



2024/2025
77th SEASON

**Friends of Chamber Music present the Han Finckel Setzer Trio in concert
at the Vancouver Playhouse, Tuesday, February 18, 2024 – 7:30 pm**

**“In appreciation of Eric Wilson’s lifelong dedication and commitment to the
Friends of Chamber music and the Vancouver Academy of Music”
– with thanks to anonymous concert sponsors**

Han Finckel Setzer Trio
Wu Han, piano
Philip Setzer, violin
David Finckel, cello



Pianist **Wu Han** and cellist **David Finckel** are past co-recipients of Musical America’s Musician of the Year Award. They are Co-Artistic Directors of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, New York City, and Music@Menlo, in California. Regular recitalist partners in concert, they also launched ArtistLed, classical music’s first artist-directed, internet-based recording label. They are both passionately dedicated to music education for people of all ages and experience. Both guide CMS’s Bowers Program, which admits stellar young musicians to the CMS roster for three seasons, and both oversee Music@Menlo’s summer Chamber Music Institute for emerging musicians.

Wu Han also serves as Artistic Advisor for Wolf Trap’s Chamber Music at the Barns series and for Palm Beach’s Society of the Four Arts, and is Artistic Director of La Musica in Sarasota, Florida. In addition to countless chamber music programmes with Mr. Finckel and other significant artists, she has played concertos with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Atlanta Symphony and the Aspen Festival Orchestra. She now has more than 80 releases on the ArtistLed, CMS Live and Music@Menlo LIVE labels, including masterworks of the chamber repertoire with many distinguished musicians.

David Finckel was the cellist with the Emerson String Quartet for 34 years, performing all over the world and making recordings including quartet cycles by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Dvořák, Brahms, Bartók, and Shostakovich, as well as collaborative masterpieces and commissioned works. The Quartet received an Avery Fisher Prize and nine Grammy Awards while he was a member. He continues to play and record as a recitalist and guest artist. His catalog with ArtistLed of more than 20 releases includes the standard literature for cello and piano (with Wu Han), plus works

specially composed for the duo. Mr. Finckel's orchestral recordings include both the Dvořák and Harbison cello concertos. He is currently a professor at both the Juilliard School and Stony Brook University. Mr. Finckel has developed a special free *Resource* section on his website (davidfinckelandwuhan.com/resource) to provide guidance for students about both music studies and careers, as well as invaluable information for arts organizations and individuals about every aspect of presenting concerts. David's 100 online lessons on cello technique, Cello Talks, are viewed by an international audience of musicians (cellotalks.com).

Violinist **Philip Setzer**, a founding member of the Emerson String Quartet, was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and began studying violin at the age of five with his parents, both former violinists in the Cleveland Orchestra. He later studied with Josef Gingold, Rafael Druian, and at Juilliard with Oscar Shumsky. As a member of the quartet for 47 years, he received nine Grammy Awards for recordings, an Avery Fisher Prize, and regularly played concerts on five continents. Currently a Distinguished Professor of Violin and Chamber Music at SUNY Stony Brook, Mr. Setzer also is on faculty teaching violin and is the Artistic Director of Strings Chamber Music at the Cleveland Institute of Music. In 2024, he was appointed Artistic Director of the Manchester Music Festival in Vermont. He is also the Director of the Shouse Institute, the teaching division of the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival in Detroit. A versatile musician with innovative vision and dedication to the continued relevance of the string quartet, Mr. Setzer was the co-creator of the Emerson's two highly-praised collaborative theater productions: *The Noise of Time* (2001), was a multi-media production about the life of Shostakovich that was performed 60 times worldwide; *Shostakovich and the Black Monk: A Russian Fantasy* (2016), performed at the Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, Tanglewood Music Festival, Princeton University, Wolf Trap, Ravinia Festival, Lotte Concert Hall in Seoul, Korea, and Stony Brook University. Mr. Setzer also tours and records the piano trio repertoire with David Finckel and Wu Han. He plays a violin made for him in 2011 by Samuel Zygmuntowicz.

Wu Han, David Finckel and Philip Setzer appear by arrangement with David Rowe Artists.

With thanks to the Vancouver Recital Society for the use of their instrument, Wu Han performs on a Steinway Piano.

Programme

Piano Trio No. 18 in A major

Allegro moderato

Andante

Allegro

Franz Josef Haydn (1732-1809)

In 1761, when he was 29, Joseph Haydn was appointed the Vice-Kapellmeister to the prominent Hungarian Esterházy family. This appointment had a considerable effect not only on Haydn, but on the history of Western music. The Esterházy's influence and substantial wealth would sustain Haydn for five decades and allow his talent and creativity to blossom with remarkable results.

In the 1790s, Haydn made two successful trips to London; he completed some of his finest symphonies during this period (thereafter collectively known as the "London" Symphonies), achieving celebrity status largely on their merit. While in London between 1794 and 1795, Haydn also composed a dozen piano trios, including this one in A Major. During his career, Haydn composed approximately forty-five piano trios, elevating the genre to a new level of sophistication. Before Haydn, the piano trio was a piano-centric medium, consisting of a violin obligato and the cello doubling the left hand of the piano. In the A Major Piano Trio, we hear Haydn's remarkable innovations, with each instrument given an equal role.

The Trio begins with three strong chords, then flowing gracefully into the Allegro moderato's opening subject, exhibiting a gentle character. Haydn's remarkable wit and craft is on full display in the development section, as the music glides gracefully through surprising key areas. The second movement, Andante, begins in the key of A Minor, eventually finding its way back to A Major in the lyrical middle section. The final movement, which begins without pause, is characteristic of the fleeting brilliance of many of Haydn's finales. The music dances along, highlighted by frequent syncopations before the trio's delightful conclusion.

—© Isaac Thompson

Piano Trio in G Major, Op. 1, No. 2

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Adagio-Allegro vivace

Largo con espressione

Scherzo (Allegro)

Finale (Presto)

Beethoven's Piano Trio in G Major, Opus 1, No. 2 is the least frequently performed of his three Opus 1 trios, and consequently is the least known, despite its excellence, which seems unfair. One could perhaps make a similar case for the G Major Trio, relative to its two siblings, as Beethoven made twenty years later for his Eighth Symphony, when told that it failed to meet the same acclaim as the Seventh—to which the temperamental composer retorted, "That's because it's so much better!"

If the E-flat Trio, Op. 1, No. 1 is the most firmly situated in the realm of Haydnesque and Mozartian Classicism, and the C Minor Trio, Op. 1, No. 3 the most brazenly forward-looking, then the Trio in G Major, Op. 1, No. 2 captures, like a time-lapse video of day turning to night, the metamorphosis of Beethoven's creative impulses towards the "new path" his music would soon pursue.

The Trio begins with a luxurious Adagio introduction: a hazy reverie, which is nevertheless of structural importance, as the violin's opening melodic figure foreshadows the movement's first theme. Even once the music enters into its main Allegro vivace section, this buoyant theme doesn't appear in full until several measures in—so long a runway does it need before taking flight. Beethoven's restless approach to thematic development is already evident in the movement's exposition; the proper development section itself traverses a remarkably wide spectrum of expressive characters. This is a movement marked by its great breadth of musical materials; though it has the trappings of the sonata form innovated by Haydn, it leaves us with the impression that that form was insufficient to contain Beethoven's imagination. The movement concludes with a rich coda, continuing on past an emphatic cadence that would have made for a wholly satisfying conclusion, like the bonus of extra innings after nine frames of riveting baseball.

The Trio's centerpiece, however, is the second movement, poetically marked Largo con espressione—"unexcelled," writes Lewis Lockwood, "by the slow movement of any piano trio written up to this time, and for sheer lyrical beauty it outdoes those of [Beethoven's] early piano sonatas." The three instruments (four voices, given the independence of the pianist's left and right hands) synergistically share phrases, weaving a rich polyphonic texture that looks ahead to the most deeply felt chamber scores of the coming century.

The Scherzo movement, as genial as it is brief, bridges the profundity of the slow movement to the lighthearted finale. The ebullience of the main theme, marked by fast repeated notes, doesn't abate even for the movement's more cantabile moments, and drives the Trio to its conclusion with a wide grin.

—© Patrick Castillo

Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 90 "Dumky"

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904)

Lento maestoso - Allegro vivace, quasi doppio movimento

Poco adagio - Vivace non troppo

Andante - Vivace non troppo

Andante moderato - Allegretto scherzando - Allegro

Allegro

Lento maestoso - Vivace

Antonín Dvořák's "Dumky" Trio premiered on April 11, 1891, in Prague, on the occasion of his receiving an honorary doctorate from Charles University. The performance was given by violinist Ferdinand Lachner, cellist Hanus Wihan, and the composer at the piano.

The Bohemian composer Dvořák personifies two important artistic movements of the latter half of the Nineteenth Century. His music contains the hallmarks of Western European Romanticism, largely through the influence of his friend and mentor Johannes Brahms. But Dvořák's mature works also incorporate elements of Czech folk music. The widespread popularity of these mature pieces placed Dvořák at the forefront of the Eastern European nationalist movement, whose proponents also included Bedřich Smetana, Leoš Janáček, and a generation later, Béla Bartók.

The Opus 90 Piano Trio, "Dumky", dates from the end of Dvořák's 'nationalistic period', from the 1880s through the early 1890s. Dvořák began work on the "Dumky Trio" in November 1890 and completed it on February 12, 1891, shortly before traveling to the United States. It was the last of his five piano trios. The term "Dumky" (the plural of "dumka") refers to a traditional Slavic (first documented as Ukrainian) epic ballad, often melancholic or thoughtful. Dvořák and other nationalist Slavic composers appropriated the dumka into their wholly instrumental chamber works, turning it into a musical symbol of their Slavic heritage.

Reflecting the episodic elements of the epic ballad in their instrumental music, composers transformed the dumka by juxtaposing its initial plaintive character with a faster, more joyful section following. This pattern emerges immediately in the first movement of Dvořák's "Dumky" Trio, as the anguished cry that opens the work soon gives way to a joyful dance. In this and subsequent movements, the abrupt contrast between angst and glee serves to accentuate the emotive quality of each section.

The second dumka similarly juxtaposes two diametrically contrasting musical ideas. It begins like a funeral march with steady, somber chords in the piano. The cello presents the elegiac melody, which the violin colors with muted chords. Dvořák achieves an acute poignancy at the start by mixing major and minor tonalities. For a contrasting central section, this funereal music gives way to a vivacious folk dance. Midway through the movement, Dvořák gives the cello a lyrical cadenza, brief but full of pathos. Following the cadenza, Dvořák reprises both of the dumka's contrasting musical ideas.

The piano begins the third movement with a sweet lullaby introduction of unaccompanied single notes, as if being improvised by a child. The violin and cello then mimic this innocent theme with muted strings. Dvořák fashions the rest of the movement on variations of this theme, with the instrumental texture becoming increasingly rich. The contrasting Vivace section of this dumka, unlike in the previous two movements, uses the Andante melody, transforming it into a gypsy dance.

The fourth movement, marked Andante moderato (quasi tempo di marcia), presents a thoughtful, sweeping cello melody above the steady accompaniment in the piano and violin. A brief section marked

Allegretto scherzando interrupts, but only for a moment before the violin and piano resume their march-like ostinato.

Following the short and exuberant fifth movement, the work closes with a bittersweet finale, simultaneously gentle and world-weary. The dumka's contrasting section here is simply a reimagined setting of the first theme.

—© Patrick Castillo

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Next Concerts, both at the Vancouver Playhouse:

Notos Quartet

Sunday, March 2, 2025 – 3:00 pm

Mozart: Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, K 493

Walton: Piano Quartet in D Minor

Schumann: Piano Quartet in E-flat Major, Opus 47

Pavel Haas Quartet

Sunday, March 16, 2025 – 3:00 pm

Martinů: String Quartet No. 3

Korngold: String Quartet No. 2, Opus 26

Dvořák: String Quartet No. 11 in C Major, Opus 61