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THE GREAT VIOLINS

volume 1: Andrea Amati, 1570

Georg Philipp TELEMANN

24 Fantasies

Peter Sheppard Skærved



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Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767): 12 Fantasies for Violin

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THE MUSIC by Peter Sheppard Skærved

In 1992, I recorded Telemann's 12 *Fantasies* (1735) for solo violin. They have been at the centre of my repertoire ever since. I have long wanted to record these works on gut strings and with an early bow. The opportunity to develop a relationship with this extraordinary Andrea Amati crystallised my resolve to do this. The violin is the property of the distinguished violinist Jonathan Sparey, and on loan to the collection at the Royal Academy of Music. As soon as I put a bow to it, it was obvious that this was the instrument which could take me back to the Telemann set. The combination with a bow made by Genoese archetier, Antonino Airenti, proved irresistible; the two instruments complement each other perfectly, offering me new vistas of colour and inspiration.

However, the origin of my fascination with these works was my earlier encounter with the 12 *Fantasies* (1732/3) for solo flute. The historical relationship between string playing and wind brass repertoire/performance fascinates me. Any accomplished musician of 17th and 18th Centuries was a multi-instrumentalist, composer and usually a trained singer. Johann Joachim Quantz, whose *Treatise of a Method for Playing the Transverse Flute* (1752 Berlin) is more or less the bible of style and practice in 18th Century Northern Europe, was also a violinist. There is perhaps more practical information about violin playing in this work than Leopold Mozart's contemporaneous *A Treatise on the Fundamental Principles of Violin Playing* (1756). This represents the natural crossover of techniques; I feel that this continues.

I am particularly grateful to the wind players who have inspired me along the way. Really important experiences for me have included working and talking with the much-missed trumpeter James Watson; our many conversations gravitated to the reciprocity between blown and bowed instruments. But it was the astonishing flute-player Janne Thomsen who introduced me to the potential of these pieces; her profound understanding of the inter-relationships of line, breath, timbre and colour remain a model of the indissoluble melding of technique and artistry. For this I am truly grateful. I studied and played the Telemann flute *Fantasies*, in private, and at a safe distance from the critical ears of my flutist friends. This led, naturally, to the performance and recording of the violin works.

Early on, I noticed that the earliest known edition of the *Flute Fantasies* (in the Brussels Conservatoire Library¹) reads, on the front page "Violino". I am not suggesting for a minute that these are violin pieces, but modestly, that violinists should learn them, as a balance to the rather earthier (I generalise) violin works. But there is another aspect to this; composers such as Telemann, taking advantage of the extraordinary expressive and colouristic opportunities of the flute of the time, also had aspects of the violin at back of their minds. A simple example of this would be the placing/tuning of 'open strings'. These are present throughout the works; ironically, in order to keep within the compass of the flute the works never go below D (a tone above middle C) which is an open string on the violin, or above the E, two octaves and a tone higher (which is a ringing 'harmonic' on the violin).

Disc A: 12 Fantasies for violin (1735) TWV 40:14-25

No 1 in B Flat Major (*Largo, Allegro, Grave, Allegro*)

Unlike Bach's 6 *Sonate e Partite*, Telemann's *Fantasies* do not divide neatly between *da camera* and *da chiesa* conventions. But, like his friend, Telemann relished giving the impression that he was going to obey the rules, and then ignoring them. *Fantasy 1* is a 'church sonata', with a slow movement in the relative minor (g). Telemann wrote no violin fantasy in G minor; this work is the exact key reversal of Bach's *G minor Sonata*

BWV1001. Like Bach, Telemann seems to offer a prelude and fugue, however, he was fond of the ‘fake fugue’, like the similar gambit in Mozart’s 33rd *Symphony*. Telemann then instructs the player to repeat the second movement *in toto* after the very sombre *Grave*, making the structure A-B-C (relative minor)-B.

No. 2 in G Major (*Largo, Allegro, Allegro*)

If the *Fantasies* are heard in sequence, the playfulness of Telemann’s ‘internal linking’ becomes very clear. *Fantasy 2* ‘resolves’ the lonely G minor *Grave* of *No. 1*. Telemann’s soulful opening, picks up the duplet/triplet dialogue of the *Largo* of *No 1*, and instructs the player to play both rhythms at the same time, a comparatively rare gesture until the 20th Century. The second movement offers another playfully ‘contrapuntal tease’, but one very much in the manner of ‘Jagdmusik’, with riding music, horn calls, and bird song (like the pursued quarry in Vivaldi’s *Autumn*). The *Allegro* is the first dance music in the cycle, perhaps a ‘furlana’.

No. 3 in F minor (*Adagio, Presto, Grave–Vivace*)

In 1752, Johann Joachim Quantz observed that, “A minor, C minor, D sharp major, and F minor express a melancholy sentiment much better than other minor keys.”ⁱⁱⁱ As late as 1806, Christian Schubart defined the characteristics of F minor as ‘Deep depression, funereal lament, groans of misery and longing for the grave’.ⁱⁱⁱ Playing this extraordinary movement on the amazing little Amati, with the richly coloured gut strings, and Airenti’s wizard’s wand of a bow, I confess that it was completely impossible to avoid these notions. Telemann’s note choice demands discomfiting, flibbertigibbet intonation. Like the first *Fantasy*, the *grave* is in a relative key (the dominant minor) before the ghastly final minuet, ironically named *Vivace* (‘lively’).

No. 4 in D Major (*Vivace, Grave, Allegro*)

The grand opening blasts away the gloom with Italianate fanfare. In the 17th Century, suites by Vitali, Biber, Matteis and Walther often had unaccompanied movements imitating the trumpet. Telemann’s trumpeting is filtered through other conventions, particularly the model of the sonatas and concerti of Corelli and Vivaldi, studied and imitated all over the German-speaking countries. But for the player Telemann seems to say: ‘I admit it, that last movement was not ‘Vivace’. This is Vivace!!’ Jesting continues in the *Grave* (in the relative B minor), which is anything but grave. It begins as parody, as if Telemann was mocking some bewigged French court composer, before finishing with a Lilliputian throwaway peroration, in the manner of his *Gulliver Suite TWV40:108*(written in the same year). And then the fun begins; the last movement is a large-scale rustic gigue, real dance music to get the toes tapping and the dust rising.

No. 5 in A Major (*Allegro–Presto–Allegro, Presto, Andante, Allegro*)

Telemann remains in Italianate mode, beginning with suitably ‘toccata’-like ‘bariolage’ (alternating notes against an open string) and contrapuntal answers. This derives from Corelli’s *D Major Sonata Op 5 No 1*, available in multiple editions by the 1730s. It also harks back to the opening *Flute Fantasy* (also A major). But *Andante* shares most with the third movement of Bach’s *A minor Sonata* – also a faltering tune with a walking eighth-note bass line beneath. But there’s more to it than that, or rather, there’s a lot less. This six-bar movement is in F sharp minor, ending on a solid dominant, which should take us back to the tonic. Instead, a jaunty *allegro* starts up, in A major (not resolving the previous C sharp!). Bearing in mind the two beats rest which Telemann places in the gap, this suggests (to me) that the movement repeats in the imagination, perhaps with a lyrical line on the top. “Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard/Are sweeter; ...” John Keats wrote those words a century later, but Telemann offers a practical demonstration.

No. 6 in E minor (*Grave, Presto, Siciliana, Allegro*)

E minor has peculiar melancholy, and composers approach it with care. Mozart's one work in this key, the *E minor* Sonata K304, demonstrates this eloquently. Telemann's approach is decidedly *da Chiesa*, at least for the first two movements – a contrapuntal prelude and an austere quasi-fugue. Performing this work, it is always a wrench to tear myself from the fugal second movement into the ironically 'alla rustica' mood of the G major *Siciliana*. But this is a difficult crossing which Telemann seems to relish, setting up a deliberately uneasy balance between major and minor, the substance of the finale.

No. 7 in E Flat Major (*Dolce, Allegro, Largo, Presto*)

This is very much the heart of the violin cycle. It is, at first glance, the simplest. The C minor *Largo* demonstrates Telemann's genius with almost no material. The 'empty' spaces in this movement are not 'fermatas', but rhythmically notated silences. The final *presto* shows how little can be said, with élan – the complete opposite of the depths plumbed by the previous movement: 'Glissez, n'appuyez pas'...

No. 8 in E Major (*Piacevolmente, Spirituoso, Allegro*)

Telemann shows his command of the virtuoso techniques of his day. He avoids high registers, perhaps evidencing a relaxed hold of the violin, or just reflecting the domestic context and intention of the set. I can attest from happy experience that it is more suited for performance, 'at table', than a lot of contemporaneous music which does not invite the listener in close. *Fantasy 7* offers a variety of sophisticated bowing techniques: 'parlando', up-bow staccato, alternating 'stabbed' notes and lyrical slurs, swirling runs in triplets and 32nd notes, 'bariolage' and 'leaping' gestures across the violin. Telemann seems more disposed than his contemporaries to use a rich variety of techniques within the confines of a short timeframe.

No. 9 in B minor (*Siciliana, Vivace, Allegro*)

The most pastoral of the set, with two outer movements emphatically placed in this traditionally compound-time countryside, offering bucolic pleasure, whether we hear nymphs and shepherds, dalliance in a woodland glade, herders dancing home from Bethlehem or farmers finding their way to church. But there's a broader canvas; the coaxing pastoral which begins the *Fantasy* is balanced by the violent, even rapacious one which ends it. In the previous century Claude Lorraine's glades harboured threat in equal measure to delight, and were equally impassive to both.

No. 10 in D Major (*Presto, Largo, Allegro*)

The 'violin-yummy' (as composer Poul Ruders would call it) *Fantasy 10* approaches the atmosphere of a concerto; a dashing substantial first movement, a thoughtful, probing 'largo' in the relative minor, and a dance-like finale. It also utilises 'sleights of hand', familiar from the 'Flute Fantasies' (and Bach's *C Major Cello Suite*) to give an illusion of counterpoint; double stopping is used on a number of occasions, but only for harmonic emphasis. Telemann, it seems, does not want to 'get in the way' of all the 'ring' of D major, but lets the violin resonate freely, providing resultant harmony of the sounding instrument, rather than one resulting from crunchy chords.

No. 11 in F Major (*Un poco vivace, Soave, Un Poco vivace, Allegro*)

The bulk of this is an extended 'a-b-a' form, created by a repetition of the extended *Un poco vivace* after the extraordinary *soave*. This is in a surprising key, G minor (relative minor of the dominant major). Telemann's other 'enclosed' movements are in the expected relative or dominant keys. However, it does 'reach out' to the G minor *Grave* of *Fantasy 1* (They share a bass-line-G F sharp G). Telemann constructs elegant links, a delicate net of *prolepsis* across the set; exactly what one might expect from a composer trained in Latin, dialectic and Rhetoric, the first steps of his Magdeburg education.

No. 12 in A minor (*Moderato, Vivace, Presto*)

Fantasy 12 moves from minor to major, an extended 'Tierce de Picardie'. The final *Presto*, a bourée, is the *envoi* for the whole set, a reassurance of 'lightness' necessary after the previous movements. These are strikingly dissonant, from the opening bars, which both set A and G sharp jangling. The *Vivace* brings teeth-rattling clashes of D sharp/C/E, in high register. Telemann ends the movement with desperate scales and bare fifth. In performance, I wait a moment, then allow the last movement to ameliorate all of this, like Prince Hal's sun in *Henry IV Part 1*: ... 'breaking through the foul and ugly mists/Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.'^{iv}

Disc B: 12 Fantasies for flute (1732) TWV 40:2-13

No. 1 in A Major (*Vivace, Adagio–Allegro, Allegro*)

The first *Fantasy* flowers from the shaping of the long opening note. This reappears in the middle movement as the keystone of a written-out cadenza. The *Vivace*, 'toccata' in all but name, is a sort of 'fugato', using the sleight-of-hand seen in *Violin Fantasy 10*. Writers commenting on the *Flute Fantasies* have made great play of this as a wind technique, as opposed to being a compositional one, used on all instruments. The last movement always feels as if it is a 'passepie'd'; I know that it can't be, as it's missing that all-important up-beat! Its smooth, even slippery feeling, is enhanced by an eccentric 7 bar – 5 bar, 7 bar – 7 bar structure!

No. 2 in A minor (*Grave, Vivace, Adagio, Allegro*)

Fantasy 1's brightness is immediately annulled by this A minor work. The opening is very grave, sharing the mood of slow movements in Bach's A minor *Violin Sonata BWV1003* and *Flute Partita BWV1013*. A difference between the writing of the violin and flute fantasies is the space necessary to draw attention to ornaments. For instance, the 'lower note' resolution of the marked ornament which ends this movement suggests to me a 'battements' style decoration, trilling below the note. There's less 'room' for these in the violin fantasies, highlighting a different poetic attention in the instruments. The *Vivace* uses a very Bachian motif to build the illusion of a contrapuntal structure not unlike Bach's great violin fugue in the same key. The exquisite *Adagio* is in the relative major, C. When Telemann returns to that key, (*Fantasy 5*), he avoids the languor of this movement.

No. 3 in B minor (*Largo–Vivace–Largo–Vivace, Allegro*)

The *Allegro* movement which ends this makes a clear link to the finale of the B minor violin *Fantasy 9*. It's particularly noteworthy for the chromatic, leaping gesture with which it ends. The preceding *Vivace* sections demonstrate Telemann using degrees of motivic unity to bind his cycle together; the opening gesture, repeated twelve times in its 32 bars, is an inversion of the Bachian motif of the previous *Vivace*.

No. 4 in B flat Major (*Andante, Allegro, Presto*)

At two points in this cycle, Telemann explores the ambiguity between 3/4 and 6/8 as the 'core gesture' of the movement; one of these begins this *Allegro*. Syncopation is interesting in unaccompanied works, where there is no bass line to clarify or 'swing against'. In the eighteenth century, where much daily life involved rhythmic activity, be it dancing or riding, perhaps the player would be expected to nod, or even stamp, to clarify the pulse. The notated, rhetorical silences in the last movement, preceded by two accented eighth-notes, refer back to the opening *Vivace* of the cycle, with its 'abruptio'-type hesitations, used in completely the opposite manner in the third movement of *Violin Fantasia 7*.

No. 5 in C major (*Presto–Largo–Presto–Dolce, Allegro, Allegro*)

In the first movement of this *Fantasy*, there's the tiniest hint of Telemann's frustration at the limitations of the flute, with five chords presented as 'grace notes'. Flutist Rachel Brown points out that such writing is uncommon in flute writing of the time;^v it's not a flute technique, and because of the limited compass available, is not a string technique either. The second movement, both harmonically and technically, looks back. The opening three bar bass line, never repeated in bare form, lays a ground bass which is repeated for the majority of the movement, whilst the remaining bars play with various inversions of the line.

No. 6 in D minor (*Dolce, Allegro, Spirituoso*)

Monothematic procedures abound in both these cycles. However, this *Fantasy No 6* is the only one where all the movements are clearly based on the same motif, 'A-D-C sharp-E'. The sweet/sour instability of the tonic-leading note provides its melancholy effect, pointing, for a violinist, to the fugue of Bach's *A minor Solo Sonata BWV1003*. Indeed, the Allegro is a 'quasi-fugue'. Telemann's final rondo, *spirituoso*, almost throws off its courtly shackles, offering folk music 'in the raw'. I can't resist the chance to play this with the appropriate 'open-string' chords, '...in rustic laughter/Lifting heavy feet in clumsy shoes.'^{vi} D minor sets the stage for the sun to come out, with the following D Major fantasy, on the model of *Fantasies 1 & 2*.

No. 7 in D major (*Alla Francese, Presto*)

The two-movement form of this *Fantasy* conceals the scale of the opening 'French overture', challenging the player to evoke the splendour of the opening of an orchestral suite, to which Telemann could bring pomp and humour in equal measure (as his *Wassermusik-Hamburger Ebb und Fluth TWV55:C3* demonstrates). Then, a charming misdirection: the second section of the movement offers a motif which is a fugue subject in all but result; Telemann eschews contrapuntal 'working out' and moves directly to the charming excursions but with no fugue! With repeats, this movement is nearly 200 bars. To finish, constrained by his 'fantasy form', Telemann just offers a fleeting Polish-dance, albeit in French finery, many social removes from the 'loam feet, lifted in country mirth' which ended the previous work.

No. 8 in E minor (*Largo, Spirituoso, Allegro*)

Earlier, I noted the singular 'affect' of E minor. Compared to the almost ecclesiastical mien of Telemann's E minor violin fantasy, the sadness of this work is assuredly *da camera*, even domestic. To me, it recalls the sweet melancholy of Giuseppe Torelli's solo 'preludes'. The *spirituoso* hypnotically recycles its opening two-and-a-half-bar motif, almost 'intact', in E minor, B minor, G major, A minor, and back to the tonic – at which point the movement breaks down, into 'choked' rhetorical silences typical of this composer. The finale teeters between a 'simple' 3/4 time and 'compound' 6/8. Bach uses exactly this gambit, in the final 'presto' of his *G Minor Sonata BWV 1001*.

No. 9 in E Major (*Affetuoso, Allegro, Grave, Vivace*)

Charles Burney noted that Telemann, 'like the painter Raphael, had a first and second *manner*, [...]. In the first, he was hard, stiff, dry and inelegant; in the second, all that was pleasant, graceful, and refined.'^{vii} The charm and intellect of this *Fantasy* epitomises his 'second *manner*': 'pleasant, graceful, and refined'. The writing is full of striking unities. The opening bars of the *Affetuoso* elaborate a rising bass line, referencing the *Spirituoso* from the previous fantasy (when the set is played *in toto* this rings in the memory). Later in the movement this scale appears, in retrograde, before a series of reiterations of the opening scale, in varying tonal contexts, over the next 10 bars. Chains of snapping ornaments in the following *Allegro* worry at this motif (still 'backwards') seven times before it re-emerges (right way round) in the tonic. Such integrated writing will enchant even the most jaded player!

No. 10 in F sharp minor (*A tempo giusto, Presto, Moderato*)

Here, we experience a beautiful equilibrium between chromatic exploration and an open harmony, evoking the notion of an 'ideal music'. To me, this conceit looks to the theory of classical architecture's root (popular in the 18th Century) in the 'primal' hut. This had been illustrated by Antonio Averlino 'Filarete' (1400-1448), with Adam himself as the hut's 'first architect'.^{viii} Such music also seems informed by the enquiries into 'proto-plastic' models which so excited the early Enlightenment. Essential balance between complexity and simplicity is offered in the dancing fifths, which occur six times in the *Presto*, and answering chromatic ripostes (in bars 43-5 the motif is entirely of semitones and a diminished fifth). In the opening *A tempo giusto*, this 'denseness' is hidden by octave displacements. The final gigue is an instrumental 'remise en bouche', much needed after such intense musical flavour.

No. 11 in G Major (*Allegro, Adagio–Vivace, Allegro*)

Of all pieces in the flute set, this *Fantasy* most calls to mind the bass viol, the improvisers' string instrument of choice in the early 18th century. I have done what a violinist of Telemann's day might, and explored the full compass of my instrument; the ringing 'bottom G' of the violin is irresistible! This radiant fantasy sets the scene for the 'drawing down of blinds' that follows. The move from major to minor is melancholy in affect, but not necessarily pessimistic. This is a striking reversal of the minor-major paradigm established in the Fantasy-pairs 1-2, 6-7 and 8-9.

No 12. G minor (*Grave–Allegro, Dolce, Allegro, Presto*)

This set closes in the 'tragic' key of G minor, with this most 'dimorphic' work. First, an alternating *grave-allegro*, with a fascinating structure. The first iteration of the pairing, 24 bars long, brings us to the expected dominant (D minor) The second, more than twice as long, inflates these first 14 bars to 27 and into a written-out cadenza (*Dolce*), varying the earlier *grave* material. The cadenza ends, high and dry, in B flat, the relative major. This 69-bar movement is a long 'upbeat' to the final *Presto*, the largest dance in either set, its orchestral scale contrasting with the tiny movement ending the violin *Fantasies*. Playing it calls to mind Telemann's rustic '*Concerto Polonois*' (TWV43:G7)

Peter Sheppard Skærved

ⁱ (*littera T 5823 W*)

ⁱⁱ P.165, Johann Joachim Quantz, *On Playing the Flute, 1752*, Ed/Trans Edward Reilly, Faber, London, 1966

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ideen zu einer Aesthetik der Tonkunst (1806)*

^{iv} *Henry IV, Part One, Act 1,ii, 183-4*

^v Rachel Brown

^{vi} P.22.East Coker, T S Eliot, 1944 Faber and Faber

^{vii} Pp.242-3, Charles Burney, *The Present State of Music in Germany etc., Volume 2*, Beckett & Co, London, 1773.

^{viii} *Treatise on Architecture, Filarete, Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, Cod, Magl. II, I, 140, fol. 54v*

I would like to express my immense gratitude to the poet Guy Gallo (who died in January 2015 while this booklet was being prepared), for inspiring this project. Over the years, he brought me back, again and again, to the enchantment that he found in the Telemann violin *Fantasies*, and argued that I should return to them, older (if not wiser). His lyrical voice, and sense of the divine in the quotidian, has been in my mind and heart through the whole process.

PSS



Peter Sheppard Skærved playing the 1570 Amati at the British Museum

A note on the Violin

by Luthier David Rattray

During my time as Instrument Curator at the Royal Academy I welcomed many violin making students from around the world to view the treasures of the collection. The reaction to these works was interesting to observe. The Stradivari's were greeted with voices of excitement and wide eyed reverence, Guarneri's with nervous chuckles and often an element of bewilderment, however on presenting an Andrea Amati violin the room would fall silent, this shared experience of being in the presence of something akin to the luthier's 'Holy Grail' was a privilege and honour.

Andrea was born at the beginning of the sixteenth century in renaissance Italy, a period of extraordinary vitality and experimentation. Although there are few clues as to his training, it is clear from the designs and proportions of his violins, violas and cellos, that he was a scholar with intimate knowledge of geometrical form, fine woodworking skills and of acoustical function; he was also the first to use the now legendary Cremonese varnish to beautify and preserve his instruments. Although rather primitive violins had been around for a few decades before Andrea became established, he refined the design, developing the use on an 'inside mould', allowing near- identical sets of instruments to be assembled. Andrea's fame went well beyond Italy, to the French and Spanish courts, where his instruments were often extravagantly painted with royal motifs and mottos. Andrea Amati's violin making sons Antonio and Girolamo played a significant part in the workshop and inherited the family business on their father's death in 1577.

The term 'design classic' is without doubt over-used, the tag can be defined as a manufactured object with timeless aesthetic value and one with a lasting impact on society. Given this criteria then arguably Andrea Amati created the greatest design classic of all time; how many other objects made four hundred years ago still function in the role intended and musically? As we can hear from this recording his instruments retain a rich tonal palette that is rarely surpassed. Andrea Amati's designs have served as a blueprint, followed and developed by all the great violin making traditions that followed. Amati laid the foundations for western art music as we know it today.

David Rattray is one of the great living violin makers and restorers, specialising in both modern and historical instruments. He curated the collection at the Royal Academy of Music from 1989 to 2013. He has published extensively, on British and Italian *lutherie*. davidrattrayviolins.co.uk

A note on the Bow

by Archetier Antonino Airenti

Usually when I am asked “Why should I use a copy of an historical bow?” I answer, “Because it works! And it can teach you a lot”, but then I add “-on an instrument historically mounted.” My experience of thirty years had taught me that. Now, Peter has demonstrated in practice that a seventeenth-century bow can also work well on a violin with a different mounting and, above all, it can still lead a musician to perform to the best the strokes for which it was designed. And that's the point here: the bows before the French Revolution are not necessarily neither primitive nor imperfect. It's pretty hard to believe that the extraordinary craftsmen who created the world's finest violins could be satisfied with imperfect bows: I mean, men in whose instruments even the smallest detail was carefully designed. Maybe, simply, those bows were designed to perform a certain kind of music. They succeeded and, apparently, they can be very good even today.



The violinist

Peter Sheppard Skærved is the only violinist to have performed on the violins of Viotti, Paganini, Joachim, Kreisler and Ole Bull. His exploration of the relationship between string music and the instruments used to play it has resulted in years of collaboration with luthiers, archetiers, and projects (ranging from performances to films) working with some of the world's great collections, especially with the Library of Congress, Washington DC, where he has performed on up to 6 violins in one concert!

He is the dedicatee of over 400 works for violin, by composers including Hans Werner Henze, Poul Ruders, David Matthews, Judith Weir and Jörg Widmann. He has made over 60 critically acclaimed recordings, including cycles of sonatas by Tartini and Beethoven, Quartets by Reicha and Tippett, and many of the works written for him, resulting in a Grammy nomination, and awards from the BBC Music Magazine.

Peter is the only musician to have been invited to curate an exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, London, and has made and performance projects for the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and galleries worldwide. In the near future, he will be playing all 30 Tartini solo sonatas in residencies in Brussels, Tallinn and Bergen, will complete a residency at the Dover Museum, and will give a lecture recital on Darwin and music in Maine.

As a writer, he has published on subjects ranging from Victoria painters and violin-making to contemporary quartet writing and Paganini. He is married to the Danish writer and poet, Malene Skærved, and is the Viotti Lecturer at the Royal Academy of Music, London, where he was elected Fellow in 2013.

For recordings, films, writing and more info, go to www.peter-sheppard-skaerved.com





GREAT VIOLINS, Volume 1
presented by Athene Records

Georg Philipp Telemann
(14 March 1681 – 25 June 1767)

Peter Sheppard Skærved plays
an Andrea Amati violin made in 1570
Gut-strung, tuning A=416
Bow by Antonino Airenti

Recorded at the Church of St. John the Baptist, Aldbury, Hertfordshire, England,
on 13th and 21st November 2013

Producer: Peter Sheppard Skærved

Sound engineering and mastering:
Jonathan Haskell (Astounding Sounds)

Booklet and packaging design:
Stephen Sutton (Divine Art Recordings)

Photographs of the violin by
Ian Brearey, courtesy of the Royal Academy of Music, London

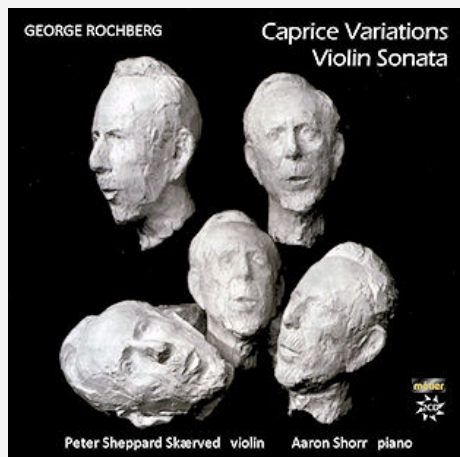
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VOLUME 2: J.S. Bach: Complete solo Sonatas and Partitas: 'Joachim' Stradivarius of 1698
to be released soon (Athene ATH 232034)

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Solo violin music performed by Peter Sheppard Skærved from Divine Art Recordings Group labels



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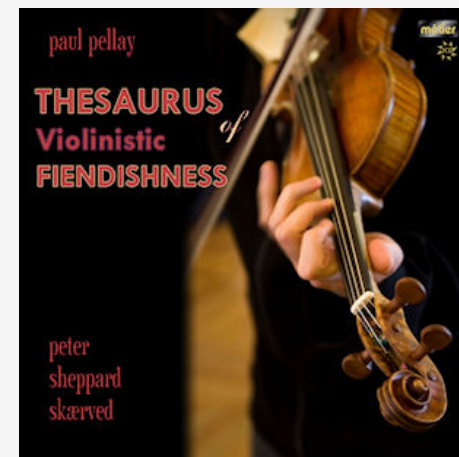
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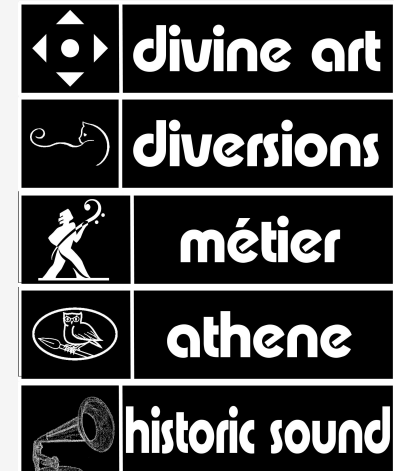
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Telemann's Fantasies

From this remove, I still know this music
Familiar as a sunset or a lover's touch.
Precise, simple, welcoming as if even I
Might play it. Of course I never will.
The violin has escaped my aging hands.
Still, I can hear it in my head. I am sure
Of the next note. Telemann gave me
That comfort, surrounding me with his
Enviably certain. Each crisp sound
Leading to the next, building an edifice of
Pattern and yearning. Such purity of purpose
Clarity gathering like wisdom.
Yet always, woven into the clear math
Of music, a constant fear of unfulfillable longing.

Guy Gallo (1955-2015)

January 28, 2014, New York City

It was Guy Gallo who inspired this project.
His passing leaves a void impossible to fill, and
this entire series is dedicated to his memory.

Peter Sheppard Skærved