

Teodorico Pedrini - Complete Violin Sonatas (2016)

Written by bluesever
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CD 1: 01] Violin Sonata in D major, Op.3, No.3 - I. Grave 02] Violin Sonata in D major, Op.3, No.3 - II. Allegro 03] Violin Sonata in D major, Op.3, No.3 - III. Adagio 04] Violin Sonata in D major, Op.3, No.3 - IV. Allegro 05] Violin Sonata in D major, Op.3, No.3 - V. Allegro 06] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.2 - I. Adagio - Allegro 07] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.2 - II. Grave 08] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.2 - III. Allegro 09] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.2 - IV. Vivace 10] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.2 - V. Grave 11] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.2 - VI. Allegro 12] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.9 - I. Preludio grave 13] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.9 - II. Allemande: Allegro non presto 14] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.9 - III. Sarabanda. Adagio 15] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.9 - IV. Tempo di Gavotta. Allegro 16] Violin Sonata in C major, Op.3, No.7 - I. Largo 17] Violin Sonata in C major, Op.3, No.7 - II. Allegro 18] Violin Sonata in C major, Op.3, No.7 - III. Adagio 19] Violin Sonata in C major, Op.3, No.7 - VI. Allegro 20] Violin Sonata in C minor, Op.3, No.10 - I. Preludio 21] Violin Sonata in C minor, Op.3, No.10 - II. Corrente. Andante 22] Violin Sonata in C minor, Op.3, No.10 - III. Grave - Sarabande. Vivace 23] Violin Sonata in C minor, Op.3, No.10 - IV. Minuetto. Allegro 24] Violin Sonata in C minor, Op.3, No.10 - VI. Giga. Allegro 25] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.11 - I. Preludio. Adagio 26] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.11 - II. Allemanda. Allegro 27] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.11 - III. Adagio 28] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.11 - IV. Giga. Allegro

CD 2: 01] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.8 - I. Grave 02] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.8 - II. Vivace 03] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.8 - III. Adagio 04] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.8 - IV. Baletto allegro 05] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.8 - V. Allegro 06] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.5 - I. Largo 07] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.5 - II. Allegro 08] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.5 - III. Vivace 09] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.5 - IV. Allegro 10] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.5 - V. Adagio 11] Violin Sonata in G major, Op.3, No.5 - VI. Allegro 12] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.4 - I. Grave 13] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.4 - II. Cantabile 14] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.4 - III. Allegro 15] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.4 - IV. Grave e arcate lunghe 16] Violin Sonata in G minor, Op.3, No.4 - V. Allegro 17] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.6 - I. Grave 18] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.6 - II. Vivace 19] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.6 - III. Adagio 20] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.6 - IV. Allegro 21] Violin Sonata in B flat major, Op.3, No.6 - V. Allegro 22] Violin Sonata in A major, Op.3, No.1 - I. Adagio 23] Violin Sonata in A major, Op.3, No.1 - II. Allegro 24] Violin Sonata in A major, Op.3, No.1 - III. Largo 25] Violin Sonata in A major, Op.3, No.1 - IV. Adagio 26] Violin Sonata in A major, Op.3, No.1 - V. Allegro 27] Violin Sonata in F major, Op.3, No.12 - I. Corrente vivace

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28] *Violin Sonata in F major, Op.3, No.12 - II. Grave* 29] *Violin Sonata in F major, Op.3, No.12 - III. Allemanda allegro* 30] *Violin Sonata in F major, Op.3, No.12 - IV. Pastorale adagio*
Nancy Wilson - violin Joyce Lindorff – harpsichord

Teodoro Pedrini is not exactly a household name. He seldom appears on concert programmes and few discs have been devoted to his oeuvre. That is understandable as the Sonatas op. 3 are the only extant compositions from his pen. It seems that his name appeared on disc for the first time in 1998 in a recording of a 'Jesuit Mass from Peking'; it was reissued in 2007 and reviewed by Robert Hugill. The Mass is from the pen of Jean Joseph Amiot (1718-1793) but the Ensemble XVIII-21 Musique des Lumières, directed by Jean-Christophe Frisch, also included two movements from the Sonata XII by Pedrini.

He was from Fermo, not far from the Adriatic coast, where he received the minor orders in 1690. After studying law for two years at Fermo University he went to Rome where he lived for five years, from 1692 to 1697. Here he took part in musical life; in 1696 he joined the Arcadian Academy, and in 1698 he was ordained presbyter. In January 1702 he was sent to China where he arrived nine years later. In Beijing he became court musician to Emperor Kangxi, succeeding the Portuguese Jesuit Tomás Pereira. The Jesuits were the first to set foot in China; that was in 1589. Over the years the emperor's court had received harpsichords from foreign visitors, and Pedrini also built instruments.

Although Pedrini worked closely with the Emperor, their relationship was rather complicated. That was partly due to a conflict over the Chinese Rites which was about the question whether Chinese ritual practices of honouring family ancestors and other Confucian and imperial rites qualified as religious rites which would make them incompatible with the Catholic faith. This dispute started in the early 17th century. The Jesuits considered them secular, but the Dominicans and Franciscans disagreed and were supported by Rome. Later they shifted to the Jesuit position but the Holy See banned the rites in 1704. Rome's views were shared by Pedrini and this caused many conflicts between him and the Jesuits and also between him and the Emperor. In 1721 he was imprisoned; Kangxi's successor Yongsheng set him free in 1723.

Despite all these frictions the Emperor held him in high esteem for his musical capabilities. They often played together at the harpsichord, each with one hand on the same instrument. Pedrini also acted as music teacher of three sons of the Emperor. His predecessor Pereira had started the writing of a treatise on Western music theory; Pedrini finished it which made this the first treatise of its kind ever published in China.

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The sonatas which are the subject of this disc have been preserved in a manuscript which is part of the National Library of Beijing. The author is called 'Nepridi', an anagram of Pedrini. They show the influence of Arcangelo Corelli. Joyce Lindorff, who also wrote the entry on Pedrini in New Grove, mentions that they even include several quotations from Corelli's sonatas op. 5. These were published in 1700 when Pedrini was still in Rome, and considering his involvement in musical life there he certainly must have known them. He may even have had a copy with him when he was on his way to China. Several movements include double stopping, for instance the grave, the first movement from the Sonata III in D which opens the first disc. The very first sonata from the set has five movements all of which include double stopping. The opening movement of the Sonata X in c minor is dominated by arpeggios. There are several movements which are technically pretty demanding. The last sonata from this set ends with a Pastorale; here we find the siciliano rhythm which is a feature of so many music for Christmastide and more generally music of a pastoral nature in Italian music of the baroque period.

Joyce Lindorff has spent much time studying the life and work of Pedrini during a stay of six years in China and Hongkong more than 20 years ago. In 2006 she started to record these twelve sonatas with Nancy Wilson; over the years they have recorded the complete set which explains the recording dates spanning a period of six years. This is the first recording of the entire set and because of that this release is of major importance. Both artists deliver fine performances; Nancy Wilson shows her technical prowess in the more demanding movements and sonatas. Sometimes I find her playing a bit too rigid and even a little stiff; a more gestural and passionate performance had not been amiss. However, this hasn't spoilt my enjoyment; if you like Italian baroque chamber music you should add this release to your collection. ---Johan van Veen, musicweb-international.com

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