



## Max Reger: Complete String Trios & Piano Quartet in A Minor, Op. 133

aud 97.714

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Gramophone (Peter Quantrill - 01.03.2018)

### GRAMOPHONE

Once read, it's hard to forget, but best to lay aside Reger's claim for his Op 77b String Trio as satisfying the demands of his age for a new Mozart. 'Even more beautiful' it may be than the Flute Serenade with which it shares an opus number, but the trio's least far-fetched claim to cast some flickering shadow of Mozartian lightness of spirit lies in a divertimento-like character most pleasingly heard in a Larghetto which shares the formal, spacious layout and grave beauties of the gardens in Potsdam and the Nymphenburg. The rough, stamping humour of the subsequent Scherzo rather coarsely banishes any lingering illusion of imperial (or Classical) finesse, though the finale makes partial amends with a Haydnesque turn of dialogue and brevity.

If the steam of dumplings still rises from Reger's better-known chamber and orchestral music for some listeners – I'm rather partial to a dish of Griessklösschen myself – then they should find the calorie count more to their taste in the attenuated textures of the string trio, even in the more densely woven lines of Op 141b. The German Trio Lirico do a fine job of sounding more like a sextet, not without some effort caught by the microphones. Rival ensembles on Naxos and Gramola are also audibly taxed – somehow huffing and sighing are grist to the mill of the Regerian aesthetic – but I prefer the ebb and flow of the new recording, the opportunities for contrast and genial dialogue taken wherever they arise, such as in the serenade-like lilt of the first movement's second theme.

The Second Piano Quartet is one of those several works composed after Reger had had a close encounter with a Brahmsian archetype (in this case the C minor Quartet, Op 60), and there is even a furtive tip of the hat to his exemplar at the start of the development section. Here again a sympathetic recording balance is key to the success of the performance, placing Detlev Eisinger's contribution at a discreet distance while making clear that this is a partnership of musical equals.

**Reger**  
String Trios - No 1, Op 77b; No 2, Op 141b.  
Piano Quartet No 2, Op 133\*  
Trio Lirico with Detlev Eisinger pf  
Audite © AUDITE97 714 (84 • DDD)

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**Peter Quantrill**  
String Trio – selected comparisons:  
Aperio Pf Qt (NAXOS) 8 570785/6 (out)  
Vogl Strg Trio (GRAM) 98943

## Reger

String Trios - No 1, Op 77*b*; No 2, Op 141*b*.

Piano Quartet No 2, Op 133<sup>a</sup>

Trio Lirico with <sup>a</sup>Detlev Eisinger *pf*

Audite © AUDITE97 714 (84' • DDD)



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