



# FRIENDS OF CHAMBER MUSIC

*in Cooperation with Pacific's Conservatory of Music presents*

## BOSTON TRIO

IRINA MURESANU, violin

ASTRID SCHWEEN, cello

HENG-JIN PARK, piano

2:30 PM, Sunday, February 14, 2016

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

University of the Pacific

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**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN PIANO TRIO IN C MINOR, OP. 1, NO. 3 (1793-5)**

(1770-1827)

Allegro con brio

Andante cantabile con variazioni

Menuetto. Quasi Allegro

Finale. Prestissimo

**JOHN MUSTO PIANO TRIO (1998)**

(b. 1954)

Moderato

Slowly – Allegro molto

**INTERMISSION —**

**CLAUDE DEBUSSY LA MER : TROIS ESQUISSES SYMPHONIQUES**

(1862-1918)

**POUR ORCHESTRE (1903-5), arr. Sally Beamish**

*De l'aube à midi sur la mer: très lent – animez peu à peu (si mineur)*

*Jeux de vagues: allegro (dans un rythme très souple) – animé (do dièse mineur)*

*Dialogue du vent et de la mer: animé et tumultueux – cédez très légèrement (do dièse mineur)*

The BOSTON TRIO is represented by JMS Artist Management  
For booking, contact Justin Stanley at [jmsartistmanagement.com](http://jmsartistmanagement.com)  
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**Season Sponsor: C. A. Webster Foundation**

## ARTIST PROFILE



"Whenever this trio plays, drop everything and go hear them!" hailed the Boston Globe on the occasion of The Boston Trio's Tanglewood debut at Ozawa Hall. Since their formation in 1997, the trio has quickly become one of today's most exciting chamber ensembles. Acclaimed for their superb sense of ensemble and wondrous balance, these virtuosic and profound musicians are committed to creating exceptional and daring performances of standard and contemporary repertoire.

Violinist Irina Muresanu, cellist Astrid Schween, and pianist Heng-Jin Park each have distinguished careers as soloist, recitalist, chamber musician, and have appeared with major orchestras and premier chamber music festivals throughout the United States and Europe. Cellist Ms. Schween, who made her debut as soloist with the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta, enjoys a varied concert career as a soloist and chamber artist. She has been soloist with major orchestras in Canada, US, and in Europe. Ms. Muresanu, who has appeared as soloist with the Boston Philharmonic, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and other top international orchestras, is the recipient of top prizes at the Montreal International Competition and the Queen Elizabeth Violin Competition. Pianist Heng-Jin Park, who made her solo debut with the Boston Pops at the age of 15, is the founding member of the Boston Trio and founder and artistic director of Halcyon Music Festival.

Recent highlights for the Boston Trio include performances at UCLA, Detroit Pro Musica, University of Arkansas, Maui Classical Music Festival, Rockport Chamber Music Festival, Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival, Virtuosi Concerts in Winnipeg, performances of Beethoven's Triple Concerto with the Boston Classical Orchestra, and nationally televised performance at Belgrade Music Festival at Kolarac Foundation Hall in Serbia.

## Beethoven: Piano Trio in c

October 29, 1792

Dear Beethoven,

*In leaving for Vienna today, you are about to realize a long-cherished desire. The wandering genius of Mozart still grieves for his passing. With Haydn's unquenchable spirit, it has found shelter but no home and longs to find some lasting habitation. Work hard, and the spirit of Mozart's genius will come to you from Haydn's hands.*

Your friend always,

Waldstein

Fortified with these words of reassurance from his patron in Bonn, young Ludwig was off to master Vienna. He took the three piano trios that would ultimately form his Opus 1 with him and played them all within a year.

According to Beethoven's pupil Ferdinand Ries, *"It was planned to introduce the first three Trios of Beethoven to the artistic world at a soirée at Prince Lichnowsky's. Most of the artists and music lovers were invited, especially Haydn, for whose opinion all were eager. The Trios were played and at once commanded extraordinary attention. Haydn said many pretty things about them, but advised Beethoven not to publish the third in C minor. This astonished Beethoven, inasmuch as he considered the third the best of the Trios. Consequently, Haydn's remark left a bad impression on Beethoven and led him to think that Haydn was envious, jealous and ill-disposed toward him. I took occasion to ask Haydn himself about it. His answer, however, confirmed Beethoven's statement; he said he had not believed that this Trio would be so quickly and easily understood and so favorably received by the public."*

Whether or not Haydn was correct, the third trio is certainly the heftiest of the three. We hear this "weight"

immediately as the music begins in a big, bold, spirited and optimistic manner. The first movement is full of rhythmic propulsion and brio "fire," with turns of phrase easily already recognizable as Beethoven. Listen for a chain of short themes that evolves from dark brooding to sunny self-confidence followed by a development that is best described as an impudently dramatic scene with continually evolving character. The recapitulation takes us back to the beginning for a glad review.

The second movement, a set of lovely variations on a simple but graceful theme, shows Beethoven's skill at theme and variation, which goes hand in hand with improvisation, using a simple theme much like the later hymn-like themes he would invent. There follows a charming process of converting this into variations that express his vast imagination.

A lightweight, refreshing foil to the profoundness of the first two movements, the obligatory minuet that follows yields a gracefulness, loveliness and transparency.

The finale, marked *prestissimo*, allowed Beethoven to display his keyboard virtuosity. This fervor and turmoil may have been the negative influence on Haydn's opinion, whose finales were renowned for being playful and fun. Listen for a parade of passion in the exposition, which is later developed and intensified. Each instrument seems to contend for the most emotional passion. Then this emotion seems to play itself out as the music arrives at an unexpectedly quiet finish.

## Musto: Piano Trio

Composer and pianist John Musto, regarded as one of the most versatile of current musicians, pursues activities that encompass virtually every musical genre: orchestral and operatic, solo,

chamber and vocal music, concerti, and music for film and television. His work embraces many forms of present-day American concert music, enhanced by refined inspirations from jazz, ragtime and the blues. These qualities lend a strong form to his vocal music, which ranges from a series of operas – *Volpone*, *Later the Same Evening*, *Bastianello* and *The Inspector* – to a catalogue of art songs that is among the finest of any living American composer.

As pianist he has performed repertoire from Galuppi sonatas to Bolcom études, Bach keyboard concerti to Bernstein's *Age of Anxiety*, his own piano concerti, and Schubert lieder to the Great American Songbook. He also performs frequently with his wife, soprano Amy Burton, in recital and cabaret.

Mr. Musto was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his orchestral song cycle *Dove Sta Amore*, and is a recipient of two Emmy awards, two CINE Awards, a Rockefeller Fellowship at Bellagio, an American Academy of Arts and Letters award, and a Distinguished Alumnus award from the Manhattan School of Music. He is currently on the faculty of the Graduate Center at CUNY.

Some composers hide behind a lack of individuality by offering eclectic but unfathomable works. This is not true of John Musto, whose chamber music comprises various musical styles even as it conveys its own appealing, colorful and moving expressions. Noted for songs and theater works, as well as sterling pianism, Musto also shows a natural talent regarding instrumental interplay. Every moment in his *Piano Trio* develops from the context of a

solid line of reasoning and original design.

Alluring, songful and exquisitely written for the piano trio format, it is in two movements, of which the second shortly becomes animated but ultimately returns to take up the expressive task of the first. This work introduces Musto's emblematic edgy energy and his talent to give each instrument a dynamic part in the expressive, whimsical or nebulous bustle. The cabaret world of Poulenc seems to contribute to some degree to the melodiousness of the second movement, although you may find this music's shifting nonchalance and yearning is like no other composer's.

## Debussy: La Mer

Debussy's *La Mer* is a singular mix of tone poem and symphony: a three-movement impression of the ocean. As Debussy's concept formed in his mind, he wrote to a friend in September 1903 that "*I was destined for the fine career of a sailor,*" and that "*only the accidents of life put me on another path.*" He allowed that a musical work about the ocean "*could turn out to be like a studio landscape,*" but resolved that "*I have countless reminiscences. This matters more, in my opinion, than a reality.*"

Claude Debussy was distinctly uninterested in pictorialism or programmatic music. He had written only a few months earlier in a concert review for a Paris newspaper that the popularity of Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony "*rests on the common and mutual misunderstanding that exists between man and nature.*" He remarked that the bird calls in that symphony were "*more like the art of M. de Vaucanson<sup>1</sup> than drawn from*

*nature's book. All such imitations are in the end useless — purely arbitrary interpretations.*" Elsewhere, he opined that the "Pastoral" succeeded "*simply because there is no attempt at direct imitation, but rather at capturing the invisible sentiments of nature.*"

If Debussy certainly was not about to try it himself if he thought that Beethoven could not pull off an imitation of nature in music. And it was his determination to depict the ocean in general rather than in specifics led to his changes to original titles. In a 1903 letter to his publisher, Debussy proposed "*The Sea; Three symphonic sketches for orchestra: I. Beautiful sea by the bloodthirsty islands. II. Play of the waves. III. The wind makes the sea dance.*" By the time he finished *La Mer* in March 1905, he had changed the title of the first movement to "From dawn to midday on the sea," and that of the last movement to "Dialogue of the wind and the sea." Originally, the title of the first movement was a copy of the title of Camille Maclair's short story. Though Debussy no doubt liked the contrast between beauty and blood-thirstiness, he abandoned it, most likely because using Maclair's title could give the impression that the music traced the story.

Since analogous compositional techniques were employed in each of the three movement, they have a similar feel. The first thing heard in the orchestral version above the gently purring basses is a rising advancement constructed on whole tones, fourths, and fifths (the open strings of violins, violas, and cellos are tuned in fifths, those of double basses and guitars are in fourths), and using the rhythmic figure of a short note on the downbeat followed

by a much longer one. Fourths and fifths stacked on each other have a strong, forthright quality (think fanfares) but also a sort of blankness. The fourth and fifths recur discretely throughout the work, but since they are such a fundamental part of tonal music, they bring an elemental quality, as if conveying something wide, open and vast — the ocean, for example. The short-long rhythmic figure is easier to pick out, and conveys a sense of pathos in places and utter command in others, as when the brass thunder it out at the end of the first movement.

"*La Mer*" ("The Sea") was poorly received by critics at its 1905 première, but nevertheless has survived to become one of Debussy's most beloved and enduring orchestral works. It is a dazzling display of surging motifs and sparkling orchestration. It was a deeply personal project for Debussy, who had long been fascinated by the sea. For years, he had wanted to capture the magnificence of the ocean in various quartets and sonatas, but he destroyed them all, explaining, "*They never sounded wet enough.*"

Debussy's *La Mer* was originally orchestrated for piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 2 cornets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, glockenspiel, tam-tam, triangle), 2 harps, and strings.

It will be interesting to hear if it is "wet enough" as performed by piano, violin and cello.

—notes © Dr. Michael Spencer

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<sup>1</sup> An 18<sup>th</sup>-century creator of a famous mechanical duck

# 60<sup>TH</sup> SEASON 2015-2016

*Presented in Cooperation with  
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## Akropolis Reed Quintet

2:30 PM Sunday, September 27, 2015

Faye Spanos Concert Hall

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2:30 PM Sunday, October 25, 2015

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2:30 PM Sunday, November 15, 2015

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## Boston Trio

2:30 PM Sunday, February 14, 2016

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## Ensemble Schumann

2:30 PM Sunday, April 17, 2016

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- Please turn off cellular telephones and disengage audible signals on digital devices during concert.
- Concert programs are subject to change without notice.
- Seating is unreserved for the 2015-16 Season.
- Contributions, including memorials, are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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