

FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

The Brahms Trio
Alla Aranovskaya, violin
Leonis Shukaev, cello
Maxim Mogilevsky, piano

7:30 PM, September 6, 2003
Faye Spanos Concert Hall

In cooperation with the Conservatory of Music
University of Pacific
Stockton, California



Program

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| Piano Trio in E-flat (unfinished) | Alexander Alyabiev
(1787-1851) |
| Adagio (last movement of Piano Trio) | Zurab Nadarejshvili
(b. 1957) |
| Piano Trio in C minor, Op. 1, No. 3
Allegro con brio
Andante cantabile con Variazioni
Menuetto: Quasi allegro
Finale: Prestissimo | Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827) |

—Intermission—

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| Piano Trio No. 4 in E minor, Op. 90, B166 “Dumky”
Lento maestoso—Allegro vivace, quasi doppio movimento—
Tempo I—Allegro molto
Poco adagio—Vivace non troppo
Andante—Vivace non troppo—Andante—Allegretto
Andante moderato (Quasi temp di marcia)—Allegretto scherzando—
Meno mosso—Allegro—Moderato
Allegro
Lento maestoso—Vivace, quasi doppio movimento—Lento—Vivace | Antonín Dvořák
(1841-1904) |
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THE BRAHMS TRIO appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists
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The Brahms Trio

The Brahms Trio is made up of the Grammy-nominated St. Petersburg String Quartet's incomparable first violinist Alla Aranovskaya and cellist Leonid Shukaev, together with pianist Maxim Mogilevsky, winner of three international piano competitions, and the last pupil of A. Sumbatian, teacher of Vladimir Ashkenazy. Their debut season in 2002-03 included New York City's Frick Collection, the Cleveland Museum of Fine Arts, and the Los Angeles Music Guild. The Los Angeles Times hailed their LA debut as "impassioned ... noble, heroic, bold, intimate, prayerful, ineffable."

Program Notes

Alyabiev—Piano Trio in E-flat

Alexander Alyabiev was born in the noble family of the governor of Tobolsk. When he was eleven years old, the family moved to St. Petersburg. Alexander studied music seriously in Moscow from 1804. He became an officer taking part in the war against Napoleon in 1812, and reached Paris with the Russian army.

In 1824, Alyabiev settled in Moscow, performing as pianist, singer, and composer for the musical theater. He had written many romances on verses by the great Russian poet, Alexander Pushkin.

It was in a prison on a false accusation of murder that he wrote his most famous song, *Solovey* (Nightingale) used by Rossini in his opera *The Barber of Seville* in Rosina's music lesson scene, and therefore sung by the great sopranos such as Viardot, Pottil and Sembric. The song was made famous as well by the piano variations of Glinka (1831) and Liszt (1834).

A member of the young intelligentsia, many of who had been sent to study in Western

Europe, he was accused of being part of the Decembrist political movement and sent to the Caucasus in Siberia. Here he heard and worked into his music the "oriental" themes of the East thus becoming a pioneer in the Nationalist movement led by Balakireff.

A decade before this he composed the E flat trio, the key associated with the Masonic movement in which he had many friends. Mozart's *Magic Flute* was well known in Russia, composed in E flat, and considered to have Masonic themes and overtones. The trio is characterized by an undeniable verve and radiance. The violin, cello, and piano converse in a good-humored manner responding to each other's cues.

Nadarejshvili—Adagio

Zurab Nadarejshvili was born in Poti, in Georgia where he pursues his teaching and composing career, work that includes being a board member of the Georgian Composers' Union and musical editor at the KVALI Film Studio. His orchestral and chamber music have won prizes and been performed and recorded in Asia, Europe and North America. These works included a *Quintet for Guitar and Strings*, premiered only last March at Stanford University; the St. Petersburg Quartet and guitarist Paul Galbraith had commissioned the work.

The *Piano Trio* (nearly forty minutes long in its entirety) was awarded the prize for best piece of 1995 by Georgian Composers' Union. The last movement, performed this evening is based on a Georgian folk song that is a traditional lament for the dead.

Beethoven—Piano Trio in c

When the aristocratic supporters of Beethoven in

Bonn thought it time to send him to Vienna "to receive the spirit of Mozart through Haydn" in 1792, he had composed a considerable amount of music: cantatas, piano concertos, chamber music, and possibly some material from Opus 1. Beethoven would present some of his work to Haydn as new work to impress the master, for in 1793, he had not completed a single new work. Opus 1, Number 1 was revised and touched up but Numbers 2 and 3 were completed after Haydn's departure for London in 1794. Haydn had criticized Number 3 for he did not believe the Trio would be accepted quickly or easily understood and so favorably received by the Viennese public. Beethoven admitted this criticism was the source of his "grudge" against Haydn, for he did not want to be recognized as a pupil of Haydn. His career was launched with the support of Prince Lichnowsky in whose palace he lived most of the nineties. He was accepted as a friend and brother of this leading patron of the arts, to whom Opus 1 is dedicated.

Perhaps, as Kerman has said, Haydn was put off by the extremes of tempo, dynamics, texture, and chromatic action in the piece with the resulting emotional aura as a result. However, Beethoven had learned from hearing and studying the latest of Haydn's compositions; Haydn, with Mozart, had laid the groundwork for the Classic style. Beethoven took Haydn's London Symphonies as his model for Opus 1, with each work consisting of four movements, the movements lasting a half hour, not the twelve minutes or so of former works. Number 3 transfers the

aggressive, driving sonorities of the symphony to chamber music.

In Vienna, Beethoven, as a virtuoso, had come to appreciate the expressive possibilities of the piano over previous keyboard instruments. Even so, Opus 1 marks a stage in Beethoven's gradual liberation from reliance upon the piano as the anchor of his compositional style. The medium of the piano trio had its origins in the so-called accompanied sonata for keyboard with violin and cello offering the accompaniment. Gradually, the strings became more essential to the musical fabric. In Opus 1, each instrument has a vital part. In addition, there is even a sense that the music is scored for the three instruments.

The *Allegro con brio* opens with a somewhat impassioned introductory theme by the piano, answered by the strings, and the theme returns, at times presented by the piano, at other times by the strings. Typical is one slow, suspense filled passage on the piano that develops, and then ends with a violent chord by the trio. A second theme containing three notes alternates with the introductory theme. The cello and violin have rich passages always interrupted by piano virtuosity.

A song-like theme introduced on the piano and taken by the strings is given a wide variety of treatment in the *Andante cantabile*. As a further innovation (although there had been a ready market for keyboard variations), in the slow movements of Opus 1, Beethoven moved from external variation technique to a sonata-style work. Although the piano work ranges from peppery to violent over the strings, the theme ends quietly, becoming a lullaby.

The piano presents the dance theme in the *Menuetto*. In the B section, the piano decorates the

string melodic passages. A brief coda ends the movement.

The *Prestissimo* has a lively distinct melodic theme. The presentation is often gentle alternating with violent passages such as have already been presented in the other movements. The virtuoso piano dominates with a gentle center portion, and a quiet ending.

Dvořák–Piano Trio in e

Dvořák's popularity long rested on his *Slavonic Dances*, the *New World Symphony*, and his *Cello Concerto*, but his chamber music has become more and more widely played and the *Dumky Trio* is one of the most popular. It was premiered in 1891 with the composer at the piano, as part of the celebration when the Charles University of Prague conferred an honorary degree on him. How much he loved the work is shown by the fact that, prior to his departure for the United States, Dvořák undertook a farewell tour organized by the Prague publisher, Urbanek.

Accompanied by Ferdinand Lachner, the violinist, and Hanus Wihann, the cellist, they visited, between January and May 1892, thirty-nine towns in Bohemia and Moravia. Dvořák always included the *Dumky*.

The Trio is made up of six *Dumky*, a *Dumka* being, among other things, a type of folk music, which originated in the Ukraine, characteristically meditative lamentations, but alternating with livelier music. Dvořák's Trio is composed of six *Dumka*, nationalistically flavored movements, but each movement embraces sections in contrasting tempi, which can be noted by studying the titles contained in each movement. In spite of the difficulty of such a work, it totally succeeds, due to Dvořák's ability to create moods

of great subtlety; though the moods are similar, they are never the same from movement to movement. Emanuel Ax stated, "Like a great poet, he created variety through synonyms." The *Dumky* are orchestral, but differ from Dvořák's more Brahmsian orchestral writing. There is a sense of diverse, rather than massive sound. Dvořák had a lifelong concern for instrumental timbre and he composes so that the piano supports but does not overwhelm the strings. The work is, finally, a rhapsody with sections of varying characters: tragic, meditative, and exuberant.

The first three movements, of *Dumky*, *Lento maestoso*, *Poco adagio*, and *Andante* follow one another without a break. Within these three tempos are contrasting sections of liveliness. At the beginning of the second movement, the piano can be as quiet as a shepherd's flute. The fourth, *Andante moderato*, makes ingenious play with alteration of musical style, something distinctly Slavonic. It serves as a slow movement and ends with a long pause. The whirlwind fifth, *Allegro*, is scarcely meditative but with an openly lyric feeling. In the final *Dumka*, Dvořák turns to his melodious Czech style. Here the piano is raucous, drowning out the others like a whole band.

Dvořák's use of "chain form" in his unusual piano trio anticipated a practice that would become widespread in the twentieth century with the works of Debussy, Bartók, and Stravinsky.

—Notes by Dr. Catherine Roche

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The Brahms Trio

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