Giuseppe Tartini - The Devil's Sonata and other Works (1997)

1. La Sonata del Diavolo in G Minor *01 I. Largo 02 II. Allegro 03 III. Andante, Allegro, Adagio*
2. L'arte del Arco *04 Theme & variation 1 05 Variations 2 & 4 06 Variations 9, 15, & 12 07 Variatios 10 & 20 08 Variation 29 09 Variation 30 10 Variation 33 11 Variation 34 12 Variation 23 13 Variation 38*
3. Sonata in A minor
14 Cantabile 15 Allegro 16 Andante 17 Giga 18 Aria (with variations) 19 Variation 1 20 Variation 2 21 Variation 3 22 Variation 4 23 Variation 5
4. Pastorale for violin in scordatura
24 I. Grave 25 II. Allegro 26 III.Largo, Presto, Andante

Andrew Manze, violin

Prior to Robert Johnson's legendary encounters with the devil in the Thirties, probably the best-known diabolic incursion into Western music was Tartini's The Devil's Sonata (aka The Devil's Trill), composed between 1713 and c1750. Tartini dreamt he sold his soul to the devil, who, in return, took up a violin and played 'a sonata so unusual and so beautiful... that I stopped breathing and awoke gasping'. Trying to recapture that satanic majesty, Tartini wrote The Devil's Sonata, which is certainly fiendishly hard to play, particularly the infamous trill in the last movement.

In the hands of Andrew Manze, the sonata transcends its complexities to become a beautiful and compelling piece of music, closely followed by the Pastorale, with its fantastical Grave, and the other works here. Manze plays them all solo, as Tartini preferred, and the lack of continuo allows him an interpretative freedom that he exploits to the full, combining clarity of articulation and fluency of phrase in a display of mesmerising technical bravura that the devil himself might envy. Magnificent! --- Graham Lock, BBC Music Magazine

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