

FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

Presents

THE FRANCESCO TRIO

Nathan Schwartz, piano

Miwako Watanabe, violin

Bonnie Hampton, cello

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1989, 3 PM

LONG THEATRE, UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

Program

Eight Variations on a Greek Folk Tune

NIKAOS SKALKOTTAS, 1904-1949

Piano Trio in C Major, Opus 87

JOHANNES BRAHMS, 1833-1897

Allegro

Andante con moto

Scherzo (Presto)

Finale (Allegro Giocoso)

Intermission

Piano Trio No. 2 in C Minor, Opus 66

FELIX MENDELSSOHN, 1809-1847

Allegro energico e con fuoco

Andante espressivo

Scherzo (Molto allegro quasi presto)

Finale (Allegro appassionato)

The Francesco Trio, one of the nation's finest chamber ensembles, has won many awards and much acclaim for its American and Canadian concerts since it organized in San Francisco in 1965. Its debut concerts for the San Francisco Chamber Music Society and the University of California at Berkeley were followed by a national tour and a residency at Grinnell College in Iowa.

In 1974 the trio won the prestigious Naumberg Chamber Music Award after its New York debut at Alice Tully Hall. The ensemble returned to the Bay Area as artists-in-residence at Stanford University and later as residents at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where Hampton and Schwartz remain. In 1986 Miwako Watanabe replaced David Abel as violinist.

The trio began regular concert series in San Francisco and Los Angeles in 1987-88 which, starting last season, also are carried by the Gardner Museum in Boston. In 1988 the group won a Chamber Music America national commission for a new work by Andrew Imbrie and a \$10,000 Meet the Composer consortium commissioning grant.

PROGRAM NOTES

Eight Variations on a Greek Folk Tune

Nikos Skalkottas was a violinist, music scholar and secretive counter-culture pessimist who had studied with Kurt Weill and Arnold Schoenberg and who died in obscurity at age 45 in 1949. When a wave of post-war nationalism swept his native Greece, his work was "discovered" and popularized. His interest in folk music began when he worked on recording projects for the Folk Music Archives in Athens.

His *Eight Variations on a Greek Folk Tune* (1938) is a fusion of folk-like elements, Schoenbergian techniques and, especially in the last two variations, a certain degree of neo-classicism. Unfortunately, his secretiveness left few practical hints to help performers find the balances and voicings in his work. Musicians must take care in sorting-out the musical elements when interpreting his music; had Skalkottas ever actually heard his scores performed, his music might have been different.

Piano Trio in C Major, Opus 87

There are no sketchbooks to reveal the mind and artistic development of Johannes Brahms. We have only polished works, products of years of self-criticism and revision; works which displeased him were ruthlessly destroyed. Although his *C Major Trio* took twelve years to complete, he was unusually pleased with it and wrote to his publisher: "You have not so far had such a beautiful trio from me and very probably have not published one to match it in the last ten years."

Piano Trio No. 2 in C Minor, Opus 66

Felix Mendelssohn dedicated his second piano trio in 1845 to Louis Spohr, the violinist-composer with whom he performed it. Written at a time of unrest and change in his life, the first movement reflects brooding passion and stormy outbursts (but within an instrumental context as opposed to the style of his earlier piano trio). The second movement is full of song and duets for violin and cello. The Scherzo is remarkable in its unconventional treatment, and the main Finale theme is similar to themes in Brahms.

EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

Friends of Chamber Music is grateful to The Francesco Trio for consenting on short notice to give today's concert in place of the Tchaikovsky Chamber Orchestra, which three days ago cancelled its only two West Coast concerts following the Bay Area earthquake. The Orchestra also was to play a benefit for Armenian Earthquake Relief in San Francisco this weekend but the concert was cancelled when the site sustained structural damage.

FOCM FRENCH BICENTENNIAL SALUTE

Friends of Chamber Music is pleased to invite our audience to a reception following the November 3 concert at UOP by the Maurice Bourgue Ensemble a Vent from Paris. Michel Dejaegher of San Francisco, the Deputy Consul General for France, will attend the 8 p.m. performance in Long Theatre and the reception across the street in the Great Hall Common Room. Please plan to join us for a Stockton salute to the Bicentennial of France.