



The Violin through the Ages

Ariadne Daskalakis completes the two-part recording of Franz Schubert's complete violin works



Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

[1] Rondo in B minor Op. 70 / D895 „Rondeau brillant“ (1826)

Sonata in D major, Op. posth. 137/1 / D384 (1816)

[2] I. ALLEGRO MOLTO

[3] II. ANDANTE

[4] III. ALLEGRO VIVACE

Sonata in A minor, Op. posth. 137/2 / D385 (1816)

[5] I. ALLEGRO MODERATO

[6] II. ANDANTE

[7] III. MENUETTO. ALLEGRO

[8] IV. ALLEGRO

Sonata in A major, Op. posth. 162/ D574 „Grand Duo“ (1817)

[9] I. ALLEGRO MODERATO

[10] II. SCHERZO. PRESTO

[11] III. ANDANTINO

[12] IV. ALLEGRO VIVACE

Ariadne Daskalakis Violin | Paolo Giacometti Fortepiano
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„Our ultimate goal is to help the music speak for itself, in order to convince and transport the listener.“ - Ariadne Daskalakis

This recording by the Greek-American violinist Ariadne Daskalakis and Italian-Dutch pianist Paolo Giacometti completes BIS' presentation of all originally published works by Franz Schubert for solo violin with orchestra and with fortepiano. The complete traversal is presented on period instruments, tuned at 430 Hz. Volume I, released in 2019 (with the Kölner Akademie under M. A. Willens), garnered enthusiastic reviews: the magazine *The Strad* for example wrote that the orchestral works „...in Ariadne Daskalakis's skilled hands cascade off the fingerboard with a liveness and shimmering delight that capture the music's innate charm and dance-like vivacity with a beguiling sureness of touch.“ (Julian Haylock)

The pieces with piano on both SACD's were recorded in Leiden (NL), using an original Viennese fortepiano built by Salvatore Lagrassa in 1815 – thus it is a contemporary of the sonatas, written in 1816 and 1817. Ariadne Daskalakis plays a violin by J.B. Guadagnini built even earlier, in 1754. She uses a classical Vilsbridge model and gut strings.

The CD opens with the virtuosic *Rondeau brillant* written in 1826. Schubert composed this late work for the violinist Josef Slavik, who was celebrated by Viennese critics as a next Paganini. Daskalakis confirms that the Rondo has „a certain demonic intensity and breathlessness.... in turn dramatic, playful, gentle, seductive and wild.“ She and Giacometti, who first met in the 1990's as students at the Festival Musikdorf Ernen, demonstrate not only technical prowess but also the full scope of the music's drama and tenderness.

The following Sonatas in D-Major and A-minor are early gems. They contrast markedly and are both perfectly proportioned. Technically accessible, they were most likely written for Schubert's elder brother Ferdinand, who led the family string quartet in which Franz played the viola. The Sonata in A-Major which ends the disc was written a year later; it is more challenging for the performers and testifies to Schubert's continual development.

The instrumental context during Schubert's time was very different than today: string instruments used pure gut strings which sound different – not only softer, but also offering colors both raw and subtle compared to modern metal strings. And the difference between original fortepiano models and the modern concert grand is even greater. Daskalakis and Giacometti seek to demonstrate that the historical approach helps to understand the framework of Schubert's time – and hence his intentions, „because it comes closer to approximating the very sounds, colours, dynamics and articulations that Schubert himself was accustomed to hearing and working with.“ With success, as the online-magazine *Pizzicato* testifies: „a sound which underlines the intimate fragility of Schubert's music.“ (Uwe Krusch)

While historical performance practice has become standard for baroque and early-classical repertoire, documentations of such challenging works as the Rondo brillant and the C-Major Fantasy (on Vol. I) are still the exception. However, here the experience with the period instruments is just as enlightening. Of ultimate significance remains, finally, the execution, as Ariadne Daskalakis writes: „Our decisions regarding tempi, rhythmic gestures, legato markings, fingerings, articulation, balance, voicing, vibrato and intonation – these are all of vital importance for any fine and convincing interpretation.“ Here her unique expertise pays off: her experience with historical performance practice since the 1990's includes, alongside her baroque Ensemble Vintage Köln, collaborations with the Manon Quartet Berlin, the Academy of Ancient Music Berlin, the Norwegian Baroque Orchestra and Concerto Köln. She concertizes internationally as baroque and modern violinist, and she shares the joy of deciphering and interpreting musical language with her students at the Cologne Conservatory of Music and Dance.



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