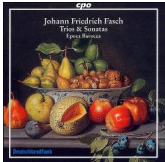


Johann Friedrich Fasch - Trios & Sonatas (2007)



QUADRO IN D MINOR FOR OBOE, VIOLIN, BASSOON & B.C 1. *Poco allegro* 2. *Largo* 3. *Allegro* TRIO IN E MINOR

FOR OBOE, VIOLIN & B.C

4. *Adagio* 5. *Allegro* 6. *Affettuoso* 7. *Allegro*

SONATA IN C MAJOR FOR BASSOON & B.C

8. *Largo* 9. *Allegro* 10. *Andante* 11. *Allegro assai*

QUADRO IN B FLAT MAJOR FOR RECORDER, OBOE, VIOLIN & B.C

12. *Largo* 13. *Allegro* 14. *Grave* 15. *Allegro*

TRIO IN G MINOR FOR OBOE, VIOLIN & B.C

16. *Andante* 17. *Allegro* 18. *Poco allegro*

QUADRO IN F MAJOR FOR VIOLIN, OBOE, BASSOON & B.C

19. *Largo* 20. *Allegro* 21. *Largo* 22. *Allegro*

CANON IN F MAJOR FOR RECORDER, BASSOON & B.C

23. *Andante* 24. *Allegro* 25. *Allegro*

Epoca Barocca: Alessandro Piqué (oboe) Margarete Adorf (violin) Sergio Azzolini (bassoon)
Christoph Lehmann (organ, harpsichord).

Johann Friedrich Fasch was seven years younger than Georg Philipp Telemann was and outlived him by one year; Fasch, Telemann, and Johann Sebastian Bach all traveled in similar circles. In 1720, for example, both Fasch and Bach were gainfully employed in the courts of the Anhalt princes, Bach in Cöthen and Fasch in Zerbst. However, Telemann provided the model for the sonatas heard on CPO's Johann Friedrich Fasch: Trios & Sonatas, featuring Epocca Barocca, a period-instrument ensemble based in Bergisch Gladbach, Germany.

Fasch did not publish any music during his lifetime, and sources for performances of Fasch have to be drawn from either original manuscripts or the few modern editions that have been prepared from his music. This is partly why this collection of Fasch's chamber music comes as a bit of a surprise as the core of his instrumental output is made up of orchestral music -- he has

87 "overture" suites, 64 concerti, and 19 symphonies. Fasch's surviving chamber output is modest by comparison -- 18 trio sonatas and 12 sonatas in four parts; the seven works here account for slightly more than one-fifth of Fasch's entire chamber music legacy. Most of the music was probably composed in the mid-1730s for a Collegium musicum that Fasch had founded in Zerbst in the 1710s, which went head to head for a time with similar ensembles led by Bach and Telemann. Of the seven pieces included, the Sonata in C for bassoon is the most interesting. Fasch manages to keep the bassoon out of its usual barking or percolating role and writes for it in the same flowing manner as one would for the flute -- the first-movement Largo is particularly lovely, and Epoca Barocca wisely includes a lute in the continuo to provide contrast with the low-throated solo instrument. The D minor Quadri for oboe, violin and bassoon is missing its alleged violin part; here Epoca Barocca has reconstituted it through having the violin answer to the bassoon part, a logical solution that works so well if one wasn't aware that this had been done, it wouldn't be noticeable at all.

However, this is also the Achilles' heel of CPO's Johann Friedrich Fasch: Trios & Sonatas; there isn't much that sets the music apart from its era, nor from the chamber music of Fasch's contemporaries. While occasional unusual harmonic twists are present here and there, these are heard nowhere near to the degree that they turn up in Fasch's orchestral music. Clearly, Fasch intended his chamber music as a kind of light entertainment and did not approach it with the same ambitiousness that marks his overtures. Nevertheless, not all who listen to Baroque chamber music need for a given work to stand out from the pack; with some listeners the more homogeneous it is the better. The expert performance by Epoca Barocca speaks for itself, and it should be congratulated for rescuing music of such great obscurity and making it accessible for listeners around the world to evaluate and enjoy. ---Uncle Dave Lewis, Rovi

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