

PHILADELPHIA CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

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PREVIEW
NOTES

David Shifrin, *clarinet*

Peter Wiley, *cello*

Anna Polonsky, *piano*

Sunday, December 8 – 3 PM

American Philosophical Society

PROGRAM

Clarinet Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 11

Ludwig van Beethoven

Born: December 16, 1770, in Bonn, Electorate of Cologne

Died: March 26, 1827, in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1709

Duration: 21 minutes

Beethoven first acquired his reputation after arriving in Vienna in 1792 as a pianist, a flamboyant young man of untamed spirit particularly noted for the power and invention of his improvisations. Some of the compositions from the years immediately following show his eagerness to stretch the boundaries of the conventional forms and modes of expression, but most of his music of the 1790s still pays eager obeisance to the traditions and taste of the time. Such a work is the Trio for Piano, Clarinet and Cello, Op. 11, composed in 1798

Clarinet Trio

Nino Rota

Born: December 3, 1911, in Milan, Italy

Died: April 10, 1979, in Rome, Italy

Composed: 1973

Duration: 16 minutes

Rota, a leading composer of lyrical and neo-Romantic concert music in Italy, was nonetheless most widely known for producing a large catalogue of film scores. His most famous cinematic association, however, was that with Federico Fellini, who relied on Rota to score nearly every film he ever directed. Cinema fans may sense in the final movement a strong association with Rota's film music. The humor of the composer's writing in the *Allegro* recalls, perhaps, one of the many circus-like, off-kilter scenes so characteristic of Fellini's films.

Trio [Arr.]

Francis Poulenc

Born: January 7, 1899, in Paris, France

Died: January 30, 1963, in Paris, France

Composed: 1926

Duration: 13 minutes

During the 1920s Poulenc consciously began to pursue a neo-Classical ideal, fashioning many of his works in the molds of Stravinsky and late Debussy. In his Trio for piano, oboe and bassoon -- the composer's first true chamber work -- he imitated the French Baroque style, with its emphasis on clarity, balance, simplicity and a generous dose of humor. In a letter to the critic Claude Rostand, Poulenc admitted that "I love my Trio because it sounds clear and it is well balanced."

Clarinet Trio in A Minor, Op. 114

Johannes Brahms

Born: May 7, 1833, in Hamburg, Germany

Died: April 3, 1897, in Vienna, Austria

Composed: 1891

Duration: 25 minutes

The Clarinet Trio is the first of four chamber works inspired by the principal clarinetist of the Meiningen Court Orchestra, Richard Mühlfeld. It was in 1891 that Brahms, while on a week-long stay at the Meiningen court in March, asked Mühlfeld to perform privately for him. Apparently Brahms was impressed, and in November he returned to Meiningen with two new works in hand -- the Trio for clarinet, cello and piano, Op. 114, and the Quintet for clarinet and strings, Op. 115.