting the critic of *Le Mémorial des Vosges* to declare that

at the present time, Cécile Chaminade is one of the uncontested leaders of the French school, and the most pleasing of our young composers.³

A few weeks later, at a concert in Cambrai on 2 April 1897, the Trio was described in the Cambrai *Indépendant* (3 April 1897) as one of the *hits* of the evening, which earned an ovation for the composer and her colleagues.⁴

Musical taste can be a fickle thing and by the 1920s Chaminade's chamber music was no longer fashionable. The English pianist Katharine Eggar (an active feminist and member of the Society of Women Musicians)

³ À l'heure actuelle, Cécile Chaminade est un des chefs incontestés de l'école française et le plus sympathique de nos jeunes compositeurs

⁴ un des *clous* de la soirée a valu une ovation à l'auteur et à ses interprètes

wrote the entry of Chaminade for *Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*.

Comparing the two trios, Eggar was of the view that

the more ambitious plan and more virile style of the second trio is, perhaps, not so attractive as the delightfully feminine grace of the earlier work,

going on to criticise a 'lack of character in the rhythmical construction' in the first movement, while admitting that 'the soundness of the workmanship should command appreciation.' A century on, it is hard to reconcile these remarks with Chaminade's bold and inventive music. The Trio is cast in three movements, the first marked *Allegro moderato*. Its main theme is announced in octaves by piano and strings in the stirring opening paragraph. A gentler, contrasting idea – based on an ascending scale – is introduced by the cello, soon taken up by the violin. Both ideas are developed in the course of an elaborate movement, but the first theme dominates the musical argument and drives the music towards its dramatic conclusion. The *Lento* slow movement, in E major, finds Chaminade at her most radiantly expressive. Over rich piano chords, a long-breathed melody on the strings (in octaves) develops into a dialogue in which



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Dora Pejačević

Chaminade's harmonic resourcefulness is also much in evidence. A slightly faster central section (in E minor) begins with a piano solo. It works towards an ardent climax, after which a seamless return to the original key and tempo brings a varied reprise of the opening material. The finale, *Allegro energico*, drives the work to a highly animated close.

Dora Pejačević: Piano Trio (No. 2) in C major, Op. 29

The Croatian composer Dora Pejačević (1885 – 1923) was born in Budapest into an aristocratic family, and she spent much of her childhood at the family castle in Našice, though she also travelled regularly to Vienna, Prague, Munich, and Budapest. Intellectually curious and a voracious reader from an early age, Pejačević was largely self-taught as a composer. Her first piano trio (in D major) was composed in 1905 (when she was twenty) and the second followed in 1910, by which time Pejačević's musical language had already evolved into its distinctive late-romantic style. Pejačević's biographer Koraljka Kos has written that,

The second Trio in C major for Violin, Violoncello, and Piano, Op. 29 (1910), is a mature composition, with well-formed chamber texture and style.

The force of thematic and motivic concentration is impressive, especially in the first and final movements. A short, dotted motif is particularly emphasised and used many times over, like an obsessive repetition. In the development sections, the polyphonic texture and density of the sound are allied with harsh harmonies and 'unexpected' intervals.

The Trio is dedicated to Walther Bachmann (1874 – 1938), a distinguished Dresden pianist. His Bachmann Trio (with Rudolf Bärtich and Arthur Stenz) worked closely with Pejačević in 1910 – 11, during her time in Dresden (when she studied privately with the Anglo-German composer Percy Sherwood). Bachmann's ensemble performed several of her works, notably the Piano Quartet, Op. 25, though it seems that they did not play the new Trio at the time. According to the records of the Croatian Music Information Centre, the earliest known performance of the Op. 29 Trio took place in Budapest in 1913, played by an ensemble including the pianist István Thomán (a Liszt pupil who taught Bartók and Dohnányi).

Composed when Pejačević was in her mid-twenties, the Trio is in four movements. The first, marked *Allegro con moto*, begins with a

lyrical violin theme over piano arpeggios, but Pejačević soon introduces a distinctive dotted rhythm into the thematic mix – the ‘obsessive’ motif mentioned by Koraljka Kos – which returns intermittently throughout the work. This first movement is remarkable for its profusion of melodies, its individual harmonies, and occasional hints of earlier composers such as Brahms. The second movement is a Scherzo (in A minor) and it reveals a spikier side to Pejačević’s music in its outer sections, which are in 2 / 4. The dream-like central Trio is in A major, and it is more unusual, written in a gently swaying 5 / 4 time, the piano and string parts ingeniously intertwined. The *Lento* which follows is in E major, though, characterised by frequent changes of tempo and key, it is as varied as it is unconventional. This beautiful and often surprising movement is followed by a Finale marked *Allegro risoluto*. While dotted rhythms are very much in evidence – as they were in the first movement – these are but one ingredient in a movement which is notable for its energy and its swashbuckling spirit. Pejačević’s harmonies are attractively adventurous throughout, but the Trio ends in a flamboyant blaze of C major.

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Hailed by the magazine *BBC Music* for its ‘generous and warm-hearted, utterly beguiling playing’, the GRAMMY®-nominated *Neave Trio* has emerged as one of the finest young ensembles of its generation. It has been praised by WQXR Radio in New York City for its ‘bright and radiant music making’, described by *The Strad* as having ‘elegant phrasing and deft control of textures’, and praised by *The New York Times* for its ‘excellent performances’. Its members originating from the US, Russia, and Japan, the Trio has performed on concert stages from Carnegie Hall, in New York, to venues in the UK, continental Europe, Japan, and Russia, bringing audiences to their feet and receiving the highest critical acclaim. Performances have been broadcast on radio stations across the United States and abroad, notably on American Public Media’s *Performance Today*.

Previous recordings have been met with critical acclaim, listed among ‘The Best New Recordings of 2018 (So Far)’ on WQXR and among the best recordings of 2019 both by *The New York Times* and BBC Radio 3. The Trio’s 2022 album, *Musical Remembrances*, was nominated for a GRAMMY® in the Best Chamber Music / Small Ensemble category. The Trio has held artist residency

positions at Brown University, the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, San Diego State University, Rochester Institute of Technology, Walnut Hill School for the Arts, and Concord Academy, and is the inaugural Ensemble-in-Residence at Virginia Commonwealth University. From 2017 to 2022, it was ensemble in residence at the Longy School of Music of Bard College, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As part of its mission to create new pathways for classical music and engage a wider audience, the Neave Trio frequently works with artists of all mediums. Notable collaborations include

the world première performance of *Klee Musings*, a work dedicated to the Trio by the American composer Augusta Read Thomas; the world première of Robert Paterson's triple concerto, *Summit*, conducted by JoAnn Falletta; and a new dance piece with Pigeonwing Dance, the composer Robert Sirota, and choreographer Gabrielle Lamb called *Rising*, an evening-length work which meditates not only on rising temperatures and sea levels, but also on the rising awareness of humanity of our connection to and dependence on the Earth's oceans.
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Steinway Model D Concert Grand Piano (serial no. 592 087) courtesy of Pottton Hall
Piano technician: Alexander Warcada-Wood, Alex Wood Piano Services
Page turner: Peter Willsher

Recording producer Jonathan Cooper
Sound engineer Jonathan Cooper
Editor Jonathan Cooper
A & R administrator Karen Marchlik
Recording venue Pottton Hall, Dunwich, Suffolk; 5 – 7 August 2025
Front cover Photograph of Neave Trio by Titilayo Ayangade
Design and typesetting Cass Cassidy
Booklet editor Finn S. Gundersen
Publishers © c. 1847 Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig (C. Schumann), © 2016 Edition Butorac, München (Pejačević), © 1887 Énoch frères & Costallat, Paris (Chaminade)
UPC 0095115236826
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Chandos Records Ltd, Colchester, Essex CO2 8HX, England
Country of origin UK

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IN HER HANDS

CLARA SCHUMANN (1819–1896)

1-4 Trio, Op. 17 (1846) 28:04
in G minor · in g-Moll · en sol mineur
for Piano, Violin, and Cello

DORA PEJAČEVIĆ (1885–1923)

5-8 Trio (No. 2), Op. 29 (1910) 34:49
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CÉCILE CHAMINADE (1857–1944)

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TT 85:16

NEAVE TRIO

Anna Williams violin
Mikhail Veselov cello
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