

# ||| Trio con Brio Copenhagen

Soo-Jin Hong, violin

Soo-Kyung Hong, cello

Jens Elvehjaer, piano

"Glowing reports hold true. The Trio con Brio Copenhagen clearly occupies a lofty perch in today's musical scene." – *Washington Post*, 2013

Trio con Brio Copenhagen has throughout their career been hailed by press and audiences for their "unique sound and unity of interpretation" –*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Germany*.

Founded in Vienna in 1999 with the concept of pairs coming together, the two Korean sisters and Soo-Kyung and Jens (who are now married) have since then been exploring the piano trio repertoire with freshness and curiosity as well as with respect and reflection. In particular they have been gaining a reputation for the freshness of their approach to the core repertoire: "works by Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms are transformed in their hands into the alive-and-ricking music of today" –*Esben Tange, editor at DR P2*.

Trio con Brio Copenhagen is in great international demand and has an intensive worldwide touring schedule. Appearances this season include Washington DC, Los Angeles, Dublin, Hannover and Mannheim, (Germany), the Evian Festival (France), Göteborg (Sweden), Trondheim (Norway) and Copenhagen among many other cities. In recent years, Trio con Brio Copenhagen has appeared in major concert halls in Europe, the USA and Asia, such as Tivoli Concert Hall, the Concertgebouw, Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, the Konzerthaus Berlin, the Seoul Arts Center, Bunka Kaikan Tokyo, and Teatro Olimpico Vicenza.

Since its inception the trio has won most of the international competitions for piano trio, including the ARD (Munich), Vittorio Gui (Florence) and Norway's Trondheim Competition. In January 2015 the trio will be the first ensemble to receive one of Denmark's most prestigious music awards, the "P2 Artists Prize," at a live televised concert where they will perform Beethoven's Triple Concerto with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra. Other major awards received include the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson International Trio Award (USA) and the "Allianz Prize" in Germany's Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

Trio con Brio Copenhagen continues to play a central role in Scandinavia's vibrant contemporary music scene. Several of Denmark's most prominent composers such as Per Nørgård and Bent Sørensen, as well as Swedish composer Sven David Sandström, have composed and dedicated works to the trio. Trio con Brio Copenhagen was enormously honored to be chosen by Per Nørgård to be the dedicatee of a work that was premiered at a festival in Stockholm celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2012. Coming up in January 2016 is the world premiere of Bent Sørensen's Triple Concerto with the Danish National Orchestra.

As founders and artistic directors of the Copenhagen Chamber Music Festival – a festival that is gaining more and more international attention – the trio is searching for new and interesting paths and directions in chamber music as well as initiating concerts for the young generation.

The trio's début CD was unanimously praised by critics. *American Record Guide* wrote: "One of the greatest performances of chamber music I've ever encountered . . .". *Gramophone Magazine* wrote: "the performances can compete with the best available . . . airtight ensemble . . . a superb, greatly gifted chamber group." Their Mendelssohn CD was chosen by Classic FM, UK as Chamber Disc of 2011: "Every phrase soars and pulsates with the excitement of a fresh discovery as the Copenhagen players go the full distance with playing of skin-rippling sensitivity... sensational playing . . ." Their latest recording, "Phantasmagoria," of Danish contemporary music, has been receiving rave reviews as well.

Trio con Brio Copenhagen is frequently featured as soloists in Beethoven's Triple Concerto with orchestras. In 2011 the trio premiered a new Triple Concerto by the renowned Swedish composer Sven-David Sandström with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra and Kristjan Järvi in Copenhagen's Koncerthuset. The following year, they were invited to perform the Triple Concerto with the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra for Sandström's 70th birthday concert in the Stockholm Konserthus.

As educators, the trio members teach at the Royal Academy in Copenhagen and give masterclasses on their international tours, including at Yale University, Rice University in Houston, and the Royal Irish Academy of Music, among many others.

The trio's sound benefits from the superb instruments all three play: Soo-Jin plays a violin built by Andrea Guarneri from the 17th century, Soo-Kyung plays a Grancino cello, and Jens is Denmark's first Steinway Artist. The ensemble was coached by the Alban Berg Quartet, Frans Helmerson, Mihaela Martin and Harald Schoneweg at the Cologne University of Music and received excellent musical guidance by Ferenc Rados in Budapest.