



*Petteri*

Brahms  
Ysaye

*GENESIS*  
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

Petteri Iivonen & Kevin Fitz-Gerald  
*Art of the Sonata*  
Volume II

|                |                  |                                              |                  |
|----------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>1-4</b>     | <b>Brahms</b>    | <b>Violin Sonata No. 3 in D Minor Op 108</b> | <b>20:11</b>     |
|                |                  | <i>Allegro</i>                               | 7:45             |
|                |                  | <i>Adagio</i>                                | 4:22             |
|                |                  | <i>Un poco presto e con sentimento</i>       | 2:39             |
|                |                  | <i>Presto agitato</i>                        | 5:24             |
|                |                  | with Kevin Fitz-Gerald, piano                |                  |
| <br><b>5-7</b> | <br><b>Ysaye</b> | <br><b>Sonata No. 4 in E Minor</b>           | <br><b>11:57</b> |
|                |                  | <i>Allemanda</i>                             | 5:42             |
|                |                  | <i>Sarabande</i>                             | 3:00             |
|                |                  | <i>Finale</i>                                | 3:15             |



Gary Koh from Genesis Advanced Technologies and I first met when Elliot Midwood at Acoustic Image asked Genesis and Yarlung to collaborate for a demonstration for Robert Levi and the Los Angeles and Orange County Audio Society. Maestro Levi has built the largest audiophile club in the world, and hosts monthly events at high end listening rooms around Southern California. Working with Gary was a treat. He brought equipment and Yarlung supplied music. People heard fresh recordings for the first time on equipment many of us dream of.

So it makes Yarlung proud that Gary chose to sponsor our fifth quartet of DSD releases from the Yarlung SonoruS series of analog tapes. Dr. David W. Robinson “twisted Yarlung’s arm” to release music in 64fs, 128fs and 256fs (single, double and quad) DSD, and our quartets have been enjoyed by music lovers around the world. exaSound sponsored our first quartet, Merging Technologies underwrote the second set (and we used Merging Technologies’ Hapi converter and Pyramix software to make these files). International Rectifier (now owned by Infineon in Munich) supported our third quartet, and Elliot Midwood executive produced the fourth quartet in collaboration with PS Audio. So it is only fitting that Gary and I shared the Genesis Quartet with the public for the first time at Elliot’s Acoustic Image listening room.

Gary is a friend and we enjoy working together. But projects with him succeed because of the quality of his engineering. Gary was one of a group of pioneers who built the Internet in much of Southeast Asia and invested in Internet companies in the very early days. He “retired” young, and could have spent the rest of his life in luxury and leisure. Instead, he planted a vineyard and started to build the room to house his dream speakers – the flagship reference from Genesis – the G1. When he called to order a pair, he was informed that the company had closed down and couldn’t deliver. Gary didn’t accept this answer; the mere closing of a company shouldn’t keep him from the sound he wanted. He bought assets from the bank that had foreclosed on the company, and resurrected the brand. Not only has Gary run Genesis Advanced Technologies successfully, but has designed new and successful products. Some years ago, I bought a pair of Gary’s Genesis M60 tube

monoblocks and fell in love with his solid state amplification as well. Gary has continued to refine the designs of his speakers, both the mind-bendingly expensive and ear-enchancing top of the line G1, but smaller speakers as well, including his G7-series speakers which we demonstrated for the Audio society and the G7 series 2 which Gary shipped to Los Angeles to inaugurate this Genesis Quartet. Gary also showed off his company's new amplifier and music server as well as a recently-designed phonostage. (We offered a sneak preview of Yarlung's two latest vinyl releases: *Ciaramella Dances* and *Sophisticated Lady* jazz quartet, mastered by Steve Hoffman and with lacquers cut by Bernie Grundman).

One might ask, "How does Gary do it? How has he resurrected the company and how has he continued to improve what was already good?" Gary is a meticulous designer with a clear vision for what he wants to build. He does not shy away from tried-and-true engineering when it works but also examines deeply the roots of the science. He is fond of saying "creativity and discovery comes from seeing what everybody has seen, and thinking what nobody has thought." My M60 monoblocks are a good example of this. Gary told me recently that there is no unique technology in these monoblocks. Yet they are only 60 watts each and can drive almost any speaker. Gary explained that within the classic tube power amp design there were countless ways he could improve the interrelation of each component, honing the whole system into a musical and muscular flexibility that was making my ears happy. By contrast, Gary's solid state amplifiers idle using only 6 watts of electricity and utilize many of Gary's from-the-ground-up newly designed circuits in both power supply and amplification.

Despite the sophistication and subtlety of Gary's designs, he keeps them as simple as possible, following his philosophy that "For a recording engineer, an ideal amplifier must not embellish or color a recording. If the source and speaker are close to perfect, the amplifier has to be as transparent as possible. Genesis high-performance audio products are designed to deliver the music to the listener without interference."

Gary initially developed his amplifiers to help him further refine his company's loudspeakers. He wanted an unadulterated lab reference amplifier so he could best judge evolutions in his speaker designs. Successes like this have a way of becoming known, and now Gary's Genesis Reference Amplifier (the GRA) is highly sought. It won "Ultimate Reference" from *Magazine Audio*, "Select Component" at UltraAudio.com and garnered the Blue Moon Award.

Frederic Beudot with *6moons* gave the amplifier its first review. He responded directly to Gary's goals for the design: "I am still at a loss to accurately describe what the GR360 sounds like. I am actually not even sure it has a sound as every time I changed a component in my system, I was exposed to the sonic signature of the component I just introduced more intensively than I had experienced before. If anything, the GR360 reveals the true nature of other components..." Gary succeeded in building an ideal amplifier for his new speakers and for the rest of us who prize transparency.

Ernie Fisher continues in similar vein in *Inner Ear*: "The GRA ... handled the entire musical signal with a touch of refinement, almost as though it wasn't there. That is a rare experience for this listener, who is forever looking for sonic signatures. This amp has one, to be sure, but it is written in almost invisible ink."

Bravo Gary. Bravo Genesis. And thank you for sharing your success with Yarlung.

-- Bob Attiyeh, producer



Genesis Dragon in the Hong Kong listening room of Forthwise Ltd.

Thanks to the generosity of Ann Moore Mulally, Yarlung Records brings you the long anticipated second recording featuring Finnish violinist **Petteri Iivonen**, Canadian pianist **Kevin Fitz-Gerald** and their special musical chemistry. We live during a musical flowering, especially in Southern California. Future generations will look back on these decades as one of the musical golden eras for live concert performances and new music composition. Despite this, classical recordings do not sell enthusiastically any more. But along with concerts, recordings remain one of the principal ways our society shares musical greatness. Even though classical music recordings are not as commercial as they once were, they provide critical support to musicians and their careers, they remain the medium through which most of us first hear and appreciate classic repertoire, and they provide endless listening pleasure at home. So we are doubly grateful to our friends and sponsors, especially Ann, for making this recording possible.

**Johannes Brahms** dedicated his Violin Sonata No. 3 to Hans von Bülow; it premiered with violinist Jenö Hubay in Budapest during the winter of 1888 with Brahms himself at the piano. This is the darkest and most severe of his three sonatas, and was soon taken up by Josef Joachim, who programmed it and played it repeatedly. Along with *Vier ernste Gesänge*, this sonata remains my favorite of Brahms' compositions, possibly because it careens so calculatedly between heart-racing nervous tension and glorious melody. As was so often the case with Brahms, the composer had little confidence in this work when it was complete. He delayed sending it to his friend Clara Schumann because he feared it was not good enough for her to like it and Brahms didn't want her to share it with Joachim unless she felt it would pass muster. When Brahms finally did share it with Clara Schumann, she responded with appropriate enthusiasm for this great work of art.

Some scholars note that Brahms' piano parts in his sonatas and vocal music reach even higher levels of sophistication than the violinist's or singer's lines. There is certainly a healthy give and take between violin and piano in this sonata, but the piano part at least equals if not surpasses the violin part in subtlety. Regardless, Petteri and Kevin capture the listener in an unrelenting musical grip until the sonata's satisfying conclusion.

Belgian composer **Eugène Ysaÿe** lived from 1858 to 1931, and achieved great fame as a conductor, composer and concert violinist. As a violinist, he was perhaps best known for his interpretations of Bach and Beethoven. Ysaÿe's fascination, or indeed obsession with Bach inspired his writing of the sonatas.

Legend has it that Ysaÿe composed all six of his Op. 27 violin sonatas, or at least completed sketches of them, within a 24 hour period in 1924. The composer credited his inspiration to a concert in which Joseph Szigeti played Bach's G Minor Sonata (the same sonata Petteri played for me at our audition). The composer dedicated his 4<sup>th</sup> sonata, Ysaÿe's personal favorite, to Fritz Kreisler.

**Petteri Iivonen** was born in 1987, and began to study the violin at the Helsinki Conservatory when he was four years old. Petteri also studied the piano as a student and remains an accomplished pianist. Petteri won the Erkki Melartin chamber music competition when he was fifteen: Petteri's nuanced talent as a musical collaborator (as a partner who listens) remains easy to hear even in his violin solo and concerto repertoire. Since 1997, Petteri's principal teachers have been Tuomas Haapanen and Hagai Shaham. Petteri continues to

study despite his increasingly busy concert schedule of solo recitals and concertos in the United States, Germany, Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands, Israel, Portugal, Spain and Italy. Iivonen has performed with Paul Neubauer and David Grossman of the New York Philharmonic, and raised money for the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a special Choral room benefit at Walt Disney Concert Hall. Petteri was invited to perform with pianist Ryan MacEvoy McCullough to open The Broad Stage in Santa Monica in 2008. Last year Iivonen performed the Tchaikovsky violin concerto under the baton of Zubin Mehta, and based on this performance was immediately invited to play the gala opening night concert with the Israel Philharmonic with whom Petteri performed the Bruch Violin Concerto No. 1. As I write these notes, Petteri is preparing for a South American tour with Zubin Mehta and is scheduled for more concerto performances with major orchestras in Europe, especially the Tchaikovsky, Bloch and Sibelius concertos for which Petteri has become famous. Immediately after playing in South America, Petteri flies to Los Angeles to join Kevin Fitz-Gerald for a private concert and dinner in the home of Ann Moore Mulally to celebrate the release of this album.

While much of Petteri's playing is exceptionally beautiful, he never tries to make the sound "pretty." I have heard very few violinists with Petteri's ability to control color and timbre, and even fewer who use this ability for such musical and appropriate ends. For our recording Petteri plays a Ferdinandus Gagliano violin, built in 1767, kindly loaned to him by OKO Bank Art Foundation. Kevin plays New York Steinway serial number 567908.

Canadian pianist **Kevin Fitz-Gerald** performs in concert halls around the world as a soloist, has recorded with seven record labels including Yarlung Records, and performs regularly in partnership with other musicians including Patrick Gallois, Stephen Isserlis, Richard Stolzman, Petteri Iivonen, Alan Civil, Camilla Wicks, Midori Goto, Eudice Shapiro, Milton Thomas, Karen Tuttle, Donald McInnes, Ronald Leonard, and the Bartok, St. Petersburg and St. Lawrence String Quartets. Kevin also performs four-hands piano works with his wife Bernadene Blaha.

In addition to his position as Professor of Piano Performance and Collaborative Arts at the USC Thornton School of Music in Los Angeles, Mr. Fitz-Gerald is also a regular visiting artist teacher at the Banff School of Fine Arts, a frequent guest master class teacher at The Colburn School for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles, and serves as visiting faculty at many other national and international music festivals and institutions throughout North America, South America, Asia and Australia.

Kevin was born in Kelowna, British Columbia and received full scholarships to study at the Victoria Conservatory of Music, The Banff Centre School of Fine Arts and the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto where his principal teachers were Marek Jablonski, Robin Wood and Alma Brock-Smith.

**GRAMMY® Award winning Yarlung Records** brings fresh musicians to the classical music world using minimalist audiophile recording techniques to deliver sound as close to living performance as possible. Rather than using recording studios, we produce these albums in concert halls famous for their acoustics, including Walt Disney Concert Hall, Ambassador Hall, Zipper Hall and Alfred Newman Hall in Los Angeles. Yarlung uses both analog tape and high resolution digital media for 24-bit downloads and CDs and 180 Gram vinyl LPs,

all mastered by Steve Hoffman. For our CDs, pressed in Germany, Yarlung uses special alloys, high resolution virgin polycarbonate and careful glass mastering techniques to bring you sound that closely matches the original.

Yarlung repertoire ranges from the 11th century through the Baroque, Classical and Romantic eras, with a special focus on new music from the 20th and 21st centuries. Artists include top soloists as well as superstar young musicians at the beginnings of their international concert careers. Yarlung brings artists into your living room; you can hear their music, their breathing, and almost their heartbeats.

**Yarlung Artists** is a 501(c)(3) public charity which raises money to bring new recorded music to the public through our support of young musicians at the beginnings of their international concert careers. We wish to express how grateful we are for the support we receive from key players in the music industry and from generous friends and patrons. For this particular album, we want especially to thank my friend Ann Moore Mulally for her generosity, as well as Steve Hoffman, Elliot Midwood, Jon Fisher, Kevin Fitz-Gerald and Robert Cutietta.



Contributions to Yarlung Artists are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. If you would enjoy supporting our recordings, the commissioning of new music and the careers of our most talented young musicians as they launch their international concert careers, please visit [www.yarlungartists.org](http://www.yarlungartists.org), or write to us at Yarlung Artists, 10920 Wilshire Boulevard 150-9162, Los Angeles, California 90024.

Thanks to support from Dean Robert Cutietta, we recorded Petteri and Kevin in Alfred Newman Hall at the University of Southern California. Newman Hall exemplifies the warm yet transparent and lively sound of concerts halls that I favor for recordings, and its acoustics adjust easily to provide different lengths of decay. We chose a legendary Austrian AKG C-24 stereo microphone with the original brass surround CK12 tube, made available to us by our friend and sponsor Jon Fisher at Gearworks Pro Audio. We used five-foot long Yarlung-Records-designed interconnects with a flat silver ribbon suspended in air for the dielectric, customized vacuum tube preamplifiers and no mixer. The signal path was as short as we could make it, with as few electronics between performer and final product as possible.

In closing, I would like to thank Martin Chalifour, a good friend and advisor to Yarlung Artists, for his help with this recording. Martin worked closely with me and helped us choose the best takes for each movement from our four days of recording sessions. He has played this repertoire in many concerts, and Martin's help was invaluable.

--Bob Attiyeh, producer

July 15, 2011



Petteri Iivonen and Kevin Fitz-Gerald



Petteri Iivonen and Kevin Fitz-Gerald

## The Genesis Quartet



Four New Yarlung Records Releases: Summary Notes  
by Robert H. Levi, PFO May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Nigel Armstrong, *Nigel Armstrong: Bach, Bartók, Korngold*. Featuring Sir Neville Mariner and the Colburn Orchestra. Native DSD Catalog number YAR65007DSD**

This Yarlung Records recording is simply entitled *Nigel Armstrong*. Armstrong is a young and dynamic artist, exactly fitting the rising stars captured by the Yarlung label. With a varied repertoire of Bartók, Bach, and Korngold, I was floored by the diversity and sensitivity of this superb artist. Truly a budding Heifetz stylistically, and with the sweetest violin I have heard in years, Nigel Armstrong is an artist to follow closely. The Bartók is solidly played. The difficult Bach is gorgeously rendered. The Korngold Concerto, conducted by the great Sir Neville Marriner, is exceptional and captivating.

Recorded on analog tape with tube microphones. Bob Attiyeh, the exceptional producer and master

recordist of Yarlung Records, shows remarkable taste, as usual, and ultimate sensitivity for the performers and the balance of his recordings. The DSD download is worth every penny and more just for the Korngold. Highest recommendation.

**Smoke & Mirrors: *Vanish, Vol. 2, Takemitsu, Rachmaninov*. Featuring the Smoke and Mirrors Percussion Ensemble. Native DSD Catalog Number: YAR15195DSD2**

Smoke and Mirror's *Vanish, Vol. 2* is a *tour de force* in elegant, wide-ranging melodic percussion performance. I cannot say I have ever experienced diversity and elegance like this in musical form, but so what? I love it! Truly addictive, it is musically entertaining and original. The six artists sound like sixteen. What an adventure in style and virtuosity. A sonic masterpiece! Recorded to perfection, and great fun! Recommended, for sure.

**Petteri: *Art of the Sonata, Vol. II Brahms & Ysaye*. Petteri Iivonen, Violin; Kevin Fitz-Gerald, Piano. Native DSD Catalog Number: YAR76721DSD2**

Beautifully played and recorded, you might think these musicians have been playing together for years. When this was recorded in 2011, Petteri was still in his early twenties! Yarlung strikes again. The delicious repertoire between Iivonen and Fitz-Gerald on this album is as good as it gets.

The Brahms *Violin Sonata Number 3* is played with such uncanny feeling and perfection. The difficult Ysaye *Sonata No. 4 in E Minor* is polished off with such ease and skill as to make it a true gem. The recording is truly first-class: very analog in its smoothness and lack of grain. How can Yarlung Records do this and Sony not?

Highest recommendation.

**Frederic Rosselet: *Bach, Ligeti* Cello solo album. Native DSD Catalog Number: YAR07498DSD**

Recorded to perfection, this young cello player Rosselet is a true virtuoso.

His skill and sensitivity to the pieces is astounding for such a young player. With toe-tapping rhythms and inflections, this is one magical cello recording. The Bach is exciting and rich. The Ligeti is mysterious and compelling. The combo makes for an entertaining package.

Once again, Yarlung has produced a truly reference quality recording which is a winner in DSD. Yo Yo Ma should be looking over his shoulder: Rosselet will be there!  
Highest recommendation.

[www.yarlungrecords.com](http://www.yarlungrecords.com)

Please call (310) 692-4575 or email [support@yarlungartists.org](mailto:support@yarlungartists.org) with any questions about Yarlung Artists and programs supporting young concert musicians.

-Robert H. Levi





Michael Fremer

In a surprisingly short period of time, the adventurous GRAMMY® Award winning classical music label Yarlung has produced an eclectic catalog of impeccably recorded performances by a roster of adventurous musicians, including many that are well-known and others soon to be. The varied repertoire, with a refreshingly international flavor, covers everything from modern percussion to solo piano and violin to large scale symphonic works with singers.

The minimally miked “purist” recordings produced and engineered by label founder Bob Attiyeh in some of the world’s great concert spaces, are captured simultaneously on analog tape and high resolution digital and released on vinyl, reel-to-reel tape, CD and as high resolution Studio Master downloads.

Yarlung’s production and sonic model is distilled from the recording industry’s glorious past—one that pessimists were certain could never be successfully resurrected—while its forward-thinking business and distribution model points the way towards a healthy future for a “record business” long given up for dead by trendy “futurists.”

For older lovers of recorded classical repertoire, Yarlung’s catalog represents a return to sonic and musical greatness. For younger ones familiar only with dynamically and spatially compressed low resolution recordings, these from Yarlung are like 3D IMAX but without the glasses.

-Michael Fremer

Editor [analogplanet.com](http://analogplanet.com)

Senior contributing editor, *Stereophile*

# Stereo Sound

by Mori Shima

Once upon a time there was a land of hi-fi. And it was gone all too soon. But thank Heavens for Yarlung Records. In the age of compressed digital downloads, it is refreshing to hear real sound and real music again, reminiscent of RCA Living Stereo in its golden age, or Mercury Records at its height. Yarlung's sound is liquid and transparent, just as if you were sitting in the concert halls with superb acoustics, where these recordings are made. Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, Ambassador Hall in Pasadena, and Zipper Hall at The Colburn School, to name a few.

What Mercury did for Howard Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra in the fifties, Yarlung Records is now doing for The Colburn Orchestra and Metropolitan Opera mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke. You can hear the evidence on the album *If You Love For Beauty*, released in 2012. Who would have thought that a conservatory orchestra (granted the players are young superstars, soloists all), could capture the world's attention like this. I understand that Yarlung does this by using similar techniques to those in the golden age of recordings. Only one stereo microphone for smaller ensembles, and up to four microphones for full orchestras, recording directly to two track analog tape and high resolution digital.

Don't worry, Yarlung's recordings are all on iTunes, Amazon MP3 and so forth, but you can also order 180 Gram virgin vinyl LPs, exquisitely made CDs mastered by mighty Steve Hoffman, and high resolution downloads, all available worldwide through Naxos Global Logistics in Munich. Most exciting for analog tape enthusiasts might be the SonoruS Series of recordings on ¼ inch master tape. I recently reviewed Yarlung's *Martin Chalifour and the Los Angeles Philharmonic in Walt Disney Concert Hall*, another album I recommend highly.<sup>1</sup> Yarlung offers us a true feast for the ears, and this reviewer for one, wants more.

-Mori Shima  
*Stereo Sound*, Japan

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<sup>1</sup> *Stereo Sound*, June 2013

Reviewing the original CD release, Phil Muse in Atlanta writes:

“Art of the Sonata” complements nicely the earlier Yarlung release “Art of the Violin,” which also featured the irresistible talent and solid musicianship of Petteri Iivonen in solo violin repertoire and in close partnership with Kevin Fitz-Gerald in key works for violin and piano. Once again, the magic occurs.

We have Brahms Sonata No. 3 in d minor, Op. 108 to bring matters to a smashing conclusion with the heart-pounding tension of its concluding *Presto agitato*. For sheer excitement, this is one of the great moments in the repertoire. Along the way, Iivonen and Fitz-Gerald thrill and charm us with the abundant lyricism of the earlier movements, particularly the cantabile writing for the violin in the opening allegro and its equally songlike cavatina melody in the Adagio. Typically for this artist, Iivonen’s playing can be gentle without lapsing into sentimentality, his tone as appropriately sweet as the situation requires, but never cloying. That makes the sensational outburst in the third movement, with its virtuosic arpeggios and forceful chords, all the more convincing. But listen to the effective way the piano states the major theme sotto voce in this same movement, and you will realize the need for the close collaboration of Iivonen and Fitz-Gerald here, too, for just as in the Franck, this work is for violin *and* piano, and they don’t let us forget it!

Petteri Iivonen & Kevin Fitz-Gerald

*Art of the Sonata*

Volume II

**1-4 Brahms**

Violin Sonata No. 3 in D Minor Op 108

**5-7 Ysaye**

Sonata No. 4 in E Minor

This recording made possible with generous support  
from **Ann Moore Mulally**

Recorded in Alfred Newman Hall, Los Angeles,  
June 9-16, 2008

Producer & Recording Engineer: Bob Attiyeh

Assistant Producer: Jacob Horowitz

Mastering Engineers: Steve Hoffman & Bob Attiyeh

Monitoring equipment: Elliot Midwood

AKG tube microphone: Gearworks Pro Audio

Analog tape technicians: Len Horowitz & Bob Hovland

Steinway technician: Yasuyo Nakamura

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YAR76721DSD2



Breaking the Sound Barrier