



ELOQUENCE

SCHUBERT

Piano Quintet in A 'Trout'

DVOŘÁK

Piano Trio in E minor 'Dumky'

Jörg Demus · Schubert Quartet
Suk Trio

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

Piano Quintet in A major, D.667 'Trout'

1	I	Allegro vivace	9'08
2	II	Andante	6'33
3	III	Scherzo (Presto)	4'17
4	IV	Thema – Andantino – Variazioni I-V – Allegretto	7'43
5	V	Finale (Allegro giusto)	6'52

Jörg Demus, piano

Schubert Quartet

Anton Kamper, violin · Erich Weis, viola

Ludwig Beinl, cello · Josef Hermann, double-bass

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 90 'Dumky'

6	I	Lento maestoso – Allegro vivace, quasi doppio movimento – Tempo I – Allegro molto	4'12
7	II	Poco adagio – Vivace non troppo	7'27
8	III	Andante – Vivace non troppo – Andante – Allegretto	6'34
9	IV	Andante moderato (Quasi tempo di marcia) – Allegretto scherzando – Meno mosso – Allegro – Moderato	4'47
10	V	Allegro	4'12
11	VI	Lento maestoso – Vivace, quasi movimento – Lento – Vivace	5'05

Jan Panenka, piano

Josef Suk, violin

Milos Sádlo, cello

Total timing: 67'00

Both of the delightful chamber works on this disc are unique in their composers' outputs; and as the performances themselves are also 'one-offs', music-lovers will find much to entertain and interest them.

One of the happiest summers in Franz Schubert's short life was spent at Steyr, in the mountainous region of Upper Austria. His friend the baritone Johann Michael Vogl, who came from Steyr, took him there on holiday in July 1819. Although he was the centre of an admiring little circle in Vienna, Schubert was not used to being feted elsewhere; but his songs were already quite well known at Steyr, through Vogl and others. His fame had spread even to Linz, which he and Vogl visited. The amateur musicians of Steyr liked their *Hausmusik*: the local mine manager Sylvester Paumgartner, who was an excellent cellist, asked Schubert for a piano quintet that could be played alongside one by Johann Nepomuk Hummel, for the unusual string combination of violin, viola, cello and double-bass. It seems Paumgartner also requested that one of the movements should be based on Schubert's delectable song *Die Forelle* (The Trout).

Working quite fast, Schubert wrote the usual four movements but inserted a fifth between the Scherzo and the finale, making it a set of variations on the song tune. The idyllic

circumstances in which the piece was composed, and the spirit of the song, seemed to infuse the whole work with the atmosphere of mountain streams: one can hear ripples in the piano part, even in the movements which supposedly have nothing to do with *Die Forelle*, and the string writing is in Schubert's most charming Viennese vein. He makes use of the double-bass to provide a firm yet flexible bottom line, thus freeing the cello to take a purely melodic role. Even the viola, Schubert's own instrument when he was playing quartets, is given some opportunities, not least in the Andante.

Each movement is quite simply and loosely constructed, so that the quintet is as relaxing for the players as for the listeners. The opening Allegro vivace is in sonata form, without a coda. The Andante is in a simple A-B-C-A-B-C form. In the Scherzo, Schubert puts on his fishing waders (or perhaps his hiking boots) and makes the listener very aware of the double-bass: even the lilting Trio galumphs in places. The theme for the variations is stated first by the strings, the piano entering for the first variation, and Schubert rings the changes on his instrumentation until the sprightly final variation, everyone's favourite. Even the easygoing finale is quite free of stress, although it has a Hungarian tinge. Schubert's first chamber music masterpiece is not a profound

work, as the later quartets and the C major Quintet are, and yet it has quite a few moments of quiet contemplation before its lyrical impulses assert themselves again.

The 'Trout' Quintet has always been one of Schubert's most popular works – but in the old days, when it was performed in public, the audience often applauded in the middle of the finale, where the players come to a halt before the second half of the movement. That error would hardly be committed today, when Schubert's music has become known the world over. For the 'Trout' Quintet, the breakthrough came at the beginning of the 1950s, when an American company made a best-selling recording of it in Vienna with Paul Badura-Skoda and members of the Konzerthaus Quartet with the Vienna Philharmonic bassist Josef Hermann. The Konzerthaus Quartet was formed in 1934 by members of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Anton Kamper, Karl Maria Titze, Erich Weis and Franz Kvarda. In the years 1936–38 all four were taken into the State Opera Orchestra and the Philharmonic; and from the 1936–37 season the foursome became the resident chamber group at the Konzerthaus.

In the 1957–58 season Kvarda had to resign for health reasons and he was replaced by Ludwig Beinl. For the stereo era, three of the group and

Hermann recorded the 'Trout' again with the British pianist Denis Matthews for another US label. Thus, when Deutsche Grammophon invited them to make still another recording with the Austrian pianist Jörg Demus, an old friend of theirs, for contractual reasons Messrs Kamper, Weis, Beinl and Hermann had to hide behind the pseudonym 'Schubert Quartet'.

For the sessions in September 1959, the five musicians travelled to Munich, where the work was taped in the Herkules-Saal on the 5th, 6th and 7th. The recording was an instant success and went through several LP editions and a brief outing on CD in 1992 as part of Deutsche Grammophon's 'Compact Classics' series. Music-lovers have long speculated about the composition of the 'Schubert Quartet' and now the truth can be told, so a new generation can enjoy the work of these echt Wienerisch musicians without being mystified as to their identity.

Antonín Dvořák was a great admirer of Schubert but his 'Dumky' Trio was one of his few chamber works not to show any of the earlier composer's influence. Of course by comparison with Schubert, he was a late developer: he wrote the first of his four surviving piano trios in 1875, when he was 34, an age Schubert did not even reach. Three of Dvořák's trios were couched in

the usual four movements but by the time he came to the last one, in 1890, he had already written movements of several other works in what he called the *dumka* form.

In its original Ukrainian guise, the *dumka* was a slowish folk ballad, but Dvořák adapted it into a piece that began slowly and then speeded up, often alternating slow and fast tempi. Having become adept at fashioning such movements, he went the whole hog and composed a work consisting solely of six *dumky*, in E minor, C sharp minor, A major, D minor, E flat major and C minor. The first three *dumky* are played without any appreciable break between them. In each *dumka* Dvořák contrasts major and minor keys, as well as fast and slow; and further colour is provided by muting the stringed instruments – in the second *dumka* a muted violin is twice pitted against an unmuted cello, while at the beginning and end of the third *dumka* both instruments are muted.

In general Dvořák depicts the cello as more dignified, the violin as more sprightly, although both instruments have many soulful moments and the violin has an extraordinary *molto espressivo* recitative in the final *dumka*. One can see vestiges of the usual four movements, with the first three *dumky* representing the opening movement, the marvellous fourth *dumka* with its

striding cello tune taking the role of the slow movement, the fifth acting as the scherzo and the sixth as the finale. But really each succeeding piece can be enjoyed in its own right until the final C minor *dumka* ends in a brilliantly positive chord, Dvořák here employing the *Tierce de Picardie*. Throughout, the string writing shows the composer's skill in this department and the piano part, which from the start he seems to have intended to play himself, is very effective.

The immediate spur for the *Dumky Trio*'s composition was the decision by Charles University in Prague to award Dvořák an honorary PhD degree – the ceremony was set for 17 March 1891. Dvořák began work on the trio the previous November and finished it on 12 February. On 11 April he gave a celebratory first performance with two distinguished friends, the violinist Ferdinand Lachner and the cellist Hanus Wihan; and early the following year the three of them took the work on a tour of Bohemia and Moravia, prior to Dvořák's setting out for his two-year sojourn in America. A picture taken during the 40-town tour shows the three men looking dapper and jaunty in their outdoor clothes, complete with a varied selection of stylish hats.

This performance of the *Dumky Trio* is a very special one. The great Czech violinist Josef Suk formed his trio ensemble in 1951 with the cellist

Sasa Vectomov and the pianist Jiří Hubička, naming it after his grandfather, the composer Josef Suk – pupil and son-in-law of Dvořák. The piano part was then successively taken over by Josef Hála, František Maxian, Jan Panenka and Hála again; but Josef Chuchro was basically the cellist from 1952. For three years in the late 1950s, however, while Chuchro was furthering his studies in Moscow, the ensemble enjoyed the services of the greatest of all Czech cellists, Milos Sádlo – who had previously played in the Czech Trio and so knew the repertoire well. During that brief period when the Suk Trio included the two finest Czech string players of the era, alongside the superb pianist Jan Panenka, just one recording was made: in June 1958, Panenka, Suk and Sádlo went to the Beethoven-Saal in Hanover to tape the *Dumky*, a task they achieved in four sessions spread over three days. This interpretation has ever since been regarded by connoisseurs as the best; but it has never previously been reissued on CD.

Tully Potter

Recording producer: Hans Weber (Schubert); Klaus Fischer-Dieskau (Dvořák)

Recording engineer: Heinz Wildhagen (Schubert); Gerhard Henjes (Dvořák)

Recording location: Herkules-Saal, Munich, Germany, September, 1959 (Schubert); Beethoven-Saal, Hanover, Germany, June 1958 (Dvořák)

Eloquence series manager: Cyrus Meher-Homji

Art direction: Chilu Tong · www.chilu.com

