



**2008-2009 Season
Program II**

**Daniel Banner, violin
John Chisholm, violin
Christina King, viola
Gina Feinauer, viola
Barbara Andres, cello
Marc Shapiro, piano**

**Grace Presbyterian Church
December 14, 2008 3pm**



Gideon Klein
(1919 – 1945)

String Trio
(1944)

- I Allegro
- II Variations on a Moravian Folksong
- III Molto vivace

Daniel Banner, violin Christina King, viola
Barbara Andres, cello

Paul Juon
(1872 - 1940)

Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello in A minor Op. 17
(1901)

- I Allegro
- II Adagio ma non troppo
- III Rondo (Allegro)

John Chisholm, violin Barbara Andres, cello
Marc Shapiro, piano

Intermission

Johannes Brahms
(1833 – 1897)

String Quintet No. 1 in F Major, Op. 88
for two violins, two violas, and cello (1882)

- I Allegro non troppo ma con brio
- II Grave ed appassionato – Allegro vivace - Presto
- III Allegro energico – Presto

John Chisholm, violin Daniel Banner, violin
Christina King, viola Gina Feinauer, viola
Barbara Andres, cello



The program notes for these concerts have been aimed at presenting information on the composer's life, or the circumstances surrounding the particular work's genesis. (Descriptive, and in my view, meaningless verbiage about work you will presently hear, serves no purpose other than providing a writer with something to write, verbal variations on a piece of music.) The circumstances surrounding Klein's String Trio are probably the most extreme we will have encountered in all the programs thus far presented.

Gideon Klein (1919 – 1945)
String Trio (1944)

The work you will presently hear was composed in the Nazi concentration camp of Theresienstadt.

When the Nazis invaded Czechoslovakia, the former garrison town of Terezin, a short distance north of Prague, was converted into a concentration camp. Theresienstadt differed from the other death factories in that its function was to deceive the Jews under German occupation, the international community (which, I suggest was all too willing to believe) and the International Red Cross into believing that this camp was a typical concentration camp. The Nazis went as far as producing a propaganda film entitled "The Fuhrer Presents the Jews with a City." For this film, the inmates were forced to perform and the camp fitted out with fake building facades, ala Disneyland to portray Theresienstadt as a paradise ghetto. This farce took place in 1944. However, when the camp opened in 1941, instruments were smuggled into the camp, and performances were given in secret. The Nazis found that by permitting cultural activities, though strictly censored, they could better control the population. To this end, the "Administration for Free Time Activities" was set up by the SS command and run by the prisoners, many of whom were gifted musicians, artists and writers. The other function of Theresienstadt was as a way station to the gas chambers of Auschwitz. Prisoners were routinely shipped off at a moment's notice, as was Gideon Klein.

Gideon Klein was born in 1919 in Prerov, Czechoslovakia, a Moravian Jew. He studied composition with Alois Haba at the Prague Conservatory and musicology at Charles University in Prague. He was forced to discontinue his studies in 1940 because of the Nuremberg Laws. Since compositions and performances by Jewish musicians were banned, his own works could not be played, though he continued in his career as concert pianist by assuming several pseudonyms. Klein was sent to Theresienstadt a month after it opened in 1941. He was very active in all aspects of the musical life in the camp. He formed chamber ensembles, organized solo concerts and performed the works of Bach, Mozart, Brahms, and his countryman, Janacek, as well as his own compositions and those of other composers living in the camp.



The String Trio was Gideon Klein's last composition, completed on October 9, 1944, nine days before he was shipped off to Auschwitz, and not published until 1993. It is a tribute to Klein and the human spirit that such a wonderful life-affirming work could be written under such circumstances. The first and third movements of this three movement work are filled with allusions to Moravian folk music, and indeed the second movement is a set of variations on a Moravian folk song. It is work which compares favorably with that of Janacek, Kodaly, and Szymanowski in its treatment of folk elements woven into a personal style. Klein died in the Furstengrubbe concentration camp January 1945 at the age of 25. We must not forget how he died, but we must remember Gideon Klein for the music he gave us.

"Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look long into the abyss, the abyss also looks into you."

Friedrich Nietzsche

"Over his work, just as over his life, hangs the shadow of homelessness: not Swiss, not Russian, not German; not Romantic, not Modernist, not Folklorist. And yet he was a little of all of these: and more, because he was a sincere and humanly impressive personality."

Claus-Christian Schuster

Paul Juon (1872 - 1940)
Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello in A minor Op. 17 (1901)

Paul Juon (pronounced "You win" - though that might be how it sounds if you are afflicted with a Lon Gisland accent; Kallifornians probably pronounce it "You won") was a very successful and well respected composer during his lifetime. Born in Moscow to a German mother and Swiss father, he attended the Moscow Conservatory where he studied composition with Taneyev and Arensky (teachers of Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, Medtner et.al.) He completed his musical studies at the High School for Music in Berlin (Berlin Conservatory), where he was awarded the Mendelssohn Prize.

Following this, he briefly taught violin and theory at the Baku Conservatory in Baku, Azerbaijan. He then returned to Berlin in 1897 where from 1901-03 he held the Berlin Franz Liszt scholarship. His work attracted the attention of the music publisher Robert Lienau, who brought out editions of his works. In addition, in 1906 Brahms's buddy, Joseph Joachim, hired him to teach at the Berlin Conservatory, where in 1911 he was appointed professor of composition; a post he held until he left Germany in 1934. In 1919, he was elected a member of the Berlin Academy of Arts. In 1929 the Prussian Academy of Arts awarded him the prestigious Beethoven Prize for his corpus of work.



Citing health reasons, not to mention the political climate of the emerging Third Reich, Juon and his family emigrated to Switzerland where he lived out the rest of his life.

In his article in the fifth edition of Grove's, Edwin Evans writes; "Juon's style is an interesting blend of Russian and German, the material being almost invariably Slav in character, while the treatment thoroughly German, leaning often toward Brahms. His powers of development are strong and characterized by solidity of thought, while the danger of heaviness is cleverly avoided by the use of an exceptional rhythmic ingenuity, probably as Slav in its origin as the themes he uses. He relied to a large extent on contrapuntal device, at which he was an adept, but he occasionally allowed himself to drift into sequential passages (shades of Tchaikovsky & Rachmaninoff) which are lacking in interest, and he had an inordinate love for the variation form." (That's like saying a writer has an "inordinate" love of verbs or nouns.)

While Juon composed orchestral works, concerti, piano music and choral works, chamber music comprises a substantial amount of his musical compositions. Among the varied chamber works, are six piano trios. The work to be heard today is the first of his piano trios. Indeed it is the most "Russian". It is a highly-colored work (and speaking of color, Paul Juon's younger brother Konstantin, was one of the foremost Russian painters at the beginning of the 20th Century) filled with exciting rhythms, modal harmonies, and lovely, exotic melodies at times ala Borodin. The integration of the three instruments is masterful. The movements are concise, never wearing out their welcome. I think you will enjoy the "discovery" of this forgotten master.

Johannes Brahms (1833 – 1897)
String Quintet No. 1 in F Major, Op.88 (1882)
for two violins, two violas, and cello

As might be expected of Brahms, this string quintet designated "No.1" was not his first attempt in this medium. He tried his hand at a string quintet, though with two cellos instead of two violas as in this work, twenty years earlier. He was dissatisfied with the piece, re-wrote it for two pianos, was still not happy with the result; rewrote it yet again, where it attained its final form as his Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34.

This work was composed in the spring of 1882 during a stay at the fashionable spa and resort town of Bad Ischl. The first movement is a lovely, relaxed warm-hued piece; achieved no doubt by a palette employing two violas. While in the typical first movement sonata allegro form, Brahms employs less than usual key relationships in his succession of themes.

The second movement is interesting and unusual for a few reasons. It's principle theme is taken from a Sarabande (a 17th – 18th slow dance in triple meter) for piano written by Brahms in 1855.



The movement is basically a rondo, where the sarabande theme appears and reappears three times, interspersed with another 17th - 18th century dance-inspired piece; a Gavotte (a graceful, though animated dance in moderate 4/4 time), also written for piano by Brahms. The result is a movement that combines both the usual slow movement with a scherzo all in one. The use of these old dance forms brings to mind the fact that Brahms was perhaps the first and one of the few great composers who could be considered a musicologist and music scholar. In his biography of Brahms, Karl Geiringer writes; "His antiquarian interests and tendencies went far deeper than any other of the great masters of music. He possessed the works of the most important musical theorists, beginning with Fux, Forkel and Mattheson, down to the end of the nineteenth century. The great masters of the past were represented in his collection of music by precious original manuscript, valuable first prints, and often complete editions. He possessed works in every style from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth century, many of which he had copied himself in the public libraries. Like a mere craftsman, he- the only creative artist of his eminence to do so – prepared many critical revisions and new editions of the older masters.

The list of works that Brahms edited – many of which were published for the first time – is amazingly long. It includes compositions by Friedemann and Philipp Emanuel Bach, Handel, Couperin, Mozart, Schubert, Chopin and Schumann... Remembering all this, we shall understand how deeply rooted was his predilection for the past. Under these circumstances it was bound to find eloquent expression in his work. As a matter of fact, the threads that connect Brahms's compositions with the music of the past reach back not only into the classical period, but much further back. The medieval Church modes, the masterpieces in canon form of the old Dutch composers, and the style of Palestrina: all celebrate their resurrection in Brahms's works. With fugues, a capella motets, choral preludes, and bassi ostinati the composer built a bridge to the art of Bach, and to Handel's oratorios, with his powerful Triumphlied. The musical output of five hundred years is summarized in Brahms's works. But in spite of their unbending rigidity of form, these compositions are anything but servile imitations of preceding models. They are saved by the modern and progressive note in Brahms's creative work, and by the original personality of the master."

The finale of this work serves as a great example of the preceding quote. In this movement Brahms combines the Baroque fugue with sonata form. Consensus has it that the inspiration for this approach came from the fugal finale of Beethoven's third Razumovsky Quartet, Op.59, No.3. The very busyness of the fugue subject itself might lead one to believe that Brahms was having a bit of fun with this august musical form, bringing this work to a close in high spirits.

As he did with all of his major works, Brahms made an arrangement of this Quintet for piano 4 hands. This transcription, being by the composer himself, also makes for a great listening experience.



“I shall say another word for the most select ears: what I really want from music. That it be cheerful and profound like an afternoon in October. That it be individual, frolicsome, tender, a sweet small woman full of beastliness and charm.”

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*

1 Quote from program notes to Altenberg Trio Wien’s CD of the Piano Trios of Paul Juon on Challenge Classics #72002 . Claus-Christian Schuster is the Altenberg Trio Wien’s pianist.

2 It was no small chore to locate the music for the Piano Trio No. 1, Op.17, as it is out of print. We were able to have a photocopy of the parts made from the copy in the Robert Lienau archives in Berlin.

Program Notes by Joseph Way

The Musicians

Daniel Banner, violin, has been an acting member of the San Francisco Symphony since 1997. Before moving to San Francisco he was an acting member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and assistant concertmaster of the Boston Pops Esplanade Orchestra. He has performed as concertmaster of many Boston area groups including, Emmanuel Music, New Hampshire Symphony, Boston Lyric Opera, Opera Company of Boston, Handel and Haydn Society, and Monadnock Music. He studied at Harvard University and MIT.

John Chisholm, violin, has been a member of the San Francisco Symphony for the last four years. After receiving a BA and Performance Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, he played with the Rochester Philharmonic as a first violinist. He has also served as Associate Concertmaster of the Louisville Symphony.

Christina King, viola, joined the San Francisco Symphony’s viola section in the Fall of 1996. She has been a member of the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, was principal violist in the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, (training orchestra of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra), and has also played with Lyric Opera of Chicago and various orchestras in Mexico City. She received a Master’s in Music from Northwestern University, and an A.B. in English from Barnard College/Columbia University.

Gina Feinauer, viola, is a native of Ardsley, New York. She attended Boston University and The Yale School of Music. Before joining the San Francisco Symphony in 1992 she was a member of the Buffalo Philharmonic for 5 seasons. An active chamber musician in the Bay Area, she is currently keeping herself busy raising twin sons.



Barbara Andres, cello, is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music where she studied with Lynn Harrell and Stephen Geber. She has been a member of the San Francisco Symphony since 1977. She was cello performance coach for the San Francisco Youth Orchestra for four years and since 1999 has performed the same role as mentor and coach for young performers at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. She is active as a recitalist and chamber musician throughout the Bay Area, and has appeared as Principal Cellist of the Sierra Chamber Society for the last thirteen seasons.

Marc Shapiro, piano, is accompanist of the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. He has been a featured soloist in Les Noces, Saint-Saens' Carnival of the Animals, and James P. Johnson's Yamekraw with the San Francisco Symphony, as well as annual concerts with the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. Mr. Shapiro plays principal keyboard with the California Symphony and performs with other ensembles such as Composer's Inc., San Francisco Choral Artists, San Francisco Chamber Orchestra, and on Chamber Music Sundae, San Francisco Symphony Chamber Music Series and The Mohonk Festival of the Arts in New York.

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Brahms, the Lighter Side

Not the Best of Company

A society lady pestered Brahms for a long time. She wanted him to attend one of her elitist Sunday lunches. Being very unconcerned with social functions, he resisted and resisted. One day, the valet of the aristocratic lady knocked on the door of Brahms' apartment and says "Her ladyship feels that the reason you are refusing her is that you may be bothered by some of the guests coming to the lunch next week. Therefore, she has sent you the guest list and wishes you to cross out anyone you would not wish to be there!". Brahms reviewed the list with deep thought, took out a pen and crossed out his own name and returned it to the dumbstruck Valet.

In the Shadow of the Great Man

A great wine connoisseur invited Brahms to dinner and in his honor brought out some of his choicest bottles. "This is the Brahms of my cellar," he announced to the



company as wine from a venerable bottle was poured into the composer's glass. Brahms scrutinized the wine closely, inhaled its bouquet, took a sip, and then put down his glass without comment.

"How do you like it?" anxiously asked the host.

"Better bring out your Beethoven," murmured Brahms.

Made to Order

At a party, a rich matron fawned over Brahms and showered him with accolades for his lyrical abilities. "How do you write such beautiful adagios," she asked. "My publisher orders them that way," was his reply.

Nice Paper, Max

Brahms lived to a ripe old age of 64 writing Classical music when others had started and finished with Romanticism. Although the romantic composer Max Bruch was not much younger than Brahms, he was still very eager to show Brahms the Violin Concerto that he had just composed. He went to his house and presented the score. Brahms silently leafed through it and when he got to the last page, looked at the eagerly awaiting Bruch and said: "My dear Max, where do you get that lovely music paper?"

Blue Danube

Johannes Brahms and Johann Strauss (the Younger), who greatly admired one another's work, once met in Vienna. Strauss handed his colleague an autograph book, asking him to sign it. Brahms obligingly opened the book, transcribed the first few bars of The Blue Danube, and wrote: "Unfortunately not by Johannes Brahms."

Hard to Hear

Johannes Brahms once attended a party at which he was treated to the performance of several of his songs by a homely and rather mediocre singer. When the woman was finished, she turned to Brahms, clearly expecting a compliment. "Singing is difficult," he bluntly remarked, "but it is often more difficult to listen."

Parting Shot

Johannes Brahms was not without his critics. Philip Hale, for example, once suggested that the inscription above each door at Boston Symphony Hall be altered to read: EXIT IN CASE OF BRAHMS.



Sierra Chamber Society 2008-2009 Season
All concerts at 3PM

Sunday, February 22, 2009

Haydn - String Quartet Op.76 No.5

Schumann - Fantasiestucke
for Cello and Piano

Prokofiev - String Quartet No. 2

Sunday, April 26, 2009

Francaix - Divertimento
for Flute and Piano

Dvorak - Slavonic Dances
Beethoven - String Quartet,
Op. 18 No. 2

Sunday, June 7, 2009

Haydn - Divertimenti

Hovhaness - String Quartet "Jupiter"

Schumann - Piano Quintet,
Op.44 in E flat

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The Sierra Chamber Society:
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Greg Mazmanian, Executive Director
Joseph Way, Artistic Director
Richard A. Gylgayton, Program Editor
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Sierra Chamber Society
PO Box 4485
Walnut Creek CA 94596
925-930-8880
<http://www.sierrachamber.com>

Our Home on the Web:
<http://www.sierrachamber.com>

Email

The Musicians - players@fuguemasters.com
Stevan Cavalier - steve@fuguemasters.com
Richard A. Gylgayton - richard@fuguemasters.com
Greg Mazmanian - greg@fuguemasters.com
Joseph Way - joe@fuguemasters.com



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