

PCMS Preview Notes

Roberto Díaz & Meng-Chieh Liu: Friday, April 30, 2010 – 8:00 PM
American Philosophical Society

Background

Roberto Díaz is the former principal violist of the Philadelphia Orchestra and President of the Curtis Institute. As a renowned recitalist and professor of viola at Curtis, he follows in the footsteps of renowned soloist/directors such as Rudolf Serkin and Gary Graffman. In addition to regular recitals, he is frequently heard as a member of the Díaz Trio.

Program

Quartet for Guitar and Strings in A Minor (Artists TBA)

Niccolò Paganini

Born: October 27, 1782 in Genoa, Italy

Died: May 27, 1840 in Nice, France

Composed: 1813–18

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 22 minutes

Best known as one of the world's finest ever virtuoso violinists, Paganini also wrote a substantial amount of music for the guitar. In total he composed 15 quartets for strings and guitar.

Viola Sonata, Op. 25, No. 1

Paul Hindemith

Born: November 16, 1895 in Hanau, Germany

Died: December 28, 1963 in Frankfurt, Germany

Composed: 1922

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 15 minutes

Though he famously composed sonatas for every orchestral instrument, Paul Hindemith was by training a string player. The viola was his favorite instrument, and he composed extensively for it.

Viola Sonata in C Minor, Op. 147

Dmitri Shostakovich

Born: September 25, 1906, in St. Petersburg, Russia

Died: August 9, 1975, in Moscow, Russia

Composed: 1975

Last PCMS performance: PCMS premiere

Duration: 32 minutes

This was Shostakovich's last work, completed about a month before his death. For all the suffering he endured in his last days, the composer did not invest it with the morbid and gloomy moods found in most of the late quartets, instead characterizing the music as "bright and clear."