

Schumann: Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 63

Schumann: Phantasiestücke for Piano, Violin & Cello, Op. 88

THE MIRECOURT TRIO



FIRST RELEASE

Schumann: Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 63

01. I. Mit Energie und Leidenschaft (With energy and passion) (12:50)
02. II. Lebhaft, doch nicht zu rasch (Lively, but not too fast) (5:01)
03. III. Langsam, mit inniger Empfindung (Slowly, with deep feeling) (7:15)
- IV. Mit Feuer (With fire) (8:09)

Schumann: Phantasiestücke (Fantasy Pieces) for Piano, Violin & Cello, Op. 88

04. I. Romanze (2:15)
05. II. Humoreske (7:28)
06. III. Duette (3:27)
07. IV. Finale (6:26)

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Kenneth Goldsmith, Violin; Terry King, Cello; John Jensen, Piano
Violin by Andrea Guarneri (1690); Cello by Alfio Batelli (1975); Piano by Steinway
FIRST RELEASE; produced from original master tapes

Recorded Clapp Hall, University of Iowa, March 21, 1988 (Op. 63) and May 10, 1988 (Op. 88)
Recording Engineer: Lowell Cross; Editing of session tapes: Maggi Payne
Tape transfers by Robert Witrak, HDTT (2022); audio restoration by John H. Haley, Harmony Restorations, LLC (2022).
Booklet, compilation, restorations and remasterings: © (p) 2022 High Definition Tape Transfers, Inc.
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HDTT is honored to present these recordings by the magnificent Mirecourt Trio of great Romantic trios by Robert Schumann, in their first ever release.

THE MIRECOURT TRIO

“second to none in the world”
Gregor Piatigorsky

“In addition to superb technique, musicality and near seamless ensemble, this group also possesses the aura of spontaneity, the elan and the vigor to bring their repertory to joyous life.”
The Los Angeles Times

“[combines] the finest technique and musical background with great powers of communication and creative capacity, putting them on a superior musical and artistic plane.”
Diario de Noticias, Lisbon

“today’s preeminent piano trio”
Fanfare Magazine,

The Grammy-nominated, internationally acclaimed Mirecourt Trio (1972-1993) was formed at California State University, Fullerton by cellist Terry King, violinist Kenneth Goldsmith and pianist John Jensen, becoming one of the leading chamber ensembles in the U.S. for more than two decades. With a career that included global tours and regular appearances on radio and television, and with no personnel changes, they produced more than twenty record albums on a variety of labels.

Named after the area of France that is a major center for string instrument makers since the 17th century, the Mirecourt Trio was equally at home in traditional trio repertoire and new 20th Century music. In addition to the basic trio repertoire, they performed and recorded dozens of commissioned works and premieres of new music, particularly of American composers. Contemporary composers with whom they were associated include Henry Cowell, Paul Chihara, Lou Harrison, John Cooper, Seymour Barab, Paul Creston, Otto Luening, John Duke, Paul Reale, James Drew, David White, Thomas Benjamin, Janika Vandervelde, Valentin Silvestrov, Minoru Miki, Rick Sowash, and Joly Braga-Santos. They also performed and recorded unknown works of 18th and 19th century composers discovered through research.

Each trio member brought different skills to the ensemble. John Jensen is a masterful pianist with broad experience in all musical fields including jazz and improvisation. His mentors were the eminent pedagogue John Crown (protégé of the legendary Moriz Rosenthal) and Gwendolyn Koldofsky, accompanist to Lotte Lehmann and many other greats. He has also conducted opera and musical comedy performances as music director and appeared as a jazz pianist.

Violinist Kenneth Goldsmith was a consummate musician with broad experience in orchestral and chamber music, and a pioneer in the performance practice movement established at Stanford University. His mentors were two celebrated violinists, Mischa Mischakoff, probably the most important concertmaster of the 20th century, and William Kroll, “Mr. Chamber Music” as Jascha Heifetz called him, leader of the Coolidge and

Kroll Quartets and the Elshuco Trio. Kroll imparted the lineage from Marteau and Kneisel, while Mischakoff his unparalleled experience as concertmaster of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, the Bolshoi Ballet, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, Toscanini's NBC Symphony, and the Detroit and Baltimore Symphonies. In addition, Goldsmith worked with illustrious master Nathan Milstein.

Following renowned cellist Terry King's New York debut, The New York Times proclaimed that his playing "could not be faulted...[he] play[ed] with relish and technical aplomb." As a protégé of the legendary Gregor Piatigorsky, he served as Piatigorsky's assistant in his famed master classes at the University of Southern California. King is the author of the outstanding biography of his mentor, *Gregor Piatigorsky: The Life and Career of the Virtuoso Cellist* (McFarland, 2010). He is a devoted teacher, with students placed worldwide in orchestras and in the teaching profession, as well as an acclaimed soloist, chamber musician and conductor. Among his students is Gold Medalist in the XIII Tchaikovsky Competition, Sergey Antonov. King's broad repertoire features the classic works for cello as well as unknown masterworks he has found throughout the world. Many prominent American composers have written works for him, including Roy Harris, Paul Creston, Lou Harrison and Otto Luening; and he has premiered solo works by Aaron Copland, Virgil Thomson, Henry Cowell, Miklós Rózsa and Lukas Foss. He has served on the faculties of the San Francisco Conservatory, UC Berkeley, California State University at Fullerton, Grinnell College, the University of Iowa, the Longy School of Music of Bard College and the Hartt School, University of Hartford. He has recorded for such labels as Sony, Music & Arts, ABC, MCA, A&M, Varese Sarabande, Albany and Bay Cities.

Commissioning New Music for Trio

The members of the trio were fortunate to win a residency at Grinnell College which lasted for 15 years. Because they were also faculty members, they were given the opportunity to accrue a large portion of their concert fees into the trio's corporation. This, along with grants and gifts, gave them the ability to offer commissions on a regular basis for new music.

They decided to begin by approaching the older generation of contemporary composers who had not yet written a trio, starting with Samuel Barber, who said that he had so many commissions that he knew he would not live to complete most of them (he had cancer). Copland was at the end of his ability to write (the trio was not in love with his early Vitebsk), but he sent a very kind note. Leonard Bernstein was simply not interested, the only composer who responded in this way. William Schuman was not able to commit but encouraged the trio to contact Persichetti (which they did and recorded his excellent Parable). Virgil Thomson wanted to initiate with one of his "Portraits" with Terry King sitting across from him. After two days the creative juices were not there and the project was abandoned.

Dave Brubeck was willing, and Terry King's conversation with him was memorable. He said, "you guys are amazing" but when they "talked turkey" about a commission he "leveled with" King, saying that it would take three weeks to write the piece. He toured 10 months out of the year with a staff of 14, they all had salaries, and he would have to pay them for those weeks. He refused commissions otherwise because he only wrote for the church, gratis, and only when he had time off. The bottom line was that the price he wanted was way beyond the trio's budget.

Interestingly, they explored the possibility of a triple concerto with Lalo Schifrin. His plan was to compose a Marx Brothers concerto, each movement featuring one of the brothers (Schifrin lived in Groucho's old home), but here too the price proved to be beyond the trio's abilities. However, they were successful with Otto Luening and Paul Creston, and of course with many younger composers. The Mirecourt Trio worked tirelessly to increase the trio repertoire of the 20th century.

Terry King wishes that established trio ensembles had sought to commission new works in the period from the 1920s to the 1970s. As he points out, the great piano trios of the 18th and 19th centuries were all written by pianist-composers, ending with Ravel in 1914. Stravinsky, Bartok, Kodaly, Prokofiev, Britten, Tippett, Walton, Janacek, Khachaturian, Glazunov, Honegger, Berg, Webern, Schonberg, and most surprisingly, Hindemith, who seemed to have written for every combination of instruments, never wrote any trios for the traditional ensemble of piano, violin and cello. Many composers tried their hand at trios in their youth but abandoned the idiom otherwise. This fascinating group includes Elgar, Bax, William Schuman, Sibelius, Bernstein, Richard Strauss, Debussy, Nielsen, and Vaughn Williams.

IN MEMORIAM. This release is dedicated to the memory of violinist Kenneth Goldsmith (1938-2020). As Terry King commented about him in connection with the instant recordings, "He really played his heart out, didn't he?" Earlier, King stated: "We fed on each other's strengths with gratitude as we stole as much as we could. Ken ... was a terrific role model for discipline. We admired and loved each other as only music can say better than words."

For a discography of The Mirecourt Trio's recordings, please see: <https://www.kingcello.com/mirecourt-trio>

For additional information about cellist Terry King's work with the legendary cellist Gregor Piatigorsky, please see the excellent 2016 interview he did for *Strings Magazine*, with critic and commentator Laurence Vitte, available on stringsmagazine.com.

King's outstanding, exhaustively researched biography of his teacher Piatigorsky is [available on Amazon](#) and at other book sellers. As stated by *Strad Magazine*: "At last we have a book that does justice to Gregor Piatigorsky."



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