

# Beethoven

Piano Trios – No 5, 'Ghost', Op 70 No 1; No 6, Op 70 No 2; No 10 (Variations on an Original Theme), Op 44

Xyrion Trio (Nina Tichman *pf*  
Ida Bieler *vn* Maria Kliegel *vc*)

Naxos 8 557723 (72' • DDD)

*Op 70 – selected comparisons:*

Istomin, Stern, Rose (SONY) SM2K 64513

Kempff, Szeryng, Fournier (DG) 453 751 2GCB5

**Not entirely comfortable, perhaps, but this trio do respond to the theatrics**



BEETHOVEN

Piano Trios  
Nos. 5 'Ghost' and 6  
Tichman • Bieler • Kliegel



Schubert is foreshadowed in the third movement of the Sixth Trio. Beethoven originally conceived it as a minuet but then marked it *Allegretto ma non troppo*. The rhythm

of a dance remains but the melodic lines suggest a lissom lilt that the Xyrion Trio don't quite tap into. Their purposeful way rather brushes aside the relaxed nature of the music that is shown by the groups led by Eugene Istomin and Wilhelm Kempff. The Xyrion aren't comfortable with the first movement, either, and misjudge the tempo needed to accentuate compound time; their tense drive minimises the 'swing' of 6/8 by turning it into 3/4. But come the finale and these artists have no difficulty in responding to its theatrical elements.

As is to be expected, therefore, they interpret the theatrical Ghost Trio very well. Nina Tichman, who has the major role, is an assertive pianist who nevertheless doesn't dominate her partners; all three are perhaps at their finest in the second movement where, through careful grading of dynamics, they expose the eerie quality of the music. In this overall excellent performance you also get the rarely heard second-half repeat in the first movement with its four-bar lead in.

The Variations that form the filler are, in comparison, light and entertaining. The Xyrion play artistically without attempting to inflate the Trio's stature. Sound is good, instrumental balance just, but the piano spreads a bit and the musicians are far apart.

**Nalen Anthoni**