

## CD REVIEW

By Jack Rummel

### *Always*

Paolo Alderighi and Stephanie Trick Double Trio

ATCD004 (No label)

Always / Panama / After You've Gone / Promenade aux Champs-Élysées / Hindustan / Truckin' / Nel Blu Dipinto di Blue (Volare) / Stradivarius / Boogie Woogie / Fig Leaf Rag / Whispering / New Orleans Function / Love Me Tender / With a Smile and a Song.

First and foremost, this is not ragtime. So then, why is it being reviewed here? Because both Paolo Alderighi and Stephanie Trick entered the public performance arena via ragtime and their long-time fans have not forgotten that. Trick's first CD was pure ragtime. From there, as word of her speed and accuracy at the keyboard spread, she embraced that early Harlem ragtime style – stride – and flat-out conquered it. This was also the style that Alderighi favored and the two of them met at a European stride “summit,” I am told, where both were headline performers.

Now husband and wife, they have chosen the one piano, four hands technique as their niche and have revolutionized and energized it into an exciting performance art. On this, their fourth CD together, they have rebranded themselves as a “Double Trio” by adding Roberto Piccolo on string bass and Nicola Stranieri on drums. It also reinforces their transition into jazz and will open up additional performance opportunities at jazz venues.

Alderighi and Trick still perform at ragtime festivals where, individually or together, they never fail to bring an audience to its feet. Best described as *simpatico*, they are so attuned that they function as a single being, yet always able to separate for individual solos. The varied content of this disc features musical and rhythmic improvisations around ragtime, stride, boogie, early piano jazz and cocktail-styled selections. These departures are so inventive that they never grow stale, even on repeated listenings. The one true rag, Joplin's *Fig Leaf Rag*, starts out true to the score and never really loses the melodic line but, with the Double Trio's tasteful departures, becomes a new creation with an older soul.

The recorded fidelity is excellent, the dynamics are omnipresent and the artistic package design is eye-catching. The effusive liner notes by jazz critic Michael Steinman will be helpful to the listener.

I am not qualified to review jazz and will not attempt to do so. However, I do recognize talent when I hear it and this recording is loaded with it. Paolo Alderighi and Stephanie Trick are succeeding in the musical genre they have chosen, and with the addition of Roberto Piccolo and Nicola Straneiri, the total truly exceeds the sum of its parts.

Available at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) and at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com). Prices vary.

