



Robert Schumann & Franz Schubert: Piano Works

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[American Record Guide](#) (Becker - 2005.03.01)

The [Sound Record Guide](#) is excellent and, in SACD mode, there is an added openness and clarity. Hisako Kawamura was born in Japan in 1981 and is now based in Germany. Her acquisition of prizes is especially notable for one so young. Were I not aware of her age and background I would have been thinking of a much more mature artist.

Schubert's late sonata is given a reading of great power and majesty. Kawamura achieves much depth of expression in the Andantino and has the technique and musicality to cope with the composer's many pianistic demands. The final Rondo sums up perfectly all that is right and pure in this masterpiece of Schubertian expression. It is never the sort of performance that makes a conscious effort to impress. Without any artifice, the pianist serves the composer perfectly and carves out a niche where comparison with other fine performances seems irrelevant. Those who must have everything slammed out for them should be forewarned.

Schumann's Faschingsschwank... is a set of character pieces that the composer originally referred to as a "great romantic sonata", though the five movements are a little too free in form to qualify for that designation. With imagination overflowing with fertile ideas the piece offers a severe test for interpreters. Kawamura embraces the Schumann idiom with natural abandon and fears not to tread in areas where many others have failed. If memories of Arrau, Perahia, Richter, and a few others are not entirely erased, there is always room at the top for one more.