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PRESENT

**THE YUVAL TRIO**

Jonathan Zak, piano

Uri Pianka, violin

Simca Heled, cello

*Thirty-third Season - Seventh Concert*

# THE YUVAL TRIO

with

Jonathan Zak, piano

Uri Pianka, violin

Simca Heled, cello

Stude Concert Hall      Alice Pratt Brown Hall

Rice University

February 11, 1993      8:00 P.M.

## PROGRAM

### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

(1756-1791)

### PIANO TRIO in G Major, K 564

*Allegro*

*Andante*

*Allegretto*

### ANTON ARENSKY

(1861-1906)

### PIANO TRIO in D Minor, Op. 32

*Allegro moderato*

*Scherzo: Allegro*

*Elegia: Adagio*

*Finale: Allegro non troppo*

## INTERMISSION

### LUDWIG von BEETHOVEN

(1770-1827)

### PIANO TRIO, in B-flat Major, Op. 97

"Archduke"

*Allegro moderato*

*Scherzo*

*Andante cantabile ma pero con moto*

*Allegro moderato*

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## PROGRAM NOTES

### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

(1756-1791)

Piano Trio in G Major, K 564

*I. Allegro III. Allegretto*  
*II. Andante (tema con 6 variazioni)*

Mozart's own "Catalogue of all my works" contains five *Terzette*, as he called piano trios; the first, K. 496 is entered under the date 8th July 1786, the last, K. 564, on 27th October 1788, in addition there is a forerunner of the piano trio in Mozart's oeuvre, the "Divertimento a 3" K. 254, also scored for piano, violin and cello, which was written in Salzburg in August 1776. Compared with other classical forms such as the symphony, the piano concerto and the string quartet, and indeed with the piano and the violin sonatas, the piano trio genre thus makes its appearance conspicuously late on the Mozartian horizon. A sideways glance at Haydn shows that this was not an isolated case. In Haydn's oeuvre, too, the piano trio only appears with any prominence after 1784. Thus there is a certain justification for the claim that the piano trio was the last genre to gain emancipation in Viennese Classicism. This is surprising when we look back at the popular, indeed ubiquitous practice of the trio sonata in Baroque tradition - and it becomes even more surprising if we consider that the trios written by Haydn, Mozart and the young Beethoven were not intended for the concert hall, but for domestic performance by amateur music-lovers.

Mozart's last contribution to the genre, the trio in G major, K 564, which he briefed in his catalogue of works under 27th October 1788, is generally regarded as a "poor cousin" to the others. The sparing musical resources here caused musicologists to believe for many years that K. 564 was a piano sonata arranged for piano trio. In its refined and artistic simplicity, the work is reminiscent in places of the "Sonata facile" for piano, K. 545. There are also further fragments pointing to Mozart's study of the trio form. Abbe Maximilian Stadler combined three single fragments that did not originally belong together and published them as the Trio K. 442. The witty and vital last movement in particular, probably written in 1790/91, which Mozart left in draft form as far as the reprise, contains reminiscences of "Cosi fan tutte" and makes us regret that Mozart did not return to the piano trio form after 1788.

Program Notes by Uwe Schweikert  
Translation: Clive Williams

### ANTON ARENSKY

(1861-1906)

Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 32

*I. Allegro moderato III. Elegia: Adagio*  
*II. Scherzo: Allegro IV. Finale: Allegro*  
*non troppo*

Arensky is not generally considered an important figure in the history of music. Yet his First Piano Trio is among the more popular and appealing works in the chamber music repertoire. Little is known about the circumstances of its composition beyond the fact that he wrote it in 1894 and dedicated it to the memory of Karl Davidoff (1838-1889), first cellist of the Saint Petersburg Opera and later director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory.

Over a murmuring triplet figure in the piano, the violin sings a flowing first theme that seems to have drawn its inspiration from Tchaikovsky. After an agitated transition, the cello is entrusted with the somewhat more vocal second theme. The tempo picks up for the forceful, vigorous concluding theme of the exposition. The following, richly Romantic development section is mostly concerned with the opening theme. The recapitulation brings back all three themes, little changed from the exposition. A slow, quiet coda, really an augmentation of the principal theme, fades out at the end.

The Scherzo pits a florid, virtuosic piano part against extremely spare writing for the strings. A folk influence can be heard in the slightly slower middle section, a lilting waltz with a Slavonic cast. Here the piano is relegated to the role of accompanist as the strings weave their strands of sound into the appealing waltz melody. The movement is rounded off with a slightly expanded return of the Scherzo.

The center of gravity of the entire trio is the *Elegia*, the movement in which Arensky specifically pays homage to Davidoff. Both strings are muted, giving them an attractive, veiled dark tone color. The tempo increases, and the mood brightens for the middle part of the movement. For the reprise of the opening, the original tempo resumes.

Lively and rhythmic, the *Finale* explodes in a burst of sound. The quieter second theme seems to be a transformation of the *Elegia*'s main theme. Toward the end, the tempo slows for a reminder of the first movement theme, before concluding with a fast, brilliant coda.

Program Notes by Melvin Berger

## LUDWIG von BEETHOVEN

(1770-1827)

### PIANO TRIO in B-Flat Major, Op.97, "Archduke"

- I. Allegro moderato III. Andante cantabile,  
II. Scherzo ma pero con moto  
IV. Allegro moderato

The nickname, "Archduke", came from Beethoven's dedication of the work to Archduke Rudolph, younger brother of Emperor Leopold II, and a longtime student and patron of Beethoven. The work was composed in three weeks, from March 3 to 26, 1811, and the premiere was given at a charity concert held at Vienna's Hotel Zum Romischen Kaiser on April 11, 1814, with Beethoven playing the piano, Ignaz Schuppanzigh, violin, and Joseph Linke, cello. The performance was also notable because, due to his worsening deafness, it was the last time Beethoven played in public. Composer Ludwig Spohr described the performance: "In forte passages the poor deaf man pounded on the keys until the strings jangled, and in piano he played so softly that whole groups of notes were omitted."

The spacious opening theme of the first movement emerges quiet, warm, and smooth-flowing. It is followed by some subsidiary material that Beethoven introduces in a leisurely fashion before moving on to the second theme, which is staccato in articulation and made up of pairs of descending phrases. Although the thematic material is comparatively simple and straightforward, and the subsequent working out is in traditional sonata form, Beethoven is able to achieve a movement of great nobility of spirit and moving expressivity.

Instead of a conventional slow second movement, the lively and disarmingly naive Scherzo comes next. Bearing an unmistakable resemblance to the Scherzo of Beethoven's String Quartet, Op. 59 No. 1, the movement starts with a rhythmic figure played by the cello alone that bounces along in its light humorous way until the cello introduces the sinuous mysterious chromatic line of the trio. Before too long, though, Beethoven brings in the second theme of the trio, a gay, dancing melody that falls somewhere between a sturdy peasant Landler and a classical ballet melody. Both sections are repeated, creating an overall form of A (scherzo)-B (trio)-A-B-A-coda.

Beethoven bases the *Andante cantabile* on a simple but exquisite, hymnlike theme that he states at the beginning and then subjects to five interconnected variations. The variations follow the eighteenth-century model, essentially transforming the original melody by elaborating on the rhythmic patterns while maintaining the fundamental melodic and harmonic features, to create a movement of ineffable beauty.

The last movement, following the lofty *Andante cantabile* without pause, provides the same

rude shock that observers frequently reported after hearing Beethoven improvise at the keyboard. Apparently, the effect of his music was to slam his fist down on the keys and burst into raucous laughter, as though embarrassed by the spiritual experience they had just shared. Likewise, the energetic, dancelike last movement imprudently intrudes on the serene, otherworldly atmosphere Beethoven had created in the previous movement. But, once having broken the spell, the movement fairly bubbles along with great wit and humor, to reach a brilliant conclusion.

Program Notes by Melvin Berger

## BIOGRAPHY

### THE YUVAL TRIO

Uri Planka, violin  
Simca Heled, cello  
Jonathan Zak, piano

Having just celebrated their 20th anniversary, the Yuval Trio is unique in that it still consists of its founding members. It was established in 1969 in Israel, and first toured North America in 1971. This great success was followed by annual tours of Europe and Latin America, as well as the United States and Canada. In the summer of 1987 the Yuval Trio made its first Australian tour to great critical and public acclaim. As "Laureate of the European Festival Association", they perform regularly at several European festivals including those in Ascona, Flanders, Montreaux, Paris, Strassburg, Stresa, Vienna, and Israel. In addition to their recitals, they perform with such orchestras as the Israel Philharmonic, the Baltimore Symphony, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Brazilian Symphonic Orchestra, the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, the Bamberg Symphony, the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra, and the Mozarteum Salzburg Symphony among many others. They have performed under the batons of such celebrated conductors as Inbal, Blomstedt, Levi, and Commissiona. Mr. Planka is presently concertmaster of the Houston Symphony Orchestra.

The Yuval Trio has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon and CBS Masterworks. In fact their recording of Dvorak's "Dumky" Trio and the Smetana Trio was chosen as "Record of the Month" by the French magazine "Harmonie." Of their recording of Dvorak's *Trio in F Minor, Op. 65* for Deutsche Grammophon, *Stereo Review* said "The unanimity of approach and spontaneous-seeming mesh in the playing of (the Yuval Trio) suggest . . . that they must be individually and collectively in love with this magnificent work. Rarer still, theirs is a love accompanied by the deepest understanding." Future CD recordings on the Relief label include works by Saint-Saens, Chajes, Pfitzner, Bruch, Arensky, Daniel Shalit and Dvorak.