

J A C O U E L I N E R O S S

Violinist



Schubert: Sonatas Op. 137, Nos. 1-3 Sonata Op. post. 162, vol.I

JACQUELINE ROSS, violin • MAGGIE COLE, fortepiano

The Strad, 26 October 2012

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Schubert's three op.137 sonatas were downgraded to sonatinas after his death. Here they have their dignity restored, but are performed with a lighter touch than many players afforded them under their old title. The D major Sonata is sprightly and delicate, with understated but nicely shaped phrasing, the staccato passages bubbling with crisp vitality. There is plaintive but caressing playing in the Andante. The more substantial A minor Sonata receives subtle shading of dynamics and dramatic contrasts, highlighting the sudden changes of emotional gear in the opening Allegro moderato. The three movements that follow are all quite gentle: there is an easy, wistful flow to the Andante; the trio of the Menuetto is thoughtful, almost tentative, and the final Allegro has a melancholy tinge. The second movement of the G minor opens with an old-fashioned courtliness, before becoming darker and more highly coloured, and the duo performs the Menuetto with gusto.

With the A major Sonata, written a year later, Schubert's palette had broadened. Jacqueline Ross brings a vocal expressiveness to the opening melody, and in the scherzo second movement (Schubert had upgraded from the minuet), the players scamper and tussle with sparkling vigour and wit. There is an air of wonder to the Andantino before an ebullient finale. This is all fine playing, with great musical teamwork. The balance between instruments is good, in an acoustic providing space and clarity.

TIM HOMFRAY