



*International  
Presentations of  
Music & Dance*

THE UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

## Beaux Arts Trio

MENAHEM PRESSLER, *Pianist* ISIDORE COHEN, *Violinist*  
PETER WILEY, *Cellist*

SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 4, 1989, AT 8:00  
RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

### PROGRAM

- Variations on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu,"  
in G major, Op. 121a ..... BEETHOVEN
- Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1985) ..... GEORGE ROCHBERG  
Amabile  
Largo  
Allegro con spirito

### INTERMISSION

- Trio in A minor, Op. 50 ..... TCHAIKOVSKY  
("To the Memory of a Great Artist")  
Pezzo elegiaco (Moderato assai, allegro giusto)  
Tema con variazioni  
Finale e coda (Allegro risoluto e con fuoco, andante con moto, lugubre)

This concert marks the Trio's sixth Ann Arbor appearance.

*The Beaux Arts Trio is represented by Columbia Artists Management Inc.  
Halls Cough Tablets, courtesy of Warner-Lambert Company, are available in the lobby.*



## PROGRAM NOTES

Variations on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu,"  
in G major, Op. 121a ..... LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
(1770-1827)

Around the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, the market in sheet music was swamped by a positive flood of variation works. Above all else, recourse to popular opera melodies and much-hummed fashionable songs was almost a guarantee of success. The Abbé Gelinek, who was fêted in aristocratic households and bourgeois salons alike, was interested in demonstrations of pianistic pyrotechnics in such works, most of which were intended for the piano. Beethoven's variations on the song *Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu* appear far more substantial in comparison. The variations were first published in 1824, but recent Beethoven research suggests that they may have been composed as early as 1803. The little song from Wenzel Müller's singspiel *Die Schwestern von Prag*, first performed in 1794, was nothing short of a hit at the time, and was later circulated in several different versions in broadsheet form.

In Beethoven's variation work, some components of the theme can be heard in the G-minor introduction — the theme then provides the opportunity for an amusing game of transformation in the ten variations. In the seventh variation, for example, a two-part invention for violin and cello, Beethoven allows the piano to remain silent. The eighth variation, on the other hand, clearly contrasts piano and strings, before the G-minor variation that follows leads into a completely new sphere of expression; last but not least, variation No. 10 ends in a free *Allegretto*.

Trio for Piano, Violin, and Cello (1985) ..... GEORGE ROCHBERG  
(b. 1918)

George Rochberg, one of America's most significant composers, was born in Paterson, New Jersey, on July 5, 1918. He studied theory and composition with George Szell in New York between 1939 and 1941, before serving in the armed forces during World War II. After the war, he enrolled in composition classes at the Curtis Institute of Music, studying with Rosario Scalero and Gian Carlo Menotti. He later taught classes at Curtis and in 1960 joined the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. Influenced most profoundly by Schoenberg and Anton von Weber, Rochberg developed an individual type of serialism but later returned to tonality. His compositions include works for orchestra, ensemble and chamber groups, piano, solo voice and orchestra, and an opera.

Rochberg describes his new piano trio as follows:

"My trio for piano, violin, and cello was composed in 1985 for the Beaux Arts Trio under a commission from the Elizabeth Coolidge Foundation in the Library of Congress. Its first performance took place February 27 and 28, 1986, at the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

"It is actually my second piano trio, the first one having been written in 1961 and given its première in Buffalo in 1964 by the Nieuw Amsterdam Trio. It is not only the distance in time between the writing of the two trios which differentiates them; it is also the distance in language and style that separates them. The first trio was the very last work I wrote in a serial style. After 1961, I gradually found my way back to writing my own tonal music. The new trio is thoroughly tonal in language with an extended vocabulary of chromatic intensities. The first and third movements are in E major and explore in different ways the old sonata form (statement-development-restatement). The second movement is in B-flat major, but a very restless B-flat major that moves slowly and inexorably through many sub-tonalities until it leads directly back to the E major of the third movement.

"The music is frankly melodic — the only way, as I believe, to write genuinely tonal music. Since a piano trio is an ensemble of equals, I have tried to treat each of the three instruments as partners in a common musical discourse."

Trio in A minor, Op. 50 ..... PETER ILYITCH TCHAIKOVSKY  
("To the Memory of a Great Artist") (1840-1893)

The Trio Op. 50 is dedicated "to the memory of a great artist," the pianist Nicolai Rubinstein, who died in 1881. The Trio was composed in the months December 1881 — January 1882.

Nicolai Rubinstein, brother of the composer Anton Rubinstein, was the founder of the Moscow Conservatory as well as its director from 1865 until his death. It was he who engaged Tchaikovsky as harmony teacher, and following Rubinstein's death, Tchaikovsky was offered the post of director, which he declined. Rubinstein, at that time, was considered Russia's



greatest pianist and was one of Tchaikovsky's best and most dedicated friends. However there was a cooling off period between the two of them after Rubinstein violently attacked Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto in B-flat in 1874. Four years later, when Rubinstein himself admitted his mistake, his friendship with Tchaikovsky was renewed, with the pianist becoming one of the concerto's most ardent performers in and outside of Russia.

For a long time, Tchaikovsky had been asked by his great friend and benefactor, Mme. Nadejda von Meck, to write a piano trio. His constant reply was always, "my acoustic apparatus is such that I simply cannot bear the combination of piano with violin and cello." Nevertheless, some years later he set out to compose the Trio Op. 50, which is undoubtedly one of his best and most touching chamber works.

The first movement — *Pezzo elegiaco* — opens with one of Tchaikovsky's most beautiful melodies. Various themes of a contrasting nature follow, with the movement quietly closing, after the storm has subsided.

The second movement is a set of variations on a melodious theme, reminiscent of a Russian folk tune. The variations are written very freely indeed, and the theme takes on several disguises; a waltz, mazurka, dirge, and folk dance. The last variation is of a heroic and brilliant nature, leading to the finale which is based on the first theme of the first movement, starting with a dramatic outcry and ending with a lament and a funeral march.

—Jonathan Zak

### About the Artists

The **Beaux Arts Trio** made its official public debut at the 1955 Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood, now known as the Tanglewood Festival. Since then, this legendary union of pianist Menahem Pressler, violinist Isidore Cohen, and cellist Bernard Greenhouse has established itself as one of the most successful musical collaborations of our time. In over three decades of concertizing throughout North America, Europe, Japan, South America, the Middle East, Australia, and New Zealand, the Beaux Arts Trio has elevated the status of the previously neglected piano trio literature to the level of that for string quartet and has won unsurpassed admiration from critics and audiences. At 30th anniversary celebrations held at Indiana University in September 1985, President Ronald Reagan commended the Trio's artistry, awarding each member a special silver medallion.

The year 1986 marked an important change for the Beaux Arts Trio, as cellist Bernard Greenhouse retired from the group in order to devote more time to his expanding teaching career. The ensemble, however, has continued its standards of excellence with the addition of famed cellist Peter Wiley.

Among the many concerts the Trio performs regularly are annual engagements at the Library of Congress, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Chamber Music of Chicago, Miami Friends of Music, Montreal's Ladies' Morning Musical Club, Friends of Music of Kansas City, and the Denver and Detroit Chamber Music Societies. The Beaux Arts Trio also lends distinction to many major music festivals, including Mostly Mozart, Ravinia, Tanglewood, and South Mountain. Its regular University performances include appearances at Harvard, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, and the University of Missouri-Columbia.

The Trio's extensive discography on Philips Records encompasses the entire piano trio literature. It has brought the ensemble many coveted awards, including the Prix Mondial du Disque, three Grand Prix du Disques, the Union de la Presse Musicale Belge Caecilia Award, and the *Gramophone* Record of the Year and *Stereo Review* Record of the Year awards.

In honor of its 30th anniversary, a number of publications ran exhaustive feature articles about the Beaux Arts Trio, among them London's *Strad Magazine* and *The New York Times Magazine*. The president of Indiana University awarded them the University's Medal of Excellence. Also commemorating the Trio's 30th anniversary season was the recently released book by Nicholas Delbanco, *The Beaux Arts Trio — A Portrait*, detailing the individual lives, musical philosophies, and group history of these venerable musicians in their three decades of superlative music-making.

**Menahem Pressler**, pianist, was born in Magdeburg, Germany, and was raised in Israel. He began his professional career in the United States at 17, when he won First Prize in San Francisco's first International Piano Competition. This achievement led to solo appearances with major U.S. orchestras; his first American tour was highlighted by five solo performances with The Philadelphia Orchestra. Since then, Mr. Pressler has appeared with other orchestras of international renown including the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, National Symphony of Washington, D.C., Israel Philharmonic, and London Philharmonic, and under such distinguished conductors as Dimitri Mitropoulos, George Szell, Eugene Ormandy, Leopold Stokowski, Georges Enesco, Antal Dorati, Paul Paray, Izler Solomon, and Frederic Waldman. The pianist tours extensively worldwide, both with the trio and as soloist. He holds the position of Distinguished Professor of Music on the faculty of the Indiana University School of Music and also takes time every winter to teach at the Jerusalem Music Center. In 1986, he received an honorary doctorate from the North Carolina School of the Fine Arts in Winston-Salem. He has recorded for Philips, Musical Heritage Society, and Monitor.



**Isidore Cohen**, violinist, was born in New York City of Russian immigrant parents. Originally planning a career in medicine, he grew to love the violin while in the armed forces. Upon his discharge, he was accepted by The Juilliard School, where he studied with Ivan Galamian. He has been concertmaster of the Mostly Mozart Festival in Lincoln Center (where he has also appeared as soloist), Little Orchestra Society of New York, and the orchestra of the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico, among others. Mr. Cohen has made frequent solo appearances throughout the United States, and his extensive chamber music background includes membership in the Juilliard String Quartet, the Schneider Quartet, and appearances with the Budapest Quartet and the renowned Music From Marlboro. He is permanently associated with the Marlboro Festival in Vermont.

**Peter Wiley**, cellist, was born in Utica, New York. At age seven he began cello studies, continuing at the Curtis Institute when only 13 years old. He joined the Cincinnati Symphony as its principal cellist at age 20, holding that position for eight years until leaving to establish himself in a solo career. Since that time, Mr. Wiley has been soloist with the Cincinnati Symphony, the St. Luke's Chamber Orchestra, and the Charlotte Symphony, among others. He has collaborated with such prominent conductors as Klaus Tennstedt, Jorge Mester, Zdenek Macal, and Michael Tilson Thomas, and with esteemed instrumentalists such as Peter Serkin, André-Michel Schub, Michael Gielen, and Emanuel Ax. His extensive chamber music credits include the Settimane Musicale Internazionale Festival, the Asolo Festival, and the Linton Music Series, in addition to his long association with the Marlboro Festival and Music from Marlboro touring groups.

### Coming Concerts

OSIPOV BALALAIKA ORCHESTRA . . . . .	Thurs. Feb. 9
with stars of the Bolshoi Opera	
MUMMENSCHANZ . . . . .	Sat., Sun. Feb. 11, 12
NEW YORK CITY OPERA NATIONAL COMPANY . . . . .	Sat., Sun. Feb. 18, 19
Verdi's "La Traviata"	
RICHARD STOLTZMAN AND FRIENDS . . . . .	Wed. Feb. 22
"New York Counterpoint"	
FOLGER CONSORT & WESTERN WIND . . . . .	Mon. Mar. 6
PAUL TAYLOR DANCE COMPANY . . . . .	Tues., Wed. Mar. 7, 8
ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC / ZUBIN MEHTA . . . . .	Tues. Mar. 14
FACULTY ARTISTS CONCERT (free admission) . . . . .	Sun. Mar. 19
THE CHIEFTAINS . . . . .	Wed. Mar. 22
EMERSON STRING QUARTET . . . . .	Wed. Mar. 29
ALICIA DE LARROCHA, <i>pianist</i> . . . . .	Thurs. Mar. 30
STUTTGART WIND QUINTET . . . . .	Wed. Apr. 5
DENNIS RUSSELL DAVIES, <i>pianist</i>	
MUNICH PHILHARMONIC / SERGIU CELIBIDACHE . . . . .	Thurs. Apr. 13
ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA / LEONARD SLATKIN . . . . .	Thurs. Apr. 20
96TH ANNUAL MAY FESTIVAL . . . . .	Wed.-Sat. Apr. 26-29
LEIPZIG GEWANDHAUS ORCHESTRA and KURT MASUR	

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