

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed. Please be sure that cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are turned off.

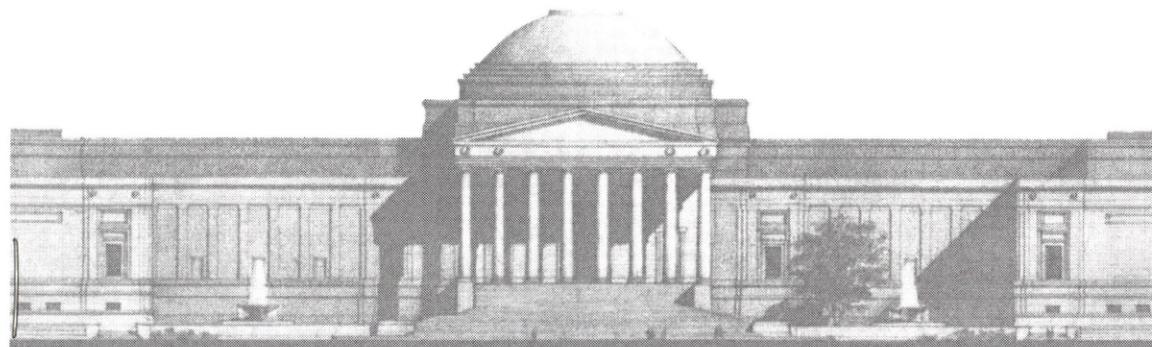
Please note that late entry or reentry of the West Building after 6:30 pm is not permitted.

For the convenience of concertgoers, the Garden Café remains open for light refreshments until 6:00 pm on Sundays.

Music Department
National Gallery of Art
Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC

www.nga.gov

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The Seventy-first Season of
The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lamot Belin
Concerts

National Gallery of Art
2,927th Concert

Vienna Piano Trio
Bogdon Božović, violin
Matthias Gredler, cello
Stefan Mendl, piano

March 3, 2013
Sunday, 6:30 pm
West Building, West Garden Court

Admission free

Program

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

Piano Trio in C Major, Hob. XV:27 (1795)

Allegro

Andante

Presto

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Piano Trio in E-flat Major, op. 70, no. 2 (1808)

Poco sostenuto; allegro ma non troppo

Allegretto

Allegretto ma non troppo

Finale: Allegro

INTERMISSION

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921)

Piano Trio no. 2 in E Minor, op. 92 (1892)

Allegro non troppo

Allegretto

Andante con moto

Grazioso—poco allegro

Allegro

The Musicians

Described by the *Washington Post* as “one of the world’s leading ensembles of violin, cello, and piano,” the Vienna Piano Trio has received praise for its silken, homogenous sound and its “telepathic gifts of communication” (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*). As a protégé ensemble of the Beaux Arts Trio, the Haydn Trio Wien, and the Trio di Trieste, the Vienna Piano Trio performed regularly in Vienna in the Jeunesse series at the Wiener Musikverein. In 1993 the group was selected by Isaac Stern for his Public Chamber Music Workshop at Carnegie Hall. Since the 2006–2007 season, the trio has been the ensemble-in-residence at Vienna’s Konzerthaus, playing regularly in its Mozartsaal series. Invitations for honorary residencies have also come from London’s Wigmore Hall and the BBC.

Frequent guests at international music festivals, the ensemble has appeared at the Aix-en-Provence, Brighton, Carinthischer Sommer, Casals, Wiener Festwochen, Flanders, Kuhmo, Mozartwoche Salzburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and Schubertiade Schwarzenberg festivals. North American chamber music festivals that have featured the trio include Domaine Forget, Lanaudière, Ottawa, Quebec City, Toronto, and Woodstock.

The broadcast of the ensemble’s 2004 concert at the National Gallery of Art was enthusiastically received, and led to subsequent live broadcast performances on National Public Radio, WNYC New York, and WGBH Boston. Its recordings for Nimbus have won many awards, including *Classic CD*’s “Top of the Class” (1999) and *The London Times*’ Record of the Year (2001). The Vienna Piano Trio appears at the National Gallery by arrangement with Shupp Artists Management, www.shuppartists.com.

Program Notes

Joseph Haydn composed more than forty trios for keyboard, violin, and cello during his prolific career, ranging from early trios in the late baroque style to extended works in the high classical style. His early trios appear to have been intended for the harpsichord, and the keyboard parts evolved as the fortepiano became the standard keyboard instrument. The *Piano Trio in C Major* comes from a series of fifteen late piano trios composed while Haydn was in London in the 1790s. Unlike Mozart, whose late trios granted unprecedented independence to the violin and cello, Haydn continued to feature the piano as the primary virtuoso instrument within the trio ensemble, as indicated by the printed subtitle of this trio—“Sonata for Pianoforte with Accompaniment for the Violin and Violoncello.”

Haydn’s wit and creativity are on full display throughout the trio. With its catchy themes and brilliant passagework, the first movement presents an arresting exposition, followed by a development that exhibits adventurous contrapuntal writing. The second movement spins a gorgeous A major melody into a tumultuous A minor section. During the restatement of the A major theme, the piano writing becomes more independent, as Haydn incorporates cadenza-like passages for that instrument. The third movement, a lively synthesis of rondo and sonata-allegro form, typifies Haydn’s tendency to conclude pieces playfully and joyfully.

Ludwig van Beethoven’s three trios, op. 70, date from the same year as his fifth and sixth symphonies (1808). He simultaneously began to introduce greater harmonic freedom and formal variation into his large-scale works and more lyricism to his chamber works. A world-class pianist, Beethoven incorporated virtuoso keyboard passages into his trios, but seldom relegated the violin and cello to accompanying roles.

The first movement of Beethoven’s *Piano Trio in E-flat Major*, op. 70, no. 2 begins with a slow introduction leading into an allegro in 6/8 time. Beethoven deliberately misleads the innocent audience member, who might be expecting a standard sonata form movement—the recapitulation begins conspicuously in the wrong key before returning to E-flat major, and he intersperses

a reprise of the slow introduction before revisiting the allegro for the coda. The second movement, a set of variations marked *allegretto*, is an intermezzo, as opposed to the “slow movement” one might expect from a typical classical-era work. The third movement (*allegretto non troppo*), a scherzo, features a repeated trio, a practice that became commonplace for Beethoven beginning in his middle period. In the energetic finale, the second theme group relates to the home key by thirds rather than fifths—a progressive technique in 1808.

The French tradition of romantic chamber music originated in 1841 with César Franck’s op. 1, titled *Trois Trios concertants*. Camille Saint-Saëns followed Franck’s lead with a much more prolific output of chamber music. The latter composer’s long career included the composition of two piano trios—op. 18 in 1869 and op. 92 in 1892. Like Haydn and Beethoven, Saint-Saëns had a penchant for writing technically demanding, sometimes dazzling music for the piano, even when it is part of a chamber ensemble.

The *Trio no. 2 in E Minor* begins with wandering piano chords behind a legato string melody, which constitutes the first theme. The second theme is a call-and-response between the piano and the strings. The 5/8 meter in the second movement is a curious choice for Saint-Saëns, who is remembered in the pantheon of composers as a conservative, but was, in fact, known to innovate. This movement, marked *Allegretto*, shares the formal structure of the Beethoven scherzo heard before the intermission—a scherzo and two trios. The third movement develops a lyrical string melody over a syncopated piano accompaniment, and the fourth is another scherzo-like movement in 3/8 time. The finale begins with whole notes, first in unison and then as a dominant chord, belying the spirited rhythmic energy that the movement has in store. The first theme returns frequently throughout this rondo-form movement, which presents a wide range of stylistic variation, including a fugue and a brilliant coda that once more brings back the 3/8 meter.

Program notes by Michael Jacko, music program specialist, National Gallery of Art

Concerts in March 2013 at the National Gallery of Art

Hermitage Cats Save the Day

Music by Chris Brubeck

March 10, 2013

Sunday, 6:30 pm

East Building Auditorium



Inscape Chamber Orchestra

Richard Scerbo, conductor

Music by Debussy, Delage,
Hindemith, and Ravel

March 17, 2013

Sunday, 6:30 pm

West Building, West Garden Court



Paul Posnak, pianist

Music by Gershwin
and other composers

March 20, 2013

Wednesday, 12:10 pm

East Building Auditorium