

ESTABLISHED 1941 • OUR 84TH SEASON

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY *of* UTICA

with generous support from Philip Pearle
and from Susanna Watling and Robert Verkuyl

presents

The Horszowski Trio

Jesse Mills, violin • Ole Akahoshi, cello
Rieko Aizawa, piano

PROGRAM

- Piano Trio No. 25 in E Minor, Op. 57, No. 2, Hob. XV:12 (1788-1789).....Josef Haydn
Allegro moderato (1732-1809)
Andante
Rondo. Presto
- Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke, Op. 19 (1911)..... Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)
Arranged for The Horszowski Trio by Rieko Aizawa
- Introduzione e Rondo: “Haydn Go Seek” (2008)..... William Bolcom
Molto Adagio (b. 1938)
Rondo. Allegro giocoso

INTERMISSION

- Piano Trio in G Minor, Op. 15 (1855)..... Bedřich Smetana
Moderato assai (1824-1884)
Allegro, ma non agitato
Finale. Presto

Sunday, 26 January 2025 • 2:30 PM
Munson Art Museum • Sinnott Family Bank of Utica Auditorium
310 Genesee Street, Utica NY 13502

PROGRAM NOTES

Piano Trio No. 25 in E Minor, Op. 57, No. 2, Hob. XV:12 (1788-1789).... Josef Haydn

No music for violin, cello, and piano has more wit, variety, surprise, and audience appeal than the trios of Haydn, products of his infinitely wise and inventive later years. They are, “along with the Mozart concertos, the most brilliant piano works before Beethoven” (Rosen, *The Classical Style*, 1997), “and are also among the most harmonically adventurous of [Haydn’s] works in any genre. . .challenging essays for both players and listeners” (Wheelock, in *Piano Roles*, 1999).

Although he wrote piano trios throughout his career, the greatest concentration of them occurs in Haydn’s full maturity. You can almost hear him looking for things he has not done before, trying to surprise himself. But it is not only the unusual stops and starts, the vivid contrasts, the playful toying with the motives that hold our attention. The trios, in their reflective moments, hold some of Haydn’s most beautiful melodies (often a chance for the violin to come forward) and most daring harmonic inventions.

The E-Minor Trio (H.XV:12) has a very appealing awkwardness about it, a movement between phrases that is deliberate, curt, and even harsh. One has the impression of an address to the listener that is not friendly, but instead bracing and edifying. Haydn is unusual in often presenting an entire piece in one basic tonal world: the major and minor form of the same tonic. The second movement of this piece offers a new sonority in familiar ground, emphasized by maintaining, from the first movement, a very thoughtful and deliberate attitude to its themes and motives, shared and refracted with careful deliberation. Allegiance to the unusual through-thinking characteristic of this piece is evident in the final movement. The initial response to the jovial E Major proposal that begins the movement is a quite rumbustious section in E Minor, serving to recap the earlier tonal dialogue. The remainder of the movement becomes gradually less earnest, letting go, to some degree, of the lofty discourse of much of this challenging piece.

— John Harbison
Artistic Co-Director, Token Creek Chamber Music Festival

Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke, Op. 19 (1911) Arnold Schoenberg/ Arr. Rieko Aizawa

The *Sechs Kleine Klavierstücke* (*Six Little Piano Pieces*) were composed at the same time that Schoenberg was working on the orchestration of his massive oratorio *Gurre-Lieder*. While he maintained a lifelong love of romantic music, the extreme contrast between his

Klavierstücke and his more romantic works comes from his modernist desire to find a new means of expression. For him, works like the *Gurre-Lieder* or *Verklärte Nacht* fulfilled the tradition he loved, but it was works like these *Klavierstücke*, or the *Fünf Orchesterstücke* that attempted to reach beyond it.

The first five pieces were written in a single day, February 19, 1911, and were originally intended to comprise the entire piece. Schoenberg penned the sixth piece on June 17, shortly after the death of Gustav Mahler. It is a well circulated claim that Schoenberg conceived Op. 19/vi as an homage to Mahler. The work was first performed on February 4, 1912, in Berlin, by Louis Closson.

The pieces have been arranged for a number of other instruments and ensembles. There is a guitar arrangement by Siegfried Behrend, and in 2006, Heinz Holliger arranged the pieces for instrumental ensemble, which he recorded with the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne.

The six pieces do not carry individual titles, but are often known by their tempo marking:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| I. Leicht, zart (Light, delicate) | IV. Rasch, aber leicht (Brisk, but light) |
| II. Langsam (Slow) | V. Etwas rasch (Somewhat brisk) |
| III. Sehr langsam (Very slow) | VI. Sehr langsam (Very slow) |

Each piece is very short and unique in character, and, following the expressionist aesthetic, can be understood to be a long composition condensed into a single brief miniature. Schoenberg regarded this style of writing as a necessary compositional reaction to the diminishing power of tonality.

Wikipedia

Introduzione e Rondo: “Haydn Go Seek” (2008)..... William Bolcom

William Bolcom is an American composer and pianist. He has received the Pulitzer Prize, the National Medal of Arts, a Grammy Award, the Detroit Music Award and was named 2007 Composer of the Year by Musical America. He taught composition at the University of Michigan from 1973 until 2008. He is married to mezzo-soprano Joan Morris.

While many of Bolcom’s works are influenced by jazz, cabaret, and ragtime, this trio draws instead from the witty and charming music of Joseph Haydn. It was one of eighteen piano trios commissioned by the Haydn Festival Eisenstadt as a part of the observation of the

bicentennial of Haydn's death in 2009, and first performed as a part of the festival. So while the gestures, rhythms, characters, and textures definitely imitate the style of Haydn, it is all with a twist as befits a piece written in the 21st century.

Christopher Hutton, Poinsett Piano Trio © 2013

Piano Trio in G Minor, Op. 15 (1855)..... Bedřich Smetana

Smetana wrote his only piano trio in 1855 when he was just thirty-one. He dedicated the work to his oldest daughter Bedřiška who had just died at the age of four from scarlet fever, a young girl of great musical abilities with whom Smetana had an especially close relationship. He was devastated. Though he left no specific programmatic description of the trio, its grief-stricken and elegiac character is unmistakable. One of the most powerful works in the literature, it is equally historical. Influenced by Eastern-European folk music with its unbridled passion, spanning rhapsodic forms full of rich thematic variation and a piano style more Liszt than Chopin, Smetana's lone piano trio is a milestone of romanticism. It predates and significantly presages music that would soon come from the likes of Brahms and Dvořák among others.

The first movement is a towering force of anguish and despair beginning with broad, devastating gestures that continue to tighten and accelerate until the final bars of near mania. The sonata principle contrasts this trajectory with something completely different: a lyrical, tender second theme rising gracefully between vicious onslaughts. Smetana described this as one of his daughter's favorite melodies. Both the dark and light subjects significantly transform throughout the movement as the emotional tenor of the music rises to panic on one hand, shining triumph on the other. This alternation between dark and light – death and daughter - vividly continues throughout all three movements in a convincing expression of inconsolable grief illuminated "within" by nostalgia, the terror of tragedy juxtaposed with the gracious nobility of what it destroyed.

The middle movement is troubled rather than devastated. A worried scherzo unusually provides two different trios, each offsetting the surrounding gloom in its own way. The first offers a sighing, swaying melody of tender expression, the second, a march that is by turns luminous, then regal, then epic in an outpouring of bright light, again, the full heartbreaking majesty of what was but is no longer.

The finale is a swift, dashing rondo with at least three powerful evocations of Smetana's apparent music program. The opening "gallop" undeniably evokes Schubert's famous song "The Erlking" where a father and his son race on horseback, desperately fleeing death as it reaches for the child. Between episodes of frantic motion, there are soft lyrical interludes, the sigh of a child and the gentle nobility of Smetana's daughter's theme from the first movement. But the end is nigh, the contest fatal. The gallop halts, confronted by the stark, timeless dread of a funeral march, the unavoidable musical teleology of the entire trio. The music is not yet over. Smetana seems determined to end on a higher plane, the nature of which is difficult to describe: a flourish for purely musical reasons, or maybe a final affirmation of what survives, what death could not ultimately take away.

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OUR NEXT CMSU CONCERT

ESCHER STRING QUARTET

Sunday, 23 February 2025 at 2:30 PM

performing works by

Samuel Barber, Florence Price and Antonin Dvořák

UPCOMING EVENTS

CLINTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF THE MOHAWK VALLEY

Solo Piano Recital to Benefit Clinton Symphony Orchestra of the Mohawk Valley

Elyane Laussade, New Zealand Concert Pianist

Saturday, February 15, 2025 at 3:00 PM

Zion Episcopal Church, 140 West Liberty Street, Rome NY

Admission: Benefit free will offering

For more information see website WWW.CLINTONSYMPHONYORCHESTRA.ORG

THE HORSZOWSKI TRIO

Giving performances that are “lithe, persuasive” (The New York Times), “eloquent and enthralling” (The Boston Globe), and described as “the most compelling American group to come on the scene” (The New Yorker), the Horszowski Trio has quickly become a vital force in the international chamber music world.

The Trio takes its inspiration from the musicianship, integrity, and humanity of the pre-eminent pianist Mieczysław Horszowski (1892–1993); the ensemble’s pianist, Rieko Aizawa, was Horszowski’s last pupil at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. Described as “power players” by the Los Angeles Times, the Horszowski Trio’s repertoire includes works by many of the composers with whom Mr. Horszowski had personal interaction, including Gabriel Fauré, Enrique Granados, Bohuslav Martinů, Maurice Ravel, Camille Saint-Saëns and Heitor Villa-Lobos. The Horszowski Trio’s debut recording – an album of works by Gabriel Fauré, Camille Saint-Saëns, and Vincent d’Indy on the Bridge label – was released in 2014 and dedicated to the memory of Mieczysław Horszowski.

In addition to their performance cycles of the complete trios of Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms, the Horszowski Trio is a passionate advocate for the music of our time. They have worked with the legendary composers John Harbison, Charles Wuorinen, and Joan Tower, for whom the Trio recorded “For Daniel” in celebration of her 75th birthday. Recent premieres include works by Daron Hagen, Eric Moe, and (through a grant from Chamber Music America) Andreia Pinto-Correia. Other premieres include works by Kenji Bunch, Stewart Goodyear, Scott Lindroth and Louis Karchin, in addition to their “Phantasiestücke Project” which commemorates their 10th anniversary with three new works by Derek Bermel, Paul Chihara and David Fulmer. The Trio’s violinist Jesse Mills, a two-time Grammy nominee who is also a composer and arranger, wrote “Painted Shadow” for the ensemble; the work was commissioned by and premiered at Bergemusic in Brooklyn, New York in January 2015.

The Horszowski Trio is based in New York City. It is Ensemble-in-Residence at the Longy School of Music of Bard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and of the Leschetizky Association in New York City.

The Horszowski Trio appears by arrangement with Robert Besen, Director,
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