

TRIO FLAMECREST

SECU Auditorium – North Carolina Museum of Art
Sunday, January 26, 2025

Jean Huang, violin | Carol Ou, violin | Amy Galluzzo, viola

String Trio in G major, Op. 9, No. 1

Ludwig van Beethoven

- I. Adagio - Allegro con brio
- II. Adagio ma non tanto e cantabile
- III. Scherzo - Allegro
- IV. Presto

Suite for String Trio

Emmy Frensel Wegener

- I. Inleiding. Moderato Chiara
- II. Fugato. Rigoroso
- III. Scherzo. Leggiero e presto
- IV. Andante. Dolce
- V. Finale. Vivace. Rigoroso possibile

From String Trio in B-flat major, D. 471

Franz Schubert

- II. Andante sostenuto (Incomplete)

Lekh (Hebrew: Go)

Jonathan Leshnoff

Intermission – Complimentary airline snacks in the lobby

Serenade in C major, Op. 10

Ernö (Ernst von) Dohnányi

- I. Marcia (Allegro)
- II. Romanza (Adagio non troppo)
- III. Scherzo (Vivace)
- IV. Tema con variazioni (Andante con moto)
- V. Rondo (Allegro vivace)



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String Trio in G major, Op. 9, No. 1

Ludwig van Beethoven
1770-1827

The eighteenth century was an era of experimentation with musical genres, giving rise to the classical symphony, the string quartet and the piano trio. The piano quartet, various chamber combinations for wind instruments, etc. were tried out but did not fare as well. Johann Sebastian Bach's sons, the Stamitz family, and especially Franz Joseph Haydn were among the best known of these experimenters.

A genre that was repeatedly tried but failed to get much of a foothold was the string trio. By the fifteenth century, harmony was conceived in four parts (the triad, with a doubling of the tonic, or "home key"). In the Baroque period, a basso continuo (keyboard instrument plus a bass instrument, such as the viola da gamba or bassoon) ensured that the harmonic structure in both small and large ensembles was clear and well supported. Boccherini, a mass producer of chamber works, adopted the combination of violin, viola and cello for 18 of his over 50 string trios. With only three instruments and no continuo, however, the problem of balancing the three instruments to produce four-part harmony was difficult, with few composers following Boccherini's lead.

Mozart called his one major venture into the genre "Divertimento." The Divertimento in E-flat, K. 563, is his longest chamber work and a superb example of balancing the three voices. It served as model for Beethoven in his Opus 3 string trio; this trio, as well as the three trios Op. 9 and the String Serenade, Op. 8, were all composed before his first string quartet. Obviously he did not find the form congenial, because he never touched it again.

Beethoven composed the three Op. 9 Trios in 1797-98, dedicating them to a wealthy patron, Count Johann Georg von Browne; The first of them gives a foretaste of Beethoven's future string quartets.

Because of the lack of popularity of the genre, they should not be viewed as somehow belonging to the experimental lower rungs on Beethoven's creative ladder. He had already composed three important piano trios in 1793 that bore distinctive marks of the composer's later complex, often stormy side. By 1795, he was well established in Viennese musical circles, in fact, claiming to have more commissions than he could fulfill. Referring to these early works, Beethoven's brother Carl stated: "These pieces were mostly commissioned by amateurs under the following agreement: he who wants a piece pays a fixed sum for its exclusive possession for a half or a whole year, or longer, and binds himself not to give the manuscript to anybody; after this period the composer is free to do what he wishes with the work."

Suite for String Trio

Emmy Frensel Wegener
1901-1973

Emmy Frensel Wegener was a Dutch violinist, composer and pianist. She studied at the Amsterdam Conservatory, and composed extensively, especially for chamber ensembles. Most of her compositions are pre-1935, when she became partially paralyzed.

Wegener composed the String Trio in 1925, probably for home entertainment purposes. The five very short neo-classical movements are light-hearted in nature, only the Andante fourth movement having a more serious tone.

From String Trio in B-flat major, D. 471 Second Movement: Andante sostenuto (Incomplete)

Franz Schubert
1797-1828

The son of a poor schoolteacher, Franz Schubert was forced by his father in 1814 to enter the teaching profession. He abhorred the job, and in 1817, as soon as he thought that he could make it on his own as a composer, quit.

During those years he developed a circle of musician friends, both amateur and professional for whom he wrote literally hundreds of works. Most of these compositions were *Lieder* and chamber works for their use and enjoyment at home during evenings devoted to his music and fondly called *Schubertiaden*. Among them were two trios for violin, viola and cello. The first, D. 471, was composed in September 1816 but abandoned after the *Allegro* movement and 39 measures of the *Andante*; and the second, D. 581, was composed in 1817.

There is no doubt that the trios were intended for Schubert's family and friends for the home concerts, in which Schubert would have played the viola. Why Schubert never completed the work is unknown, but this was neither the first nor the last piece that the composer abandoned in midstream. As a 19-year-old teacher, Schubert was an unpublished and largely unrecognized genius, and he was insufficiently known for a publisher to bother with. Both trios were not published until 1890, in the *Gesamtausgabe*, the complete edition of his works.

***Lekh* (Hebrew: Go)**

Jonathan Leshnoff
b. 1973

New Jersey-born Jonathan Leshnoff is a graduate of Peabody Conservatory and the University of Maryland. He is currently Professor of Music at Towson University, teaching theory, orchestration and composition; he is composer-in-residence with the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra.

Leshnoff's musical language is lyrical and accessible, bearing a strong resemblance to that of Samuel Barber and the neo-romantics of the mid twentieth century, with an Eastern European Jewish cast. His works have been commissioned by major orchestras and performed by more than 50 orchestras worldwide. His catalog is extensive, including four symphonies and oratorios in addition to numerous concerti, solo, and chamber works.

Lekh, composed in 2016, was written for the Chamber Encounter Ensemble. Impressed with the group's dynamism and gusto and being that they only wanted a short "opener" piece, Leshnoff decided to write something with energy, movement and drive. Through the overriding tone of *Lekh* is one of unrelenting drive, there are two distinct themes: the first is presented by the entire ensemble in unison right at the beginning. After some contrapuntal manipulations to the first theme, the second theme is introduced – and arching, plaintive theme – in the cello. The composition vacillates between these two themes, ending triumphantly with the simultaneous combination of the two.



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Serenade in C major, Op. 10 For Violin, Viola & Cello

Ernö (Ernst von) Dohnányi
1877-1960

Hungarian composer, pianist, conductor and educator Ernő Dohnányi was born in Bratislava, and obtained his formal education in music at the Budapest Academy. He was the first Hungarian of significant talent to do so and his example, as well as his personal intervention, induced Béla Bartók (his friend from early schooldays) to follow in his footsteps. But he was much more conservative than Bartók and retained throughout his life a classical and romantic style. Only rarely did he use Hungarian folk modes in his compositions.

In 1898 Dohnányi's career as pianist started its meteoric rise with a performance of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 in London. At the same time his first mature compositions – the Piano Quintet, Op. 1 and Piano Concerto, Op. 5 – gained a place in the repertoire. For the next ten years he traveled around Europe and America as virtuoso pianist, and was the first among world-famous pianists to perform chamber music regularly. In 1908 he was appointed as professor at the *Musikhochschule* in Berlin

In 1915 Dohnányi settled in Budapest and, according to Bartók, single-handedly provided the musical life in the city, giving 120 concerts annually, covering a vast spectrum of old and new music. He continued to have a major role in Hungary's musical life until forced to abandon his city in 1944. In 1949 he settled in Tallahassee, FL, as pianist and composer-in residence at Florida State University.

In the late 1950s his career as pianist began to flourish again. In 1959 he signed a contract with Columbia Records to record all of Beethoven's piano sonatas. During the trip to New York for the first recording session, he caught a cold and died, only two sonatas finished.

Dohnányi composed the Serenade in C Major in 1902 in London and Vienna. It was premiered two years later in Vienna and quickly became one of his most popular works. Its model was the classical 18th century serenade – three movements framed by a processional and a recessional march for the musicians to enter and depart.

The Serenade opens with a march that is quite lyrical in the middle with gypsy overtones, and would be hard to march to. The *Romanza* second movement in ABA' form, opens with a serene song for the viola; in the middle of the movement the violin and cello take over, and when the opening section returns, it is the violin which has the melody. As befits a classical work, it has to contain a fugue; the scurrying *Scherzo* fulfills this requirement.

The fourth movement is the work's centerpiece, a theme and five variations, which get gradually more complex and solemn. The finale, a sprightly rondo, is similar in character to the opening *Marcia*, but without the rhythm. The opening theme makes a short reappearance towards the end.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



An award-winning cellist, **Carol Ou** is known for her “fiery, marvelous” and “meltingly melodic outpourings” (Boston Globe) and her “wonderfully pure cello tone and incisive technique.” (The Strad) A founding member of Trio Flamecrest, Carol was a member of the Carpe Diem String Quartet and a longtime duo partner of legendary violinist James Buswell. Her solo and chamber music concerts have taken her to prestigious concert venues across the globe, including Carnegie Weill Hall, Jordan Hall, National Gallery of Art, Gardner Museum, National Concert Hall in Kiev, and the National Concert Hall of Taipei. A graduate of Yale, Ms Ou has taught at NEC, MIT, and NYU. She has served as Chair of Strings for NEC's Adult Education and presently

serves as the Chair of Chamber Music at NEC's Preparatory School. Outside of her regular teaching, Carol travels internationally for cello and chamber music master classes on five continents, most recently in Hong Kong, Turkey, and Italy.



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Praised for her “stunning rendition [of *Danses sacrés et profanes*]” (WGBH Boston) and her “incredible speed and energy” (Sarasota Herald Tribune), **Amy Galluzzo** enjoys an active career as both a chamber musician and soloist. Amy has performed at several prestigious summer festivals, including the Tanglewood Music Festival, Chelsea Music Festival, Taos, and Sarasota Music Festival, and has collaborated with artists such as Masuko Ushioda, James Buswell and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. More unusual collaborations include Yihan Chen, pipa, Scott McConnell, steel pan, and Dariush Saghafi, santoor.

Amy maintains a private violin studio in Boston, and teaches through the New England Conservatory Adult Education department. She has given masterclasses and workshops at University of Washington, Carnegie Mellon University, Eastern Arizona College and numerous music programs for students of all ages and has taught at the Bennington Chamber Music Conference since 2015.

Described as "a consummate artist," Taiwanese violinist **Jean Chu Chung Huang**'s active performing career has brought her to concert halls internationally and throughout the United States. Jean started violin at the age of five and came to the United States when she was fifteen. She graduated with honors from Walnut Hill High School of the Arts, while also studying at the NEC Preparatory School from 2005 to 2008.

Maintaining an active professional career, Dr. Huang currently serves as newly appointed concertmaster of the Cape Cod Chamber Orchestra, a member of the Phoenix Orchestra (Boston), and the newest first violinist of CØDA ensemble. Praised for her poised and expressive playing, Jean enjoys playing both standard repertoire and new music. Believing music can provoke the wildest imagination, she often looks for a connection between the composer, the performer, and the audience: Dr. Huang is recognized for her performances in which she combines virtuosic violin playing and commentary that audience members of all experience levels can understand. By offering informative discussion in simpler terms, Jean has been able to reach a wider array of concertgoers.



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