



1941
2021

The Ellen Black Winston Concert Fund presents

THE MARINUS ENSEMBLE

at the North Carolina Museum of Art

Sunday, May 15, 2022

Schumann: *Märchenbilder*, Opus 113

Nicht Schnell (Not Fast)

Lebhaft (Lively)

Rasch (Quick)

Langsam, mit melancholischem Ausdruck (Slow, with Melancholy expression)

Rachel Kuipers Yonan, viola

Kwan Yi, piano

Schubert: Notturmo in E-flat Major

Kobi Malkin, violin

Joseph Kuipers, cello

Kwan Yi, piano

Schumann: Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, Opus 47

I. Sostenuto assai - Allegro ma non troppo

II. Scherzo: Molto vivace

III. Andante cantabile

IV: Finale: Vivace

Kobi Malkin, violin

Rachel Kuipers Yonan, viola

Joseph Kuipers, cello

Kwan Yi, piano



The Ellen Black Winston Concert Fund supports one concert in each of Chamber Music Raleigh's seasons. Mrs. Winston established the fund in 1972 and generously supported it and this organization until her death in 1984. She left a legacy that continues to bring music and education to the capital city.

A social worker, a writer and editor, she also served as U.S. commissioner of welfare in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Read more about her amazing career by scanning the QR code.



Marinus Ensemble

***Märchenbilder* (Fairytale Illustrations), Op. 113**

Robert Schumann
1810-1856

In 1849, with the growth of the Schumann family – a new child every year or two, Clara's concert travels became restricted. Domestic music making with friends from the Dresden Court Orchestra became a musical mainstay in the household. The *Fantasiestücke* for clarinet and piano joined other miniatures for horn and cello with piano also composed that year. Similar works, the first for oboe, soon followed. After the move to Düsseldorf in 1850, Schumann added the *Märchenbilder* for viola and piano. All have the intimate character best suited to home performance.

Schumann's title for this set of miniatures is consistent with his life-long aesthetic of the bond between literature and music, already explored in a school essay when he was 17. As a young man Schumann was extremely well read and at first unsure about whether to follow a career in music or literature. While he eventually chose the former, much of his music is either programmatic or connected in some unexplained way with a poetic idea. Concurrent with his musical output, not surprisingly, his first musical compositions were *Lieder*. His most popular piano composition, *Carnaval*, Op. 9 (1834-5) is fraught with literary, self-referential musical themes and musical/alphabetic code. In addition to his music, Schumann established and edited the first music journal in 1834, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, a vehicle disseminating the musical and literary aesthetic now subsumed under the name "Romanticism."

Although Schumann often composed with specifically stated literary or poetic associations, this was not a requirement. With only the title, *Märchenbilder*, and tempo markings as a guide, listeners and performers must conjure their own literary or visual images.

Adagio in E-flat major, D. 897, "Notturmo"

Franz Schubert
1797-1828

Few composers left such an extensive paper trail of their compositional process as did Schubert. Hundreds of pages of unfinished works, dropped and discarded attempts and probably just forgotten starts have survived.

Among the surviving fragments is the Adagio movement for a piano trio, probably dating from 1827, published by Diabelli in 1846 as Op. 148, and given the title "Notturmo." The general consensus is that it is a discarded slow movement for the Piano Trio in B-flat, or even for another incomplete work. In style, however, it closely resembles the slow movement of the C- major String Quintet (D. 956), for which it also may have served as a sketch.

Schubert's later slow movements are elegiac and at times even tragic. One of the key characteristics of the composer's mature compositions is shifting between major and minor modes to contrast the emotional tone within a movement. For earlier generations of classical composers, each key was thought to have distinct and recognizable emotional connotations. For them, the general designation of major keys as happy and minor ones as serious was not a simplistic stereotype. Yet in this Adagio, the String Quintet and the G-major String Quartet

(D. 887), Schubert establishes a subtle way to infuse wrenching emotional intensity through the major mode.

All of these works were written near the end of the composer's life. Their style raises tantalizing but, of course, unsolvable speculation as to what Schubert might have produced had he lived longer. On the other hand, there is substantial evidence that this highly charged emotional content was his response to the illness he had known for some time would be fatal.

Piano Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 47

Robert Schumann
1810-1856

Robert Schumann's five-year pursuit of his beloved, the brilliant Clara Wieck, had all the ingredients of a soap opera (or grand opera): A hostile father-in-law, an adoring young bride-to-be, secret correspondence, lawsuits and court battles, accusations of alcoholism, banishment from Wieck's house, economic pressure etc. Clara was herself an outstanding pianist and composer, and their eventual triumph led to a stormy but happy marriage unleashing a flood of creativity in both husband and wife – including eight children. But in the first few years of their marriage – before the string of children put a damper on Clara – Robert felt like a second-class citizen to his touring virtuoso wife. He suffered from severe manic-depressive episodes that became worse over the years. His creative output matched his mood cycles, with frenzied creativity usually followed by periods of despondency when his inspiration ran dry. He also tended to bunch works of similar nature together: 1842 became the year of chamber music. In the spring he bought scores of all the Mozart and Beethoven string quartets in print, and between June and November, in a white heat, composed the three String Quartets Op. 41, the Piano Quintet Op. 44 and the Piano Quartet Op. 47. Schumann composed the Piano Quartet for Count Wielhorsky, a highly accomplished amateur cellist. The cello part is prominent and demanding, especially in the slow third movement, in which the C string is lowered one step to B-flat, giving the cello a drone-like quality.

The successful premiere of the Quartet, in 1844 in Leipzig, featured a star-studded ensemble: Violinist Ferdinand David (the concertmaster of the Gewandhaus Orchestra for whom Mendelssohn wrote his Violin Concerto), the violist was Danish composer and conductor Niels Gade, Count Wielhorsky was the cellist and Clara Schumann the pianist.

Program notes by:
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