TWENTY-THIRD SEASON
FOURTH CONCERT

Houston Friends of Music, Inc.
and
Shepherd School of Music

PRESENT THE

Rogeri Trio

Richard Young - violin
Barbara Weintraub - piano
Carter Brey - cello

Hamman Hall
Thursday, February 3, 1983
8:00 P.M.

Rice University
PROGRAM

TRIO in C MAJOR, K548. ......................... MOZART

   Allegro
   Andante Cantabile
   Finale Allegro

TRIO (1904). .................................... IVES

   Andante moderato
   Tsiaj (Presto)
   Moderato con moto

INTERMISSION

TRIO NO. 7 in B FLAT MAJOR, OPUS 97. . . . . BEETHOVEN
("Archduke")

   Allegro moderato
   Scherzo: Allegro
   Andante cantabile ma pero con moto
   Allegro moderato - Presto

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HOUSTON FRIENDS OF MUSIC TWENTY-THIRD SEASON

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The Rogeri Trio

Formed in 1976, the Rogeri Trio has met with extraordinary critical and public acclaim at campuses and in major cities throughout the United States. Following the Trio's New York debut, Allen Hughes wrote in The New York Times: "The Rogeri Trio demonstrated its technical fluency, musicality and liveliness. The big sonorities came out full and rich ... the extraordinary ethereal beauty was projected exquisitely." Based in New York City, the Trio was in residence at Yale University where it presented, with the Tokyo Quartet, the complete Brahms chamber music cycle. More recently it has been Trio-in-Residence at Oberlin Conservatory.

PROGRAM NOTES

THE PIANO TRIO. The best of many composers can be found in their chamber music, and the literature of the Piano Trio - a smaller and lesser known member of the chamber music family - has many outstanding gems. The presence of the piano, with its percussive and chord sounds, adds a certain luster, contrast, vigor, and "beat" not found in purely string groups. The sound of this combination, when balanced in execution, has attracted the most gifted composers as well as generations of professional and amateur musicians and music lovers who can share the potential for intimacy and variety inherent in this genre.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791) has become his own severest critic. Alfred Einstein has said, "The yardstick of perfection against which we measure Mozart's works was put into our hands by Mozart himself." The Piano Trio No. 4, K.548 was composed in July, 1788, in the company of three of the most famous symphonies ever composed. The E flat major symphony preceded it and the G minor and C major ("Jupiter") symphonies followed it within a few weeks. It has become fashionable to comment that the Trio was a breather between these giants. But what a fresh and fragrant breath! The Allegro opens with a unison figure, rapidly followed by two lighthearted melodies which, in the development section, blend with the opening fragment in major and minor form. In the Andante cantabile as in the first movement, a brief initial melody is soon followed by another; they are joined by a singing cello phrase. There seems to be an even division of labor among the three instruments in ultimately stepping forward into the limelight with one of the melodies and stepping back into the shade of the accompaniment. A light, fast-moving Allegro closes the Trio.

CHARLES IVES (1874-1954) composed his modern, individualistic music when most American composers were still trying to reproduce nineteenth-century European sounds. He was so far ahead of his time that when one hears his music without knowing the composer, one might guess it to be Bartok, Stravinsky, or Hindemith; working in complete isolation, Ives anticipated their technics and style by many years. But the attentive listener will hear, clothed in this modern mantle, melodies uniquely American, such as "My Old Kentucky Home" or "Star-Spangled Banner." This combination of style (twentieth century) and content ("apple-pie American"), more than anything else, characterizes the music of Charles Ives. Only recently has Ives' contribution been acknowledged by the establishment in American musical circles. Aaron Copland has called him "a genius working in a waste land." Leonard Bernstein was more extreme: "We have discovered our Mark Twain, Emerson, and Lincoln, all rolled into one."

The Piano Trio is typical of Ives' work. We can only speculate about how this piece was regarded by the musical public when it was composed in 1904. The first movement has no dynamic or phrasing notations. (These were left to the discretion of the performer.) A duet between the cello and piano in treble clef is followed by a duet between the violin, playing mostly double stops,
and the piano in bass clef. The movement has a stately mood, heightened in the third section in which both duets combine to produce a big sound.

Tsiaj may sound foreign, but a footnote in the manuscript explains that it signifies, “This scherzo is a joke.” Most of the melodies are tunes that are, or once were, well-known. “Marching Through Georgia” intersects with fragments of “Jingle Bells,” followed abruptly by “My Old Kentucky Home” on the piano. One reviewer states that the brief cadenza near the end represents sunrise, which brings the merriment to an end.

What can we think of such a movement? If we see it as belonging to the tradition of nationalistic musical idioms, like the compositions of Dvorak, Tchaikovsky, and Bartok, we are probably close to the composer’s intent.

The last movement has similar complexities of rhythm and tonality. There are two basic themes, one hymnlike, the other dissonant and irregular. The development of the themes proceeds not in a nineteenth-century manner, but through permutations that the modern listener finds easier to relate to than did the early twentieth-century listener. Out of the dissonance, broken chords, and unaccustomed rhythms, quietly appears “Rock of Ages” in a novel and powerful setting.

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)** concluded his Piano Trio No. 7, Op. 97, in 1811. It was first performed on April 14, 1814, with Beethoven playing the piano part. He was already so deaf in 1809 that Spohr has given a pathetic account of a rehearsal of the D Major Trio in which Beethoven was not aware of the piano’s being out of tune or the effect his noisy banging was having on the group assembled. The archduke to whom this and several other works was dedicated was the Archduke Rudolph, brother of the Emperor of Austria, and an energetic amateur musician. This Trio is the best Beethoven composed and perhaps the most famous one in the musical literature. The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, opens with a theme as simple as a nursery rhyme. Very little more thematic material is needed, for Beethoven’s magic develops it in many pleasant ways and finally ends the movement on a fragment of original theme. The *Scherzo* begins with a bouncing melody in the strings, soon followed by the piano. Following two contrasting melodies in the Trio section, and a restatement of the original theme, the movement speeds to an end. The *Andante cantabile* has an interesting sustained theme with variations which decorate it. The last variation has a particularly warm coda. The final movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins with no break. It is a fast-moving rondo with brusque but lighthearted rhythmic passages, especially for the piano. A fast coda brings this great Trio to a brilliant end.

*Program Notes by JACK B. MAZOW*
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