



THE POULENC TRIO

Vladimir Lande, ob
Irena Kaplan, piano
Bryan Young, bassoon

2:30 PM, October 11, 2009
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
In cooperation with Pacific's
Conservatory of Music

Trio Pathétique in D Minor

Allegro moderato
Scherzo: Vivacissimo—Trio: Meno mosso
Largo
Allegro con spirito—Alla breve, ma moderato

Mikhail Glinka
(1804–1857)

Fantaisie Concertante sur des Thèmes de "L'Italiana in Algeri" (Arr. Charles Triébert & Eugene Jancourt)

Gioachino Rossini
(1792–1868)

Romance, Op. 97a (from the filmscore of "The Gadfly")

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906–1975)

A Spin Through Moscow (from the suite from the operetta "Moscow, Cheryomushki," Op. 105)

Shostakovich

—*intermission*—

Trio for Piano, Oboe and Bassoon Presto: Lento—Presto Andante Rondo: Très vif

Francis Poulenc
(1899–1963)

Jaunty (from Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano)

André Previn
(b. 1929)

Oblivion (from the filmscore of Pirandello's play "Enrico IV")

Astor Piazzolla
(1921–1992)

Otoño Porteño (from *Las Cuatro estaciones porteñas* (The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires))

Piazzolla

The Poulenc Trio appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists

www.chambermuse.com

Artists

Hailed by the Washington Post for its "intriguing and beautifully played program . . . convincing elegance . . . [and] near-effortless lightness and grace," the **Poulenc Trio** brings together three uniquely gifted virtuosos. Combining brilliant 21st-century vibrancy with the best of European instrumental tradition, the trio's performances leap beyond the ordinary concert experience to a world of beautiful sonorities, playful rhythms and dramatic excitement. As the finest of a select few professional wind trios, the Poulenc Trio is committed to expanding the repertoire through commissioning new works. The Trio's busy touring schedule has included recent tours of Russia with Hilary Hahn, Italy, the Caribbean, and multiple appearances in every region of the United States including the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. The Trio has garnered positive attention in recent profiles in *Chamber Music Magazine* and the *Double Reed Journal*. The group has been called "virtuosos of classical and contemporary chamber music" in one profile on Russian television, and reviews from across the USA have praised the Trio's "new and delicious sounds," calling them "three virtuosi in complete command of their instruments" who "played with spirit and grace and brought the near-capacity crowd to its feet."

Bryan Young, bassoon, a Washington, DC native, has been praised for his "voluptuous sound" by the *Double Reed Journal*. A prizewinner of the 2002 Gillet International Bassoon Competition, he has appeared as soloist with the National Symphony and Baltimore Symphony Orchestras. Bryan is principal bassoonist of the Baltimore Chamber. He trained at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and at Yale University.

Vladimir Lande, principal oboist of the Baltimore Opera, was born in St. Petersburg, Russia. He graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory with degrees in both oboe and piano. He has performed with distinguished conductors including Leonard Bernstein, Claudio Abbado, Valery Gergiev, and Yuri Temirkanov. Vladimir is on the faculty of Johns Hopkins University, where he conducts the chamber orchestra.

Pianist **Irina Kaplan** is a graduate of the St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia. Winner of the Baltimore Chamber Music Award and the Montpelier Recital Competition, Irina has appeared in series including the Yale Gordon Concert Series, the Bachanalia Recital Series and the New York Times Young Performers Series. Irina is on the piano faculty at the Peabody Institute.

Program

Glinka—Trio Pathétique in d

Mikhail Glinka was the first Russian to create chamber music based on Russian folk melodies and is commonly thought of as the founder of Russian nationalism in music. This is evidenced by his influence on the works of Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Mussorgsky. He was an amateur musician until at the age of 26 he visited Italy and Germany where he completed his first formal study of composition. His Trio Pathétique was written after he embarked on his travels but before he completed his studies, so listen for a combination of exotic and traditional. Originally written for clarinet, bassoon and piano, Glinka's publisher insisted on a string version for standard piano trio with which he complied and which is probably responsible for the survival of the piece. The opening *Allegro moderato* reflects an early Romantic style in classical structure. In the *Scherzo*, the piano has a sparkling part, but be sure to listen for the lyrical passages in the two woodwinds that you may think reminiscent of Beethoven. The *Largo* is the center of balance for the piece and is where the origin of the nickname "Pathétique" becomes apparent (listen to the melodies given to the winds, especially the lower voice). This is a musical manifestation of the Russian saying, 'When a Russian is sad, he is very sad; when a Russian is very sad, he is at his very best.' The finale begins with runs of triplets that give way to what can only be the basis of future silent film music.

Rossini—Fantasia Concertante

The "Concert-Fantasy" is one piece from a collection of opera-inspired arrangements arising from the salon music of 19th century Paris. The arrangers were bassoon and oboe virtuosos and Conservatoire professors of that time. Today we hear an exhilarating

piece based on tunes from Rossini's "An Italian Girl in Algiers," which he wrote when only 21 in either 18 or 27 days depending on whom you believe¹. The opera's theme is simple: be careful what you wish for! Bored with his harem, ruler Mustafà seeks a new challenge in the beautiful, shipwrecked Isabella, who has comically stumbled into his path in search of her missing lover, and the addition of a jealous wife and a cast of meddling servants allow Rossini opportunity for limitless, escalating, ebullient melodies that we enjoy in a chamber format today.

Shostakovich—Romance, Op. 97a

Shostakovich endured alternating periods of honor and rejection by the Soviet government. During a time of disgrace (and reduced income), he turned to writing scores for films, which he seemed to enjoy completing 34. The *Gadfly Suite*, music written for the film of the same name is a collection of twelve short pieces of which Romance, the most popular, is the eighth. The title is a name by which the historical freedom-fighter Arthur Burton became known because of his "sting" as a revolutionary activist in Italy in 1840. He alludes to Tchaikovsky, Sibelius and others throughout the score, thereby limiting his own usually individual voice. The *Romance* is effective, as is the most of the slow music.

Shostakovich—A Spin through Moscow

We think of Shostakovich as a most deadly serious composer, but he also wrote much "light" music including an operetta: *Moskva, Cheryomushki*, or "Cherry Tree Towers?", which has long had a dull reputation as an opera but comes to life in this excerpt as a witty, goofy, even touching affair. The plot, mildly subversive in its reference to Communist Party corruption, follows the love lives of six young Soviets who are scrambling for apartments in a ghastly new high-rise during the chronic housing shortage in Moscow in the late 1950s. "A Spin through Moscow" is the first of four dance-like movements. The music portrays a heartening comic tale about the clout common folk can exert when they unite in

¹ Rossini, not surprisingly, said 18

² The name of an actual housing estate in Moscow

the collectivist spirit against bureaucracy. Listen for clever twists, satires, and self-quotations in the lilting waltzes and exuberant ensembles. That Shostakovich got away with this degree of social satire while Khrushchev was in power is amazing.

Poulenc—Trio

Francis Poulenc was born in Paris and associated with the most creative, legendary, and experimental figures of the 1920's that nurtured the chief modernist trends of the early 20th century. He was part of the informal group of French composers known as "Les Six" whose plan was to construct a new music separate from the dominance of Schoenberg (too cerebral) and the associations with Messiaen's Impressionism (too religi-mystic). Embracing lucidity, straightforwardness, humor and even parody, they refined a genre influenced by Stravinsky and Satie called Neo-classicism.

Poulenc was essentially self-taught and comparatively conservative, but he also had a healthy, and very endearing, strain of vulgarity, a taste for oral ribaldry and the contrast between sublimity and absurdity. Poulenc used this flair with the taste of a connoisseur and the skill of a natural genius. He is respected for his natural, spontaneous and superbly original style. His music is rich, energetic, appealing, and untroubled by excess drama or inflexible form. He is particularly notable for his lyricism and his gift for melody.

Poulenc had a great fondness for chamber music employing winds. His most well-known chamber work, the Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano, is full of color, transparency and poise. The first movement, patterned on a Haydn *Allegro*, is a sparkling, effervescent *Presto* that begins with a short, slow introduction. It has the character of an opera recitative, alternating grave and solemn with witty and wry. The middle movement, an outpouring of a single song, is a soft reverie described by Poulenc himself as "sweet and melancholic." The final *Rondo* is another brisk sequence of glistening scenes (do you recognize a quote of a well-known Beethoven melody?) until it makes a surprising turn into Poulenc's own fresh, distinctive idiom, catching the listener by surprise.

Previn—Jaunty

Born in Germany and escaping the Nazi regime with his parents at age 9, André Previn grew up in Los Angeles where he showed significant musical talent in high school. In the 1950s, he was an active jazz pianist and still performs that style today. He was conductor of the LA Philharmonic from 1985-89 and was knighted in the UK in 1996. He is married to Anne-Sophie Mutter with whom he tours and performs. For his 80th birthday in 2009, Carnegie Hall will be presenting four concerts which showcase the diversity of his career. The third movement of Previn's 1994 Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano opens with a leaping motif and great rhythmic difficulty, changing meter in almost every measure. This bounding design reappears in various forms throughout the movement phrased in a "jazz" style. *Jaunty* is energetic, smart, and constructed with open harmonies characteristic of American music (think Aaron Copland). Previn is careful to feature the characteristics of the individual instruments, setting the oboe and bassoon against the extended solo passages of the piano.

Piazzolla—Oblivion

The Argentinean tango, like American ragtime and jazz, is music with a shady past. Its deepest roots extend to Africa, but it seems to have evolved directly from a slower Cuban dance, the *habanera* and a faster native song form, the *milonga*, both in duple meter and both sensuously syncopated in rhythm. The tango³ came to embody the longing and hard lives of the lower classes of Buenos Aires, where it was chiefly fostered in bawdy houses and back-alley bars by usually untutored musicians. In the early 20th century, the tango migrated out of the seedier neighborhoods of Argentina to be discovered by the French, and then went on to invade the rest of Europe and North America. International repute elevated its social status, and, spurred by the glamorous images of Rudolph Valentino, the tango became the dance craze of the 1930s. Tango bands flourished during the years between the

³ Its name may have been derived from a word of African origin meaning simply "dance," or from the old Castilian *taño* ("to play an instrument"), or from a type of drum used by black slaves, or perhaps none of these

Wars, and influenced not just the world's popular music but also that of serious composers.⁴

The greatest master of the modern tango was Astor Piazzolla, born in Mar Del Plata, Argentina, a resort town south of Buenos Aires. One of his most popular tangos, *Oblivion* became widely known through the soundtrack of the 1984 film *Henry IV, the Mad King*. It has been scored for various instrumental combinations and comes from the sultry side of the tango. Over the melting rhythms of the opening the haunting and dark main theme sings a melancholic song—long-held notes alternating with slowly falling and weaving figures—over a subtle, arpeggiated accompaniment (think Phillip Glass), and this returns in a number of guises. Piazzolla varies the accompaniment beneath this tune, and the tango stays firmly within its somber and expressive opening mood. A middle section offers a minimally contrasting theme, lush but less intense. This is one of Piazzolla's most traditional tangos, less jazzy than his other widely circulated compositions, yet it also has a harmonic sophistication and whispered sadness.

Piazzolla —Otoño Porteño

What do you think of when you hear the phrase "The Four Seasons?" Typically, we associate it with that memorable work of Vivaldi. Composers ever since have referenced this masterpiece just as Piazzolla did when he composed the tango-inspired *Cuatro estaciones porteñas*. This is one of his most ambitious concert works, published originally for piano solo in 1968 and later arranged for a variety of instruments. There are four movements, but today we hear only *Otoño Porteño* or "Autumn." Piazzolla's portrayal of the seasons is not specifically pictorial (as are Vivaldi's well-known precedents) but is instead a general evocation of the changing seasons in his native Argentina.

Notes© by Dr. Michael Spencer

⁴ One of Isaac Albéniz's most famous works is his *Tango in D*; William Walton inserted a tango into his *Entertainment with Poems*; and Igor Stravinsky had the Devil in *The Soldier's Tale* dance a tango

FIFTY-FOURTH SEASON 2009-2010

*Presented in Cooperation with
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The Poulenc Trio

(Supported in part by a SAC Grant)

2:30 PM Sunday, October 11, 2009

Faye Spanos Concert Hall
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

Brentano String Quartet

7:30 PM Saturday, November 7, 2009

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

Amelia Piano Trio

2:30 PM Sunday, February 14, 2010

Faye Spanos Concert Hall
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Dædalus String Quartet

2:30 PM Sunday, March 14, 2010

Morris Chapel

RECEPTION FOLLOWING

Quartet New Generation

2:30 PM Sunday, April 18, 2010

Faye Spanos Concert Hall
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

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- Students are admitted free on a space-available basis.
- Concert programs are subject to change without notice.
- Seating is unreserved for the current Season.
- Contributions, including memorials, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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Pacific/Delta Faculty & Staff: \$10

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FOCM welcomes children to our concerts. However, an adult must accompany children ten years and under (no babes in arms please). At the request of our artists, children should not sit in the first four rows.

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