

NICHOLAS ROERICH MUSEUM

319 West 107th Street, New York NY 10025-2715 • tel: 212 864 7752 • email: inquiries@roerich.org

Sunday, March 25, 2018

Two Beloved Piano Trios of Beethoven

The Ghost and Archduke

Garry Ianco, violin, Teresa Kubiak, cello, Shawn Chang, piano

Program

Trio for piano, violin and cello

No.4 in D Major, op.70 No.1 *Ghost*

Ludwig van Beethoven

(1770-1827)

Allegro vivace e con brio

Largo assai ed espressivo

Presto

Beethoven's first published works, in 1795, were three Trios for Piano, Violin and Cello. It was to be thirteen years until he returned to this medium again, when, at the end of 1808, he wrote this trio and its companion, in E-flat Major (op. 70 No. 2). Both pieces are dedicated to Countess Marie von Erdödy, who was his close friend, "Beichvater" (Father Confessor), and, briefly, his landlady at that time. The two had a serious falling out soon afterwards, but later reconciled. The two cello sonatas (opus 102) from 1817 are also dedicated to her. The *Ghost* Trio begins and ends with bright, fast movements, the first being quite concise and the finale brilliantly virtuosic. Between them is the movement that gave the work its nickname. Beethoven probably had nothing to do with this *Ghost* label, though the Largo's sudden dynamic contrasts and tremolo effects make the trio's nickname quite appropriate. In addition, the frequently requested eerie figure that dominates this slow movement is identical to an idea that appears in Beethoven's sketchbook around this time for the opening Witches' Scene of an opera on *Macbeth* that he was contemplating. The *Ghost* Trio dates from a time during the composer's most active "middle" period, when the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the A Major Cello Sonata and the *Emperor* Concerto were created. Beethoven was to return to this medium of his youth only one additional time, three years later, when the celebrated *Archduke* Trio was born.

Intermission

Trio for piano, violin and violoncello:

In Bb Major, Op. 97 *Archduke*

Ludwig van Beethoven

Allegro moderato

Scherzo – allegro

Andante cantabile, ma però con moto

Allegro moderato

Beethoven composed his final trio for piano, violin and cello in three weeks, from March 3rd to 26th, 1811. The piece was dedicated to his long time piano pupil and patron, Archduke Rudolph Johann Joseph Rainer (1788-1831) along with a number of other great works including his last two piano concertos, the *Missa Solemnis* and the *Grosse Fugue*. The trio is in four movements, beginning with an expansive, lyrical allegro moderato that, with its scope and grandeur, seems to almost be symphonically conceived. The lovely, light scherzo which follows begins with the two string instruments and moves naïvely along until the cello introduces the dark, chromatics of its trio that provides us with a preview of the intense language of Beethoven's last period. The third movement opens with a sublime theme set in the style of a chorale which then embarks upon a journey of fantasy-like variations. As each variation grows in depth, Beethoven exposes us to some of his most tender moments. The fourth movement serves as an excellent chaser to the intimate experience of the theme and variations.

Program notes by Michael Spierman

Garry Ianco leads a varied international career as a soloist, chamber music artist, recitalist and orchestral musician. He has been a concertmaster and assistant concert master for prominent orchestras in our country and abroad and has also regularly performed in Broadway, off-Broadway and touring productions of Phantom of The Opera and others.

Teresa Kubiak is a concert artist and freelance musician working in and around the New York City area. She is the principal cellist of the Bronx Opera Company and the Orchestra of The Bronx. She is well-versed as a recital artist and chamber musician. Ms. Kubiak teaches cello privately in Westchester County, NY, where her students also participate in her long-standing cello ensemble classes. She has been incorporating Skype lessons into her practice for the past several years and works with students from around the globe. Her teaching combines elements of the Suzuki approach with the principals of Feldenkrais, Tai Chi, and a cutting edge understanding of the human nervous system and its relationship to music and the process of learning. www.teresakubiak.com

With a career of both pianist and composer, **Shawn Chang** has created an international career of distinction. His original compositions have been premiered by the Chromatic Voice Exchange, the Novello String ensemble, the aTonal Hits Duo, and the Gateshead Cello Trio to name a few. Mr. Chang's recent piano arrangement of the Dutch folk song, "tulpen uit Amsterdam," received critical acclaim at the Prinsjesdagconcert in Hague. He holds Bachelor of Music degree from the Peabody Conservatory and his main teachers have been Boris Zarankin, Ireneus Zuk, Benjamin Pasternack, Thomas Sauer and Noam Sivan (composition) www.shawnchangcomposer.com.



The Nicholas Roerich Museum has been offering regular concerts and recitals for the last 70 years. They have always been—and continue to be—free to the public, financed by the Museum's own budget and your donations. We have been able to keep organizing these concerts without either help from the city or any grants. Essential to our endeavors are the continued interest, care and participation of the musicians. Your donations are very important to us. We would like to thank everybody who decides to leave a contribution and so help keep the concert programs going.

Thoughts on the Performance of Two Beloved Piano Trios of Beethoven

The anniversary of Beethoven's death is approaching soon - March 26, 1827. His life was devoted to a force that consumed him – sounds were demanding to be put into form, and forms needed to be expanded to accommodate a new consciousness breaking through, shattering the Age of Reason. One wonders if he had any choice in the matter, but I am grateful for his service to humanity – for daring to reflect the new mindset of his time and bringing us closer to our innate divinity. I want to say how grateful I am that I have attained a level of skill on the cello that allows me to touch this music that came from the stars.

I found out about Beethoven when I was 15. At the time, I thought classical music was the sappy string sound I heard from the easy listening station my father liked. It seemed void of emotion. Perhaps it motivated people to buy more ketchup in the grocery store, I don't know. I was into Rock, everything from Aerosmith, to Pink Floyd and Bowie, and of course all the guitar legends like Clapton and Page.

So imagine my surprise when my guitar teacher played a few bars of Moonlight Sonata. It was the most beautiful chord progression I had ever heard – who wrote that?? The next day I plunged myself into Beethoven's music and began reading George Marek's *Biography of a Genius*. I had never experienced music that expressed such extremes of psychological states, yet wove them all together in some type of magical fabric of intelligence.

Like Beethoven, I too came from a home where the person responsible for loving me was capable of killing me in a rage, yet it wasn't black and white. I was attached and as every child is, hungry for whatever love and affection came my way. I savored the tender moments when things were calm. I railed against the insanity.

This is how I got hooked – I heard my own reality – the love and the hate, the fear and surrender, and hope of transcendence. I dedicated my life to his music as well as the other great composers that I would come to know. Listening was not enough, I had to touch it, and breathe it into being, and I had to do it on what struck me as the most beautiful instrument – the one that mimicked the sound of my own voice – the voice I could not use as a child for fear of death.

Beethoven was a mystical cowboy who could lasso together extremes of existence. I believe whatever holds the universe together reflects through his music. It reached me in the remote corner of my blue-collar childhood, far away from the culture of gold studded bows and instruments traded among investors. Beethoven was my Mr. Rogers.

It has been an honor to spend time preparing this concert, living in the presence of these great works of art. May you recognize your own soul in the beauty of this music.

Teresa Kubiak