

# GRIEG for Piano Duo

Piano Concerto - Two-Piano Version  
(première recording)

"Peer Gynt" Suite No. 1

Norwegian Dances

"Sigurd Jorsalfar": Homage March

Mozart: Sonata, K. 545, with second piano part by Grieg



# Goldstone and Clemmow

## EDVARD GRIEG (1843-1907)

### Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16 \*

[28:39]

with second piano part by Grieg and Károly (Carl) Thern

- |    |  |         |
|----|--|---------|
| 01 | <i>Allegro molto moderato</i>                          | [12:03] |
| 02 | <i>Adagio –</i>  | [6:19]  |
| 03 | <i>Allegro moderato molto e marcato – Quasi presto</i> | [10:17] |

### “Peer Gynt” Suite No. 1, Op. 46, for piano duet

[13:01]

- |    |   |        |
|----|---|--------|
| 04 | <i>Morning Mood</i>                     | [3:13] |
| 05 | <i>The Death of Åse</i>                 | [3:54] |
| 06 | <i>Anitra’s Dance</i>                   | [3:24] |
| 07 | <i>In the Hall of the Mountain King</i> | [2:30] |

### W. A. Mozart: Sonata in C major, K. 545, for solo piano

[13:02]

with second piano part by Grieg

- |    |                             |        |
|----|-----------------------------|--------|
| 08 | <i>Allegro</i>              | [4:47] |
| 09 | <i>Andante</i>              | [6:25] |
| 10 | Rondo ( <i>Allegretto</i> ) | [1:50] |

### Norwegian Dances, Op. 35, for piano duet

[15:04]

- |    |                  |        |
|----|------------------|--------|
| 11 | No. 1 in D minor | [5:25] |
| 12 | No. 2 in A major | [1:56] |
| 13 | No. 3 in G major | [2:31] |
| 14 | No. 4 in D major | [5:12] |

### 15 Homage March from “Sigurd Jorsalfar”, Op. 56, No. 3, for piano duet \*

[7:46]

\* = PREMIÈRE RECORDING

Total playing time: [77:35]

**GOLDSTONE AND CLEMMOW, piano duo**

**Edvard Grieg**, the crucial figure in nineteenth-century Norwegian music, wrote his ever-popular *Piano Concerto* during a summer sojourn in Denmark in 1868 (he made subsequent revisions), when, at just twenty-five, he was still struggling for recognition as a composer in the conservative atmosphere of his native land. In late 1867 he revived a series of subscription concerts by the Christiania (now Oslo) Philharmonic Society by means of which he tried to enhance musical awareness, but his real breakthrough came when, in December 1868, Liszt wrote to him enthusiastically from Rome about his *Violin Sonata*, Op. 8, and invited him to meet him in Weimar. A state grant – and credibility – ensued, and when Grieg finally met Liszt, in Rome in early 1870, the latter famously sight-read the *Piano Concerto* brilliantly and praised it extravagantly. Grieg reported that Liszt was struck by the national character of his music, which must have reinforced his belief in the course he was beginning to take. The devil-may-care flattened (one might now call it “blues”) seventh near the close of the finale sent Liszt into raptures, according to Grieg.

The second piano part taking the place of the orchestra in this recording is partly by Grieg and partly by **Károly (Carl) Thern** (1817-1886). Thern was an Austro-Hungarian

composer, conductor and pianist, who became important to musical life in Hungary, being appointed assistant conductor of the National Theatre in Pest while still in his mid-twenties and writing operas to be performed there. In the full score of the concerto, throughout the orchestral *tutti* sections (i.e. when the soloist is silent) Grieg filled the staves of the soloist's part with a piano reduction of the orchestral material. This enabled the concerto to be played through in its entirety by the pianist, so aiding familiarity, but of course all the orchestral texture would have to be omitted during the solo sections. It fell to Thern to complete the process by arranging for piano the music played by the orchestra when the soloist also is playing, and this made possible – as here – a performance of the whole work on two pianos, endowing it with a special immediacy and clarity.

In the present context it is interesting to note that Thern spawned perhaps the first professional touring piano duo in the form of two sons, Vilmos and Lajos, with whom he moved to Leipzig in 1864 (and stayed until 1868), so that they could attend the Conservatory. Later they studied in Weimar with Liszt, whose duo works they performed, and they were the dedicatees of a complex

virtuoso reworking by Liszt for piano duet of marches by Schubert. Grieg and Thern knew the same musicians in Leipzig; Reinecke and Moscheles, two of Grieg's teachers in the Conservatory only a few years earlier, also taught Thern's sons. It is possible that Grieg knew Thern personally, though I have found no evidence of this. Thern's work on the concerto was first published by Fritzsch in Leipzig in 1876.

The first movement [1] begins with a drum roll exploding into an attention-demanding chordal flourish from the soloist, starting at the very top of the piano's range and utilising a melodic trademark of Grieg – and a feature of Norwegian folk music – a descending tonic/ major seventh/ dominant (followed here by the mediant), which will colour much of the concerto. After the wistful first subject, a playful transition recalls for me the skipping main theme of the finale of Mendelssohn's "*Scottish*" *Symphony* in the same key, a work that I was pleased to discover Grieg to have conducted in April of the same year in Christiania. [We have recorded this in Mendelssohn's own rare four-hand version on Divine Art 25028.] The lyrical second subject grows to a climax, ushering in a short, well-argued development followed by a conventional recapitulation. There is a spectacular cadenza founded on the first subject and the movement

ends with a reference to the opening flourish.

The slow movement [2], in the remote – and very rich – key of D flat major (Beethoven had shocked in the same way in his *Third Piano Concerto*), begins with a beautiful melody stated by the orchestra, based on the same degrees of the scale as the soloist's first movement flourish, now ordered differently. There follows a melismatic, quasi-improvisational passage for the soloist, which is no less than a radical transformation, in true Schubertian/Lisztian fashion, of that flourish as it had recently appeared, falling and rising, at the close of the first movement (a fact that I have never seen mentioned). Now it falls lazily but then rises urgently with sudden *ffz* accents, which are usually "ironed out", sadly, in performance. A short, gentle *tutti* modulates upwards by a minor third and the soloist repeats the melisma in the new key. From the start of this movement Grieg has mirrored Beethoven's procedure in the slow movement of his "*Emperor*" *Concerto* – another fascinating discovery (along with the fact that Grieg had conducted the "*Emperor*" *Concerto* also earlier that year in Christiania), which demonstrates the superficiality of the traditional wisdom that Grieg used Schumann's *Concerto in A minor* virtually as a template. True, the two works are in the same key, and certain features are similar – for example, both



first movements begin with a downward solo flourish introducing a gentle main theme on the orchestra, but there are many contra-indications, including the very different slow movements: the influences on Grieg were diverse. The music builds towards a passionate restatement by the soloist, with the orchestra, of the opening melody, eventually dying away in a haze of D flat major.

The finale [3], which follows *attacca*, is based on the rhythm of a virile Norwegian *halling* dance. Its infectious energy is punctuated by a lovely central episode in F major, marked *poco più tranquillo* (not *lento*, as one often hears it played), which, after a yearning climax, dissolves into silence, allowing the *halling* to reappear. After an emphatic cadenza and an expectant pause, the main *halling* theme is transformed into a triple-time *springar* dance in a *quasi presto* coda, which drives thrillingly towards a peroration that triumphantly, though briefly, reprises the finale's central episode. The use of the flattened seventh here that so excited Liszt had already been anticipated towards the close of the central episode, and indeed earlier – in the second subject of the first movement.

The received opinion that Grieg was purely a miniaturist is surely confounded by the *Piano*

*Concerto*, which is cogently constructed on a substantial scale so as to seem to have evolved organically, and which successfully amalgamates varying central European influences into an individual, strongly Nordic, style.

By 1874 Grieg's reputation had become firmly established and in January his compatriot, the great poet and dramatist Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), wrote asking him to provide incidental music to a staged version of his metrical folktale-based satire, "Peer Gynt", the main character of which, a self-centred, arrogant adventurer, is an early example of the anti-hero of modern literature. Though written with a degree of scorn for his countrymen's supposed national character, this masterpiece has become an icon of Norwegian art. Grieg obliged handsomely despite his misgivings concerning the suitability of "Peer Gynt" for music, and the success of the production in Christiania was due in no small part to his work; he was asked to write additional pieces for subsequent productions until there were twenty-six numbers in 1902. In 1877-8 and 1890-2 he arranged two four-movement suites, both of which were published for piano (four-hands and solo) as well as for orchestra. The **Suite No. 1** has remained the more popular of the two, particularly movements one and four.

*Morning Mood* [4], originally intended to evoke Norwegian mountains, was actually used in the drama for a sunrise on the African coast. The suggestion of birdsong near the end is particularly delightful. *The Death of Åse* [5], Peer's poor widowed mother, is solemn and moving. On his travels Peer becomes smitten, then betrayed, by Anitra, the daughter of a Bedouin sheikh. Grieg wrote a seductive dance for her [6]. *In the Hall of the Mountain King* [7] concerns a frightening episode in the palace of the Troll King, whose daughter Peer has made pregnant.

We come now to a litmus test for musical snobbery. The *Sonata in C major* [8-10] by **Mozart** (1756-1791), dating from 1788, is one of his best loved works for solo piano. It is sometimes known as the "Sonata facile" (easy sonata) as the composer intended it "for beginners", but, to quote the great pianist Artur Schnabel, "The sonatas of Mozart are unique; they are too easy for children, and too difficult for artists." That is to say that behind their relative lack of notes lie complex, ambiguous layers of human emotion, and also a fine intellect.

In 1877, a rather unproductive time in his composing life, Grieg added a second piano part to this sonata and also to others, without

modifying the notes of Mozart's original but providing indications of dynamics and articulation. His idea was "to give some of Mozart's piano sonatas a sound that commends itself to modern ears." Lambasted for his lack of respect for the master, he was unrepentant. He wrote to a composer friend, "Much of it sounds very good – indeed, so good that I have reason to hope that Mozart 'won't turn over [in his grave]'. " Surely he wouldn't – Mozart himself, while remaining an admirer of Handel, made arrangements of several of his choral works, including *Messiah*, expanding the orchestra and adding counter-melodies with the selfsame intention of "bringing them up to date". With characteristic ingenuity Grieg revealed unexpected chromatic twists that he found implicit in Mozart's diatonic language, and the results brim with period charm and good humour (note the mischievous little cadenza in the finale of this sonata).

Although perhaps better known in their orchestration by Hans Sitt, the viola player in Adolf Brodsky's string quartet, Grieg's four *Norwegian Dances* were written, in 1881, for piano duet – a medium for which Grieg had a special affection, thus enriching the repertoire of national pieces that already included Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* and Dvořák's

*Slavonic Dances*. He was inspired by the collection of Norwegian folk melodies, *Ældre og nyere Fjeldmelodier* (*Old and New Mountain Melodies*), made by the pioneering Ludvig Mathias Lindeman (1812-1887), a celebrated organist, who for many years had traversed Norway, sometimes visiting extremely remote parts, on his mission. Grieg used Lindeman's piano arrangements of the vocal, fiddle and dulcimer tunes as starting points for his flights of fancy. All four are in ternary (A, B, A) form.

Number one [11] is based on the "Sinclair" march collected in Vågå, in the west of the country, and it is surely no coincidence that this region is opposite Scotland, a country which has longstanding links with Norway. Indeed Grieg's great grandfather Alexander Greig had left Scotland for Bergen in the 1760s, made good in the fishing industry, reversed the vowels in his surname and been appointed British consul in Bergen, a post which his son and grandson (Edvard's father) also held. The Scottish composer Alexander Mackenzie recounted that, in 1894, "my *Burns Rhapsodie* led [Grieg] to expatiate on the similarity of our countries' melodies and their characteristics". The "Sinclair" march is fierce, with a tender middle section. The other three dances are *hallings*. Number two [12] begins whimsically but becomes almost hysterical in

the brief middle section, while conversely the robust main melody of number three [13] is transformed into a touching central minor-key lament. The last [14], though in D major, boasts a curiously eastern-sounding introduction (Grieg's own melody) in D minor that generates the middle section, and a nostalgic, then decisive, coda.

The Norwegian poet, dramatist and patriot Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832-1910), whose daughter married Ibsen's son, was a frequent collaborator with Grieg. His play "Sigurd Jorsalfar" ("Sigurd the Crusader") is a historical drama for which Grieg wrote eight incidental orchestral pieces, to two of which he added voices. It is based on the *Heimskringla* saga, according to which, referring to the twelfth-century King Sigurd I of Norway, who was just seventeen in 1107:

"A young king just and kind,  
People of loyal mind ...  
To the distant Holy Land  
A brave and pious band,  
Magnificent and gay  
In sixty longships glide away."

The première took place in April 1872 and the play was subsequently performed many times. Two decades later Grieg published revised

versions of three of the orchestral pieces, the third of which, the noble ***Homage March [15]***, signifying royal reconciliation, is recorded here in the composer's own four-hand version. The opening fanfare and the middle section were composed for the revision. Grieg's sweeping melodies and pungent harmonies are present in force, providing a fittingly celebratory conclusion.

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Caroline Clemmow & Anthony Goldstone



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Recorded in St. John the Baptist Church,  
Alkborough, N. Lincs., England, in 2006

Pianos: Grotrian <[www.grotrian.de](http://www.grotrian.de)>

Piano technicians:

Philip Kennedy (works for two pianos)

Benjamin E. Nolan (piano duets)

Cover photo: Nordfjord, Norway, courtesy of

Anthony Goldstone

Booklet design/artwork: Stephen Sutton

This recording is dedicated to the memory of Derrick Wyndham (1921-2006), under whose  
inspirational teaching Goldstone first studied Grieg's Piano Concerto.

## GOLDSTONE AND CLEMMOW

Described by *Gramophone* as 'a dazzling husband and wife team', by *International Record Review* as 'a British institution in the best sense of the word', and by *The Herald*, Glasgow, as 'the UK's pre-eminent two-piano team', internationally known artists Anthony Goldstone and Caroline Clemmow formed their duo in 1984 and married in 1989. With about forty CDs to their credit and a busy concert schedule stretching back more than thirty years, the British piano duo Goldstone and Clemmow was established as a leading force.

Their extremely diverse activities in two-piano and piano-duet recitals and double concertos, taking in major festivals, sent them all over the British Isles as well as to Europe, the Middle East and several times to the U.S.A., where they received standing ovations and such press accolades as 'revelations such as this are rare in the concert hall these days' (*Charleston Post and Courier*). In their refreshingly presented concerts they mixed famous masterpieces and fascinating rarities, which they frequently unearthed themselves, into absorbing and hugely entertaining programmes; their numerous B.B.C. broadcasts often included first hearings of unjustly neglected works, and their equally enterprising and acclaimed commercial recordings include many world premières.

Having presented the complete duets of Mozart for the bicentenary, they decided to accept the much greater challenge of performing the vast quantity of music written by Schubert specifically for four hands at one piano. This they repeated several times in mammoth seven-concert cycles, probably a world first in their completeness (including works not found in the collected edition) and original recital format. *The Musical Times* wrote of this venture: 'The Goldstone/Clemmow performances invited one superlative after another.' The complete cycle (as a rare bonus including as encores Schumann's eight Schubert-inspired Polonaises) was recorded in 1998/9 and was re-issued by Divine Art in a new luxury edition 'haunted with the spirit of Schubert' – *Luister*, The Netherlands.

Tragically, after a battle with illness, Anthony Goldstone died on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2017, while he and I were working on the final adjustments to the notes and artwork for that Schubert set.

*Stephen Sutton, CEO, Divine Art*

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# Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

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