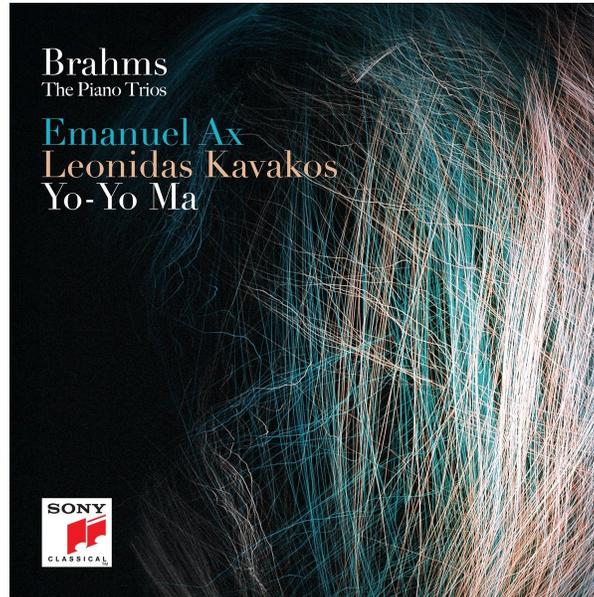




## EMANUEL AX, LEONIDAS KAVAKOS AND YO-YO MA IN FIRST RECORDING TOGETHER – THE COMPLETE PIANO TRIOS OF BRAHMS

**Ax, Kavakos and Ma to Perform All Three Brahms Piano Trios  
Throughout the US During the 2018 Concert Season**



**Recording Available September 15, 2017, on Sony Classical**

Cellist **Yo-Yo Ma** and his longtime collaborator, pianist **Emanuel Ax**, are joined by violinist **Leonidas Kavakos** in their first recording together for Sony Classical, of the piano trios of Johannes Brahms. Ax and Ma have collaborated in a distinguished catalog of Brahms recordings for Sony Classical, but this is their first recording together of the Piano Trios – and their first collaboration with Kavakos. Sony Classical will release the recording of *Brahms: The Piano Trios* on September 15, 2017.

During the 2018 concert season, Ax, Kavakos and Ma will reunite for a series of US performances of all three of the Brahms Trios heard on the new recording – Trio No. 1 in B Major, Op. 8; Trio No. 2 in C Major, Op. 87; and Trio No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 101.

The Second and Third Trios were written and first performed in quick succession (1882 and 1883), both examples of Brahms at his creative zenith. The same can be said of the First Trio: originally completed when he was twenty, in 1854, and premiered the following year, Brahms thoroughly rethought and revised it in a new version premiered early in 1890. That more elegant and concentrated version of a youthful work has become the standard for the First Trio, and it is the version performed on the recording by Ax, Kavakos, and Ma.

For Ma, who believes Brahms wrote “really difficult music to play well,” the collaboration with an old friend (Ax) and their new colleague (Kavakos) was an extraordinary experience. “What I was impressed by was that we could listen to a take and each one of us would make comments, but there was never a disagreement. We actually added these elements together, and it became a better performance. That was unusual. That doesn’t happen often with three people, whether they know one another or not.”

“From the very first note we ever played, Emanuel Ax, Yo Yo Ma and I felt a priceless blessing,” Kavakos says, recalling how their collaboration began. “After playing just the Op. 8 Trio in Tanglewood, the urge to repeat and expand was immediate. Performing all the trios was the next step, from which the idea of this recording was born. It has been an experience full of musical joy. It is my hope that listeners will join us in experiencing all this and more, in what has been an absolutely amazing musical and human journey.”

Emanuel Ax speaks of his own passion for the music of Brahms and the Piano Trios. “To be able to work on these masterpieces again with my friends Leonidas and Yo-Yo is a great privilege,” Ax said. “The glory of such musical masterpieces is that no one performance can exhaust everything in them. It is because of the infinite depth and variety of Brahms’s genius that we hope to be part of the long tradition of this wonderful music.”

All three performers have been acclaimed for their interpretations of Brahms, as soloists and as colleagues. Between them, Ax and Ma have shared four Grammy Awards for their recordings of Brahms’s chamber music. With Kavakos, they first performed all three Brahms Piano Trios at the Tanglewood Festival in 2015. They will repeat the program in US concerts during the 2018 season.

*Sony Music Masterworks comprises Masterworks, Sony Classical, Okeh, Portrait and Masterworks Broadway imprints.  
For email updates and information please visit [www.sonymusicmasterworks.com/](http://www.sonymusicmasterworks.com/)*

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#### **Concert Dates with Brahms Repertoire:**

Wednesday, Feb 21, 2018: Symphony Hall – Boston, MA

Thursday, Feb 22, 2018: Carnegie Hall - Stern Auditorium, NYC

Friday, Feb 23, 2018: Kennedy Center Concert Hall, Washington, DC

Sunday, Feb 25, 2018: Symphony Center – Chicago, IL

Monday, Feb 26, 2018: Cobb Great Hall, Michigan State - East Lansing, MI

Wednesday, Feb 28, 2018: Zellerbach Hall - Berkeley, CA

Thursday, Mar 1, 2018: Bing Concert Hall – Palo Alto, CA

Saturday, Mar 3, 2018: Copley Symphony Hall – San Diego, CA

Sunday, Mar 4, 2018: Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, CA

**For More Info on Emanuel Ax, Leonidas Kavakos, and Yo-Yo Ma, see below.**

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YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/YoYoMaVEVO>