

press commentary

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- Haydn CD - American Record Guide 2006
- Haydn CD - Fono Forum 2005/11, ***** 5 stars
- Koechlin CD - review Klassik.com 2007
- Köln/Cologne Philharmonie - Schumann cello concerto 2007/01/26
- New York Sun review - All Beethoven in New York, with Annegret Kuttner/piano

"This" (the 6 Suites for Cello solo by Bach) "is one of the best CD recordings of the year - possibly of the decade.... here we encounter the closest we have witnessed...to a new Casals." (Early Music Review)

„Noch eine ..., ebenfalls sehr besondere Scheibe möchte ich Ihnen heute morgen vorstellen. Der Cellist Peter Bruns hat sie, wieder zusammen mit der Pianistin Roglit Ishay, für händsler eingespielt. Sie umfasst Werke von Franz Schubert, nämlich dessen Arpeggione-Sonate, und von Robert Schumann, wobei sich hier aparter Weise die C-dur-Suite von Bach in Schumanns Bearbeitung für Cello und Klavier findet. Was bei dieser CD von Peter Bruns und Roglit Ishay sofort auffällt, ist der..... Klang..... Tatsächlich hat die Pianistin diesmal einen fast einhundert Jahre alten Bechstein aufgetrieben, der Klang des Tasteninstrumentes verbindet sich ... auf wundersame Weise mit dem Tonon-Cello von Peter Bruns, übrigens einem Ex-Casals. Roglit Ishay kann darauf geradezu parlieren, was Peter Bruns erlaubt, die Farbenfülle seines Cello nach Herzenslust auszuspielen. Und zu einem anderen Behufe ist dieser eminente Musiker ja wohl auch nicht Cellist geworden. Der gebürtige Berliner ist und bleibt ein Romantiker und damit im steten, aufregenden Zwiespalt zwischen blitzendem Intellekt und überschäumender Emotion, zwischen Krafnatur und Selbstdisziplin. Schumanns Fantasiestücke op. 73 scheinen wie geschrieben für dieses Duo. (Deutschlandradio & Die Neue Platte, Norbert Ely , 24.8.2003)

Peter Bruns (cello) & Ilan Rechtman (piano) Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, New York City ... Bruns is a splendid cellist of what might be called the old European school: though his instrumental mastery is complete, he is more interested in expressive communication and the inspiration of the moment.... His tone is dark, warm and powerful, and he can give it infinite, instantaneous variety of color and inflection in the service of mood and character. Perhaps most remarkable is his rhythm, which combines freedom and steadiness with the ebb and flow of the human pulse and makes his tempo changes feel organic and his rubatos subtle, poised and balanced. This was especially striking in the Brahms and Schubert Sonatas: rhythm and phrasing had a natural, spoken quality; the players seemed to have become one with the music and to communicate its mood, character and expression directly to the listener with a sense of inevitability and absolute "rightness." Bloch's Baal Shem was played with total idiomatic identification and all-out passion; originally for violin, it worked remarkably well on the cello (as did another Bloch piece, Prayer, which was performed as an encore). Judging from the enthusiasm of the overflow audience, these two artists cannot come back too soon or too often. (Edith Eisler, ANDANTE, April 2001)

In their duo recital debut at Weill Hall, Canadian violinist Lara St John and German cellist Peter Bruns, both young and exuberant, displayed no less virtuosity than fiery temperament...The playing was fabulous... Constantly watching each other's fingers and bows by playing almost everything from memory, the pair achieve uncanny rapport and coordination... Their tone is full, vibrant, carefully balanced, and infinitely variable... (Edith Eisler - ON STAGE, Strings Magazin January 2001 issue)

"In a heavy season of violin-cello duos, violinist Lara St John and cellist Peter Bruns left every other pairing I've heard recently in the dust (27 September, Weill Recital Hall). The repertoire for that instrumentation is limited and therefore repeated to a ridiculous extent, but hearing the visceral, vibrant playing throughout Martinu's duo, Kodaly's duo Op. 7, Ravel's sonata and the omnipresent Handel Halvorsen Passacaglia in G minor I felt like I'd never heard these pieces before. If St John and Bruns don't return to New York soon, I'll have to track them down." (Ken Smith, The Strad, page 1399 December 2000 issue)

Reference Recording 10/10 Artist Quality/Sound Quality Ernest Bloch often turned to the cello to express his deepest feelings, especially in music that pays homage to Jewish themes and sensibilities, as in Schelomo and Voice in the Wilderness. It also was the instrument that served as a vehicle to join his modernist sympathies to his love for Bach's music. These life-long stylistic tendencies are amply displayed on this admirable disc. The "Jewish" Bloch is heard in Baal Shem (originally written for violin and piano), Méditation hébraïque, and the emotionally direct pieces comprising From Jewish Life, music full of cantorial inflections and plaintive, soulful melodies. But all is not mournful: in Simchas Torah, the third piece of Baal Shem, the performers become a mini-klezmer band that will set your feet tapping with joy. I have no idea whether Bruns is Jewish, nor does it matter, but his playing here sounds as if he was wearing a yarmulke during the recording sessions; it's that idiomatic. For many listeners Bloch's later, more complex Suites for solo cello, written in 1956 and 1957, will be the main attraction of this disc. They're too rarely heard, even more so in such accomplished performances. As Bruns says in a brief booklet note, "chromaticism is taken to its limits" and the performer is required to display "an infallible sense of form and rubato." That's exactly what Bruns does, clarifying the often cloudy structures and making these difficult works accessible. He's equal to their great technical demands and his love for the music shines through. The whiplash Allegro of Suite No. 1 scintillates. His tonal variety and plastic rhythms bring the Suite No. 2 alive and make the Third Suite's internal logic crystal clear. Throughout, his big tone sings with conviction. His excellent keyboard partner in the shorter accompanied works is Roglit Ishay. Important music. Excellent performances. Realistic sound. A winner. (Dan Davis/Classics Today)

"These recordings are a new yardstick. For music lovers absolutely a must!" (About the Fauré CD, translated from German, Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten)

"Was folgte, war der frühe Höhepunkt des Abends: Das Cellokonzert D-Dur von Joseph Haydn. Dafür hatte (man) sichder Unterstützung des Cellisten Peter Bruns versichert. Ein Glücksgriff. Selten hat ein Musiker, wie der erst 36-jährige auf fast allen Konzertbühnen der Welt bekannte Bruns einen solchen Sturm der Begeisterung hervorgerufen. Bravos und nicht enden wollender Applaus waren der Dank für ein fast unnatürlich schönes Konzert..... Ebenso wie die virtuose, weltentrückte Beherrschung des Instrumentes begeisterte der Klang des 1730 in Venedig von Carlo Tononi gebauten....Cellos. (Märkische Allgemeine Zeitung)

"...der junge Peter Bruns wurde gefeiert und umjubelt. Er bot auf musikalisch schlüssige Weise und mit historisch-stilistisch vorbildlicher Gestaltung Haydns Cellokonzert in C-Dur, musikantisch mitreißend, im Ausdruck treffend, voll innerer Expressivität im Adagio, das sich zu einer Art dramatischen Gesangsszene steigerte, vital, virtuos faszinierend im Finale." (Sächsische Zeitung)

"Gleichsam verzaubert wurde man durch die Prägnanz des musikalischen Ausdrucks und die Tonschönheit, von der jedes Detail erfüllt war." (Sächsische Zeitung)

"Am ... Konzert für Violoncello und Orchester... von Edward Elgar bewies er, was in ihm steckt. Aus einem Guß setzte er das in romantischer Verpackung würdevoll daher kommende Werk hin, so unkompliziert musizierend, so überlegen

gestaltend, als böten die konträren Sätze weder Probleme des Technischen noch des Inhaltlichen." (Thüringische Landeszeitung)

"Die Berliner Cellonacht, in der Peter Bruns vor einiger Zeit alle 6 Bachsuiten auswendig spielte, sorgte für Aufsehen.... Das Ensemble oriol hatte sich nunmehr den exquisiten Künstler als Solisten ausgesucht und damit einen besonderen musikalischen Erfolg gesichert. Bruns hatte es" (Haydns D-Dur-Konzert) "dynamisch aufgefrischt und launig gegen den Strich gebürstet, vor allem aber mit sprühenden Tempi und einem artistischen Schneid gespielt, wie das dem alten Haydn nicht alle Tage widerfährt. Dabei brachte er nicht nur im langsamen Satz auch feinste pastellfarbene Abtönungen ins Spiel. Sein inspirierter und zugleich ungemein präziser Musizierstil verlieh dem gesamtem Haydn-Konzert eine neue Intensität..... Auch dieses Stück" (Denissow, Variationen über einen Haydn-Kanon) "spielte Bruns bei aller bisweilen schmerzhafter Akzentuierung mit einem singenden Espressivo sondergleichen." (Der Tagesspiegel)

"...In der Philharmonie, wo das Ensemble oriol und der Cellist Peter Bruns....musizierten,... unterstrich (Peter Bruns) seinen Ruf als bedeutender deutscher Cellist der jüngeren Generation...." (Berliner Morgenpost)

"This is one of the most convincing early music style readings I have heard." (American Record Guide)

"The artists themselves cannot be overpraised...What ultimately makes this very truthfully recorded disc so enjoyable is the immediacy and intensity of their personal response, through unfailing pliability of phrasing and nuance, to the composer`s warm romantic heart. Every single note speaks in a way that can scarcely fail to touch your own. In sum, wholly worth its price." (About the Brahms Sonatas, "Critics choice" award 1998 Gramophone magazine)

"Faure's cello works summarise the various phases of his development as a composer. Peter Bruns and Roglit Ishay tackle them with a new slant, using an Erard piano of the type of which Faure was especially fond, with its gently, refined and intimate sound quality and its rich palette of colours. These qualities are immediately evident in the Sicilienne, Ishay's light, staccato accompaniment unobtrusively supporting Bruns's sonorous cantabile. The more meditative central section, like the Romance, is played with tenderness and poise, while Bruns's sustained legato admirably captures the vocal qualities of Faure's languid *Après un reve* in Casals's seasoned transcription. A strong forthright reading of the *Elegie* is followed by a spirited account of the *Serenade*, while Bruns displays neat virtuosity in *Papillon*. World War 1 and Faure's incipient deafness help explain the yawning gulf between these miniatures and the two sonatas, in which both artists demonstrate a remarkable affinity for Faure's elusive idiom. The musicians highlight the argument between the leading themes in the turbulent development and coda of the First Sonata's energetic opening *Allegro*, the Erard piano contributing significantly to achieving an ideal balance and punctuating the dense textures. They also invest the *Andante* with an appropriately contemplative air and build the joyous finale to a powerful close. The heart of the Second Sonata is the elegiac central *Andante*, which is sustained with a dignity worthy of its original commemorative intentions; but the outer movements are also strongly characterised and firmly shaped, particularly the effervescent finale." (The Strad, review by Robin Stowell)

"He is a cellist of the first order. Everyone was touched by the precision of the musical expression and the beauty of the sound which filled every detail." (Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin)