

Upcoming Events of the Seventy-Fifth Season of The William Nelson Cromwell and F. Lammot Belin Concerts

Tomas Kaco, piano

Music by Bach, Chopin, and Paganini

Presented as part of the European Month of Culture

May 17, 12:10

West Building, East Garden Court

United States Marine Chamber Orchestra
Program in honor of *America Collects*

Eighteenth-Century French Painting

May 21, 2:00

West Building, East Garden Court

Poulenc Trio

Music by Françaix, Saint-Saëns, Rossini,
Viet Cuong, Schnittke, and Shostakovich

May 21, 4:00

East Building Auditorium

West Garden Trio

Piano trios by Kenji Bunch, Charles Ives,
and Paul Schoenfield

May 31, 12:10

West Building, East Garden Court

Eclipse Chamber Orchestra

Music by Piazzolla and Vivaldi

June 4, 4:00

East Building Auditorium

General Information

Admission to the National Gallery of Art and all of its programs is free of charge, except as noted.

The use of cameras or recording equipment during the performance is not allowed.

Please be sure that all portable electronic devices are turned off.

Concerts are made possible in part through the generosity of donors to the National Gallery of Art through The Circle. Reserved seating is available in recognition of their support. Please contact the development office at (202) 842-6450 or circle@nga.gov for more information.

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Cover Moritz von Schwind, *Architectural Details for a Wall Decoration with Empress Maria Theresia Embracing the Young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* (detail), c. 1864, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund

75TH SEASON OF CONCERTS

MAY 14, 2017 • NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART



PROGRAM

3:30 • West Building, East Garden Court

Boreal Trio

Uriel Vanchestein, clarinet

Juan-Miguel Hernandez, viola

Carlos Avila, piano*

*This concert is sponsored by The Gottesman Fund
in memory of Milton M. Gottesman.*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano in E-flat Major, K. 498, "Kegelstatt"

Andante

Menuetto

Allegretto

Uriel Vanchestein (b. 1984)

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano

Prélude

Intermezzo

Lamento

Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Intermission

Max Bruch (1835 – 1880)

Selections from *Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*, op. 83

No. 4, Allegro agitato

No. 6, Nachtgesang: Andante con moto

No. 7, Allegro vivace, ma non troppo

Jean Françaix (1912 – 1997)

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano

Preludio: Largo

Allegrissimo

Scherzando

Largo

Presto

*Pianist Carlos Avila will stand in for Wonny Song in today's program.

The Musicians

Boreal Trio

The Boreal Trio comprises three international competition laureates passionately dedicated to the art of chamber music. Clarinetist Uriel Vanchestein, violist Juan-Miguel Hernandez, and pianist Wonny Song — soloists with national and international reputations — unite, through this unusual and compelling formation of instruments, to bring their audiences performances of the highest caliber. They have respectively won top prizes at the Geneva International Competition, the Brahms International Competition, and the World Piano Competition and have been lauded by critics as "versatile, intelligent, and deeply musical" (*Washington Post*) and "tender, lyrical, loaded with personality" (*Atlanta Constitution*).

As soloists they have been invited to perform with orchestras such as the Montreal, Atlanta, and Toronto Symphonies, the Geneva and I Musici of Montreal Chamber Orchestras, and many other orchestras worldwide. The trio's recordings as soloists and as collaborators have been acclaimed, earning them awards such as Hernandez's Grammy Award-winning collaboration as part of the Harlem Quartet with Chick Corea and Gary Burton on the *Hot House* album and Song's album *Pictures of an Exhibition*, reaching the Top 20 "Album of the Year" with the *Gazette*.

In this ever-changing world, the trio has a strong commitment to educate and engage new audiences globally. They have already reached young musicians and various communities through art convoys in South Africa and Venezuela, various music festivals in South America and Asia, and outreach projects in Europe and North America. This commitment has also led Hernandez to initiate a large-scale project in which the Musical Heights Foundation, a nonprofit in-the-making, would bring continual high-level music teaching to developing countries. As associate director and director of artists-in-residence of Lambda School of Music and Fine Arts, Song frequently gives master classes and workshops to inspire young pianists through innovative pedagogical approaches.

The Boreal Trio has plans to further the already exquisite repertoire for clarinet, viola, and piano by arranging and commissioning new works of different genres, including a new piece for the past 2014 – 2015 season by Uriel Vanchestein who is also an active composer, having received commissions from the New York Classical Players and the New York Woodwind Quintet.

Vanchestein holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School where he studied clarinet with Charles Neidich and conducting with Maestro Derrick Inouye. Hernandez received his bachelor's from the Colburn Conservatory, studying with Paul Coletti. He has a graduate diploma in string quartet performance from the New England Conservatory, studying with Kim Kashkashian and Paul Katz. Song was awarded a full scholarship to the Curtis Institute of Music in 1994 and subsequently completed his doctoral studies in 2004. His mentors include Anton Kuerti, Marc Durand, Lydia Artymiw, and Leon Fleisher.

Carlos Avila

Hailed for his “beautiful command of tone and mood . . . and unruffleable savoir-faire” (*San Francisco Chronicle*), Carlos Avila is one of the most in-demand pianists on the classical music scene. He began his professional career in 2001 when he substituted for an ailing Stewart Goodyear to play the Rachmaninoff First Piano Concerto with the California Symphony. Since then, Avila has been a guest at several prestigious venues and festivals, including Schleswig-Holstein, Tanglewood, Aspen, Banff, Atlantic Music Festival, and Carnegie Hall. He shares an almost twenty-year partnership with acclaimed violinist Jay Oh, with whom he has given over eighty recitals across Asia and the United States. A dedicated supporter of community outreach, he actively promotes the Doublestop Foundation and was awarded Honorary Ambassadorship of the city of Chuncheon, South Korea, for his chamber music initiative. A proud Filipino-American, Avila is a graduate of the Juilliard School where he studied with Jerome Lowenthal and did prior studies at Yale with Peter Frankl and Claude Frank. He is on the Collaborative Piano Faculty at the Heifetz Institute.

Program Notes

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano in E-flat Major, K. 498, “Kegelstatt”

In 1786, faced with dwindling performance opportunities, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart turned to writing chamber music, which enjoyed enormous popularity in Vienna. During the second half of the year, he composed prolifically in a variety of chamber music genres. Among the works that he produced was the Trio in E-flat Major, K. 498, “Kegelstatt.” He dedicated it to Franziska von Jacquin, who was one of his pupils and the sister of his close friend Gottfried van Swieten. Mozart was a frequent visitor to the Jacquin residence, which was the site of weekly gatherings of family and friends seeking diversion in “discussions, games, and music-making.” The first performance of the new Trio took place at one of their Wednesday afternoon house concerts, with Franziska playing the piano, Mozart the viola, and Anton Stadler the clarinet. The rumor that the piece was composed during an afternoon game of skittles — hence the nickname “Kegelstatt” (or playground for skittles, an old European variety of bowling) — remains uncorroborated.

Mozart’s enthusiasm for the clarinet dated back to 1764, when he first heard the instrument in London. His friendship with the Viennese virtuoso Anton Stadler, whom he met in 1783, provided additional impetus for him to write for the clarinet. The publisher Artaria, recognizing that such a new instrument was unlikely to possess many devotees, designated Mozart’s composition as a “Trio for Harpsichord or Fortepiano with Violin and Viola accompaniment,” indicating that a clarinet might perform the violin part.

The “Kegelstatt” Trio is cast in three movements. The opening Andante, in sonata form, favors the clarinet and piano in the presentation and development of the two main themes, although the viola does play the second theme in the recapitulation. The second movement is a robust minuet. In the contrasting trio section, in minor mode, the viola becomes more active with an agitated triplet accompaniment figuration. The main theme of the trio returns in the coda to the closing minuet. The finale, a seven-part rondo, exhibits the influence of the concerto style with virtuosic writing for all three instruments and equal distribution of thematic material.

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano

In four brief, contrasting movements, Uriel Vanchestein’s Trio adopts an atonal language, sometimes venturing into modality, often reclaiming the neoclassical influence of composers such as Poulenc, Prokofiev, or Françaix. The Prélude opens with a resolute repetition of the note G by the piano. Over this ostinato, the clarinet and viola play convoluted triplet figures whose displaced accents create a complex meter. The music intensifies, spirals towards a climax, and gradually fades, yet the tensions created by this movement are not released. In an ABA form, the Intermezzo has a dance-like character, retaining a connection with the previous Prélude through the repeated G in the viola. A short passage of imitation between the three instruments is introduced in the binary (2/4) central section, before the return to the ternary (5/8) movement of the A section.

The mournful Lamento opens with a viola and clarinet duet. This movement is free in character due to the flexible rubato of solo cadenzas for each instrument. In the long expressive and chromatic phrases of the central passage, we hear the influence of Bruckner, a significant composer for Uriel Vanchestein. The work concludes with a passionate Scherzo, in which the clarinet and viola hold a lively conversation of short sixteenth-note motifs, punctuated by crisp accents in the piano. The central trio is calm and lyrical, a brief respite before the return of the quasi-obsessional movement of the Scherzo. *Program notes by Florence Leysieux, translated by Sheila Hannigan*

Selections from Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, op. 83

Max Bruch, widely known and respected in his day as a composer, conductor, and teacher, received his earliest music instruction from his mother, a noted singer and pianist. He began composing at eleven, and by fourteen had produced a symphony and a string quartet, the latter garnering a prize that allowed him to study with Karl Reinecke and Ferdinand Hiller in Cologne. His opera *Die Loreley* (1862) and the choral work *Frithjof* (1864) brought him his first public acclaim.

Bruch composed his *Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*, op. 83, in 1909, in his seventieth year for his son Max Felix, a talented clarinetist who also inspired Bruch to compose a Double Concerto (op. 88) for clarinet and viola two years later. When the younger Bruch played the works in Cologne and Hamburg, Fritz Steinbach reported favorably on the event to the composer, comparing Max Felix's ability with that of Richard Mühlfeld, the clarinetist who had inspired two sonatas, a quintet, and a trio from Johannes Brahms two decades before. This was indeed sweet praise to Bruch, since Steinbach had been music director at Meiningen before moving to Cologne and knew Mühlfeld's playing intimately.

Like other late works by Brahms for clarinet, the *Eight Pieces* favor rich, mellow instrumental hues in the alto range of the instrument and an autumnal maturity of expression, deeply felt but purged of excess. In Bruch's opus 83, the clarinet and viola are evenly matched, singing together in duet or conversing in dialogue, while the piano serves as an accompanimental partner. Bruch intended that the *Eight Pieces* be regarded as a set of independent miniatures of various styles rather than as an integrated cycle and advised against playing all of them together in concert (today's selections are numbers 4, 6, and 7).

Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano

Jean Françaix, unlike his contemporaries, avoided the trends of atonality and the rejection of traditional form: he used wit, color, and a supple lightness in order to represent musical "pleasure." A virtuoso pianist and skilled orchestrator, Françaix had a particular interest in wind instruments, as was characteristic of many great French composers.

A relatively recent work, the Trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano was written in celebration of the 300th birthday of the clarinet and based on the instrumentation of Mozart's classic "Kegelstatt" Trio. Françaix's music evokes the popular sounds of modernism in the early twentieth century with syncopated rhythms, musical theater, excitement, and occasional nostalgia. What makes this work unmistakably "chamber music," besides the obvious nature of the ensemble, is the exquisite detail and complexity of the composition, the virtuosic demands placed on the performers, and the expert use of the idiomatic, natural qualities of highly evolved classical instruments.

The piece starts with a very simple melody played on the clarinet accompanied by the viola. The second and third movements are very characteristic of Françaix and include numerous dialogues, "arguments," and interchanges among the instruments. A contrasting Largo movement is much more relaxed, and here the composer plays more with the harmony changes rather than melodies. The joyous Presto brings the listener back to Françaix's virtuosic and colorful writing by recapping various motifs from the previous movements.