

CD REVIEW 33

BEETHOVEN Sonatas for violin and piano, Volume 3.

A major Op 30 no 1,

E flat major Op 12 no 3,

A major (Kreutzer) Op 47

Alina Ibragimova (violin) Cedric Tiberghien (piano)

Wigmore Hall Live 0045 (78.56)

Recorded live at Wigmore Hall, London 25 May 2010.

Alina Ibragimova was born in Polevskoy, Russia on 28 September 1985 and now resides in the UK. She has won several prizes and awards including the youngest-ever winner of the Royal Philharmonic Emily Anderson Award and the London Symphony Orchestra Music Scholarship. She has recorded the violin works of Karl Amadeus Hartmann, concertos by Roslavets, works by Szymanowski and the solo violin works of J S Bach.

Cedric Tiberghien was born in France on 5 May 1975 and has also won many prizes and awards. He has performed in many parts of the world from New York to Japan and has 50 concertos in his repertoire including the formidable Piano Concerto no. 1 by Brahms.

This is their third and finale volume of the Beethoven violin sonatas.

I wish to correct the reviewer of Music Web International who says, or implies, that the violinist is not assertive enough in the early sonatas or words to that effect. I do wish reviewers knew what they were talking about and, of course, it helps to have the music in front of you to follow it. The early sonatas were for piano with violin accompaniment and so the piano, and not the violin, is the prominent instrument.

The A major Sonata Op 30 no 1 begins with an Allegro which is, in the main, moderately paced. The first movement repeat is observed and the dynamics accord with the score. The violin tone is sweet and never rough as some violinists make it sound so that the music appears difficult and they promote themselves as superb performers. Beethoven has good thematic material which is well developed, something not regularly found in many other composers. The playing by both performers is secure and the violinist has perfect intonation.

I love the fact that she is not a show off but is a servant to the music.

The slow movement is in D major and marked Adagio molto espressivo. It has a beautiful theme over a 'rocking' piano part. The performance has a lot of feeling but it is not mawkish or slush. Details are observed faithfully including the sforzandos.

The final Allegro with variations is hugely enjoyable and infectious fun. The main theme's repeat is not observed but all the other repeats are. The music flow effortlessly. The double stopping is not strained as it is with some self-promoting violinists. The humour in some variations is expertly caught.

The E flat Sonata Op 12 no 3 is also for piano with violin. It opens with an Allegro con spirito and a terrific theme. The piano part is a concertante part perhaps foreshadowing the Emperor Concerto. You have to be able to read music and follow the score to see what a great movement this is and how wonderfully well it is played.

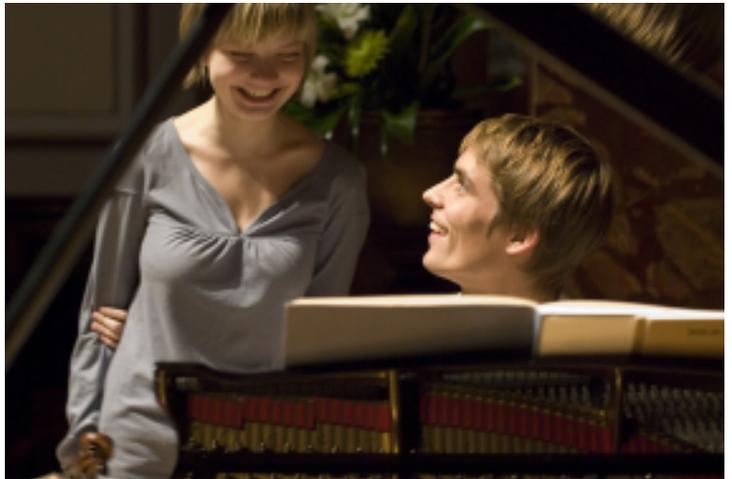


The slow movement, Adagio con molto espressivo is in C major and in 3/4 time. The performance sounds effortless as it should do. I admire the pianist's grace notes and ornamentation and the sensitivity from both players is remarkable. At times the violin sounds perfectly glorious.

The finale is a Rondo in E flat marked allegro molto. It is infectious fun and the lack of assertiveness and affectation makes it sparkle.

I do not want to hear these two sonatas played by anyone else so I may avoid disappointment.

The Sonata in A, the Kreutzer, Op 47 is a masterpiece although I think the middle movement Andante with Variation is, perhaps, a little too long. Here the soloists are equal, as set out in the score, and they both play with vigour and commitment. The music is often very exciting when so required. I put the music down and just relished in the joy of this music. I have not heard it played so well since Campoli and Peter Katin played it years ago.



With these artists so comparatively young there is a maturity. The performers are impressive, technically secure and set a very high standard.

The previous volumes are on Wigmore Hall Live 0036 and 0041

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