



## R. Schumann: Piano Trios Nos 1 & 2 (Op. 63 & 80)

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Even though they never have gripped the imagination of music lovers, the Schumann trios—these two plus a later one—are certainly worthy of the composer, and they have had their share of distinguished recordings: Thibault-Casals-Cortot (1 only, 1928), Szeryng- Fournier-Rubinstein, and the Beaux Arts Trio.

The two recorded here were written in the same year (1847), but show different character. The first is rather Beethovenian in its exhaustive use of limited materials in a fairly severe style; but the second, written in three days, is lighter and less impassioned. The second—which, by the way, was preferred by Clara—even quotes Schumann songs and works of Beethoven and Mendelssohn. Both pieces have strong advocates in the Swiss Piano Trio, which plays with great spirit and the right level of bravura. The performances are quite brisk, but never seem too fast, and balances are fine.

A very good recording, then, though some may prefer the richer, old-world feel of the Vienna Brahms Trio or one of the classic recordings mentioned above.