

FRIENDS OF  
CHAMBER MUSIC

*Fifty-First Season*

**STRATA**

Nathan Williams, *clarinet*  
James Stern, *violin/viola*  
Audrey Andrist, *piano*

2:30 PM, December 3, 2006

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

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

**Program**

**Trio Sonata in G Major for Clarinet, Violin & Piano** (after BWV 1039) **J. S. BACH**  
Adagio (1685–1750)  
Allegro ma non presto  
Adagio e piano  
Presto

**From *Eight Pieces* for Clarinet, Viola and Piano, Op. 83** **Max BRUCH**  
II: Allegro con moto (1838–1920)  
VII: Allegro vivace, ma non troppo  
VI: Nachtgesang (Andante con moto)  
IV: Allegro agitato

—*intermission*—

**Little Concerto for Clarinet, Viola and Piano (1937)** **Alfred UHL**  
Allegro con brio (1909–1992)  
Grave  
Vivo

**Suite for Clarinet, Violin and Piano (1992)** **Alexander ARUTIUNIAN**  
Introduction (b. 1920)  
Scherzo  
Dialog  
Final



## The Artists

The musicians of STRATA, old friends to many in Stockton, have been performing and appearing in concert together since 1988. All three hold the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the Juilliard School, where their first performances as an ensemble occurred. STRATA presents a wide spectrum of classical and modern styles in programs that enhance the unique expressive power of each work. Listen today for the clarity of counterpoint and the blends afforded by their contrasting instruments. The group has performed recently throughout the US.

Clarinetist **Nathan Williams** has been hailed by critics as "outstanding for his musicality, breath control, robust, and brilliant tone, and flawless technique," "a highly effective soloist," and "a stellar musician, capable of the most exquisite and expressive playing." He has appeared as soloist and in chamber music performances at Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, & Kaufmann Hall at the 92nd St. Y, as well as throughout the United States, and in Austria, Canada, China, Hungary, Germany, the Netherlands, Taiwan, Japan, and the Czech Republic. He also earned the Artist's Diploma from the Academy of Music and Fine Arts in Vienna, Austria and an MM degree from Eastman. Since 2001, he has been the Instructor of Clarinet at the Interlochen Arts Academy.

**James Stern** has made recital and concerto appearances throughout the United States, France, Germany, China and Norway. He has performed chamber music at Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall, and festivals at Marlboro, Ravinia, Banff and Norfolk. As Associate Professor at the University of the Pacific, he performed with the Sierra Chamber Society and at the Ralston Series, Le Petit Trianon Theatre, and the Annenberg Theater. Currently Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, he performs with the 21st Century Consort, the Contemporary Music Forum and the Smithsonian Chamber Players.

Canadian pianist **Audrey Andrist** is the 1994 first prize winner of the San Antonio International Keyboard Competition and was presented in a cross-Canada solo recital tour as winner of the Eckhardt-Gramatté Competition. She has appeared as soloist with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, the Juilliard Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall, and the CBC Vancouver Symphony. As a chamber musician, Ms. Andrist has performed in New York's Merkin Hall and Steinway Hall, at Place des Arts in Montreal, Spivey Hall in Georgia, on NPR's "Performance Today", and the Kennedy Center and Library of Congress in Washington, DC. She has participated in premieres of new works in Canada and the United States. Ms. Andrist currently lives in Maryland with her husband, James Stern, and their son, Kenneth.

## The Program

### *JS Bach—Trio Sonata in G*

Though the trio sonata was very popular in the Baroque era, J.S. Bach wrote very few of them. Hence each work—especially one of the qualities of the G Major sonata—deserves special attention. The only one of the three gamba sonatas that exists in an original manuscript, the G Major sonata is itself a transcription of the Sonata for two transverse flutes and basso continuo, BWV 1039. In fact, today's trio sonata may have originated as a now lost sonata for two violins and continuo before Bach arranged it in its present form for two flutes and continuo. He later reworked it into BWV 1027 for viola da gamba and obbligato harpsichord in which form it is probably most familiar today. It was not unusual for Bach to redraft his music in new settings, or even to arrange other composers' pieces<sup>1</sup>. It is for this reason that it does not seem inappropriate for us to hear BWV 1039 in today's instrumentation.

<sup>1</sup> The organ concertos transcribed from Vivaldi's violin concertos are one successful work in this vein

When Bach used this format, he wrote the *trio sonata* for two treble instruments accompanied by a *basso continuo*, usually a keyboard plus either cello or bassoon. The *sonata da chiesa* (church sonata) format in which this piece is written comprises an instrumental ensemble in four movements alternating in two slow-fast pairs. This form contrasts with the *sonata da camera* in that it omits dance movements characteristic of the chamber sonata. It also differs by using the organ as the keyboard, reflecting the setting of the performance and eliminating the need for additional supportive continuo instruments. The piano supplies much of the vibrancy and intensity of the organ for today's performance.

The *Adagio* is an unhurried, idyllic evocation of a pastoral, shepherd-like scene against the background of the other instruments. Listen for interesting and possibly surprising key changes and clashes of tone which darken the mood. The *Allegro* second movement is the piece's first expression of uninhibited elation. The third movement, *Adagio e piano*, reaches the piece's full depths of shadowy darkness descending through a warren of harmonics only to burst forth for a second time into the joy of the final *Presto*.

### *Bruch—From Eight Pieces*

Max Bruch, born in the early years of the Romantic era in Köln, lived in the shadow Brahms all his life. Widely known and respected in his day as a composer, conductor and teacher, Bruch received his earliest music instruction from his mother, a noted singer and pianist. He had an extremely traditional upbringing and musical education, and thus found himself at odds with the followers of Liszt and Wagner from the beginning of his career. He began composing at eleven, and, by fourteen, had produced a symphony and a string quartet, the latter garnering a prize that allowed him

to study with Karl Reinecke and Ferdinand Hiller. From 1864 to 1889, Bruch held various posts as a choral and orchestral conductor in Cologne, Coblenz, Sondershausen, Berlin, Liverpool and Breslau. From 1890 to 1910, he taught composition at the Berlin Academy and received numerous awards for his work, including an honorary doctorate from Cambridge University.

Bruch was even more traditionalist in his compositional technique than Brahms and was an open critic of the music of Wagner and Liszt. In addition to his musical output, his legacy can be counted in terms of his students, including Vaughan Williams and Respighi. Though Bruch is known mainly for the three famous compositions for string soloist and orchestra (the Concerto and the Scottish Fantasy for violin, and the Kol Nidrei for cello), he also composed two other violin concertos, three symphonies, a concerto for two pianos, various chamber pieces, songs, three operas and much choral music.

Fundamental to Bruch's approach was belief that folk music supplied the best model for meaningful expression and he wrote a number of pieces based on folk tunes of various nations.

Bruch's *Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, Op. 83*, was written for his clarinetist son, Max Felix Bruch (1884-1943) who debuted the piece in 1909. Simrock, who published the work shortly after its completion, arranged the clarinet and viola parts for violin and cello, feeling the customary piano trio combination would appeal to a wider audience. This work was composed at a time when many of his contemporaries were moving into modernism. To gain an appreciation for Bruch's "retro" reputation, you have only to realize this work is contemporaneous with Stravinsky's *Firebird* of 1910 and *Petroushka* of 1911. But Bruch kept this work thoroughly Romantic in style, with glowing melodies and harmonies.

The presentation of only four of the eight pieces complies with the desire of

the composer, who stated that he did not intend the work to be performed in its entirety at any one time. Each is a two- or three-part form with thematic material skillfully dovetailed, shared, or alternated between the clarinet and violin, with the piano providing harmonic support. Each instrument and every movement has its own personality, sometimes sweet or solemn, other times happy, lively, or more dramatic, and at times powerful. The composer's gift for lyricism is apparent and gratifying in all of the Opus 83 pieces, leaving us wishing he had treated the genre of chamber music more generously.

### *Uhl—Little Concerto*

Alfred Uhl, an Austrian composer, played cello in his musical family's string quartet. He received his training from the Vienna State Academy of Music, which he entered in 1927, and subsequently went on to teach at the same institution. Uhl also taught theory and composition at the Vienna Musikhochschule until he retired in 1980. He wrote extensively for clarinet and his educational materials and works are still common repertoire today. His most famous pedagogical pieces are the two volumes comprising the *48 Studies*. His *Divertimento for Three Clarinets and Bass Clarinet*, written in 1942 for the clarinetists of the Vienna Philharmonic and employing the use of three B-flat clarinets and a bass clarinet, is one of the most performed works for the medium. Other works include a concerto for clarinet and orchestra and the trio for clarinet, piano and viola, which we hear today. You will hear a combination of allure and sophistication in this piece. Its wit and rhythmic ingenuity are charming and attractive.

### *Arutiunian—Suite*

Alexander Arutiunian was born in 1920 in Erevan, Armenia (USSR) and is one of the best known and highly esteemed composers of the former Soviet Union. He studied composition and piano at the

Armenian Conservatory and then perfected his skills with H. Litinsky in Moscow (1946-48). He is presently head of composition at Erevan State Conservatory.

In 1949, he was awarded the USSR State Prize for the *Motherland Cantata*, a graduation piece he wrote as a student at the Moscow Conservatory. He has continued to win acclaim at home and abroad for his works, many of which are quickened by the folk traditions of Armenian music. Some of Arutiunian's works for wind instruments, notably the 1950 concerto for trumpet, concerto for tuba, and the brass quintet *Armenian Scenes*, have secured their place in the international repertoire. His total output includes operas, cantatas, symphonic and chamber works.

The *Suite for clarinet, violin and piano*, written in four movements in 1992, was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio. You will note the vibrant Armenian character of the music which is always present in Arutiunian's style. The opening phrases of the Introduction, marked *Lento*, create tension with dark intonations in the low registers of the piano in combination with the violin. Though emotionally tense and reflective, the prevailing mood in this movement is lyrical. The playful Scherzo is a graceful fugatto, which is followed by the Dialog—a short intermezzo between the Scherzo and Finale. Despite its laconic nature, this duet between the violin and clarinet contains the dramatic spirit of the whole piece. The Dialog ends with a transition into the Finale, containing the elements of boisterous Armenian dance rhythms with their capricious pulse and unexpected irregularities in a freely improvised melodic style. Listen for all three instruments to display their dazzling virtuosity.

—Notes ©Dr. Michael Spencer

## FIFTY-FIRST SEASON 2006-2007

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

### The Takács Quartet

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

### The 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

### The Streicher Trio with Dance

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

### The Ying Quartet

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

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- 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

FOCM welcomes children to our concerts. However, an adult must accompany children ten years of age 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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