

UNIVERSITY MUSICAL SOCIETY

# BEAUX ARTS TRIO

MENAHEM PRESSLER, Pianist

ISIDORE COHEN, Violinist

PETER WILEY, Cellist



Saturday Evening, March 21, 1992, at 8:00  
Rackham Auditorium, Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Beaux Arts Trio is represented by Columbia Artists Management Inc., New York City.  
Recordings: Philips and Mercury Records

The University Musical Society is a member of Chamber Music America.

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the National Endowment for the Arts.



# PROGRAM

Trio in G major, K. 496 . . . . . Mozart  
Allegro  
Andante  
Allegretto

Spring Music, Trio in Five Movements  
for Violin, Cello, and Piano (1990) . . . . . Rorem  
Aubade  
Toccata  
Fantasia  
Bagatelle  
Presto

Commissioned by Carnegie Hall in honor of its Centennial  
(World premiere, February 8, 1991, at Carnegie Hall)

## INTERMISSION

Trio in B-flat major, Op. 99 . . . . . Schubert  
Allegro moderato  
Andante un poco mosso  
Scherzo: allegro  
Rondo: allegro vivace

## Program Notes

**Trio in G major, K. 496**  
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Mozart's piano trios show a prolonged vacillation between the modern style of the trio and certain of its earlier stages. The cause of this is to be found firstly in the great tenacity of the older forms as demonstrated by Haydn's trios, which are practically violin sonatas with a bass-strengthening cello part. This was, at first, Mozart's model, too. It is also clear that he did not attach as much importance to the piano trio as to the piano quartet or violin sonata. His contributions are, with few exceptions, light in character. It was only gradually that he began to take the trio seriously — influenced possibly by the piano quartets — and bring it up to date.

The Trio in G major, K. 496, was completed on July 8, 1786, and thus is contemporary with the piano quartets. This is obvious from the independent treatment of the cello part alone. But the grouping of piano and strings as separate masses hardly exists, though piano and violin both have their say, as in a violin sonata, while the cello again doubles the bass.

In the *Andante*, pure obbligato three- and four-part writing makes its appearance. By contrast, there is all the greater unity of structure. In this respect, the trio outdoes all its successors. There is also a marked divergence from the piano quartets in the importance given to counterpoint, as is evident from the development in the first movement. Vigorous determination characterizes the whole work, and this, in the finale, becomes transformed into serene confidence.



## Spring Music (1990)

NED ROREM (b. 1923)

Brought up in Chicago and trained partly in Paris (where he studied with Arthur Honegger on a Fulbright Fellowship), Ned Rorem has long divided his residence between New York City and Nantucket. He also ranks among the most distinguished composers to have taught, and still to teach at Philadelphia's Curtis Institute, where he himself was a student in the 1940s before going on to Juilliard and to private lessons with Virgil Thomson and David Diamond.

Gifted with as vivid a feeling for words as for music, Ned Rorem's published memoirs and essays are noted for their sensitivity and mordent wit. He is preeminent among American composers in the setting of poetry; his songs number in the hundreds. Instrumental works form a much smaller part of his output, though it was with one of them, the orchestral *Air Music*, that he won a Pulitzer Prize in 1976. "Even when building so-called abstract structures," Rorem observes, "I've always felt most at ease when guided by a concrete program." In the case of the work heard this evening, there is no detailed program, but the title already hints at an extramusical association that the composer explains with characteristic drollery in his own succinct note:

"Having already written *The End of Summer* and *Winter Pages*, I am beginning to round off a seasonal cycle, which is one reason for the title, *Spring Music*. Another reason is the need for a tag. I've composed many works for three instruments (the first even called *Trio*) and have found that names help the auditor, not to mention the composer, to tell them apart. Finally, the work wishes to reflect (insofar as non-vocal music reflects anything) the season of optimism."

By way of further description, Rorem adds only that the structure of the work is "quite simple: 4 plus 1 movements," and that he never feels it appropriate to tailor an instrumental piece for specific performers, since he finds fewer differences among instruments than among voices. For the rest, there is one utterly characteristic quality in *Spring Music* that should be pointed out, and that is its deceptive simplicity. Looking at the music on the page, it may be judged to be very normal and even innocuous. Yet in actual hearing, as with many Rorem works, the listener is likely to be astonished at how much

passion, wit, and sheer individuality this composer can conjure from seemingly plain textures and unproblematic, basically tonal harmonies. Notable, too, is the way the little fragmentary phrases first heard as a brief respite in the furious progress of the *Toccata* second movement return in the rhythmically intricate finale *Presto*, to bind the whole work together in subtle but strong unity.

*Spring Music* was commissioned by Carnegie Hall in honor of the Hall's 100th anniversary and was given its world premiere by the Beaux Arts Trio February 8, 1991, at Carnegie Hall. Tonight, *Spring Music* is given its first Ann Arbor hearing.

## Trio No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 99

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797-1828)

"One glance at Schubert's Trio (Op. 99), and the troubles of our human existence disappear and all the world is fresh and bright again." So wrote Robert Schumann of this radiant and cheerful piece, with its wealth of melodic beauty, rhythmic inventiveness, and rich, Romantic harmonies.

The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, opens with an exultant melody played in octaves by the violin and cello, while the piano adds a simple accompaniment. An ascending chromatic scale on the piano leads to the cello holding a high pitch, after which the tender second subject is played first by the cello alone, then the violin and cello together, and finally by the piano. The development section that follows is long and attractive, with the two subjects splendidly varied and combined. The recapitulation recalls the opening with very little change.

In the second movement, *Andante un poco mosso*, the cello is frequently called upon to play in its uppermost range. After two measures, during which the piano indicates the rhythm, the cello plays an expressive sustained tune, later adding a delightful counterpoint while the violin takes over the theme. A contrasting middle section has a syncopated string accompaniment to the pensive tune played by the piano. The theme is afterwards taken up by the strings, and then the opening tune, beautifully transformed, unassumingly returns.

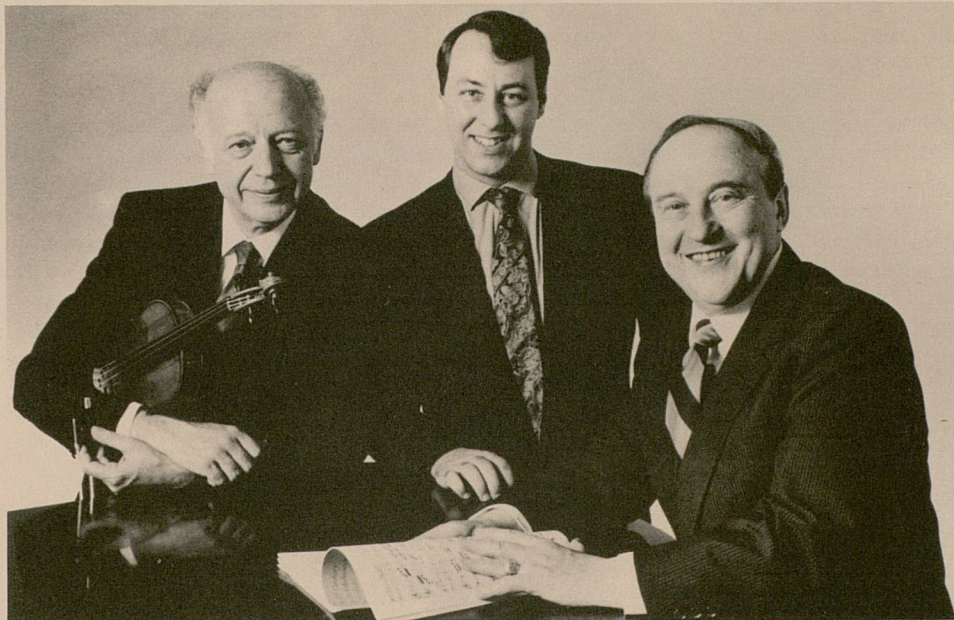


The third movement, *Allegro*, is begun by the piano playing light-heartedly in octaves. The strings soon join in, after which the simple sustained melody of the Trio forms an ideal contrast.

The last movement is a Rondo, *Allegro vivace*, and is opened by the violin playing

the main theme, which is then repeated by the piano. A secondary subject is soon heard with a pompous opening played by all three instruments together, after which the violin adds an impudent, carefree dance rhythm. Out of this same material, Schubert builds the exciting, effective finale.

## About the Artists



Over a span of nearly four decades, the Beaux Arts Trio has continued to nourish the public's passion for chamber music with concerts throughout North America, Europe, Japan, South America, the Middle East, Australia, and New Zealand. Their performances have received worldwide admiration. Following a Detroit concert last December, John Guinn of the *Detroit Free Press* wrote that "Sunday's audience witnessed the revelatory readings that have made the Beaux Arts the world's supreme chamber music threesome."

The Beaux Arts Trio made its official public debut at the 1955 Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood, now known as the Tanglewood Festival. Among the many concerts the trio regularly performs 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, to name a few. The Beaux Arts Trio also lends distinction season after season 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. New credits include performances in the "December Evenings" Festival in Moscow and appearances in Beethoven's "Triple Concerto" with the Berlin Philharmonic, the Munich Symphony Orchestra, and Washington's National Symphony Orchestra, among others. The 1990-91 season was highlighted by the Beaux Arts Trio's premiere of Ned Rorem's *Spring Music* at Carnegie Hall and their performance of Beethoven's "Triple Concerto" with Rostropovich conducting the National Symphony at the Kennedy Center. In 1991-92, the Trio performs Mr. Rorem's *Spring Music* throughout the United States and abroad and premieres George Rochberg's



trio *Summer, 1990*, commissioned by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

The Beaux Arts 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, the *Gramophone* "Record of the Year," and the *Stereo Review* "Record of the Year" Award.

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, and President Reagan commended the Trio's artistry, giving each member a special silver medallion. Also commemorating the Trio's 30th anniversary season was the book *The Beaux Arts Trio — A Portrait*, written by Nicholas Delbanco and published by William Morrow & Company, which details the individual lives, musical philosophies, and group history of these revered musicians in three decades of superlative music-making.

The Beaux Arts Trio made its Ann Arbor debut in the 1962 Chamber Music Festival and now returns for its seventh performance in Rackham Auditorium.

**Menahem Pressler**, pianist, was born in Magdeburg, Germany, and received most of his musical training in Israel. He began his international career in 1946 when he won First Prize in the Debussy International Piano Competition in San Francisco, an achievement that led to solo appearances with major U.S. orchestras. He made his American debut with The Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Eugene Ormandy, and since then he has made extensive tours throughout the United States and Europe, appearing with many of the major orchestras including those of New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Dallas, as well as in London, Paris, and Brussels.

In 1955, Mr. Pressler first appeared as a chamber music pianist as part of the Beaux Arts Trio debut in Tanglewood. That same year, he commenced his association with Indiana University, where he holds the rank

of Distinguished Professor of Music, and where his teaching has gained him an international reputation enhanced by his many master classes all over the world.

While expanding his field of activity, Mr. Pressler has kept up his appearances as soloist both in recitals and with orchestras. His most recent concerts have taken him to Washington, College Park (Maryland), San Francisco, Miami, Paris, London, Bath, and Zurich, among other cities.

**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 serving in the armed forces. Upon his discharge, he was accepted by The Juilliard School, where he studied with Ivan Galamian. 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 ensembles. He is permanently associated with the Marlboro Festival in Vermont.

**Peter Wiley**, cellist, was born in Utica, New York. A performing member of the Beaux Arts Trio since September 1987, Mr. Wiley began cello studies at age seven, continuing at the Curtis Institute as a student of David Soyer while only 13 years old. He joined the Cincinnati Symphony at age 20 as principal cellist and held that position for eight years. He appeared repeatedly as a soloist with the orchestra, both at home and on tour. Mr. Wiley made his New York recital debut in 1981, and in 1983, he resigned his position in Cincinnati to pursue a career as a soloist and chamber musician. Since then, Mr. Wiley has traveled to concert halls throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Russia, and the Far East. He has appeared as soloist with the New York String Orchestra in Carnegie Hall and at Washington's Kennedy Center. In 1985, the cellist was awarded the prestigious Avery Fisher Career Grant, which led to a highly successful recital at New York's Alice Tully Hall.



Prior to joining the Beaux Arts Trio in 1987, Mr. Wiley's chamber music credits included appearances with the Guarneri Quartet, as well as numerous performances at the world's leading festivals, including those of Naples, Cremona, Angel Fire, and the Chamber Music at the "Y" series. He has been a frequent participant at the Marlboro Music Festival, performing extensively with

the Music from Marlboro touring groups, and it was with Music From Marlboro that Peter Wiley made his Ann Arbor debut in 1985, followed by his first appearance as a member of the Beaux Arts Trio in 1989.

Mr. Wiley's work is found on the Philips, Marlboro Recording Society, and Dynamic labels. His first recording with the Beaux Arts Trio was released recently.



### A limited edition of "Je Pense a Toi," by Emil Weddige

*Internationally acclaimed printmaker and painter Emil Weddige is making available 80 lyrical and colorful prints of his new lithograph "Je Pense a Toi," a work inspired by and created for the University Musical Society. The new lithograph will be on display at Workbench Furniture in Kerrytown from March 8 through April 5, and all proceeds from the sale of the prints and posters will be donated to the Musical Society. For further information, please call (313) 764-8489.*

## The Waverly Consort

Saturday, March 28, 8:00 P.M., Rackham Auditorium

You won't want to miss this extra chamber music concert featuring "The Year 1492: Spanish Music in the Age of Columbus." In 1492, three momentous events occurred in Spain: the Christian conquest of the Iberian peninsula, the expulsion of the Jews, and Christopher Columbus' voyage to the New World.

This program explores the cultural cross-currents around and following 1492 that have contributed to the vibrant and endlessly fascinating character we identify as "Spanish."

For tickets, \$10 to \$20, call the University Musical Society at 313-764-2538.

Free Philips Pre-concert Presentation: David Crawford, *A Musical Voyage to the World of Christopher Columbus*, and Judith Laikin Elkin, *Sepharad - Who?* 6:30 p.m., Rackham.

### UMS Questionnaire — Please Give Us Your Opinions

*Please complete the survey distributed with this evening's concert program. Each concert's survey contains a number of different questions for which we would like your input. Even if you have completed a previous survey, your response tonight is appreciated.*