

Flute Quartets

**Crusell
Devienne
Krommer
Mozart**

*and works for
flute and piano*

Mikael Beier

**The
Copenhagen
String Trio**

Bernhard Henrik Crusell (1775-1838)

Flute Quartet op. 8 D major 22:17

[1] Allegro non tanto 6:41

[2] Un poco Largo 5:43

[3] Menuetto: Allegro-trio 4:50

[4] Finale: Allegro 4:52

Mikael Beler, flute

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Kim Sjögren, violin

Bjarne Boie Rasmussen, viola

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François Devienne (1759-1803)

Quatuor Concertante G major 12:26

[5] Allegro 6:46

[6] Tema con variazioni 5:36

Franz Krommer (1759-1831)

Flute Quartet op. 13 D major 21:50

[7] Adagio: Allegro 8:09

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[9] Romanza 2:46

[10] Menuetto: Trio 2:43

[11] Rondo 3:43

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Flute Quartet A major K. 298 10:50

[12] Tema (Andante) con variazioni 5:45

[13] Menuetto 2:01

[14] Rondeau (Allegretto grazioso) 3:01

Flute Quartet G Major K. 285a 9:18

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Mozart

Flute Quartet D major K. 285 13:35

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Flute Quartet C major K. Anh. 177 15:46

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[10] Le Carneval de Venise op. 14 (1857) 8:25

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[13] Scherzino op. 55 no 6 1:47

Mikael Beier, flute

Anne Øland, piano

Flute Anthology

On 30 October 1777 Mozart, travelling with his mother on a journey that would eventually take him to Paris, reached Mannheim, where the Elector Palatine had his court and kept there one of the finest orchestras in Europe. During the five months he stayed in Mannheim, Mozart met many of the Elector's orchestral players and other local musicians. Among those with whom he was on good terms was the flautist Johann Baptist Wendling, who introduced Mozart to a surgeon with the Dutch East India Company, Ferdinand Dejean, who was also an amateur flautist and quite rich. Dejean offered the composer 200 gulden to write three short concertos and a couple of quartets for flute and strings. Mozart in fact only partially fulfilled the commission – with the Flute Concerto, K. 313 and two Flute Quartets, apparently because, as he wrote to his father, he couldn't stand the instrument, and rapidly lost enthusiasm. Nevertheless he complained that the 96 gulden that Dejean actually paid him was far too little for the amount of work he had put in. And whatever his feelings about the flute, he actually produced music for it of immense charm and character.

In keeping with the terms of his commission, Mozart kept the flute quartets for Dejean very clear in form and texture and not particularly taxing on the players. They are nonetheless virtually perfect in every detail. **The Quartet in D major, K. 285** is evidently the first of them, the manuscript dated on Christmas Day, 1777. The three

movements consist of an elegant sonata form contrasting a blithe, rhythmically lively opening subject of great charm with a bittersweet second theme. The ensuing slow movement, in B minor, has the character of an operatic aria, the flute being the 'vocal' soloist, projecting a line of tender pathos, with its accompaniment played pizzicato. It links straight into the concluding Rondeau, a carefree, bubbling movement of immense *joie de vivre*.

Mozart's second Flute Quartet for Dejean, the **Quartet in G major, K. 285a**, was written somewhere between the completion of K. 285 and St Valentine's Day 1778. The fact that it is a slighter work of only two movements perhaps indicates Mozart's waning enthusiasm for his task, though it is as well to note that his manuscript is not extant: the work is only known from a printed edition brought out in 1792 in Vienna, which prefaces the two movements of K. 285a with the first movement of K. 285, to produce a hybrid (and, Mozart no longer being along the living, presumably spurious) work. But it could be that the Andante with which K 285a otherwise opens was intended as a slow movement – this is a cool dialogue in which the flute is sometimes partnered by the violin. The concluding movement is marked 'Tempo di Minuetto', and in this sometimes rather frothy piece the flute takes the lead, echoed by or supported by the harmonies of the strings.

Mozart's third **Flute Quartet is the Quartet in C major, K. Anh. 177**. This work used to be catalogued as K. 285b, because

it was thought that it too had been written for Dejean; and on the face of it the music seems well suited to the terms of his commission, for the material is simple yet made to sound extremely effective and charming. However, on the evidence of the paper on which Mozart wrote his manuscript, this Quartet must date from 1781-2, his first year in Vienna. Again there are only two movements, a busy, airy *Allegro* with bravura flourishes in the flute part, and a Theme and six variations for finale, of which the last also functions as a lively coda. This latter movement is in fact an arrangement or parallel version of the sixth movement of the B flat Serenade for wind instruments, K. 361, also of 1781.

The fourth and last of Mozart's flute quartets is the **Quartet in A major, K. 298**, believed to have been written in about 1786 for the Viennese Jacquin family, with several of whose members Mozart was on very friendly terms. In character it is different from the other three, since it appears to be a kind of musical joke – a parody of contemporary popular styles. The euphonious first movement presents the kind of ballad-like theme common in contemporary *Singspiels*, and treats it to four good-humoured variations (the absence of a slow one, or any in the minor, is evidence of the lack of serious intent). The central movement is a formal Minuet and Trio, but the parodic intent becomes clearest in the finale, which Mozart dubbed a 'Rondieaoux' giving it the tempo marking *Allegretto grazioso ma non troppo presto, però non troppo adagio. Così-così con*

molto garbo ed espressione (Allegretto grazioso, but not too fast, then not too slow. So-so, with much elegance and expression). The main theme of this movement is a take-off of an aria in Paisiello's comedy *La gare generoso*, which was premiered in Vienna in the autumn of 1796. Mozart may have heard it then, but he certainly attended a performance in Prague in January 1787. The humour, however, is gentle, the music stylish.

Though they are perhaps the best-known examples of chamber music for flute and strings from the Classical era, Mozart's quartets are by no means the only examples that deserve to be remembered. Several other composers among his younger contemporaries achieved work of real distinction in the field. Closest in spirit and form to the Mozart examples is probably the **Quatuor Concertante in G major** by the French composer François Devienne (1759-1803). The last child of a family of fourteen, and a musical prodigy who wrote a Mass at the age of ten, Devienne was an uncommonly versatile musician. Though he died insane and comparatively young, in a brilliant career he not only composed copiously but was a successful conductor and a bassoonist before being appointed as the first Professor of Flute at the re-established Paris Conservatoire in 1795. His *Méthode de Flûte* remains in use even today.

Devienne wrote no less than 30 quartets for flute and strings; the G major Quartet is one of the set of six published in Amsterdam about 1787 as his opus 11. The title *Quatuor Concertante* indicates that the

flute takes the lead in the music almost throughout, but the mood and texture of the piece closely resembles that of Mozart's quartets (Devienne was a keen student of the scores of both Haydn and Mozart). The two-movement form, with a busy and civilized *Allegro* complemented by a *Grazioso* Theme and Variations, is strongly reminiscent of Mozart's K. Anh. 177, though the variations themselves, especially the pathetic minor-key one that occurs just before the coda, seem to bear echoes of the operas of Gluck.

Born in the same year as Devienne, the Czech composer Franz or Frantisek Krommer long outlived him, surviving until 1831. In the course of a long life he worked in Bohemia, with the Court Orchestra in Vienna, and visited Paris and Italy. Krommer was hugely prolific, but only turned to the writing of chamber music in his later years. Though his mastery of the medium was much admired he was also extremely conservative from a stylistic point of view, adhering to the high classical style of Haydn and Mozart even though he was writing in the last years of Beethoven and Schubert, whose music he disapproved of. He seems to have composed about ten flute quartets, though their dating is uncertain and their opus numbers, which merely indicate order of publication, cannot be taken as a reliable guide.

Krommer's **Quatuor in D major, op. 13** with its five-movement layout rather resembles a Baroque suite, and some of the gestures and phraseology of the music are more Baroque than classical in character.

The opening movement begins with an *Adagio* introduction whose pathetic and wide-ranging modulations keep the listener guessing as to the movement's true expressive trajectory until an exceedingly jolly *Allegro* gets under way. This irrepressible and wittily-phrased movement is the most substantial part of the work. There follows the first of two minuets, a dapper and lively example of the genre with an equally energetic trio section. The brief third movement is a delicate and melodious *Romanze*, perhaps not without a hint of indulgent irony in its unexpected cadences and the modulations of its central episode. A second minuet follows, considerably shorter than the first, and more rustic in expression, the violin and flute indulging in a lively duet in the trio. The concluding Rondo is an ebullient and high-spirited movement which shows off the flautist's bravura technique to perfection.

The Swedish composer Bernhard Crusell (1775-1838), born in Finland when that country was part of Sweden's empire, became famous not as a flutist but as one of the greatest clarinet virtuosos of his time. The scion of a poor family, he rose after army service to become clarinettist and deputy conductor with the Royal Court Orchestra in Stockholm. Though he remained based in Sweden, he travelled widely, studying composition in Berlin, Paris and Leipzig, and absorbed a great deal of European culture which enabled him to become an important force in Swedish music.

Though naturally especially

renowned for his clarinet compositions – which include three magnificent concertos – Crusell wrote in many genres, including a single **Quartet in D major, op. 8** for flute, violin, viola and cello which he composed in 1823 and had published in Leipzig. This elegant, thematically rich work shows that Crusell had assimilated not only Mozart but also Beethoven and some of his French contemporaries into a personal synthesis of great charm and technical skill. The work has four quite substantial movements, the first being a finely-balanced sonata-form *Allegro non tanto*, notable for the sinuous expressiveness of its themes and the bravura quality of the flute writing. The A major slow movement, *Un poco largo*, has something of the pathos of an operatic scena, the flute decorating its principal melody with elaborate but not over-effusive ornamentation. The following Minuet in D (with its trio in G major), is an inventive piece with military aspects – note the opening fanfare-rhythm – contrasted against the flute's more courtly dance-melody. The trio is ruminative in character, led off by an almost elegiac cello figure. The *Allegro* finale is a high-spirited and yet often lyrical movement notable for its continuous bustle of semiquaver figures, calling for considerable virtuosity and sustained breath control from the flautist.

As the flute became ever more popular as a concert and domestic instrument, so its repertoire increased exponentially as many composers, some of them virtuosi of the instrument, some merely attracted by its pure tone as a vehicle for

musical ideas, flocked to write for it. The group of flute and piano works in this album illustrates something of the range of the shorter works available for that repertoire. Frédéric Chopin's only work for the flute is also among his earliest compositions, a brief set of **Variations sur un air de Rossini** in E major, based on the concluding aria, 'Non più mesta', from Rossini's opera *La Cenerentola* which had been premiered seven years before. The work remained little known during Chopin's lifetime, and was only published posthumously. The variations (the theme itself is stated at both the beginning and the end) are mainly brilliant and decorative, but the slow minor-key variation has a true Chopinesque melancholy.

In contrast to Chopin's modest variations is the extended, bravura **Fantasia Brillante** on themes from Bizet's *Carmen* composed in 1900 by the Belgian composer and critic Fernand Le Borne (1862-1929), who studied with Franck, Massenet and Saint-Saëns and among his many compositions (which included several operas and symphonic works) also wrote a sonata for flute. Le Borne, perhaps with his tongue in his cheek at times, produces almost a synopsis of Bizet's opera, with dramatic highlights and several celebrated themes (with the central evocation of the celebrated Habanera as an undoubted high-point) in a composition perhaps essentially intended for the salon but also enjoyable for its feats of instrumental transformation and metamorphosis.

Another bravura variation work is **Le Carnaval de Venise, op. 14** by Pierre

Agricole Genin (1832-1903). Genin hailed from Avignon, but his career as a composer and flautist centred on Paris, where he took the Premier Prix for flute at the Conservatoire in 1861. He is credited with having written around 80 works for flute, of which *Le Carnaval de Venise*, composed in 1872, has retained some of its popularity. Paradoxically it is a series of variations on a German folk song (or drinking-song), *Mein Hut, der hat drei Ecken* (My hat, it has three corners), which had somehow become associated with the Venice Carnival and which was taken as a variation-subject by several composers for the purposes of virtuoso display (there is a famous set for the cornet by Jean-Louis Arban). Genin himself cashed in on the popularity of his op. 14 by producing a version for saxophone as his op. 15! After a slow introduction the theme is stated and treated to a series of increasingly capricious and vertiginous variations.

The **Berceuse, op. 16** by Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924) is the odd member out of this programme, for it was not originally conceived for flute. The first of what was to prove a long line of expressive *morceaux* with piano accompaniment, it was composed in 1880 as a piece for violin, subsequently arranged for cello, and only then given a third incarnation as a work for flute. Nevertheless Fauré's characteristic cool ecstasy sounds perfect for the instrument.

'His music is neo-classic, but threatened with modernism', was the curious comment that the critic André Coeuroy applied to Fauré's younger

contemporary Philippe Gaubert (1879-1941). Gaubert was a refined and civilized member of the impressionist movement in France who is chiefly remembered – though he wrote in many genres – by his compositions for the flute, his own instrument: he became principal flautist in several of the Paris orchestras and, like Devienne, professor of flute at the Paris Conservatoire. The **Madrigal**, written in 1908, has a Fauré-like poise, its shapely melody spun over a refined harmonic background. The pastoral atmosphere and sense of Attic grace may remind us also of the *Chansons de Bilitis* of Debussy.

A predecessor of Gaubert as flute professor at the Paris Conservatoire (and a successor, indeed a pupil, of Devienne) was Jean-Louis Toulou (1786-1865), who occupied that position for 30 years, from 1829 to 1859. He had entered the Conservatoire at the age of 10. Toulou enriched the flute repertoire with many works, including duets, variations, and settings of national airs from Wales, Italy and other countries. His **Grand Solo, op. 96** is the fourteenth of the 15 works to which he gave this title, which were mainly published for flute and piano though some were also arranged for flute and strings. While this substantial movement provides plenty of opportunity for the flautist to show off their prowess, it is no mere salon piece but a serious composition in a modified sonata form, the place of a development section being taken by a soulful, songful slow episode, before the main theme is recapitulated in varied form.

The Danish flute virtuoso and conductor Carl Joachim Andersen (1847-1909) was born and died in Copenhagen, where from 1894 until his death he was conductor of the popular Sunday Palace Concerts and the concerts at Tivoli park. Before then he had played in the orchestra of the St Petersburg Opera and in 1882 was a co-founder of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. He was obliged to give up playing and concentrate on conducting owing to paralysis of the tongue. Andersen wrote many flute works (his complete works have been recorded on Danacord) as well as eight volumes of études for his instrument which are still in use. The tiny, hilarious **Scherzino, op. 55 no. 6**, from his set of 8 *Vortragsstücke*, op. 55 (published in St. Petersburg in 1894) may stand as merely a taster for his larger output.

Ferenc Farkas (1905-2000) studied not only in Budapest but with Respighi in Rome. After World War II he became professor of composition at the Academy of Dramatic Art in Budapest, where he exercised a significant influence as one of Hungary's leading composers of the period. His **Rumanian Dances from Bihar** were composed in 1953 and is a sequence of short movements arranged from dance-tunes collected early in the 20th century by Béla Bartók. It makes a highly effective counterpoint to Bartók's own well-known *Rumanian Dances*.

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Malcolm MacDonald

Mikael Beier, flute

Mikael Beier was born in 1958. His first instrument was the recorder, but he later played the piccolo flute and flute in a youth orchestra. In 1972 he won First Prize in the Danish newspaper Berlingske Tidende Competition for Young Musicians, and appeared as a soloist for the first time with the South Jutland Symphony Orchestra. In 1974 he was admitted to the Royal Danish Music Conservatory in Copenhagen, where he studied with Professor Ørnulf Gulbrandsen and Professor Poul Birkelund. Every summer, from 1972 to 1980, he studied with Jean-Pierre Rampal in Nice, and has moreover attended master classes with Michel Debost, Alain Marion in Paris, Aurele Nicolet in Basel and Julius Baker in New York. Mikael Beier has performed with all Copenhagen orchestras and he has been a member of the Chamber Orchestra Collegium Musicum since its foundation in 1982. In 1997 he was appointed associated Principal Flutist in the Danish National Symphony Orchestra (DR). He is prize winner of the International Kuhlau Competition in Vflzen, Germany, and in 1982 received the Jacob Gade Prize. Mikael Beier has appeared as soloist with several Danish orchestras, toured both Europe and the US and has performed frequently in radio and television.

The Copenhagen String Trio

Kim Sjøgren, violin

Kim Sjøgren was born in 1955. He has played the violin since the age of three. When he was only 12 years old he was accepted by The Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus, Denmark, where he studied with Professor Henrik Sachsenskjold and Tutter Givskov. He gave his debut at the grand age of 17. Three years later, he became a member of the Royal Danish Orchestra, where he consequently became concert master at the age of 22, the youngest ever in the history of the Orchestra.

In 1997, Kim Sjøgren founded his own "The Little Mermaid Orchestra", which subsequently became one of Denmark's most in-demand orchestras. In 2004, Kim Sjøgren was appointed the position of Professor of violin and chamber music at The Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus, Denmark.

Kim Sjøgren has composed music for film, TV and theater. He performs frequently throughout the world as a classical soloist and as a stand-up entertainer.
www.kim-sjogren.dk

Bjarne Boie Rasmussen, viola

Bjarne Boie Rasmussen was born in 1938 and was educated at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory, Copenhagen by

Professor Erling Bloch and Hans Kassow, where he got his Diploma in 1959. From 1961 he played in the Tivoli Orchestra and in the same year became a member of the Royal Danish Orchestra. In 1965 he became Principal viola of the Royal Danish Orchestra. He studied in Rome and Venice with Professor Renzo Sabatini and gave concerts in Scandinavia, Germany, Austria and Italy. He was a much sought after chamber musician and appeared on several recordings. Bjarne Boie Rasmussen passed away on October 28, 2000.

Lars Holm Johansen, cello

Lars Holm Johansen was born in 1939 and was educated at Victoria University in New Zealand. He took further studies at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory with Professor Erling Blöndal Bengtsson. He received his Diploma in 1967 and the same year became solo cellist in the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra, Sweden. From 1969 he became solo cellist in the Royal Danish Orchestra. Lars Holm Johansen has been a member of the Scandinavian Quartet for over 10 years Quartet and a member of the Copenhagen String Trio for 15 years. He has studied in Hungary and Holland and attended master classes with Gregor Piatigorsky. He has given concert tours in Europe, the United States, China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

Anne Øland, piano

Anne Øland was born in 1949 and studied at the Royal Danish Music Conservatory under Professor Herman D. Koppel. Later she studied with Guido Agosti in Rome, Hans Leygraf in Salzburg, and Nikita Magaloff in Geneva. She made her debut in 1977 and received the artist's prize of the Music Reviewers' Circle in the same year. Her other distinctions include the Jacob Gade Prize, grants from the Leonie Sonning Fund, the Tagea Brandt Memorial Scholarship, and the distinguished artist's award of the Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Foundation.

In 1978 Anne Øland won first prize at the Nordic Competition for Young Pianists, and she made her Wigmore Hall debut in London in 1981. She appears frequently as a soloist and as a chamber musician, has played with all the Danish orchestras, and has toured in most of Europe, Russia and the US.

Her CD recordings include the complete works of Schumann for cello and piano, the complete piano works of Carl Nielsen, and the Beethoven piano sonatas.

Early on in her career, Anne Øland involved herself in teaching. She became associate professor at The Royal Danish Music Conservatory in 1980, and has since taught a great number of Denmark's most talented pianists. Since autumn 2004, Anne Øland has been concentrating her teaching activities at the Royal Jutland Academy of Music in Aarhus. www.anneoland.dk

This re-release of the original recordings, which Bjarne held in such fond remembrance, is dedicated by all his friends and fellow musicians in the memory of what would have been his 70th Birthday.

DACOCOD 675 [1] – [16]

DACOCOD 676 [1] – [5]

Recorded in Torpen Kapel, Denmark.
Nov. 1984. Producer and Recording Engineer: Eyvind Rafn

DACOCOD 676 [6] – [13]

Recorded at Kollemorten, Denmark
Sept. 1983. Producer: Karin Jürgensen
Recording Engineer: Leif Ramløv Svendsen

CD mastering by Claus Byrth

DACOCOD 675 [1] – [11] previously released
on LP DACO 204

DACOCOD 676 [6] – [13] previously released
on LP DACO 208

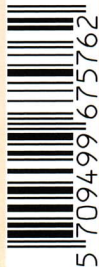
DACOCOD 675 [12 – [16] and
DACOCOD 676 [1] – [5] first release

Executive producer: Jesper Buhl

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DACOCOD 675

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CD 1 Total playing time: 77:23

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