

## Brahms

Piano Quartet No. 1, Op. 25 in G Minor for piano, violin, viola and cello

Giorgia Tomassi, *piano* • Gabriele Pieranunzi, *violin*

Francesco Fiore, *viola* • Danilo Squitieri, *cello*

01. Allegro	13.07
02. Intermezzo, Allegro ma non troppo e Trio (Animato)	07.47
03. Andante con moto	10.07
04. Rondo' alla zingarese (presto)	08.51

Total Time: 39:52

Giorgia Tomassi, piano - Gabriele Pieranunzi, violin

Francesco Fiore, viola - Danilo Squitieri, cello

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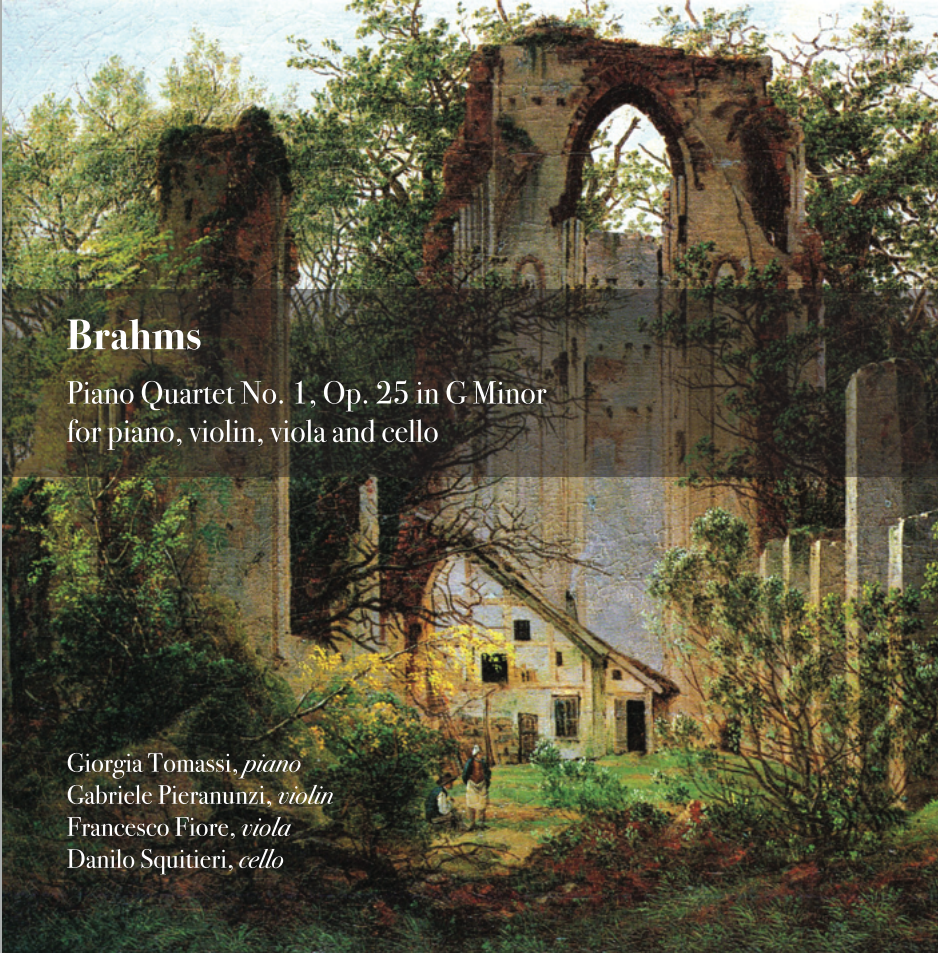
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**Tomassi - Pieranunzi and friends** In composing the Quartet No.1 in G min op.25 for piano and strings (and op.26) - his first truly important chamber works - Brahms - being the fervent classicist that he was - looked back to some important models to emulate and renew, he composed his own diptych of quartets with piano with other significant diptychs of pieces for strings and piano in mind: Mozart's Quartets K 478 and K 493 (Mozart's K 478 and Brahms' op. 25 are both in G min), Beethoven's two Trios op.70, Schubert's two Trios op.99 and 100. In all of these models, Brahms sees a desire to juxtapose very different expressions and styles: so op. 25 is emotionally immersed in the temperie romantica, in terms of passion, impetuosity and exuberance of instrumental writing, while op. 26 is more measured, more regular in the squaring of musical phrases and forms and less confrontational in the relationship between piano and strings. Emblematic are the endings of the two quartets, both of which have a 'gypsy' flavour, like much of Brahms's music: in the Quartet op.26, the cordial and lyrical side of this character prevails, while in the Quartet op.25, the robust and unrestrained, rough and popular side prevails. The Quintet in F min. op. 34 for piano and strings shows other significant aspects of Brahms's compositional process. Brahms had composed a String Quintet in F minor in 1862, the musical content of which met with the enthusiastic approval of Clara Schumann, the musician's faithful advisor, and the famous violinist Joseph Joachim, Brahms' friend and collaborator: the force and impetuosity of the musical discourse and the passionate fervour of the thematic invention were particularly pleasing, less so, the instrumental appearance. The perplexities that arose at the reading were confirmed by the performance rehearsals: Joachim and the instrumental ensemble headed by him could not fail to notice several flaws in the instrumentation, excessive harshness in the treatment of the strings that made concertation difficult and showed how, in this guise, Brahmsian musical thought had not found the right timbral configuration. Convinced, upon witnessing the rehearsals, of its timbre inadequacy, Brahms withdrew the quintet to revise its draft: after second thoughts, he turned it into a sonata for 2 pianos, completed in February 1864 and publicly performed the following April by him





**Danilo Squitieri**, studied with Ionescu, Aldulescu, Chiapperino, Strano, Piovano, Filippini, Demenga, Meneses, Bronzi and Dindo. He graduated with 10/10 cum laude at the Campobasso Conservatory and with 10/10 at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia. He gained top marks at the Basel Academy and at the two-year specialist course. He also studied at the Stauffer Academy, the Trieste Trio School and the Accademia Chigiana. He won third prize at the 2010 Gui Competition in a duo with Enzo Oliva, a member competition of the World Federation of International Music Competitions in Geneva. He was first cello in the 'Archi di Santa Cecilia'. With the Adorno Quartet he won the "2nd Wiener Schule Preis" awarded by the University of Vienna in 2016, the third prize, the special prize and the audience prize at the 11th Borciani Competition in 2017 (in the competition's 30-year history, no Italian quartet has won such an important award), the Rimbotti Competition in 2018 and the "a life in music" youth prize in 2019. He was artist in residence at the 'Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel' in Brussels, where he took part in the recording of the Cd Box 'A Tribute to Ysaye' (Diapson D'or prize) together with artists such as Miguel da Silva, Gary Hoffman, Augustin Dumay, Renaud Capuçon and Jean-Claude Vanden Eynden. In 2022, he was asked to perform Haydn's concerto in C major with the Santa Sofia Orchestra and the Italian Lyric Ensemble, Elgar's concerto with the Roma Tre Orchestra and Dvorak's concerto on tour with the Kharkiv Symphony Orchestra. He has recorded for Decca Italia, Sony Classical, Fuga Libera, Philips Collection and Stradivarius. He teaches cello at the Pergolesi Conservatory in Fermo.

and Carl Tausig. Some (Clara Schumann, Hermann Levi) still remained dissatisfied; If the use of strings alone seemed a stretch, the choice of two pianos seemed an unacceptable tonal limitation for such exuberant and rich music. Brahms was strongly urged to come up with yet another instrumental guise for this music, and at this point the combination of four strings and piano appeared to him to be the most natural tonal destination to adopt: A synthesis and refinement of the previous two, this last and final version (completed and published during 1865) shows how and to what extent, in general, the presence of the piano in chamber music had become indispensable for the generation of musicians following the early Romantics. The spirit of Schumann's Quintet in Eb sensitively hovers in the piece: from the adoption of a tonality equally rich in bemoilcs to the same succession of the four movements (Allegro - Adagio - Scherzo - Finale), from the expressive and characteric affinity between the corresponding movements (adagios excluded) to the use of similar instrumental arrangements for similar compositional situations, from the use of the piano as a guiding instrument but not as a soloist to a division of roles (power and impetuosity of the piano, lyricism of the strings) already experimented and sanctioned by Schumann's Quintet. Where Brahms departs from that model is in the renunciation of a constant, 'compulsory' use of the piano and in the complementary, more incisive and authoritative role entrusted to the strings, as can be deduced from the greater complexity and density of their writing and the use of thicker, more elaborate contrapuntal textures. Beyond affinities or differences, it is important here to emphasise how in Brahms, in the wake of the Schumannian example, chamber music with piano proves to be an effective means of sound expression of romantic musical thought: In the wake of the examples of Schumann and Brahms, it gradually became a favourite forum for important and passionate artistic messages as well as a fundamental and inescapable stage in the compositional itinerary of all the major musicians of the second half of the 19th century..

FRANCO PIPERNO

Giorgia Tomassi - Ernesto De Angelis, Photographer



**Giorgia Tomassi** began studying piano with her mother at the age of 7, and then continued her studies at the Imola Piano Academy under the guidance of Franco Scala. She revealed herself on the international scene in 1992 with her victory at the Arthur Rubinstein Competition in Tel Aviv. She has performed in important Italian and international halls and has been a partner of prestigious musicians such as Martha Argerich, Salvatore Accardo, Gabriele Pieranunzi, Geza Hossu Legocky, Michele Battista, Roberto Cominati, the Ensemble Wien-Berlin and many others. For EMI she recorded Chopin's Etudes and Nino Rota's Piano Concertos with the Filarmonica della Scala conducted by Riccardo Muti. Since

2010, with pianists Carlo Maria Griguoli and Alessandro Stella, she has undertaken a lasting artistic partnership in a piano trio formation, The Pianos Trio, interpreters of masterpieces of symphonic literature, transcribed for three pianos by Carlo Maria Griguoli, participating in all editions of the "Martha Argerich Project" and appearing in the seasons of the most important concert institutions in Italy and abroad. Warner Classics has released a CD collecting all the pieces performed by The Pianos Trio at the Martha Argerich Project from 2010 to 2013. She regularly plays in a piano duo with Carlo Maria Griguoli. She teaches piano at the 'L. Refice' Conservatory of Music in Frosinone.

Gabriele Pieranunzi - Luana Straliker, Photographer



**Gabriele Pieranunzi**, one of the most representative Italian violinists of his generation, a former pupil of Salvatore Accardo and later of Stefan Gheorgiu, soon came to the attention of the public and critics, being awarded prizes in some of the major international competitions: Premio Paganini (Genoa, 1988 and 1990), Tibor Varga (Sion), Ludwig Spohr (Freiburg). Invited several times by the City of Genoa to play the famous Guarneri del Gesù 'Il Cannone' that belonged to N. Paganini, regular guest of the most important Italian and international concert institutions. Recently published are Kurt Weill's Concerto op.12 under the conduction of Jeffrey Tate and the winds of the San Carlo Theatre in Naples (Concerto Classics), Mendelssohn's quartets for piano and strings (Decca-Universal) and Chausson's

Concerto op.21 for violin, piano and string quartet (with pianist Jin Ju and or Philharmonia Chamber Players - Aulicus Classics). He plays a Ferdinando Gagliano instrument (1764) that belonged to Gioconda De Vito and was kindly made available to him by Fondazione Pro Canale Onlus.

Francesco Fiore - Gianni Murzi, Photographer



**Francesco Fiore**, born in Rome, completed his studies at the S. Cecilia Conservatory in Rome under the guidance of Maestro Lina Lama and Maestro Massimo Paris. He subsequently specialised with Maestro Bruno Giuranna at the W. Stauffer Foundation in Cremona. Winner of numerous prizes, he has undertaken an intense concert activity as a regular guest of the most prestigious Italian and foreign Associations and Festivals. His solo and chamber music activity has led him to collaborate with artists such as Salvatore Accardo, Boris Belkin, Uto Ughi, Pierre Amoyal, Renata Scottò, Bruno Canino, Alfons Kontarskj, Alexander Mazdar, Michele Campanella, Andrea Lucchesini, Rocco Filippini, Alain Meunier, Bruno Giuranna, Franco Petracchi, Gabriele Pieranunzi, Rainer Kussmaul,

Pavel Vernikov, David Lively. He is a member of the Accardo Quartet. He has recorded numerous CDs for RCA, ASV, FONIT CETRA, FONÈ and MUSIKSTRASSE. Since 1991 he has been first viola in the Orchestra del Teatro dell'Opera in Rome: the same role he has also held in the Orchestra Filarmonica of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, in the Orchestra of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, in the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI in Turin and, invited by Salvatore Accardo, in the Orchestra da Camera Italiana. Within the framework of the Biennial Advanced Courses, he has taught at various Conservatories (Santa Cecilia in Rome, Latina, Fermo, etc.). He plays a Joseph Hill viola, London 1774, and a Raffaele Fiorini viola d'amore, Bologna 1894.