

Musica Viva!



Treble Logo—Marilyn Banner

THE MILO TRIO
Music of Clara and Robert
Schumann
Washington Musica Viva
Saturday, November 2
dcmusicaviva.com



THE MILO TRIO

Carl Banner, piano

Celaya Kirchner, violin

Emma Hays Johnson, cello

Continuing on its series of concerts examining the the development of the piano trio, the Milo Trio returns to its home at Washington Musca Viva. The fourth of the eight-concert series exploring the history and development of the piano trio genre, takes features from the husband and wife team of Clara and Robert Schumann. Their marriage was cut short by Robert's untimely death in 1856, but Clara continued performing until 1889. She died in 1896.

PROGRAM

Clara Schumann

(Sept. 13, 1819–May 20, 1896)

Trio in G minor, Op. 17 (1846)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Scherzo

III. Andante

IV. Allegretto

Robert Schumann

(June 8, 1810–July 29, 1856)

Trio #2 in F, Op. 80 (1847)

I. Sehr lebhaft

II. Mit innigem Ausdruck - Lebhaft

III. In mässiger Bewegung

IV. Nicht zu rasch

PROGRAM NOTES

Clara Schumann, Trio in G minor, Op. 17. Written in 1846, this was the only piano trio she wrote. It was composed during her presence in Dresden 1845–1846. During the development of the Trio, she was going through hardships in life. Her husband was extremely ill. During the summer of 1846, they traveled to Norderney in attempts to improve Robert's health conditions. And while in Norderney, Clara suffered from miscarriage. Nevertheless, the trio was completed. A year after the composition of her piano trio, Robert composed his first piano trio, Op. 63. It is seen that Clara's trio has had great influences on Robert's trio as they both share many interesting similarities. Their works were frequently paired at concerts.

The overall key of the first movement is G Minor, with a lot of modulation



both to closer and more distant keys. The structure of the movement is sonata form (made up of the Exposition, Development, and Recapitulation), with a Codetta and then a Coda. It is in Allegro Moderato. It relies on energy and chromaticism to attract the audience. Throughout the movement, each instrument has its own soloist moment on top of an exceptional balance between three instruments. This balance makes it clear that Clara had a great understanding of writing for these three instruments although she was a pianist.

The 2nd movement consists of three sections; Scherzo, Trio, and Scherzo. The Scherzo is in B-flat major, the same key as the relative major of the first movement, and it is instructed to be played in the "Tempo di minuetto" which means slow, graceful and playful. The melody is often played by the violin, while the cello accompanies the melody through pizzicato as the piano plays chords. These contrasts between the cello and piano successfully create the mood of the "Tempo di minuetto". After Scherzo, a contrasting section, Trio, appears. It is in E-flat major and is more lyrical than Scherzo. However, the overall mood of the piece is still playful. At last, it goes back to Scherzo to finish the movement.

The third movement, Andante, is in G major and begins with eight measures of a piano solo. Soon after, the violin takes over the lovely theme. In the middle of the movement, all three parts play dotted rhythms, which contribute to the contrast of the emotion of the piece. The piece could be described as "bittersweet".

The last movement, Allegretto, is in sonata form again. The opening is similar to the opening theme of the first movement, which resembles "dramatic intensity".

Robert Schumann, Piano Trio No. 2 in F. Marked "Sehr lebhaft" (Very lively), the first movement of this trio is in an ebullient 6/8 meter and cast in sonata form. The hesitant first theme is the almost entirely the property of the violin and cello, which play in parallel throughout. The unusual harmonic adventures that characterize the movement include an emphasis on D major, which becomes the dominant of G major, the harmony of the

increases in the second group, which gives way to an expansive closing theme in the violin over a light accompaniment in the piano. An imitative, contrapuntal episode at the beginning of the development section provides contrast to the homophonic music played thus far, although much of the development is concerned with the lyrical closing theme, which also ends the movement.

Contrapuntal layering occurs at the beginning of the second movement, "Mit innigem Ausdruck" (With intimate expression). Dotted rhythms in the string melody contrast with the constant triplets in the piano part, the left hand of which provides yet another layer of melody. Although it begins in D flat major, the movement quickly shifts to A major for a rapid violin line. A central, "Lively" section introduces new, detached material before the highly modified return to the opening.

A scherzo with canonic tendencies, the third movement, "In mässiger Bewegung" (In a moderate movement), is in 3/8 meter and begins in B flat minor. In contrast to Schumann's first Piano Trio, Op. 63, the triple-meter movement is in third position. The brief canons appear between the violin and cello at the beginning of the movement and the contrasting scherzo theme. In the sparse Trio, the imitative passages are between the piano and cello, just before a transformation of the main scherzo theme. A coda brings the movement to a quiet, hesitant close.

Marked "Nicht zu rasch" (Not too fast), the Finale returns to F major. The dense piano part dominates the movement as each appearance of the opening idea is further transformed.

Adapted from a record jacket by John Palmer

THE MILO TRIO

The Milo trio was formed in 2018 by Carl Banner, Celaya Kirchner and Emma Hayes Johnson, under the auspices of Washington Musica Viva, of which Carl Banner is the executive director. The group came together when Bonnie Thron, principal cellist with the North Carolina Symphony, and occasional

participant in Musica Viva programs, introduced her fellow cellist, Emma Johnson, to Banner, who in turn introduced her close friend Celaya Kirchner to him. Johnson suggested that they form a trio, and the group held their first concert on January 27, 2019, in the home of Richard White, who resides on Milo Avenue in Bethesda, hence the trio gained its name.

A musician since childhood, pianist Carl Banner studied with, among others, Harold Zabrack, Leon Fleisher, Leo Smit, and Leonard Shure, and performed in numerous solo and chamber concerts from the age of 14. In 1964 he was the winner of the Washington, DC, National Society of Arts and Letters Scholarship Award in piano. He continued to perform regularly while earning a PhD in cell biology from Harvard University in 1982. In 1998 he and his wife, artist Marilyn Banner, founded Washington Musica Viva, which to date has produced more than 300 chamber music concerts in the Washington DC area and elsewhere. In 2004, Banner retired from the National Institutes of Health in order to devote full time to music. With Musica Viva, he has produced concerts at the Embassies of the Czech Republic, Germany, Austria, Lithuania, Denmark, Israel, and the European Union, as well as at the Kennedy Center, New York's Czech Center, and the Donnell Library. He has also performed at the Wellfleet Preservation Hall and Public Library in Wellfleet, Mass. where his father, Paul, is a long-time resident.

Cellist Emma Hays Johnson currently resides near the DC and Baltimore areas after recently finishing her second master's degree under the tutelage of Edward Arron at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. In addition to freelancing, Emma has been a member of several notable orchestras including the Spartanburg Philharmonic Orchestra and the American Festival Pops Orchestra. Her most recent performances include solo and chamber recitals and tours in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Virginia, and the Carolinas as well as France and Sri Lanka. As a chamber musician, she has worked alongside Xiao-Dong Wang, Hye-Jin Kim, Ara Gregorian, Colin Carr, Emanuel Gruber, and Raman Ramakrishnan. Prior to her engagements in Massachusetts, she held the position of adjunct professor at

Beaufort County Community College in North Carolina while also maintaining a private studio and freelancing. Emma studied at Converse College and George Mason University under the tutelage of Kenneth Law, and she graduated with her first Master's degree from East Carolina University under the instruction of Emanuel Gruber.

Celaya Kirchner currently resides in Northern Virginia after receiving her Masters in Violin Performance from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst under the tutelage of renowned pedagogue Elizabeth Chang. There she received a string quartet fellowship, performing four chamber music recitals and playing in masterclasses for members of the Cleveland Quartet, Ying Quartet, and Dover Quartet as well as many others. For her undergraduate degree, Ms. Kirchner studied with David Salness, of the Left Bank Quartet, at the University of Maryland. She also attended numerous summer chamber music festivals, including Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, Bowdoin International Music Festival, Meadowmount School of Music, and Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music. In the summer of 2018, Ms. Kirchner travelled to Piobbico, Italy to participate in the Brancaloni International Music Festival, performing in a 13th century castle as well as in other venues in the Marche region. Ms. Kirchner also enjoys orchestral playing, regularly performing with the Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra as well as participating in the National Orchestral Institute and Festival. In her teaching, Ms. Kirchner likes to focus on establishing a good technical foundation while also establishing skills for musical expression. Because why learn all of this technique if we don't use it to express ourselves? Ms. Kirchner also hopes to impart onto her students her passion for chamber music and the importance of learning chamber music skills.

Marilyn Banner. Marilyn is the artist whose music-related paintings grace the cover of these programs. She is a rising star among the artists who work in the "encaustic medium" in the DC area. Spend a little time browsing her works on her web site at **marilynbanner.com**.



Marilyn has participated in many individual as well as juried shows of her work, in the DC area and in New York. Also, her work is featured in the recently published **Encaustic Art in the 21st Century** by Anne Lee

Washington Musica Viva produces high quality, unpretentious public performances of a broad range of classical, jazz-based, and contemporary chamber music. WMV began as a monthly multi-disciplinary performance series in the Kensington studio of visual artist Marilyn Banner. Now in our 21st season, WMV has produced more than 300 programs, including performances at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage, the Czech Center in NY, the Embassy of the Czech Republic, the Embassy of Austria, Busboys and Poets, Twins Jazz Club, and the Brooklyn Conservatory. WMV is directed by pianist Carl Banner. Participants include professional musicians from Washington, Baltimore, New York, and elsewhere.

Washington Musica Viva, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, and all contributions are fully tax-deductible. WMV can be reached at 301-891-6844 or **dcmusicaviva@verizon.net**. Our mailing address is WMV, 7502 Flower Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912.

Program notes and composer pictures are adapted from material available online. Where available, names of original authors are provided with the text.

Program design by Hugh Haskell

Suggestions for improvement are welcome at haskellh@verizon.net.