

NAXOS

BEETHOVEN WRANITZKY

Oboe Trios

Marc Schachman • John Abberger, Oboes
Lani Spahr, Cor Anglais



Ludwig van BEETHOVEN (1770-1827) • Anton WRANITZKY (1761-1820)

Music for Two Oboes and Cor Anglais

In a Europe reeling from the French Revolution, Vienna offered some degree of economic security for such aristocratic houses as Lichnowsky, Lobkowitz, Kinsky, Waldstein, van Swieten, Esterházy and Razumovsky. Following the death of Emperor Joseph II in 1790 and the reversal of many of his enlightened reforms by Franz I, Austria found itself plunged into what one commentator has called the classic example of the police state, with an aristocracy that sought to preserve whatever was left of its status. The economic pressures of the times, however, placed great strain on the nobility's ostentatious lifestyle. As a consequence the more luxurious forms of the arts suffered severe cutbacks in patronage and this led to the dismissal of many private orchestras and opera companies. The situation was such that when Beethoven arrived in Vienna in November 1792 to study with Haydn only a handful of these private orchestras remained. Instead, the aristocracy employed chamber groups and instrumental soloists, some doubling as servants. Mozart had now become Vienna's favourite composer, having been ignored while he worked so hard to make his name there. *The Magic Flute* had been performed at least sixty times by the time Beethoven arrived. Haydn, too, was now famous after several decades of Viennese neglect.

It was in this environment that Beethoven found a ready-made audience for the chamber music, and particularly the wind chamber music, that he produced in the period between 1792 and 1801, the *Duet in G for Two Flutes* (1792), *Octet in E flat for pairs of Oboes, Clarinets, Horns and Bassoons* (later *Op. 103*) originally composed without oboes in Bonn (1795), the *Sextet in E flat for Clarinets, Horns and Bassoons*, later *Op. 71* (1796), the *Quintet in E flat for Piano and Wind*, *Op. 16* (1797), the *Sextet in E flat for String Quartet and Two Horns*, later *Op. 81b* (1797), the *Serenade in D for Flute, Violin and Viola*, *Op. 25* (1797), *Trio in B flat for*

Clarinet, Cello and Piano, *Op. 11* (1798), *Horn Sonata*, *Op. 17* (1800), *Septet in E flat for Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, Violin, Viola, Cello and Bass*, *Op. 20* (1800) and the present *Trios for Two Oboes and Cor Anglais*, *Op. 87* and *WoO 28*.

Among the musicians in Vienna who would play a rôle in Beethoven's life were the oboists Johann Wenth (Wendt, Went), Georg Triebensee and his son Josef, Fiala, Rosiniach, Czerwenka, Reuter and the brothers Teimer – Johann, Franz and Philipp. Gustav Nottebohm (1817-1882), scholar of Beethoven's sketchbooks and thematic catalogue, surmises that Beethoven's oboe trios were inspired by a trio by Wenth performed at a concert of the Tonkünstler-Gesellschaft by the Teimer brothers on 23rd December 1793. Whatever may have been the inspiration for Beethoven, the number of surviving trios composed by the oboists themselves and others for this combination of wind instruments testify to the popularity of the genre.

It is difficult to date precisely Beethoven's completion of his trios as there are no dates in either the sketchbooks or the manuscripts. The earliest known performance of *WoO 28*, however, took place on 23rd December 1797 in the National Court Theatre at a concert for Widows and Orphans by the oboists Teimer, Czerwenka and Reuter. The most recent date given for their composition, based on the juxtaposition in the sources with other material (such as sketches for *Adelaide*, on which he was working in 1793) is 1795. It should also be noted that Beethoven used a type of paper extremely rare in his early manuscripts for both *Op. 87* (Artaria 151) and *WoO 28* (Artaria 149), both of which are housed in the Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. This piece of information is important, for it suggests that the two pieces are more closely related than just by their instrumentation. It is possible that the variations were originally cast as the finale to *Op. 87*. Indeed, *WoO 28* contains no other title than *Thema Andante*. For

supporting evidence we should look at the history of the *Octet in E flat for Wind, Op.103* and the *Rondino in E flat, WoO. 25*, both scored for the same forces. During a revision of the octet in 1793, his first year of study with Haydn, Beethoven began writing out the *Rondino, WoO. 25*, as the finale, but quickly substituted the present finale (which may already have existed in the original version). If the supposition is true that the Mozart variations were the original finale of the oboe trio it is interesting to note that in both cases (the trio and the octet) Beethoven would have replaced an andante finale with a presto finale. *Opus 87* was originally published in 1806 by Artaria without opus number and in many authorized arrangements. It was also published for two violins and viola as *Op. 29* and was still known as such in the Artaria catalogue of 1893 (*Terzett für 2 Oboen und englisch Horn oder für 2 Violinen und Viola Op. 29*). The autograph of *Op. 87* (Artaria 151) contains four pages in a copyist's hand of the arrangement for two violins and viola.

Beethoven virtually abandoned wind chamber music after about 1800 but the works of the previous years no doubt helped to develop his treatment of wind instruments in his orchestral writing. One reviewer of the première of the *First Symphony*, conducted by Paul Wranitzky on 2nd April 1800, complained that 'the wind instruments were employed excessively, so that it was more military band than orchestral music' (Schmidt-Görg, 1970, p.35).

Beethoven's circle of friends in Vienna included the Wranitzky (Vranický) brothers, Paul and Anton. The elder brother, Paul, born on 30th December 1756,

achieved fame in Vienna as a violin virtuoso, prolific composer, conductor of the Esterházy Court Orchestra and secretary of the Tonkünstler-Gesellschaft. Both Haydn and Beethoven favoured him as a conductor of their works. Anton was born at Nová Rise in Moravia on 13th June 1761. Following the usual education in the local Premonstratensian monastery he studied philosophy, law and music at Brno and the violin with his older brother Paul. Later studies in Vienna with Mozart, Albrechtsberger and Haydn, combined with his considerable skill as a violinist, made him much in demand as a teacher and performer. By 1797 Anton Wranitzky was Kapellmeister of the private orchestra of Prince Lobkowitz. In 1807 he was appointed director of the Imperial Court Orchestra and in 1814 became principal conductor at the Theater an der Wien. He also became assistant to Haydn and made an approved arrangement of *The Creation* for string quartet. Among his numerous compositions are fifteen symphonies, fifteen violin concertos, string trios, quartets and quintets and the present trio. Wranitzky died in Vienna on 6th August 1820.

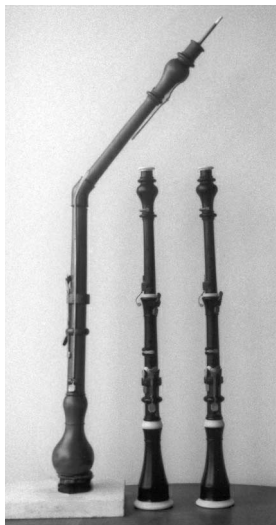
It seems highly likely that the oboists mentioned above had at one time or another worked with Wranitzky, especially Josef Triebensee and his father-in-law, Johann Wenth, both of whom were working in the Imperial Court Orchestra. We can be grateful to the oboists working in Vienna at this time and for their close personal and professional relationships with Wranitzky and Beethoven, which undoubtedly provided the impetus for these valuable additions to the oboist's repertoire recorded here.

The Instruments

The cor anglais and both of the oboes heard on this recording are copies of instruments from the workshop of Johann Friedrich Floth, Dresden, and were made by Sand Dalton of Lopez Island, Washington. Floth was apprenticed to the famous Dresden instrument maker J. H. Grundmann and later, succeeding him, made instruments under his own name between 1803 and 1807. These instruments would therefore come from this period since it is only during this time that Floth could use his own stamp to mark his instruments. Floth's oboes retained many of the characteristics of Grundmann's design for his two-keyed oboes; for example, the bore dimensions and the external turnings are identical. The increasing chromaticism of the music of the period, however, made the addition of keys necessary to make the scale of the oboe more homogeneous. These trios would undoubtedly have been played on instruments of similar design and, while allowing for the differences imposed by twentieth-century playing techniques, give us an insight into the sound world of Beethoven, Wranitzky and late eighteenth and early nineteenth century central Europe.

The oboes here are copied from the original instrument at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. The cor anglais is copied from an instrument in the national museum of Portugal in Lisbon.

Lani Spahr



Marc Schachman

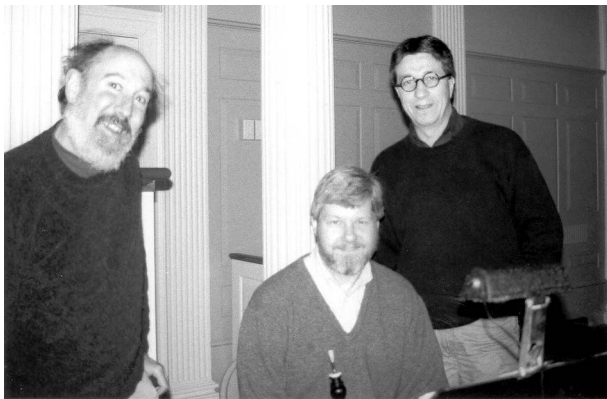
Marc Schachman attended Stanford University and the Juilliard School, where he was awarded the B.S., M.S., and the D.M.A. degrees. One of the world's leading performers on early oboes, he is a founding member of some of America's foremost period instrument chamber groups, the Aulos Ensemble, the Amadeus Winds, and the Helicon Winds. He has performed as principal oboist and soloist with many of the period instrument orchestras in the United States, including Philharmonia Baroque (San Francisco), the Handel & Haydn Society of Boston, Boston Baroque, the American Classical Orchestra (New York), and the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra (Washington, D.C.). Marc Schachman has served on the faculty of Vassar College, and has given workshops and master classes at colleges and universities throughout the United States. He has performed at festivals worldwide, including Spoleto, Edinburgh, Göttingen, Perth, Tanglewood, Ravinia, and Mostly Mozart. On the modern oboe, he performs with the New York Chamber Soloists, the Orchestra of St Luke's and the Vermont Mozart Festival.

John Abberger

John Abberger, one of North America's leading performers on historical oboes, is principal oboist with Tafelmusik (Toronto) and the American Bach Soloists (San Francisco). He has performed extensively in North America, Europe and the Far East with these ensembles, and appears regularly with other prominent period instrument ensembles, such as Philharmonia Baroque, the Smithsonian Chamber Orchestra, Concert Royal, the Handel & Haydn Society and Aston Magna. He records regularly with many of these ensembles, and can be heard on numerous recordings on the Sony Classical Vivarte, Koch International, Harmonia Mundi, BMG Classics, Pro Arte, and Newport Classic labels. A native of Orlando, Florida, he received his training at the Juilliard School and Louisiana State University. In addition, he holds a Performers Certificate in Early Music from New York University.

Lani Spahr

Lani Spahr, a leading performer on period oboes in the United States, is a member of Boston Baroque, the Handel & Haydn Society Orchestra of Boston and performs frequently with Tafelmusik in Toronto. In addition, he has appeared with many of the country's leading period instrument orchestras, including Philharmonia Baroque, the American Classical Orchestra, Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra, Concert Royal, Philadelphia Classical Orchestra, the Lyra Concert, Connecticut Early Music Festival Orchestra, San Luis Obispo Mozart Festival and Arcadia Players. Also a modern oboist, he is formerly the principal oboist of the Colorado Springs Symphony Orchestra, the Colorado Opera Festival, the American Chamber Winds, the Maine Chamber Ensemble and made his European solo debut in November of 1999 playing John McCabe's *Oboe Concerto* with the Hitchin Symphony Orchestra in England and in the summer of 2000 presented a solo recital at Imperial College in London. He has served on the faculties of Colorado College, Phillips Exeter Academy (NH) and the University of New Hampshire Chamber Music Institute. He has toured throughout North America, Europe and the Far East on period and modern oboes and has recorded for Telarc, Vox, Music Masters and L'Oiseau Lyre.



L-R: Marc Schachman, John Abberger, Lani Spahr

When Beethoven went to Vienna in 1792 to study with Haydn he made the acquaintance of many of the city's prominent musicians, including the famous violinist and composer, Anton Wranitzky. The oboe and cor anglais trios by these two composers continue the rich tradition of wind chamber music by Mozart, Haydn and others that flourished in the 18th century. Many of the famous operas of the period were arranged for wind groups of all sizes and were used by the composers to popularize their music. In these brilliant trios fleet outer movements flank aria-like slow movements and traditional minuets with all three instruments given virtuoso parts to play.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Trio in C major, Op. 87

1	Allegro	23:01
2	Adagio	11:14
3	Scherzo	4:39
4	Presto	2:39
		4:29

5	Variations on 'Là ci darem la mano' from Mozart's 'Don Giovanni', WoO. 28	9:12
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Anton Wranitzky (1761-1820)

Trio in C major

6	Adagio - Allegro	27:07
7	Andante (Theme & Variations)	6:07
8	Menuetto, Trio I, Trio II	8:36
9	Rondo: Allegro	7:16
		5:08

Marc Schachman*, John Abberger†, Oboes Lani Spahr, Cor Anglais

* Principal oboe on tracks 1-5 • † Principal oboe on tracks 6-9

Recorded at St. John's Lutheran Church, Stamford, Connecticut, 22nd-24th February 1999
 Producer & Engineer: Gregory K. Squires • Editor: Wayne Hileman • Booklet Notes: Lani Spahr
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 [The Art Archive / Society Of The Friends Of Music Vienna / Dagli Orti (A)]



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Playing Time
59:20



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