Schubert - Piano Trio No. 2 in E flat major, D929 (2002)

1 Movement 1: Allegro [15'38] 2 Movement 2: Andante con moto [8'30] 3 Movement 3: Scherzo. Allegro moderato [6'19] 4 Movement 4 (final version): Finale. Allegro moderato [12'51] 5 Movement 4 (first version): Finale. Allegro moderato [14'36] The Florestan Trio

The Florestan Trio's Schubert bristles with energy and forward momentum. It's a far cry from the comfortable, upholstered Schubert of yore, leaving an impression that every note has been freshly rethought, scraped clean of its overlay of encrusted tradition. Tempos are brisk; a huge dynamic range replaces the traditionally narrow one; and the ensemble turns on a dime from very soft to very loud. There's even a nod to historically informed performance practice in the occasional clipped phrase endings and pianist Susan Tomes's sharp staccato effects. The lean strings also offer a stark contrast to the big-toned violin of Isaac Stern and Leonard Rose's famously juicy cello in the Stern Trio's version of the work on Sony. The Florestan Trio, with its urgent playing, also occupies a spot at the other end of the spectrum from the warm, more leisurely group led by Andras Schiff in their version on Teldec. The Florestan's filler is Schubert's original version of the work's finale. This ear-opening Schubert, cooler than its rivals, joins them at the top of the recommended pile. ---Dan Davis, amazon.com

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back