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I was not familiar with the Swiss Piano Trio. This is their second performance on SACD and, being a welcome addition to the SACD library, I took the chance. And I'm glad to say it was a lucky one. As a matter of precision: The trio is not entirely Swiss. The violinist is Ukrainian. In fact, the trio was formed in 1998 for a concert in Kiev. The result was such that they remained together ever since. According to the excellent notes, the trio has won several prizes and they performed with success in the Wigmore Hall, London: Often a spring-board for young and coming musicians for a rewarding international career. This said, what is their playing like and how do they compare to the same works recorded by the Beaux Arts Trio (Philips RBCD 432 165-2, recorded in 1989 at the American Academy & Institute of Arts & Letters, New York). Not an easy comparison as the recorded sound (good though the Philips still is) differs quite a bit. That is to say - and I'm aware that this is very much a matter of personal appreciation - a comparison between the masters playing in the other room (as it were) and the pupils 'live' in your listening room. I, for one, am prepared to accept well 'live' over excellent 'on the radio'. However, in this case the choice did not have to be made. It was a pleasant surprise to hear the Schweizer Klaviertrio play these wonderful Schumann Trios as though they had been coached by the masters themselves. And, indeed, the notes reveal that the members of the trio received important artistic impulses from Menahem Pressler, the Beaux Arts pianist. So, if you liked them, you will like the 'live' next best, too. The

Ukrainian violinist, Angela Golubeva, sets a virtuoso, yet sensual tone to both trios, with skilled piano playing by Martin Lucas Staub and an almost voluptuous cello of Sébastien Stinger. They play as a team, each coming in turn to the forefront as required. The tempi are carefully chosen. Never too much, never too little. A delight! The second trio was recorded in 2007 and the first, more recently, in 2010. No DSD, but the PCM 44.1 24 bits guarantees nevertheless a beautiful sound and the engineers placed the musicians in a perfect balance to one another. Recommended.

Adrian Cue
France

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