

Beethoven - Piano Trios Nos. 2 & 5

Written by bluesever

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Piano Trio No.2 in E flat, Op.1 No.2 1. *Adagio - Allegro vivace* 2. *Largo con espressione* 3. *Scherzo (Allegro)* 4. *Finale (Presto)* Piano Trio No.5 in D, Op.70 No.1 'Ghost'
5. *Allegro vivace e con brio* 6. *Largo assai ed espressivo* 7. *Presto*
Storioni Trio Amsterdam: Bart van de Roer (piano), Wouter Vossen (violin), Marc Vossen (cello).

If you're a chamber music fan not sure whether to invest in surround-sound equipment, this Beethoven trio disc will win you over in two seconds flat. The engineering's intimate, warmly detailed ambience seems to position you in the eye of the Storioni Trio's stylish, gorgeously honed repartee. So many enticing details abound in the G major trio: the ensemble's crafty transition from the first-movement *Adagio* introduction to the *Allegro vivace*, the *Largo*'s unaffected tenderness, the *Scherzo*'s dapper linear give and take, and a pointed, witty *Presto* finale that's lighter than air. Although I marginally prefer the Vienna Piano Trio for its harder hitting accents and frighteningly slick tuttis, you can't go wrong with the present recording.

Similarly, the Storioni's "Ghost" trio holds its own alongside numerous world-class contenders, notwithstanding a few quibbles. One concerns the trio's slightly brisker than common central *Largo*, where the piano's rumbles and the long unison string lines are not quite so "sotto voce" as they could be (the Abegg Trio's version is much spookier in this regard). There also are occasional squeezed high notes and wiry moments emanating from Wouter Vossen's otherwise nimble and shapely violin playing. Perhaps it's only fair to mention that Warner Apex offers a splendidly recorded budget disc featuring the superb 1983/84 Vienna Piano Trio coupling of the same works along with Op. 70 No. 2 as a generous filler. In any event, this disc's sonic and interpretive virtues warrant strong consideration. It also sounds pretty good via conventional two-channel stereo playback. ---Jed Distler, ClassicsToday.com

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