

FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

The Jacques Thibaud String Trio

Burkhard Maiss, violin
Philip Douvier, viola
Uwe Hirth-Schmidt, cello

Saturday, November 6, 1999, 8:00 p.m.
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
University of the Pacific
Stockton, California



Performance underwritten by member contributions to the FOCM Sustaining Fund

Program

Trio in c minor, Op. 9, No. 3

Allegro con spirito
Adagio con espressione
Scherzo: Allegro molto e vivace
Finale: Presto

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Serenade in C major, Op. 10 (1902)

Marcia
Romanza
Scherzo
Tema con variazioni
Rondo

Ernö Dohnányi
(1877-1960)

—Intermission—

Divertimento in E-flat major, K. 563

Allegro
Adagio
Menuetto (Allegretto)—Trio
Andante
Menuetto (Allegretto)—Trio I-II
Allegro

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)



The Jacques Thibaud String Trio appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists
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The Jacques Thibaud String Trio

The Jacques Thibaud String Trio was founded at the Berlin School of Arts in 1994, and first toured together that same year. Since then, the Trio has toured to great acclaim in the U.S., Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, Taiwan, and Scandinavia. Nearly unique among today's chamber ensembles, these three young musicians play by heart.

An appearance at Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, a Washington, DC debut in the National Gallery, and a residency at Stanford University are among the highlights of the Trio's 1999-2000 season. The Trio's U.S. tours have included performances in Boston, Caramoor, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Frick Collection, and over 75 other concerts.

The Trio was prizewinner in the 1999 Bonn Chamber Music Competition. They also won first prize at the Folkwang/Essen Chamber Music Competition in Germany, and were Prizewinner at the International Trapani and Caltanissetta Competitions in Sicily.

The Trio pays homage with its name to the great French violinist Jacques Thibaud. Born in 1880, Thibaud devoted himself to chamber music in addition to his activities as soloist. At 73, while still concertizing all over the world, he lost his life in a plane crash. Many of the great musicians of his time, including Kreisler, Fournier, and Ysaÿe, found their way to his Paris apartment to play with him, as well as his trio partners Casals and Cortot.

Among the renowned musicians the Jacques Thibaud Trio has coached with are Thomas Brandis and Wolfgang Boettcher (Brandis Quartet), Ilan Gronich (Kreuzberg Quartet), Adolphe Mandeau, Vladimir Mendelssohn, and the St. Petersburg String Quartet.

Program Notes

The labels "Divertimento" and "Serenade" suggest musical compositions in several movements for the purposes of entertainment. A divertimento was played indoors by a variety of instrumental ensembles (and Mozart wrote several of these); a serenade used more vociferous instruments outdoors. Both the Mozart and the Dohnányi works presented in

this recital transcend that label. They do succeed, as chamber music by its very nature is destined to do, in bringing out the more personal and intimate side of a composer. Beethoven's first two Trios were multi-movement as well, most likely influenced by Mozart's Divertimento, K 563, but the Trios of Opus 9 are serious in character and in solid four movement design.

Ludwig van Beethoven — Trio in c minor, Op. 9, No. 3

Beethoven's chamber music for strings, according to Solomon, makes a stage in his gradual liberation from reliance upon the piano as the anchor of his compositional style. Brahms, haunted by the spirit of Beethoven, approached the medium of the string quartet "downwards"—string sextet, piano quintet and thence the quartet. Beethoven, with the weight of the Haydn and Mozart quartets behind him, approached the problem from the other direction by perfecting the string trio. His first works, as has been mentioned, were multi-movement works with Mozart's work, published in 1792 by Artaria, as model.

Opus 9 was probably composed in 1796–98 in Vienna, and dedicated to an important patron, Count Johann George von Browne, an officer of Irish extraction in the Russian army. In the dedicatory message Beethoven calls them "the best of my works" up to that point. Where the first two trios of Opus 9 are expansive and luxuriant, the third is considerably condensed, striving for the sense of inevitability and logic which some have found to characterize his later symphonic c minor projects. Beethoven perhaps found greater tonal expressiveness and flexibility with the string quartet, for he never returned to the string trio.

The third trio is the most remarkable of the set. In the Allegro, Beethoven incorporated three quite distinct elements in each of his two subjects and with his unique genius uses all of these throughout the movement. Four ominous descending notes lead into rich developments, serious and with considerable drama. The Adagio is in an impassioned C major and gives all three instruments ornate music. The recapitulation is

varied with string textures in four and five parts. The ending comments make effective use of rests. The Scherzo uses 6/8 meter with rather angular themes; emphatic discords are played *sforzato*. The trio contrasts with rolling melodies in C major. The finale is vigorous, with racing ascending and descending tarantella triplets, then a quiet major key ending. It is thought that the last movement could have been a first draft for the finale of his Pathétique Sonata, Opus 13, of 1797–98.

Ernö Dohnányi — Serenade in C major, Op. 10

Dohnányi was one of the chief architects of the musical culture of Hungary in the twentieth century and ranks next to Liszt in versatility with an influence that reached generations in all spheres of musical life. He was an outstanding administrator, pianist (ranked as one of the greatest of all time), composer, conductor, and as a teacher reached generations of musicians. He was the first major pianist to perform chamber music. Included among his students are Sir George Solti and Geza Anda. He possessed legendary musicianship in the fields of memory, score reading, and improvisation. The strength of his character served as an example for decades. For years in Hungary he was the presiding figure in terms of national celebrity and political prestige. In 1916 he set about the reshaping of the musical life of his country, strongly dominated by German culture. Bartók remarked that he was providing "the entire musical life of Hungary" by his offering of 120 concerts in one year in the absence of guest artists. He served as chief conductor of the Budapest Philharmonic and Director of the Academy of Music. The devastating political upheavals of the twentieth century caused him the loss of his two sons and his final emigration to the United States. By 1970 his greatness was re-evaluated in Hungary.

Though he befriended Kodály and Bartók, and sponsored the career of the latter, he did not join them in their passionate pursuit of Hungarian folk music. Rather he represented a kind of final flowering of Romanticism, using classical forms in an eloquent and expressive manner. Brahms praised

Dohnányi's early efforts. During years of study in Berlin he played chamber music with Joachim. However, he discarded the strong early influences of Schumann and Brahms, and it was with the Serenade, Opus 10, that he found his own language. Many find that this work has a definite Hungarian flavor. He drew from the past but created his own highly lyrical and vivacious music. His nine important works in the field of chamber music are all of a high standard.

The first movement of the Serenade is a high-spirited March, beginning with an almost military rhythmic motif. Lyricism continually pervades the music; when a central cello theme arrives over the viola's drone-bass, one is reminded of folk instrumentation. The viola has a long and serene singing line to open the Romanza. In the middle section the violin and cello are heard in a dialogue over rolling arpeggios by the viola. Fugal technique is used for the witty Scherzo. Twice, a graceful lyrical section intervenes. The main theme of the fourth movement is presented with variations, making this movement the center of gravity of the composition. Rising arpeggios surround the viola playing the first set of variations, while the violin gives out the subject in more rapidly flowing lines in the second and third. The fourth has the violin playing the theme accompanied by triplets in the viola. The viola returns in the fifth with gentle cello pizzicato accompaniment. Strong chordal punctuation stops the racing sixteenth notes in the Rondo finale and at last the March theme reappears in the violin over the viola's drone-bass.

**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart—
Divertimento in E-flat major K.
563**

This Divertimento, along with the Hoffmeister quartet, two string quintets, and a c minor Adagio, belongs to the period 1785–88. After the six "Haydn" quartets of 1782–85, with their intended disciplined style, Mozart adopted a more relaxed and expansive approach, concerned with sensuous beauty of the harmony or the texture. The Divertimento uses light textures and concertante writing in a less concentrated style than his quartets or

quintets but the content plumbs greater depths than the title would suggest. It is Mozart's only string trio, a limited medium that therefore shows the remarkable resourcefulness of its composer in a lengthy work.

The concertante style was intended to show off one or more performers playing in prominent, solo fashion.

The Divertimento was completed on September 27, 1788, and appears to have been written for M. Puchberg, a friend and fellow Mason who gave Mozart considerable financial assistance. The six movements are not all of equal weight. The three most important movements are the first, Allegro, the second, Adagio, and the final Rondo. This leaves two minuets and an Andante.

The Allegro in the usual sonata-allegro form encompasses a wide range of keys and emotional temperatures. The Adagio in A-flat has a quiet breath and an overwhelming seriousness with its wide leaps for the first violin and the throbbing figures for viola. The two minuets appear superficially simple but they have a certain power making them more compelling than most movements of this kind. The Andante is in B-flat and in variation form with rapid changes of mood. The result serves in a delicate manner to color the complete work. Folk melodies have been noted in this movement and in the sixth. The final rondo is in contrast to the minuet preceding it, with capriciousness both vivacious and intimate.

—Program notes by Catherine Roche



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Dinner following

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