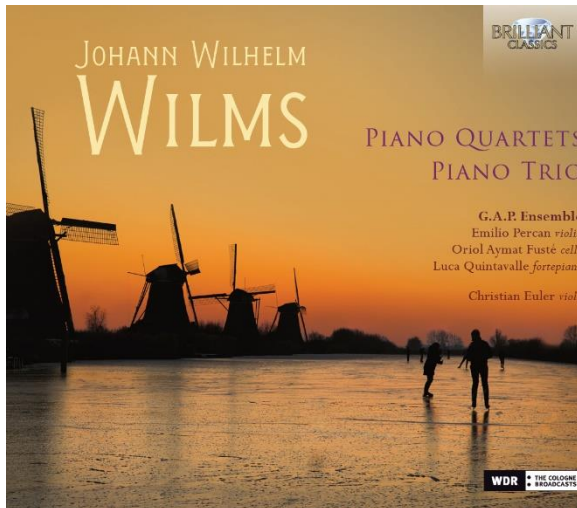




## Building musical bridges

G.A.P. Ensemble releases works of Johann Wilhelm Wilms on Brilliant Classics on period instruments for the first time



### Johann Wilhelm Wilms (1772-1847)

Piano Quartet C-Major Op.22 \*

- [1] I. Allegro
- [2] II. Adagio
- [3] III. Scherzando: Allegro-Trio
- [4] IV. Polonaise: Allegretto

Piano Quartet F-Major Op.30 \*

- [5] I. Adagio. Allegro
- [6] II. Larghetto
- [7] III. Allegro

Piano Trio C-Major Op.4

- [8] I. Allegro
- [9] II. Un poco Adagio
- [10] III. Rondo Allegro

**G.A.P. Ensemble** Emilio Percan *Violin*, Oriol Aymat Fusté *Violoncello*, Luca Quintavalle *Fortepiano*  
\*With: Christian Euler *Viola*

**Brilliant Classics | Release: April 28, 2023 | Co-production with WDR**

Recording: October 021, Großer Sendesaal (Klaus-von-Bismarck-Saal) WDR Köln

Thanks to recordings such as this one, the figure of Johann Wilhelm Wilms (1772-1847) is increasingly coming into focus and prominence as a notable contemporary of Beethoven who deserves better than his previous obscurity. In 1807, the Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung described the Wilms as ‘one of the most ingenious, spirited, and best educated artists’ of his generation: a judgment borne out by the this trio of high-spirited chamber works.

Born near Cologne, only two years after and some 60 km distant from Beethoven, Wilms made his career in Amsterdam as both performer (on flute and piano) and composer, inviting further parallels. His tenuous foothold on posterity has depended until recently for being known as the composer of the Dutch national anthem. His style may be more notable for fluency and charm than depth, but this album traverses his own expressive journey from the elegant Classical manners of an early piano trio to the intimations of Romanticism and melancholy in the second of his piano quartets.

Though the piano quartets of Wilms have been recorded before, this is the first-ever recording made on instruments of the period, and the inclusion of the piano trio makes it a generous coupling and a perfect introduction to an original voice in European music of the Classical era. Known together as the G.A.P. Ensemble, Emilio Percan, Aymat Fusté and Luca Quintavalle aim to build musical bridges between eras much as Wilms himself did, considered retrospectively. Their previous albums have been

enthusiastically reviewed in Gramophone, Diapason and elsewhere. The recording was made in October 2021 in the studios of WDR radio in Cologne, presenting both composer and performers in a warmly attractive light.

In 1807, the Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung described the composer Johann Wilhelm Wilms (1772-1847) as “one of the most ingenious, spirited, and best educated artists” of his generation. Undoubtedly, this contemporary of Beethoven was among the most important composers in the Netherlands during his lifetime. Born in 1772 near Solingen, Germany, Wilms went to Amsterdam in 1791 and made a name for himself as an outstanding improviser on the piano and as a flautist in various orchestras in the city. He increased his fame by performing his own and others' piano concertos (especially with the Felix Meritis Orchestra) and as a teacher of piano and composition. From 1793, thanks to the first publications of his works, he became an appreciated composer beyond the borders of his adopted country, Holland, and his music was also performed in Leipzig, Breslau, and Prague.

Of his two piano quartets the Op.22 is a chamber work in four movements in which the piano plays the role of 'primus inter pares', while Op.30, in three movements, is more appropriately a piano concerto with string trio accompaniment. While still fully adhering to the spirit of the 18th century, especially from a formal point of view, these are works that, in terms of intensified virtuosity and harmonic freedom, can be compared to the compositions and style of composers such as Franz Danzi, Anton Eberl, Jan Ladislav Dussek and Carl Maria von Weber.

The period instrument G.A.P. Ensemble consists of Emilio Percan, violin, Oriol Aymat Fusté, violoncello, and Luca Quintavalle, harpsichord/fortepiano. They worked with artists like Viktoria Mullova, Daniel Hope, Cecilia Bartoli, Christophe Rousset, Fabio Biondi, Julia Lezhneva, Raffaella Milanese and Hille Perl and performed at some of the most renowned concert halls in the world, for example Berliner Philharmonie, Teatro Colón Buenos Aires, Tokyo Opera City Center Hall and Palau de la Música Barcelona.

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