

Core Memory Music

Trio Gaia

Grant Houston, violin
Yi-Mei Templeman, cello
Andrew Barnwell, piano

April 9, 2022

PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven Piano Trio in B-flat major “Archduke”, Op. 97 1811

1. *Allegro moderato*
2. *Scherzo*
3. *Andante cantabile*
4. *Allegro moderato – Presto*

Intermission

David Nathaniel Baker Roots II 1992

1. *Incantation*
2. *Dance in Congo Square*
3. *Sorrow Song*
4. *Boogie Woogie*
5. *Jubilee*

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Please join us on Saturday, April 23, 2022 to hear Leslie Amper perform *Kreisleriana*, Robert Schumann’s masterpiece for solo piano. Interspersed with the music will be readings of short excerpts from letters of Robert and Clara Schumann written during their courtship.

PROGRAM NOTES

Roots II

In 1978, David Baker composed a work entitled *Roots* which was commissioned by and dedicated to the Beaux Arts Trio. Two movements of *Roots*, “Incantation” and “Sorrow Song”, appear in *Roots II*, a five-movement suite completed in 1992. Each of the five movements is a stylized portrait of a musical form from the African-American tradition. This tradition, which includes work songs, field hollers, blues, ragtime, boogie woogie, rhythm & blues, spirituals, gospel songs, calypso, rock & roll, rap, and of course jazz, provided the rich resources on which the composer drew.

I. Incantation

“Incantation” is an attempt to capture the musical mood of the voodoo rites which had their origins in ancient African traditions. An insistent and persistent drone or vamp is the basis for this movement.

II. Dance in Congo Square

“Dance in Congo Square” is an allusion to the area in nineteenth-century New Orleans where blacks periodically congregated to perform a wide variety of music, dances, and religious rituals that might have been explicitly forbidden in a less liberal environment. This movement is an attempt to capture the spirit and vitality of the music of the West Indies.

III. Sorrow Song

“Sorrow Song” belongs to the tradition of religious music which includes spirituals, laments, and church house moans. It is the plaintive cry of a downtrodden people.

IV. Boogie Woogie

“Boogie Woogie” is a stylized version of a popular black piano music which flourished from roughly 1938 to 1945. Also known as “fast Western,” “juke,” and “rent party music,” this style was based on the blues form and a left hand ostinato. Boogie woogie was the basis of the rhythm & blues and rock & roll of the 1940’s and 1950’s. As in the original, the piano is the focus of this movement.

V. Jubilee

“Jubilee,” reminiscent of the festive celebratory dances which occurred on rare rest days, is perhaps the most complex and abstract of the five movements. It is built on a pedalpoint which represents an attempt to recall the drones that accompanied the sea chanteys of black workers on the levees of the South. The movement is rhythmically and harmonically intense and virtuosic in its scope.

– David Nathaniel Baker

Piano Trio in B-flat major “Archduke”, Op. 97

As with nearly every genre he touched, Beethoven radically transformed the piano trio through a series of evolving works culminating in a grand utterance of vast proportion and emotional depth. He completed his seventh and final multi-movement piano trio in 1811 at the age of forty-one, the Piano Trio in B-flat major, Op. 97. The trio is known as “Archduke” because Beethoven dedicated the work to Archduke Rudolph, the emperor’s brother and a regular piano student of Beethoven’s.

The Archduke Trio is characterized overall by what Melvin Berger calls a new “gemütlichkeit” in Beethoven’s work, a “warm, emotional style with broadly sung, moderately paced melodies and appealing dance rhythms.” There are no epic fugues, no jarring disruptions, no transcendent tangents and no relentless dismantling of music to its fundamental core. Instead, there is bountiful beauty, genial vitality and humor.

– Kai Christiansen, earsense.org