

## CD REVIEW 99

### PETROF PIANO TRIO

Martina Schulmeisterova (piano), Jan Schulmeister (violin)  
and Kamil Zvak (cello)

LALO Piano Trio no 1 in C minor Op 7  
BRUCH Piano Trio in C minor Op 5  
MENDELSSOHN Piano Trio no 1 in D minor Op 39

Nimbus NI6219 (70.43)

This trio was formed by the violinist in 2009. They became the resident trio of the PETROF company in that same year and they are clearly very fine musicians.



The programme contains a well-loved work by Mendelssohn and two comparative rarities which have much to commend them, particularly the Lalo.

The sleeve notes are scant and disappointing. The sound and balance is very good.

The Lalo is a revelation. Here is a French composer whose music is not French but rather Germanic.

The opening Allegro Moderato is in two time, minim equals 84. It begins with an expressive cello solo which is a memorable melody. The theme is both well used and clearly developed and the cello has the lion's share of the music but the other players contribute to this coherent music. Sometimes the trio do not observe the dynamics in the score, mainly the pianissimo passages but the music flows.

The second movement is called Romance and is 2/4 time, crotchet equals 76. It starts with the piano and the key is ambiguous. Is it G major or E minor? Again, there is a very attractive cello solo and the violin enters over a rippling piano part. There is a good contrast when the cello is briefly played pizzicato over a staccato piano. The theme goes through many variations and, although the music is warm, it occasionally sounds like salon music alla Max Jaffa, and E minor wins the day.

The scherzo is an allegretto back in C minor. It is light hearted and joyful. The repeat is observed. The music is infectious and the theme is varied. There are a few stunning piano passages.

The finale is in 6/8 and in C minor. It begins with a recitative from the cello. The music is well integrated. Again, some pianissimos are not observed but the final pages are sheer delight.

The Trio by Max Bruch was published by Breilkopf and Hartel. This work has some weaknesses. The opening movement is marked Andante molto cantabile in 3/4 time. The violin and cello open the work in unison and there are some enchanting spread chords in the piano. The work modulates into four flats and, ostensibly, F minor. The music improves, but then modulates to C minor, C major and back to C minor giving the music a sort of sketchy feel.

We move straight into the Allegro assai still in 3/4 time. Again there are two many modulations and pianissimos are not always observed. To add to the weakness of this work it then develops into a waltz.

Musical grammar may not be important to some but the finale Presto in C minor opens with three bars full of sharps. Chopin did things like this with a key signature of five or six flats and almost every other note was a sharp or double sharp. Bruch's appassionato theme is a little trite and sometimes the music is banal and, as it follows the splendid Lalo score, this banality is more obvious. The music is occasionally exciting.

The Mendelssohn is a delight and, as he did not live until he was forty years of age, he has, in his short life, some truly wonderful works. His Piano Concertos are not given the scope they deserve and his chamber works are of the highest quality; the Octet is a marvel and I adore the E minor quartet. This Piano Trio dates from 1839 and the theme of the opening movement, first heard on the cello, is unmistakably gorgeous. The Andante tranquillo, set in B flat, is telling and the scherzo marked *Leggiero e vivace* in D major is a typical Mendelssohn scherzo. No one else has ever written music like this. The finale, *Allegro assai appassionato* is in D minor and brings this amazing gem to a glorious end.

A lovely CD, highly recommended, well worth buying!

(694)

---

© COPYRIGHT David C F Wright DMus 2013. This article or any part of it, however small, must not be copied, quoted, reproduced, downloaded or altered in any way whatsoever nor stored in any retrieval system. Failure to comply is in breach of International Copyright Law and will render any offender liable to action at law.

If anyone in the UK particularly has difficulty obtaining any CDs will they please contact [Record Corner](#), Godalming, Surrey, telephone 01483 422006 and ask for Tom Briggs or his staff.