

*Project: Music Heals Us String Trio
with Mihae Lee, piano*

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THE 2023 FENTON BROWN EMERGING ARTISTS CONCERT

**Project: Music Heals Us String Trio
with Mihae Lee, piano**

Stephanie Zyzak, *violin*
Brian Hong, *viola*
Andrew Janss, *cello*
Mihae Lee, *piano*

PROGRAM

String Trio in B-Flat Major, D. 471

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

I. Allegro

II. Andante sostenuto

Serenade in C Major for String Trio, Op 10

Ernö Dohnányi (1877-1960)

I. Marcia (Allegro)

II. Romanza (Adagio non troppo)

III. Scherzo (Vivace)

IV. Tema con variazioni (Andante con moto)

I. Rondo

~ INTERMISSION ~

Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, Op. 87

Antonín Dvorák (1841-1904)

I. Allegro con fuoco

II. Lento

III. Allegro moderato, grazioso

IV. Allegro ma non troppo

with Mihae Lee, *piano*

Program Notes

by Barbara Leish

Franz Schubert: String Trio in B-Flat Major , D. 471 (1816, pub. 1890-97)

Young Franz Schubert was at a crossroads. He was living at home and earning a meager living as a teacher in his father's school. His mind was only on music, and he spent every available moment composing, even snatching time at school when he was supposed to be teaching. His friend Franz von Schober was urging him to leave the crowded family home and the job he hated and devote himself exclusively to his music. Early that year Schubert had applied for a position as music master at another school, but the post had gone to someone else. Then in June 1816 he wrote auspiciously in his diary, "Today I composed for money for the first time" – a cantata for a law professor's name day. He began taking part in musicales with friends who admired and championed his music, gatherings that became known as Schubertiads. A world of freedom seemed to beckon, but Schubert hesitated.

Meanwhile he continued to compose at a furious pace, as he had for the past several years. By 1816, the year he wrote the String Trio on today's program, he already had turned out hundreds of compositions, from songs to symphonies. Most remarkable at this point were his songs. Just as Mendelssohn had written his epochal Octet when he was only 16, Schubert was just 17 when he wrote his groundbreaking song "Gretchen am Spinnrade," a masterpiece that transformed the German Lied. While he continued to pour out songs, he also was showing an increasing mastery of Viennese Classical form and structure, in works such as his Fifth Symphony and his Seventh String Quartet, both written in 1816. In the single-movement String Trio in B-Flat Major -- Schubert's first effort at the challenging task of writing for three stringed instruments -- he showed just how well he had absorbed the Classical style of Mozart and Haydn.

No one is quite sure why Schubert completed only the first movement of this miniature gem, breaking it off after 39 measures of a second-movement Andante. Alfred Einstein suggests that it was because "he was not clear in his mind about the form and found



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himself returning far too soon to the beginning.” Whatever the reason, the movement is a model of Classical, Mozartian grace. It is in traditional sonata-allegro form, with a genial, melodious exposition, a somewhat more serious and dramatic development, and a return to the untroubled opening spirit in the recapitulation. The scoring includes playful triplets, forte octave runs, and a deft passing of the themes back and forth among the instruments. It is a movement that, as Brian Newbould described it, combines “economy of texture with clarity of thought, re-enacting early Classical ideals in a most amiable way.”

Ernö Dohnányi: Serenade in C Major for String Trio, Op. 10 (1902)

In Hungary in the years before World War II, Ernő Dohnányi was practically his own musical institution – a multitalented pianist, composer, conductor, and teacher whose prestige and influence was almost as great as Liszt’s had been a generation earlier. By the time he was in his twenties, Dohnányi had won international acclaim as a brilliant pianist, had earned important prizes for his compositions (his first published work, the 1895 Piano Quintet in C Minor, was praised and promoted by Brahms), and had been invited by Josef Joachim to teach at the prestigious Berlin Musikhochschule. In 1915 he returned to Budapest to teach at the Academy of Music, where he immediately became a dominant presence. In the turmoil surrounding the end of the First World War, according to his friend Bartók, “Dohnányi almost single-handedly kept Hungarian musical life from descending into utter chaos.” Until he withdrew following the pro-Nazi government’s anti-Semitic edicts early in the 1940s, Dohnányi headed just about every major musical institution in the country, including the Academy of Music, Hungarian Radio, and the Budapest Philharmonic. He left Hungary before the end of the war and eventually came to the United States, where he lived until his death.

As composers, Dohnányi and Bartók headed in different directions. Dohnányi’s principal influence was late 19th-century European Romanticism, especially the music of Brahms. He was quite prolific – his output included about two dozen major piano and chamber works and numerous symphonic works (including his well-known Variations on a Nursery Song), plus four operas, a Mass, and two cantatas – and his compositions were widely admired. Bartók faulted Dohnányi for not being Hungarian enough in his music. But



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while for Dohnányi Hungarian music was more of a flavoring than an essence of his style, he used its rhythms and modalities effectively, and it was an important element in works like the Serenade for String Trio.

The Serenade is a vivacious, tightly constructed work that gives a modern cast to an 18th-century form. It is distinguished by sprightly rhythms, beautiful melodies, modally inflected harmonies, and deft scoring for the three instruments. It opens with a spirited March that immediately introduces a Hungarian flavor: the brief movement's middle section is a moody folk-sounding melody played over a drone accompaniment. The Hungarian influence continues to be heard in the Romanza – in the long-lined, evocative melody played by the viola over off-the-beat pizzicatos, and in the passionate middle section with its striking textures. Next comes a breathless, scampering Scherzo that features a nimble opening fugue, a short lyrical trio, and irregular rhythms. The Theme and variations offer a fine example of Dohnányi's technical adroitness. The theme itself is a variation of the first movement's folk melody. In the five variations that follow, the three instruments engage in an ongoing dialogue as they blend with and complement one another. At the end of the giddy Rondo finale the Hungarian melody from the first movement makes its final appearance, giving a satisfying sense of unity to a thoroughly delightful composition.

Around the time he wrote the String Trio, in the fall of 1816, Schubert's friend finally prevailed. Schubert left his father's school and home, cast off middle-class security, and began a new bohemian life as a composer first and last.

Antonín Dvorák: Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, Op. 87 (1889)

Warmth, joy, and vivacity infuse Dvorák's music. So does a devotion to Bohemian folk music, as well as a mastery of Classical form and technique. Like his friend Brahms, Dvorák was a Romantic composer who grounded his work within the Classical tradition while introducing innovation and originality into the Classical form. Like his fellow Bohemian composer Smetana, whose folk-inspired music he greatly admired, Dvorák filled his compositions with the melodic sounds and the rhythms of Czech nationalism.



By 1889, the year he wrote the Piano Quartet in E-Flat Major, his music was being performed and admired throughout Europe. It had been 14 years since he had written his first piano quartet, and for several years his German publisher, Simrock, had been urging him to write another, writing plaintively, "I should like to receive a piano quartet from you at last – you promised me this a long time ago! Well? How is it faring?" Finally, in August

1889, Dvorák set to work. He wrote quickly, telling a friend, “I’ve now already finished three movements of a new piano quartet, and the finale will be ready in a few days. It’s going unexpectedly easily and melodies are coming to me in droves, Thanks be to God!” In addition to its wonderful surge of melodies, the work Dvorák so easily produced is structurally masterful, harmonically rich, and brimming with irresistible high spirits.

The first movement, marked *Allegro con fuoco*, is dramatic from its opening measures. The strings begin somberly, in unison. The piano responds in a lighter mood, as if unwilling to take the strings too seriously, and eventually coaxes them into a buoyant restatement of the first theme. These contrasting moods, plus the addition of a tender second theme introduced by the viola, lay the ground for a fiery development section. Working within the Classical framework of development and recapitulation, Dvorak builds a movement rich in harmonic and emotional contrasts.

The second movement, a melodically fertile, tightly structured *Lento*, begins with the cello singing a soulful melody. The solo line passes to the violin, which introduces a second, tranquil theme. The piano takes over with an ardent melody, then all join together in a brief, passionate outburst. The piano restores calm with a return to the mood of the opening, after which the entire pattern of five themes is repeated. An entirely different feeling pervades the lilting third movement – the section of the quartet with the most specifically Bohemian references. It begins with a waltz-like peasant dance, then introduces a theme that sounds Middle Eastern, with the piano at one point mimicking a cimbalom, or hammered dulcimer, a popular folk instrument. The tempo increases in the movement’s middle section, providing a spirited contrast to the opening section and its repeat. In the virtuosic *Finale*, Dvorák returns to the intensity of the opening *Allegro*, in a robustly brilliant movement distinguished by themes that range from vivacious to lyrical, adventurous modulations, graceful interactions among the four instruments, and an exuberant conclusion.





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**Project: Music Heals Us String Trio
with Mihae Lee, piano**

Stephanie Zyzak, violin

Brian Hong, viola

Andrew Janss, cello

Mihae Lee, piano

Project Music Heals Us is a non-profit organization which exists to provide encouragement, education and healing through bringing high-quality live music performances and interactive programming to marginalized communities with limited ability to access it themselves - with a focus on elderly, disabled, rehabilitating incarcerated, and homeless populations. Since its founding in 2014, Project: Music Heals Us has presented more than 2,000 free concerts and workshops in hospitals, nursing homes, hospice centers, retirement homes, food pantries, centers for individuals with disabilities, correctional facilities, homeless shelters and refugee centers.



Praised for her sensitive musicianship and heartfelt playing, violinist **Stephanie Zyzak** is quickly gaining a reputation as one of the most soulful and profound musicians of her generation.

At the age of seven, Stephanie made her first solo appearance with the Starling Chamber Orchestra at the Aspen Music School and became the youngest recipient ever to be awarded the Aspen Music School New Horizon Fellowship. The following year, she performed in Germany as an invited guest of the Internationale Kunst – Akademie Liechtenstein (IKAL). Since making her debut in 2004 with the Louisville Orchestra, Stephanie has performed as soloist throughout Germany, Russia, Austria, Sweden,

Spain, Italy, France, and with orchestras including the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Dayton Philharmonic, Southeast Missouri Symphony, and the UC Davis Symphony Orchestra. Recent and upcoming season highlights include performances at Caramoor, Carnegie Hall, the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert series, Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and the Phillips Collection, among others.

A deeply passionate chamber musician, Stephanie has had the privilege of collaborating with renowned musicians including Jonathan Biss, Kim Kashkashian, Ida Kavafian, Alice Neary, Danny Phillips, Marcy Rosen, and Mitsuko Uchida. She has also performed at the Marlboro Music Festival, Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, Caramoor, the Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival, as well as on tour with Musicians From Marlboro.

Born in South Carolina, Stephanie is a graduate of New England Conservatory where she studied with Miriam Fried. Currently, she is studying at CUNY The Graduate Center with Mark Steinberg. She is also a founding member of ensemble132, a roster-based chamber music collective. Stephanie performs on a 1778 Joseph and Antonio Gagliano violin, generously on loan from Ravinia's Steans Music Institute, and a bow by François-Nicolas Voirin.



Korean-American violinist and violist **Brian Hong** is forging a career as an educator, soloist and chamber musician. Known for his commanding stage presence and thoughtful ear, Brian has performed concertos with such orchestras as the Juilliard Orchestra, Fairfax Symphony, American Youth Philharmonic, Chesapeake Orchestra, U.S. Army Orchestra, National Philharmonic, and the Springfield Symphony. A dedicated chamber musician, Brian's festival credits include Marlboro, Yellow Barn, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Music Academy of the West, the Taos School of Music, Kneisel Hall, and the Perlman Music Program.

Brian is a graduate of Juilliard's Artist Diploma program under the guidance of Laurie Smukler and Catherine Cho. As a Fellow of Carnegie Hall's Ensemble Connect, he performed and taught in a variety of venues in New York City and abroad, as well as maintaining a two-year teaching-artist partnership with Celia Cruz High School for Music in the Bronx. Brian also holds a master's degree from The Juilliard School, where he was awarded a prestigious Kovner Fellowship. Brian earned his bachelor's degree under Donald Weilerstein from the New England Conservatory of Music, where he was a member of three different honors ensembles and studied both classic and contemporary quartet repertoire with mentors including Laurence Lesser, Kim Kashkashian, Donald Weilerstein, and Lucy Chapman.

Brian is gaining recognition for his thoughtful and empathetic approach to teaching, joining the esteemed faculty at Bard College Conservatory of Music as a violist in Fall 2022. As a guest artist, he has taught private lessons, public masterclasses, and chamber coachings on both violin and viola at George Mason University's Reva and Sid Dewberry Family School of Music, Missouri State University, and The Juilliard School. He has also taught live virtual masterclasses for the Joven Camerata de El Salvador as well as the Edward Said National Conservatory of Palestine through the Project: Music Heals Us - Novel Voices Distance Learning Program. Brian's mission as a teacher is to provide thoughtful and well-rounded instruction to students that maximizes their musical inspiration while illuminating the technical steps needed to achieve repeatable results. Brian believes in bringing the unique qualities of each student to life, and in the right of every student to have a high-quality musical education regardless of socio-economic status.

Brian is a Co-Artistic Director of NEXUS Chamber Music Chicago in Illinois, an artist-driven collective of musicians whose mission is to make classical music culturally relevant through live concerts and multimedia content. He is also the Program Manager and A/V editor for Project: Music Heals Us, currently recording and video-editing performance and lecture videos of the complete string quartets of Ludwig van Beethoven for their course entitled "Music for the Future." In his spare time, Brian can be found brewing espresso or single origin pour-overs at his home coffee bar. He plays on a 1991 viola by Michael Darnton, graciously on loan to him through the generous support of Darnton & Hersh Fine Violins and Guarneri Hall NFP.



Cellist **Andrew Janss** has been hailed by the *New York Times* for his "muscularity and shimmering lyricism," "insightful musicianship," and "sumptuous elegance." His performances have been enjoyed across five continents in venues including Carnegie Hall, The Kennedy Center, The Sydney Opera House, and the Louvre.

Andrew has collaborated in concert and recording with a long list of iconic classical artists, including Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Lynn Harrell, Leon Fleisher, and Richard Goode, as well as chart-topping performers such as Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Lana Del Rey, Mary J. Blige, Florence + the Machine, Erykah Badu, and The Roots.

Beyond his performance career, Andrew is the Executive Director of Project: Music Heals Us, a non-profit organization which aims to provide comfort, hope, and healing to a wide range of people who lack access to live arts programming. For his work developing and implementing a nationwide series of live virtual bedside concerts for rehabilitating

COVID-19 patients and their caregivers, Andrew was nominated for a 2020-21 Emerson Collective Fellowship by his childhood (and current) idol, Yo-Yo Ma.

Early in his musical career, Andrew was the founding cellist of the Escher Quartet, with whom he was in residence at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center as part of Chamber Music Society Two from 2007-10. From there, he went on to be a cellist at the Marlboro Music Festival from 2010-12. He has served as Guest Principal Cellist of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and has toured extensively with the Mark Morris Dance Group throughout the U.S., China, Italy, and Australia.

Andrew also tours and records for the groundbreaking cello rock band Break of Reality, both in the United States and as cultural ambassadors for the U.S. Department of State. Recent tours through American Music Abroad have taken the band to Eastern and Central Asia, Haiti, and Brazil, collaborating with local musicians and composers in each country they visit.

CREDIT : CHRISTIAN STEINER



Praised by *Boston Globe* as “simply dazzling,” Essex Winter Series Artistic Director and pianist **Mihae Lee** has captivated audiences throughout North America, Europe, and Asia in solo recitals and chamber music concerts, in such venues as Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Jordan Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Academia Nazionale de Santa Cecilia in Rome, Warsaw National Philharmonic Hall, and Taipei National Hall. An active chamber musician, Mihae is a founding member of the Triton Horn Trio and was an artist member of the Boston Chamber Music Society for three decades. Her recordings of Brahms, Shostakovich, Bartok, and Stravinsky with the members of BCMS were critically acclaimed by *High Fidelity*, *CD Review*, and *Fanfare* magazines, the reviews calling her sound “as warm as Rubinstein, yet virile as Toscanini.”

Mihae has appeared frequently at numerous international chamber music festivals including Dubrovnik, Amsterdam, Groningen, Medellin Festicamara, Great Woods, Seattle, OK Mozart, Mainly Mozart, Music from Angel Fire, El Paso, Arizona Friends of Chamber Music, Chamber Music Northwest, Rockport, Sebago-Long Lake, Bard, Norfolk, Mostly Music, Music Mountain, and Chestnut Hill Concerts. Mihae has been a guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Bargemusic in New York and Speculum Musicae; has collaborated with the Juilliard, Tokyo, Muir, Cassatt, and Manhattan string quartets; and has premiered and recorded works by such composers as Gunther Schuller, Ned Rorem, Paul Lansky, Henri Lazarof, Michael Daugherty, and Ezra Laderman. Mihae is often heard over the airwaves

on National Public Radio's "Performance Today," and on WNYC and WQXR in New York City, WGBH in Boston, and other stations around the country.

A native of Korea, Mihae is a graduate of The Juilliard School and the New England Conservatory studying with Martin Canin and Russell Sherman. She has released recordings on the Bridge, Etcetera, EDI, Northeastern, and BCMS labels, and since 2016 she serves as Music Director of the Sebago-Long Lake Music Festival in Maine.



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