

FRIENDS OF
CHAMBER MUSIC
Fifty-First Season

THE PEABODY TRIO

Violaine Melançon, *violin*

Natasha Brofsky, *cello*

Seth Knopp, *piano*

2:30 PM, November 5, 2006

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

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

Program

Trio No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 1, No. 3

Allegro con brio

Andante cantabile con variazioni

Menuetto: Quasi allegro

Finale: Prestissimo

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN

(1770–1827)

Trio

Moderato

TSIAJ: Presto

Moderato con moto

Charles IVES

(1874–1954)

—intermission—

Trio No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 99, D. 898

Allegro moderato

Andante un poco mosso

Scherzo: Allegro

Rondo: Allegro vivace

Franz SCHUBERT

(1797–1828)



The Peabody Trio is represented by BesenArts LLC,
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The Peabody Tri records for Artek Recordings www.peabodytrio.org

The Artists

Since winning the Naumburg Chamber Music Award in 1989, **THE PEABODY TRIO** has committed to playing both classics of the repertoire and important new works. They bring to their music making what *The Washington Post* called "the romantic fervor of the 20th century greats."

They have performed in New York, Washington, DC, Chicago, Denver, Montreal, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Philadelphia, San Diego, and Boston, and they tour frequently in England, Japan and Israel. A highlight of their 2006-07 season includes two performances exploring the music of Schubert and Ives in Washington, DC.

Festivals, including Tanglewood, Ravinia, Skaneateles, and Napa Valley's "Music in the Vineyards," have been home to their summer performances. Radio programs include Performance Today, Morning Pro Musica, CBC, Radio-Canada, and the WQXR "Listening Room."

The Peabody Trio currently serves as the resident faculty ensemble of the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, a position they have held since 1989.

The three musicians of the Peabody Trio come from diverse musical backgrounds. Violinist **VIOLAINE MELANÇON** is from Quebec, Canada and after receiving First Prize in violin at the Conservatoire de Musique she continued her studies with Ivan Galamian at the Curtis Institute of Music and with Isadore Tinkleman at the San Francisco Conservatory. While at Curtis, she was a member of the Nisaika Quartet, prize winner of the 8th International String Quartet Competition in Evian, France.

Cellist **NATASHA BROFSKY** has degrees from the Eastman School and Mannes College. Her teachers include Marion Feldman, Robert Sylvester, Paul Katz and Timothy Eddy. In 1987 she was awarded a Fulbright Grant to study with William Pleeth in London, and while there she won the Muriel Taylor Cello Prize. She subsequently held principal positions in the

Norwegian Radio and Chamber Orchestras. An active chamber musician, Ms. Brofsky has played with many fine ensembles in the USA and Europe, including the Takács, Cassatt, and Norwegian quartets, and the Colorado Chamber Players. She has served on the faculty at Barratt-Due's Music Institute in Oslo, and as guest faculty at the University of Colorado at Boulder. In 2004, Ms. Brofsky joined the cello faculty of the New England Conservatory and was recently appointed Assistant Chair of Strings.

Pianist **SETH KNOPP** studied at the New England and San Francisco Conservatories. His teachers have included Leonard Shure and Leon Fleisher. He has performed with symphony and chamber orchestras in the United States and has collaborated in concert with such artists as Bonnie Hampton, Nicholas Mann, Kurt Ollman and the Cavani Quartet. In 1983, Mr. Knopp and Violaine Melançon formed the Knopp-Melançon Duo, an artistic collaboration which began when both performers were students. Since that time, this husband and wife team has performed throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan and Egypt. Appointed USIA Artistic Ambassadors in 1987, the Knopp-Melançon Duo toured extensively abroad and made their Washington, DC debut at the Kennedy Center. Currently, Mr. Knopp is Artistic Director of the Yellow Barn Music School and Festival in Putney, VT and is on the piano and chamber music faculties at the Peabody Conservatory.

The Program

Beethoven—Trio No. 3

Making sense of Beethoven's works for piano trio can be a confusing task. Fourteen works for this combination of instruments survive: 4 with no opus numbers; 2 are designated for the instrumental combination of clarinet *or* violin, cello & piano; 6

standard trios; and finally 2 sets of variations for piano trio.

Beethoven's Opus 1 (his first published work) contains three piano trios composed within the period 1793-95. Haydn advised him to withhold the third in c minor, the one we hear today, from publication. Haydn openly admired the other two trios, but felt the third suffered from over-emotionality, which Papa considered a fault. Beethoven, not unsurprisingly, assumed envy was the reason, as he already knew what Haydn thought a "weakness" would come to be regarded as the trio's strength. The Op. 1 trios were first presented in Vienna at one of the dedicatee's, Prince Lichnowsky, soirées where they were very well received.

The work opens with a dramatic theme which stops and then continues in the piano with a lighter tune moving downward. All three instruments share the second subject, another lyrical melody. Beethoven begins the development with a transformation of the opening theme into a charming waltz that yields to a stormy exploration. The movement ends after review of the melodic material with a short coda.

The simple second movement theme is easy to remember and offers space for the complexity of the five variations that follow. Listen to these variations for a wide disparity of mood and emotion.

After the expressive first movement and the advanced theme and variations of the second, the return to traditional *Minuetto* form is something of a surprise.

The brusque, commanding opening of the *Finale* places a sonic explosion between repeating chords. After an abrupt close, a charming melody emerges stated first by the violin, then the piano. A calm second subject leads to the development. An extended chromatic scale for the piano leads

to the recapitulation, which starts uncharacteristically, by excluding the outburst, with the second part of the first theme. Again departing from convention, Beethoven allows the music to disappear in a whisper rather than with his usual strength.

Ives-Trio

Chamber music, like any art form, renews itself through creative effort of its innovators. Since our view of history is retrospective, we tend to assign a certain conviction to this renewal process, and with 20/20 hindsight, we declare "genius will out!" Such a long-range view is like looking into the wrong end of a telescope: it ignores the subtle chafing and confrontation between innovator and audience; it hardly takes into account details of the daily struggle of the artist to continue despite the skewed whims of the public; and it obscures the fact that major figures are often ignored for amazingly long periods of time, only to be lionized when it is almost too late. In this chaotic scheme of things, the weak fold and only the strong survive.

A staunchly independent thinker and definitely one of the strong, Charles Ives was one of the most extraordinary innovators of Western music and an equally fascinating man: he worked as a very successful insurance salesman by day (estate planning was his innovation in 1902) and as a composer by night. A heart attack in 1918 forced him to give up composition. He died in 1954, leaving a legacy anticipating most of the innovations of the 20th Century, including collage, dissonance, atonality, polytonality, microtone, asymmetrical rhythms, and tone cluster. This legacy anticipated Stravinsky, Debussy, Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern before some of them had penned their first note. Every marginalized composer has at some time taken courage from Ives' long-suffering independence.*

According to Ives' wife, the three movements of the Piano Trio reflect his college days at Yale. He began and

wrote most of the piece in 1904 finishing in 1911. It did not receive a public performance until 1948.

According to Ives' wife, the first movement "recalls a short but serious talk, to those on the Yale fence,† by an old professor of Philosophy." It is an experiment in presenting two halves of a texture separately, then together (relating the speaking professor and the fence-sitting students?). We hear the same 27 measures played three times: the violin is silent for the first, the cello for the second, and all join for the third. The complex melody structure, with large intervals in the cello, features detailed rhythmical interplay.

The second movement, with the somewhat obscure title TSIAJ‡, recalls the games and antics of the students on a holiday afternoon. Some of the tunes of those days are rather roughly distorted and partially suggested. Listen for snippets of these familiar old tunes: *My Old Kentucky Home, In the Sweet By and By, Sailor's Hornpipe, How Dry I Am, The Campbells Are Coming, Dixie, and Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay*, etc.

The last movement is partly a remembrance of a Sunday service on the campus, which ended near the 'Rock of Ages.' An introduction and violin recitative contrast strongly with the montage of tunes in the TSIAJ. There is also a contrasting vigorous first theme with a very peaceful and almost religious second theme: broad lyrical melodies alternate with lighter syncopated sections. Finally, the coda quotes Thomas Hastings' *Rock of Ages* in the cello, ending the piece with Ives' typical citing from American music.

Ives' music challenges our ears and our expectations with its freshly dissonant essences and highly personal expression. All it requires of the listener is the ability to stop time and regard the transient as eternal, the everlasting as transitory, the eccentric as conventional, and the ordinary as divine.

Schubert-Trio No. 1

Schubert composed an exceptional amount of chamber music, most of it before age 20, which is fortunate as he died when only 31. However, it is his later work that deserves all the superlatives. While his chamber works are characterized by intensely lyrical melodies, the later works are strengthened by an aggressive use of rhythm, increasing chromatic daring, and malleability of form. Schubert's final chamber pieces, including the piano trios, were written about the same time Beethoven was finishing his last string quartets.

Schubert's two piano trios were probably composed within months of each other in 1827, and just months before his death, but no autograph manuscript remains to date the piece. The first in B-flat, never played or published in his lifetime, is redolent of effortless lyricism and balanced composition, according each instrument equal basis rather than allowing the piano to overpower the strings. This is a large scale work, longer than Beethoven's *Archduke Trio*, but it has an almost informal pace that is relaxed rather than epic. Robert Schumann said of the work, when we listen "the troubles of our human existence disappear and all the world is bright and fresh again."

The first movement affords some kinship with Schubert's popular lied *An Silvia*, where unfettered lyricism is underpinned by some of his most subtle harmonic and structural thinking. Textures shift in the *Andante*, where the violin and cello speak as a duet while the piano accompanies until the middle section where it assumes the melody. The contrasting *Scherzo* is a delight, but it is the *Rondo* that stands above the others in inventive rhythmic devices and energy. Finally, a dance rhythm thrusts the listener toward an end spiced with a clever coda.

—Notes by Dr. Michael Spencer

* Although written in 1901-04, his 3rd Symphony was not performed until 1946 winning the Pulitzer Prize.

† Sitting on the Yale fence was a privilege of all Yale students except the freshmen.

‡ "The Scherzo Is A Joke"

FIFTY-FIRST SEASON

2006-2007

*Presented in Cooperation with
University of the Pacific Conservatory of
Music; Stephen Anderson, Dean*

TAKÁCS QUARTET

2:30 PM Sunday, October 1, 2006
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

PEABODY TRIO

2:30 PM Sunday, November 5, 2006
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

STRATA

2:30 PM Sunday, December 3, 2006
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

STREICHER TRIO WITH DANCE

2:30 PM Sunday, February 18, 2007
Faye Spanos Concert Hall
RECEPTION FOLLOWING

YING QUARTET

7:30 PM Saturday, March 24, 2007
Faye Spanos Concert Hall

TO OUR AUDIENCE

- The use of cameras and recording devices of any kind is forbidden.
- There is no smoking in the lobby or auditorium.
- Please turn off cellular telephones and disengage audible alarms on pagers and watches.
- UOP & Delta students are admitted free on a space-available basis.
- Concert programs are subject to change without notice.
- Seating is unreserved for the 2006-07 Season.
- Contributions, including memorials, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Tickets are available at the door.
Adult: Single \$25, Season \$100
Child 13-17: Single \$5, Season \$15
Child 12 and younger: Free
UOP/Delta Faculty: \$10

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