

## **Waley-Cohen & Baillieu Reviews x 2**

### **Violin Sonatas - Strad Review**

**Deft and mellow-toned readings of late Baroque duos by Bach junior**

### **Tamsin Waley-Cohen: CPE Bach: Complete Works for Violin and Keyboard**

**The Strad Issue:** January 2020

**Description:** Deft and mellow-toned readings of late Baroque duos by Bach junior

**Musicians:** Tamsin Waley-Cohen (violin) James Baillieu (piano)

**Works:** CPE Bach: Complete Works for Violin and Keyboard: Sonatas in D major Wq71, in D minor Wq72, in C major Wq73, in D major Wq74, in F major Wq75, in B minor Wq76, in B flat major Wq77, in C minor Wq78, Arioso con variazioni in A major Wq79, Fantasia in F sharp minor Wq80

**Catalogue Number:** SIGNUM CLASSICS SIGCD573 (3 CDs)

This chronological survey of Emanuel Bach's violin/keyboard works extends from the Baroque sonatas of his youth (Wq71–3, 1731; revised 1746) to the more unpredictable 'sensitive' works of his maturity (Wq74, 1754 and Wq75–8, 1763). James Baillieu is the busier in the early sonatas and argues a strong case for the anachronistic Steinway piano as their optimum keyboard medium, such are his clean, athletic technique and his awareness of style, texture and balance. Tamsin Waley-Cohen, playing a 1721 Stradivari, takes more of a back seat, opting for light articulations, transparency and purity of tone and minimal vibrato. Nevertheless her forays into greater prominence include some admirable trading of melodic motifs with Baillieu, particularly in the Adagios of Wq71 and Allegros of Wq72. The systematic development of thematic material in the later sonatas results in greater equality between the two instruments and Waley-Cohen comes out of her shell to participate more vigorously in the dialogue, especially in buoyant allegros such as the outer movements of Wq75 or the first movements of Wq74 and Wq77. Her rapport with Baillieu is riveting in the deeply expressive Adagio of Wq78, where Baillieu's extraordinary meanderings contrast with her intimately veiled and mellow violin line.

Apart from the somewhat express final Allegretto of Wq73 and Tempo di Menuetto of Wq74, tempos are finely judged and little expressive detail is left under-characterised. The set concludes with accounts of the keyboard-centric Arioso con variazioni Wq79 and Fantasia Wq80, intelligently and deftly conveyed. Captured in the Britten Studio, Snape, the recording is exemplary.

ROBIN STOWELL

**Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH (1714-1788) - MusicWeb Review**  
**Complete Original Works for Violin & Keyboard**

Violin Sonata in D, Wq.71 (H502, 1731) [12:11]

Violin Sonata in d minor, Wq.72 (H503, 1731) [8:42]

Violin Sonata in C, Wq.73/149 (H504, 1731) [15:08]

Sinfonia in D for keyboard and violin, Wq.74 (H507, 1754) [9:53]

Violin Sonata in F, Wq.75 (1763) [24:02]

Violin Sonata in b minor, Wq.76 (1763) [18:44]

Violin Sonata in B-flat, Wq.77 (1763) [17:35]

Violin Sonata in c minor, Wq.78 (1763) [20:48]

*Arioso con variazioni*, Wq.79 (H535, 1781) [11:13]

*Freye Fantasie* in f-sharp minor, Wq.80 (H536, 1787) [14:36]

Tamsin Waley-Cohen (violin)

James Baillieu (piano)

rec. Britten Studio, Snape Maltings, Snape, Suffolk, 10-12 September and 13-14 October 2018. DDD.

Reviewed as 24/96 download with pdf booklet from [hyperion-records.co.uk](http://hyperion-records.co.uk).

**SIGNUM SIGCD573** [3 CDs: 153:06]

Purists may object to the combination of a modernised Stradivarius and a modern Steinway grand piano in music originally intended for the harpsichord (actually specified for the Sinfonia, Wq.74) or fortepiano. I would normally find myself among their number: I originally decided to give this set a miss until I heard an extract on BBC Radio 3 and changed my mind.

If you must have period instruments, Duo Belder Kimura on baroque violin and fortepiano or harpsichord (Resonus RES10192) will do very well – [review](#). For a shorter selection on period instruments, there's Amandine Beyer and Edna Stern on mid-price Alpha Collection (Alpha329, Wq.76, 77 and 78 and H545 – [review](#)).

Modern instruments these may be on the new Signum, but Tamsin Waley-Cohen and James Baillieu play with a real sense of period style; the piano, even when acting as the senior partner, is never allowed to get too big for its boots. Readers may recall that, though I much prefer the keyboard music of CPE's father on the harpsichord, I make honourable exceptions in the case of Glenn Gould and Angela Hewitt. Now Baillieu joins their ranks and Waley-Cohen, whom I associate with music from a later period, joins those violinists who, while not baroque or classical specialists, plays the music of the period convincingly.

In fact, CPE's music spans the baroque and classical styles, moving over a period of more than 50 years from early works in the manner of his father and his

godfather Telemann, to anticipations of Haydn and Mozart. I'm not even sure that 'anticipations' is the right word for the *Arioso*, Wq.79 and the free fantasy, Wq.80. The notes, jointly written by the performers, remind us that Mozart hailed CPE as 'the father of us all' and that his works in the *Empfindsamer Stil*, with its emphasis on feeling, even anticipate the romantic movement in many respects. After all, as O.A. Lovejoy's essay *On the Discrimination of Romanticisms* (plural) reminded us long ago, there are many forms of the latter, and F.L. Lucas counted over 11,000 definitions of the term, one of which might well be applied to CPE.

Even the early Wq.71, unusually in four movements, is made to sound attractive here, but it's the later works where both the music and performances come into their own. I'm pleased to see that, unlike the Resonus recording, Signum have given us the music in chronological order, with Wq.79 and Wq.80 the logical conclusion. Originally composed for keyboard alone, it's not over-fanciful to compare Wq.80 with Beethoven's late piano sonatas and quartets. Here I'm even prepared to concede that the modern Steinway not just equals the fortepiano on Resonus but makes more sense. If the sonatas from 1763 reflect at least in part the conservative tastes of his employer, Frederick of Prussia, by 1787 he was able to compose in the much freer style specified in the work's title, 'free fantasy'.

The Duo Belder Kimura end the first of their two Resonus CDs with Wq.80. Though the fortepiano on that recording is a copy of a Walter instrument of 1795, thus post-dating by several years the *Fantasie*, it fails to make as much impact as Baillieu's modern instrument, even with the volume turned up. The copy of another Walter fortepiano, as played on the Alpha selection would have sounded better in this work; it's a shame they didn't include it there. Where the Resonus Duo's lighter approach to the music is marginally preferable in the earlier works, the new Signum scores here and in the *Arioso*, Wq.79.

The Signum CDs are sold for around the price of two discs, about £19, making them competitive with the 2-CD Resonus set. Beware, however, that one dealer, who has currently reduced the CDs to £17.50, is asking £33.12 for the 16-bit download and £41.40 for the 24-bit. Follow the Hyperion link (above) for a more reasonable £15.99 and £24.00 respectively. You may even find the download for less elsewhere, but without the booklet.

The single-CD Alpha selection is well worth considering, but it doesn't contain CPE's best works for violin and keyboard. Out-and-out advocates of period performance will want the Resonus set but my money is on the new Signum in preference to either.

**Brian Wilson**

## Duo Belder Kimura Reviews x 3

### Carl Philipp Emanuel BACH (1714 -1788) - MusicWeb Review

#### Complete works for Keyboard & Violin

Sonata in C major, Wq. 73 (1731) [13:14]

Sonata in F major, Wq. 75 (1763) [16:12]

Sinfonia in D major, Wq. 74 (1754) [7:59]

Sonata in B minor, Wq. 76 (1763) [17:54]

Fantasia in F-sharp minor, Wq. 80 (1787) [14:05]

Sonata in B-flat major, Wq. 77 (1763) [16:26]

Sonata in D minor, Wq. 72 (1731) [8:05]

Arioso with Variations in A major, Wq. 79 [7:33]

Sonata in C minor, Wq. 78 (1763) [18:56]

Sonata in D major, Wq. 71 (1731) [11:53]

Duo Belder Kimura: Rie Kimura (baroque violin), Pieter-Jan Belder (harpsichord & fortepiano)

rec. 2016, St Hilda's Church, Sherburn, United Kingdom

**RESONUS RES10192** [69:32 + 62:51]

This recording provides the opportunity to hear excellent performances of all ten of C.P.E. Bach's violin and keyboard works written over a span of fifty-six years, from 1731 to 1787. As Bach's career encompassed the change from the baroque to the classical style, these works have considerable stylistic range, perhaps even greater than a casual acquaintance with this composer might suggest.

Unsurprisingly, the earliest pieces, composed when C.P.E. Bach was seventeen, reveal the most obvious debt to Johann Sebastian Bach. The opening Allegro di molto of Wq. 73 quickly brings to mind Bach the father, whose influence can be heard throughout the best of the early works, the Sonata in D major, Wq. 71.

As he gained experience, the younger Bach's sonatas began to sound more like what we expect of him: that is. wildly contoured melodies with compelling, brilliantly-timed hesitations in the lines. The work becomes more emotional, but in an Enlightenment, rather than a Romantic, manner. The musicians strike poses to project affect, often through technically demanding writing.

The Fantasia in F-sharp minor, Wq. 80 sounds most like our anticipation of C.P.E. Bach's music. This extended work, with the fortepiano taking the keyboard part, seems to be an experiment in progress, often exciting, but sometimes delaying too long to make something interesting happen. We are not accustomed to thinking of C.P.E. Bach as Mozart's contemporary, yet this rich fantasy was composed in the year of *Don Giovanni* and seems like a proper companion to Mozart's keyboard fantasias (K396, K397, K475).

Perhaps the most impressive music here is the group of four sonatas from 1763. The C minor Sonata, Wq. 78, opens with unease and yearning, Romantic in spirit if not in form. The Adagio contains a long and solemn rhetorical line for violin over keyboard arpeggios. The finale, a jig, remains serious, but moves right along, insistent, but not demonic. The B flat Sonata, Wq. 77 begins with an Allegro di molto that rushes forward like Johan Sebastian, until the momentum is interrupted by the son's rhetorical hesitations. The Largo is a lamentation before another extrovert movement, a slightly awkward but endearing Presto.

The downside of a complete set is that it must include weaker pieces alongside the strong. There are not many of these, but the F major Sonata, Wq. 75 did not hold my attention.

These are confident, assertive performances. Kimura and Belder play with assurance and joy, although not with in-your-face virtuosity, so expect to be quietly pleased rather than dazzled. Kimura's rich violin sound is a plus. The recording is clear, and the two instruments are well-balanced, although the violin is (perhaps inevitably) favored over the harpsichord's treble line.

***Richard Kraus***

## **CPE Bach: Complete Works for Keyboard and Violin CD review – intelligently conveyed - Stephen Prichard Rating: 4\*/5\* Guardian Review**

**Duo Belder Kimura  
(Resonus) (2CDs)**

This impressively comprehensive study of all CPE Bach's work for keyboard and violin encompasses sonatas from his teen years to his 70s and maps his progress as an individual voice, naturally influenced by his teacher-father but gradually moving out of his shadow into new areas of expression. The earliest sonatas (the attractive D major example in particular) follow the traditional "trio" pattern, where the right hand of the harpsichord enjoys equal status with the violin; 50 years later we meet a much freer dialogue between the fortepiano and the violin, prefiguring Beethoven. This fascinating development is intelligently and elegantly conveyed by the distinguished Amsterdam-based players [Rie Kimura](#), violin, and [Pieter-Jan Belder](#), keyboards. Recommended.

## **C.P.E. Bach: Violin Sonatas in D major, D minor, C major, F major, B minor, B flat major, C minor; Sinfonia in D major; Fantasia in F sharp minor; Arioso with Variations in A major - Strad Review**

**Description:** Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's music in its enjoyable, varied entirety

**Musicians:** Duo Belder Kimura

**Composer:** C.P.E. Bach

**Catalogue Number:** RESONUS RES10192 (2 CDs)

This comprehensive survey of C.P.E. Bach's works for keyboard and violin traces his artistic development from the period of his father's influence through to the expressive sensibility and freer dialogue of his maturity. Rie Kimura and Pieter-Jan Belder convey this development with technical assurance and sound stylistic appreciation. Kimura coaxes a lyrical flexibility from her violin, its sonorous tone enhanced by her restrained but telling vibrato usage, notably in the Adagio of the C minor Sonata. There are some isolated occasions when her shifting sounds inelegant and her intonation questionable, but her playing is generally neat, poised and tasteful. Belder, too, plays with a spontaneity and sense of timing that allow the music to breathe, and he negotiates the juxtaposition of figured bass and fully notated episodes in, for example, the Sonata in B minor with a degree of smooth efficiency. The genre's conversational element is well exemplified throughout, particularly in lively allegros such as the outer movements of the F major Sonata or the second movement of the D major, this latter played with invigorating rhythmic drive and subtle articulation. Kimura's expansive contribution in the Poco andante of the B minor Sonata is especially affecting and Belder's stylish cadenzas enhance the D major's two slow movements. These players use a fortepiano for their accounts of the Fantasia and the Arioso. They convey the contrasting characters and textures of the Fantasia with deft timing and virtuosity, and they negotiate the Arioso's variations with some humour and aplomb. They are well served by the gently resonant church acoustic and Resonus's vivid recorded sound. ROBIN STOWELL