

## **J O H A N N E S   B R A H M S   ( 1 8 3 3 - 1 8 9 7 )**

<b>Trio en Do mineur op.101</b>	19'53
1. Allegro energico.	7'12
2. Presto non assai.	3'22
3. Andante grazioso.	4'00
4. Finale : Allegro molto.	5'19
<i>Trio Florilège</i>	

<b>Intermezzi op 118</b>	12'44
5. n° 1 en La mineur	1'33
6. n° 2 en La majeur	5'32
7. n° 6 en Mi bémol mineur	5'39
<i>Irakly Avaliani, piano</i>	

<b>8.Scherzo en Do mineur Wo0 2 pour violon et piano</b>	5'46
<i>Jean-Noël Molard - violon, Irakly Avaliani - piano</i>	

<b>Trio en Si majeur op.8</b>	35'19
9. Allegro con brio.	14'56
10. Scherzo. Allegro molto.	6'22
11. Adagio.	7'19
12. Allegro.	6'42
<i>Trio Florilège</i>	

Totale durée            74'30

### **T R I O   F L O R I L È G E**

Irakly Avaliani, piano  
Jean-Noël Molard, violon  
Marc-Didier Thirault, violoncelle

Eglise Saint Marcel, Paris, 1997  
Prise de son et direction artistique: Joël Perrot.

## JOHANNES BRAHMS

In the mid-1800's, Germany's musical cognoscenti were divided into two camps. After Mendelssohn's death in 1827, opinion was split between Schumann's ideology, considered «modern» and the Mendelssohn camp, which was more traditional and conservative. In this context it is important to mention that there was no one spiritual leader representing the two different ideologies. Moreover, Schumann himself greatly admired his friend Felix Mendelssohn and refused to be implicated in this divisive debate. The split between these two styles seems to have occurred quite naturally, speeded along by pressure from the critics of the day. However, this stylistic dispute pales in comparison to the fierce quarrel that ensued between followers of Liszt and the puritan disciples of Mendelssohn.

Meanwhile, the new wave of liberalism, to which Schumann adhered, fell squarely between two stools. On the one hand was the Weimar Academy, led by the militant Wagner and revolutionary Liszt, on the other, the conservative traditionalism of Leipzig, home to the musical lineage of Mendelssohn who had remained academic throughout.

It was precisely at this troublesome time that Johannes Brahms first appeared on the musical scene alongside Robert and Clara Schumann.

They first met on the 30th September 1853.

Robert Schumann's life was coming to an end. Gravely ill, he saw in Brahms his spiritual descendant. In the warm, nurturing environment of his friendship with Schumann, the young Brahms blossomed.

The Weimar Academy made several attempts to convert "the young eagle", but all was in vain. Johannes Brahms, led by his solitary character and eager, creative instinct, defied classification and ignored contemporary musical styles. Following his modest upbringing, he would hold on to nostalgic memories of his native Hamburg throughout his life. The melancholic, misty landscapes of northern Germany, which he remembered wistfully, would greatly influence his music. Driven by ambition, Brahms carved out an education for himself, taking inspiration from the works of Hoffmann, Jean Paul and Eichendorff.

Brahms' repertoire was dominated by chamber music but, even here, the symphonic nature of his music is omnipresent. Following in Beethoven's footsteps, Brahms enriched the form of the sonata and the technique of variations, bringing greater flexibility to composition. His inexhaustible imagination and thematic multiplicity had a huge influence on future generations.

In the spring of 1886, Brahms left Vienna for the small village of Hofstetten, on the banks of Lake Thun in Switzerland. He took lodgings on the first floor of a charming house and decided to permit himself an extended holiday. «...I have found absolutely enchanting lodgings. It's absolutely wonderful here." At the age of 53, Johannes Brahms had developed a love of rambling, a pursuit that took him frequently on picturesque, solitary excursions to Mürren and Kandersteg. The verdant banks of this pretty and peaceful lake enchanted

him. It was these beautiful surroundings that provided the inspiration for the celebrated Trio in C minor Op. 101.

**The Trio in C minor Op. 101** is amongst the great chefs d'oeuvres of romantic chamber music. From the very first bars, the listener is subjected to the emotional strength and power of this characteristically Brahmsian work.

The first movement - Allegro energico - takes the form of a sonata with breath-taking orchestral resonance. After a grandiose exposition - ben marcato - the themes are continuously developed, culminating in the coda that recalls the original motif.

Presto non assai - is an elegiac scherzo, whose central passage evokes memories of a Hungarian dance. This remarkable movement is noteworthy, above all, for its extraordinary rhythms. It has, at once, a mysterious and fantastic quality, which one would normally associate with more youthful work.

The following movement - Andante grazioso - represents a cradle rocking between the piano and the strings. Affection and feeling are an integral part of the music, as well as charming intimacy.

The finale - Allegro molto - is written with verve and ardour by a composer that is in complete control of his genius. The final coda is the jewel in the crown of this magnificent Trio.

**The three Intermezzi Op. 118:** No. 1 - Allegro non assai, ma molto passionato - in A minor, No.2 - Andante teneramente - in A major and No. 6 - Andante largo e mesto - in E sharp minor were composed in 1893 and reflect the intimate character of Chopin's nocturnes. It is with these elegies that Brahms shares his most deeply felt music with us.

**The Scherzo in C minor WoO 2** for violin and piano is the 3rd movement of a sonata composed in 1853 by Johannes Joachim, (a loyal friend of Brahms) entitled "Frie aber einsam" (free but lonely). The second and fourth movements were composed by Robert Schumann and the first, by his pupil Robert Dietrich. It is a piece that exudes great energy and passion.

**The Trio in B major Op. 8** was written by Brahms at the tender age of 21 and was composed in Hanover in 1854. It was not, however, until 1891, after having been completely transformed, that the piece appeared in its definitive form. As Brahms himself explained to his old friend Grimm - " That Trio in B. I will not put a wig on its head, but instead content myself with combing its hair and styling its coiffure a little. "

This piece of music, comprising four movements, represents the period of great friendship that united Schumann and Brahms.

The 1st movement - Allegro con brio - is in the form of a sonata. This Allegro, with its three elaborately developed themes, is very rich in its melodic variety. It already reflects the future character of Brahms' music.

The 2nd movement - Scherzo. Allegro molto - is a scherzo that bursts with energy with room enough, for a waltz in the middle section. This movement was only very slightly altered by Brahms in his dotage.

The slow movement - Adagio - is a veritable dialogue between the piano and the strings. The mystical piano chords take the cello solo to its expressive climax.

The "Finale" - Allegro - is a combination of rondo and sonata forms. This movement, completely re-worked by Brahms, brings this genial piece to its intensely passionate conclusion.

Alexis MAZEL  
Translated by Eve JUDELSON