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Kandinsky Trio

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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Kandinsky Trio

Elizabeth Bachelder, piano
Alan Weinstein, cello
Benedict Goodfriend, violin

Connie Regan-Blake, storyteller

This concert has been made possible, in part, by a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

The Kandinsky Trio is Ensemble in Residence at Roanoke College and a member ensemble of Chamber Music America.
Trio in C Major, Hob. XV No. 27 (1797)  
Franz Joseph Haydn  
(1732-1809)

Allegro  
Andante  
Presto

Tales of Appalachia:  
The Cantankerous Blacksmith (1995)*  
for piano trio and storyteller  
Mike Reid  
(b. 1948)

INTERMISSION

Trio in G minor Op. 15 (1855)  
Bedrich Smetana  
(1824-1884)

Moderato assai  
Allegro, ma non agitato  
Finale: Presto

*Tales of Appalachia was commissioned for the Kandinsky Trio by:  
The Center for the Performing Arts  
at Penn State University (Lead Commissioner),  
Portland Concert Association (MF),  
The Fine Arts Center at the University of Massachusetts,  
Litchfield Performing Arts (CT),  
Miller Theatre at Columbia University (NY),  
Harrisburg Area Community College (PA),  
Shepherd College (WV), Appalachian State University (NC),  
and the Music Foundation of Spartanburg (SC).
One of only five piano trios ever to win the prestigious Chamber Music America Residency Award, the Kandinsky Trio has appeared in recital, on radio and television broadcasts and conducted residencies across the United States and Canada. The ensemble has collaborated with numerous internationally acclaimed artists such as soprano Dawn Upshaw, bassist James VanDemark, composer Gunther Schuller and the Cavani Quartet. Currently, the trio is ensemble-in-residence at historic Roanoke College in Virginia.

Master storyteller Connie Regan-Blake has captivated the hearts and imaginations of audiences around the globe with her powerful performances and workshops. Her performances have enchanted concert goers and school children of all ages in North America, Europe, and Asia. She has been featured on five award-winning recordings and two videos produced by PBS and has been praised by New Age Magazine, School Library Journal, Southern Living, on NPR and CNN.

Composer Mike Reid is one of America’s most recorded and most respected artists. He holds the unique distinction of being both a former all-pro football star and a two-time Grammy Award winner. Mike composed the critically acclaimed song-cycle Quilts for the Tennessee Dance Theater and his musical House Divided premiered to enthusiastic audiences at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center in 1994. His one-act opera for OperaMemphis, New York’s Metropolitan Opera, and the Tennessee Bicentennial premiered in 1996.
Program Notes

Franz Joseph Haydn - Trio in C Major Hob. XV No. 27

Franz Joseph Haydn's longevity allowed him a career that spanned from the earliest formulative stages of the classical period to more than halfway through Beethoven's dramatic ushering-in of the Romantic era. Although Haydn is credited with being a major influence on the music of Mozart and Beethoven, his late works show signs of a backlash of influence by these "later" composers. Such is the case with the Trio in C Major written in 1797, when Beethoven was already 27 years old.

The opening Allegro is a highly virtuosic movement marked by the sharp contrasts of mood characteristic of Beethoven. The following movement, an Andante in the key of A Major, begins conservatively enough as a typical ornamented Haydn slow movement. The middle section, in A minor, is by contrast of a more tempestuous nature. The concluding Presto is a devilish movement full of the peasant humor both Beethoven and Haydn were fond of portraying.

Mike Reid - Tales of Appalachia: The Cantankerous Blacksmith

The Music

For me, the most attractive aspect of chamber music is its quality of intimacy, similarly, there are few experiences in life as satisfying as sitting in a roomful of people and having a wonderful story told to you. Tales of Appalachia is a piece that attempts to combine these two personal art forms into one. But, what exactly do we call this form? Is it a piano trio with storyteller or a story with trio accompaniment? In a broader sense, one might be tempted to call "Tales" a theatre piece. As the composer, I approach the work from a theatrical perspective in that I felt it imperative that the story inform the music. By that I mean the story must tell the music just what emotional landscape is being traversed. However, once informed the music must then drive the piece. Ultimately, it's on the shifting currents of the music that the story rides. More importantly, it is vital that this trio of musicians not be relegated to the role of simply underscoring the words.

Perhaps the question of what to call the integration of the "music" of words with the music of instruments is one with no answer. In the end, it doesn't really matter. For the Kandinsky Trio, Connie Regan-Blake and
myself, our hope is that we’ve created a piece where the language of spoken words and music meet at their respective strengths. If the elements of “Tales of Appalachia” stray a bit from the tracitional, the intent remains the same – the intimate experience that is chamber music.

- Mike Reid

_The History_

When the Europeans began settling in the Southern Appalachian Mountains over two centuries ago, they brought their trunks and quilts...and their stories. The characters that peopled these stories have roamed the hills and hollers ever since. My version of the “Cantankerous Blacksmith” (also known as “Wicked John”) is inspired by Barbara Freeman, one of the leading contemporary tellers, and Ray Hicks, a mountain-man considered to be the patriarch of American traditional storytelling. You can hear my Scotch-Irish roots and southern upbringing that inspire all my storytelling images.

Storytelling is as old as language itself, and as new as today’s events. It is in the telling and listening and re-telling that we keep the tradition alive. So I invite you to “pass it on!”

_A written version collected by Richard Chase can be found in Grandfather Tales, published by Houghton Mifflin_

- Connie Regan-Blake

**Bedrich Smetana - Trio in G minor, Op. 15**

The Czech composer Bedrich Smetana wrote his only piano trio in 1855, following the death of his oldest daughter. Although only 4 and a half, his firstborn child Bedriska was extraordinarily gifted, and seemed destined to carry her father’s musical talents to the next generation. Smetana wrote, “Nothing can replace Fritzi, the angel whom death has stolen from us.” Throughout the trio, Smetana’s grief takes the form of rage rather than despair. Nostalgic themes and an occasional funeral march remind us of his madness. Although composed in the minor key, many brighter episodes occur as the composer remembers happier times in his daughter’s short life. Optimism prevails at the end, as the music moves from minor to major in a triumphant close.
Upcoming Events

Richard Becker, piano
Sunday, January 26 at 3pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music
~ Performing Debussy's Preludes, Book 1, Chopin's Nocturne in B-Flat minor and Scherzo in E Major, Liszt's Mephisto Waltz and his original work, Three Preludes for Piano

LECTURE - Filmmaker Spike Lee
Monday, January 27, 1997 at 8pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music
Presented by the Jepson Leadership Forum
~ In conjunction with "The Year of the Arts," Spike Lee will discuss the impact his works have on society and our culture. His films, including "School Daze," "Do the Right Thing," "Malcolm X," and "Crooklyn," have solidified his position as an eminent maker of films portraying the lives of ordinary and extraordinary black Americans.

Shanghai Quartet
Wednesday, January 29 at 8pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music

Charlottesville Gamelan Ensemble
Saturday, February 1, 1997 at 3pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music
~ Performing traditional gamelan pieces as well as demonstrating the individual instruments

Harlem Spiritual Ensemble
Sunday, February 2, 1997 at 8pm
Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts
~ This ensemble, which is devoted to the preservation of the American Negro Spiritual, is scheduled in celebration of Black History Month.

Our Young Men Are Dying And Nobody Seems To Care
Monday, February 10, 1997, 7:30pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music
~ A contemporary play about issues facing African-American men
King Lear, starring Ralph Waite
February 13-15, 1997 at 8pm and February 16, 1997 at 2pm
Jepson Theatre
~ Famed screen and stage actor Ralph Waite joins the University Players as Tucker-Boatwright Artist-in-Residence to play the powerful King Lear.
(tickets: $7 adults, $6 seniors/students)

Jeanette Thompson, soprano
Wednesday, February 19, 1997 at 8pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music
~ Performing works by American composers, including a selection of spirituals in celebration of Black History Month
(tickets: $10 adults, $8 seniors, $5 students)

Michael Davison, trumpet and Anne Lewis, piano
Sunday, February 23, 1997 at 8pm
Camp Concert Hall, Booker Hall of Music
~ Featuring works by Alexander Arutunian, Gershwin, Johan Pezel, Herman Bellstedt and Meg Bowles

Shanghai Quartet with Ruth Laredo, piano
Monday, February 24, 1997 at 8pm
Carpenter Center for the Performing Arts
~ Featuring Brahms Piano Quintet in F minor, Opus 34

All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. For ticket information, please call the Modlin Center Box Office at 289-8980.

Stop by the Marsh Art Gallery while you are in the Modlin Center for

January 11 - March 2, 1997
Marsh Art Gallery

Sponsored by Philip Morris, Inc. and starting a national tour, the exhibition focuses on the importance of still-life painting throughout this century with masterworks from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The still life is defined and explored thematically through the works of fifty-nine renowned artists, including Stuart Davis, Jim Dine, Janet Fish, Marsden Hartley, Franz Kline, Georgia O’Keeffe and Mark Tansey.
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Please remember to silence digital watches and paging devices before the performance. Doctors expecting emergency calls should register with the House Manager. The use of cameras - with or without flash - recorders or other electronic devices inside the theatres is strictly prohibited. No eating, drinking or smoking is allowed inside the theatres or galleries.

Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of house management.