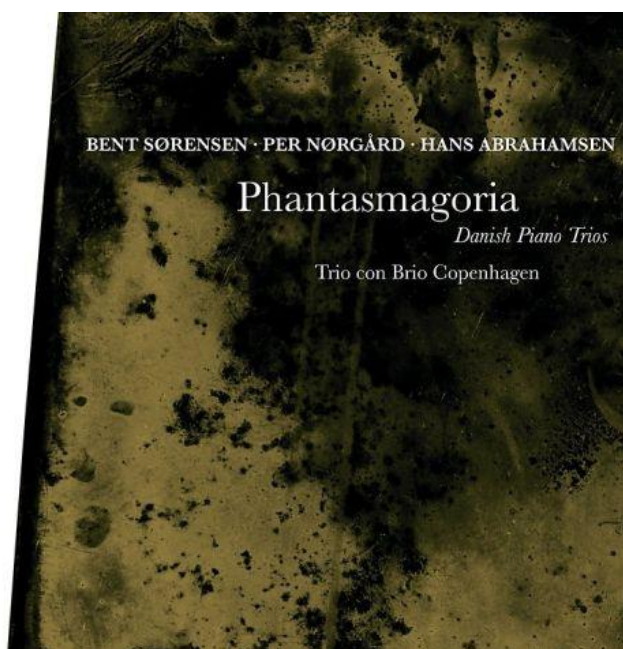


## Album review: Trio con Brio Copenhagen, 'Phantasmagoria'

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cd cover: "Phantasmagoria" Photo: Da Capo, Amazon.com

### Trio con Brio Copenhagen New music

If national styles of composition are a 19th century phenomenon, the word hasn't quite reached Denmark, and for my money that's a wonderful thing. The three piano trios included on this haunting disc are by different composers from two generations, but the Danish flavor - a combination of spare textures, craggy rhythms and sublimated Romantic fervor - is unmistakable throughout. The great treasure here is Per Norgard's "Spell," now 40 years old and a classic of formal expansiveness and poker-faced grace. It unfolds across 15 minutes of sensuously patterned music that is always just a little out of rhythmic alignment, with bursts of harmonic splendor alternating with unpredictable dissonances. The works by the younger composers - Bent Sorensen's "Phantasmagoria" and Hans Abrahamsen's "Traumlieder" - are more self-consciously eclectic, shifting restlessly across movements from vague, fog-bound soundscapes to puckish invocations of Romantic-era modes. But they too share with Norgard a quizzical and wondrously ambiguous attitude to traditional harmony and form, and all three works get sleek, vivid performances by the Trio con Brio Copenhagen.

TRIO CON BRIO COPENHAGEN, PHANTASMAGORIA, DACAPO