



**The Diablo Regional Arts Association
presents the**

**2003-2004 Season
Program V**

**Lawrence Ferrara, guitar
John Chisholm, violin
Cathy Down, violin
Linda Wang, violin
Christina King, viola
Barbara Andres, cello
Stevan Cavalier. piano**

**Grace Presbyterian Church
Sunday June 13, 2004 4pm**



Luigi Boccherini
(1743 -1805)

Quintet for Guitar & Strings in D Major
"Fandango", G.448

- I Pastorale
- II Allegro maestoso
- III Grave assai - Fandango

Lawrence Ferrara, guitar *John Chisholm, violin*
Cathy Down, violin *Christina King, viola*
Barbara Andres, cello

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Sonata for Violin & Cello
(1922)

- I Allegro
- II Très vif
- III Lent
- IV Vif, avec entrain

John Chisholm, violin *Barbara Andres, cello*

Intermission

Johannes Brahms
(1833-1897)

Quintet for Two Violins, Viola, Cello
& Piano in F minor, Op. 34 (1864)

- I Allegro non troppo
- II Andante, un poco Adagio
- III Scherzo: Allegro
- IV Finale: Poco sostenuto

Linda Wang, violin *Cathy Down, violin*
Christina King, viola *Barbara Andres, violin*
Stevan Cavalier, piano



Music's an excellent thing, it reduces the beast in men.

Joseph Stalin to Harry Truman

The Conspiracy continues: Today's program includes another work by a French (*They's agin' us*) composer. However, the major work on today's program is by a German composer. (*Hmm, they's also agin' us!*) But wait, we do also have a work by an Italian composer who spent his career in Spain. (*Well, they WAS with us, but now they's agin us too!*) As it happens, all three works were originally heard in a form different from their final incarnation. Two are works by relentless perfectionists, one by an extremely prolific composer who has been compared to a plumbing fixture.

Take my wife.....Please!

Henny Youngman

Luigi Boccherini (1743 -1805)

Quintet for Guitar & Strings in D Major "Fandango", G.448

"Boccherini is the wife of Haydn." This unfortunately oft-quoted saying, attributed to the violinist Puppo (now there's a name) is a double slam against Boccherini. While the good Puppo may have only meant that Boccherini is the "yin" to Haydn's "yang," the phrase makes Boccherini's music seem to be merely derivative of Haydn. The second slam is that Haydn despised his wife, a termagant, by all accounts.

Boccherini was born into a musical and artistic family from Lucca, Italy and was a child prodigy. His talents as a cellist and composer enabled him to achieve a great reputation in his hometown, then Rome, which in turn led to concert tours throughout Italy to France, finally to Paris, where he became all the rage. As result of his success in Paris he was invited to Madrid by the Spanish ambassador. Not much happened on this initial trip to Spain, until 1769 when he came under the patronage of Infante Don Luis, brother of the Spanish King and took the title "Compositore e virtuoso di camera di S.A.R. Don Luigi infante d' Ispagnia." However good it is to be the King or his brother, they don't go on forever and with the death of the Infante in 1785, he needed a new gig. Between 1782-86 he traveled throughout Germany, where Frederick II of Prussia, himself a cellist, made him chamber composer, with the condition that he compose only for, who else . . . the king. Good. At the king's death in 1797, Luigi found himself again gig-less. So, he returned to Madrid (though one of the sources says he never spent any time in Prussia - go figure! Perhaps he Fed-Exed the scores to Fred.), where he came into the service of the Marquis Benavente, and was supported for a time by the French Ambassador Lucien Bonaparte.

However, he was by then plagued, until his death by ill-health and money problems. "Boccherini's facility was so great that he has been described as a fountain of which it was only necessary to turn the cock to produce or suspend the stream of music"



writes his biographer in Grove's Dictionary. While having a mere 20 symphonies and 2 operas among his more than 460 compositions, he was especially prolific in the field of chamber music. He composed 113 string quintets (with 2 cellos), 102 string quartets, 48 string trios, as well as many, many other chamber combinations. While recently a symphony or two of his has been played on local radio, he is perhaps best known for his minuet, taken from one of the quintets, one of his 4 cello concertos, and the Guitar Quintet in D "Fandango."

The guitar quintet actually started its life as one of a set of 12 piano quintets, composed in the late 1790's. The work was recast as a guitar quintet a few years before the composer's death at the request of the Marquis Benavente, who was an amateur guitarist. Boccherini, who was broke at the time was glad to oblige. The colorful D Major quintet starts out with a peaceful Pastorale. The second movement, Allegro maestoso, is of a more vigorous character, yet graceful. The third movement is actually comprised of two parts; the first part, Grave assai, serves as a slow introduction to the "Fandango" a fiery, yet courtly, classical evocation of the Flamenco music of the Spanish Gypsies.

I did my work slowly, drop by drop. I tore it out of me by pieces.

Maurice Ravel

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)
Sonata for Violin & Cello (1922)

Those accustomed to thinking of Ravel's sonic world in terms of *Bolero*, *Daphnis et Chloe*, *Miroirs* for piano, and the *Introduction and Allegro* will no doubt be surprised by this sonata, perhaps the least known of this composer's master works. The lushness of the aforementioned works is replaced by a lean and astringent quality, more reminiscent of the works of Igor Stravinsky; the *Three Pieces for String Quartet*, or the *Concertino* for string quartet. This is not surprising, as the composers were friends, and for a time in 1913 worked together on an arrangement, or rather a "realization" of Mussorgsky's opera *Khovanshchina*. Their influence on each other's works can also be heard in Ravel's *3 Mallarme Songs*, and Stravinsky's *3 Japanese Songs*.

Stravinsky called Ravel "a Swiss watchmaker, an epicure and connoisseur of instrumental jewelry." Ravel viewed composition as a game, but with strict self-imposed rules. It was often the restrictions that provided a stimulus to his creativity and inventiveness. "I am not one of the Great composers. All the Great Ones produced enormously. But I have written relatively very little and with a great deal of hardship. And now I can not do any more, and it does not give me any pleasure." While his extreme perfectionism may have contributed to him stifling himself, it must be mentioned that he was also suffering from Pick's Disease, a condition not unlike



Alzheimer's which caused both physical and mental deterioration, making his last five years of life a nightmare.

The Sonata for Violin and Cello began its life in 1920 as a one-movement work entitled Duo for Violin and Cello. It was one of a number of works commissioned by the editor of *Le Revue Musicale* for a special issue of the magazine entitled *Le Tombeau de Claude Debussy* commemorating the late French Master.

It seems that in 1921 Ravel returned to this work with the idea of expanding it into a full-blown four movement Sonata, perhaps inspired by Zoltan Kodaly's *Duo* of 1914. The musical building blocks of this work, which occur throughout all four movements, are the alternation of major & minor triads, and a succession of consecutive sevenths. Despite the sometimes acerbic quality of the music, the melodic contours are clearly stamped with Ravel's hallmark.

It was not until February of 1922 that he completed the work to his satisfaction. In a passage from one of his correspondences, he wrote "There is the duo for violin and cello which has been dragging on for a year and a half, and which I decided to finish. Until then, I will not leave Montfort, and will not reply to any of the letters which are accumulating in a majestic pyramid. The day before yesterday it was completed. Only I thought that the scherzo was not what I had wanted, and I began all over again."¹ The scherzo features pizzicato, always a crowd pleaser, a tune that sounds like a child's taunting song including musical "raspberries", as well as a humorous ending.

As usual with Ravel, he places the utmost demands on the performer's physical ability and musicianship. This caused the violinist Hélène Jourdan-Morhange to remark that no one would dare play such a difficult work, in which the soloists are expected to "play the flute on the violin and the drum on the cello." Ravel replied, "So much the better! That way amateurs can't bash up my music!"² The third movement comprises the working out of one of Ravel's fabulous long-lined bittersweet melodies. And the finale has Ravel as master juggler, keeping the many contrasting yet related themes in the air, as it were. The work was premiered on April 6, 1922 in the Salle Pleyel by Hélène Jourdan-Morhange on violin and Maurice Maréchal, the work's dedicatee, on cello.

While this work may be one of the least known of Ravel's major works, it points to the direction he would take in his other works of the 1920s, particularly his opera *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, the Chansons *Madécasses*, and the *Sonata for Violin and Piano*.

1 Orenstein, Arbie *Ravel: Man and Musician*, Dover Publications, Inc. N.Y. 1991

2 Ivry, Benjamin *Ravel: A Life*, Welcome Rain Publishers, N.Y. 2000



Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Quintet for Two Violins, Viola, Cello & Piano in F minor, Op. 34 (1864)

In contrast to his somewhat slovenly personal appearance, Brahms was as fastidious and perfectionist a composer as could be found. Ever mindful of his predecessors, the giants of the Austro-German musical tradition, Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, he torched countless of his compositions. Some twenty string quartets were consigned to the flames so that three would be deemed acceptable and published. He always spoke of his music in a self-deprecating manner. (Though perhaps a “manner” it was.) “In the old days it was only my music I disliked. Now it’s the titles as well. Is all this due to vanity?” Florence Mays 1905 biography of the composer contains the following anecdote. “Yes gentlemen, observed [his Coblenz host] solemnly as the guests sat in almost reverential silence, inhaling the bouquet of some rare old Rauenthaler that had been reserved for the end of the repast, ‘What Brahms is among the composers, so is this Rauenthaler among the wines.’ ‘Ah, then let’s have a bottle of Bach now!’ cried Brahms.”

The Piano Quintet went through interesting instrumental transformations before arriving at the form in which it is known today. This work actually started out as a quintet for strings following Schubert’s instrumentation: two violins, viola, and two cellos. As was often the case, Brahms sent the work to his friend the renowned violinist Joseph Joachim for critique. Although he liked the piece at first, after rehearsing it, Joachim felt that it lacked charm and that Brahms should “mitigate the harshness of some passages.” Brahms complied, yet after another hearing the work was still felt to be wanting. It was only in his fireplace that the work briefly gave off the warmth and light that it otherwise lacked.

Brahms then completely rewrote the piece as a sonata for two pianos, which he, along with pianist Karl Tausig, performed in Vienna. In this form critics poorly received the work, and its lack of warmth was attributed to the employment of pianos rather than strings. Despite the negative reaction, Brahms did publish the work in this form as his Op. 34b. (So much for the opinion of the critics.) It was Clara Schumann, his other superb musical confidant, who suggested that the work be recast as a quintet for piano and string quartet. Her late husband, composer Robert Schumann, an early supporter and champion of Brahms, had set the standard for this medium with his Piano Quintet in E Flat Major, Op. 44. It is in this form that this monumental work was published in 1865, and has gained a place of eminence in the chamber music repertory.

The first public performance (given Brahms's circle of excellent musician friends, private performances were common) was given in Paris by pianist Louise Langhans-Japha on March 24, 1868. (Langhans are a big help in playing this work.) The names of the string players on this occasion are now unknown. The Piano Quintet was dedicated to Princess Anna of Hesse.



The Quintet's first movement is dramatic and of epic scale. By contrast the second movement consists of the leisurely unfolding of a long-lined melody. The third movement scherzo is as restless and exciting a movement as there is to be found in all of Brahms. The finale returns to the large scale and drama of the first movement, as the work seems to stretch the sonorities of chamber music to the limits.

One evening, Brahms, on taking leave of his hostess at a party said, "kindly excuse me if I, by chance, have forgotten to offend one of your guests."

On behalf of The Sierra Chamber Society, I would like to thank you, the audience, for your support and loyal attendance in this ongoing musical adventure. We look forward to seeing you all next season, our 18th!

Program Notes by Joseph Way

The Musicians

Lawrence Ferrara, guitar, has the distinction of being the first guitarist to receive a master's degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His teachers have included Julian Bream and George Sakellariou. An active teacher himself, Mr. Ferrara teaches guitar at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, UC Berkeley and also serves as full time music instructor at City College of San Francisco. He has performed major recitals in San Francisco, Toronto, Barcelona, Los Angeles and at the Carnegie Recital Hall in New York. He has performed with the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, the Bay Chamber Symphony, the Classical Philharmonic and the San Francisco Conservatory's Chamber Orchestra and New Music Ensemble. Among many awards, Mr. Ferrara was twice prize winner at the Carmel Classic Guitar Competition and received special recognition at the Toronto International Guitar Competition. He has also served on the Music Advisory Panel to the National Endowment of the Arts. Mr. Ferrara is the author and performer of a sequence of music books titled The Student Repertoire Series for Guitar, with accompanying CD's, published by Guitar Solo of San Francisco.

Linda Wang, violin, made her debut with Zubin Mehta and the New York Philharmonic at the age of nine, and has performed throughout the



United States. She has also been the guest soloist with Sir Georg Solti and the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival Orchestra, Salzburg Chamber Orchestra, the Czech Republic's Southern Bohemian Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra, with whom she toured. Her solo concerts have taken her to New York City's Carnegie Hall, Amsterdam's Beurs van Berlage and the Berlin Schauspielhaus. She studied at The Juilliard School (Pre-College Division) and the University of Southern California. Awarded a Fulbright Scholarship, she pursued advanced studies at the famed Salzburg Mozarteum. Her principal teachers have been Dorothy DeLay, Alice Schoenfeld and Ruggiero Ricci. Linda performs on a 1767 J.B. Guadagnini, and is Assistant Professor of Violin and chamber music at the University of the Pacific's Conservatory of Music.

Cathy Down, violin, was 5 years of age when she began taking lessons, emulating her mother who was a professional violinist. She attended the San Francisco Conservatory of Music where she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees, studying with Zaven Melikian. Her desire for travel led her to move to Europe where she played as Second Concertmaster with the Baden-Baden Orchestra in Germany for one year and as Associate Concertmaster of the National Orchestra of Belgium for 3 years. In September 1993 Cathy moved back to the Bay Area and played with the New Century Chamber Orchestra and Sacramento Symphony until joining the San Francisco Symphony as an acting member in 1994. She became a member of that orchestra in September of 2001.

John Chisholm, violin, has been a member of the San Francisco Symphony for the last two 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.

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 twelve seasons.

Stevan Cavalier, piano, studied with Maryan Filar, himself a pupil of Walter Gieseking, at the Settlement School in Philadelphia, as well as with harpsichordist Lori Wollfisch and pianist Robert Miller. He has attended the Interlochen Summer Music Festival, and appeared in chamber ensembles in many Bay Area venues, including Davies Symphony Hall. Dr. Cavalier is Director of the Sierra Chamber Society.

*Why waste money on psychotherapy when you can
listen to the B Minor Mass?*

Michael Torke

*All music is folk music. I ain't never heard a horse sing
a song.*

Louis Armstrong

*All the good music has already been written by people
with wigs and stuff.*

Frank Zappa



Sierra Chamber Society 2004-2005 Season

These programs are subject to change both in pieces
and in program order. Dates to be announced.

Wolf - Italian Serenade

Brahms - Haydn Variations for Two Pianos

Bliss - Quintet for Oboe and Strings

Haydn - String Quartet TBA

Khatchaturian - Trio for Piano and Strings

Brahms - Clarinet Quintet

Bax - String Quartet No. 1

Bloch - Concertino for Flute, viola, Piano

Dvorak - Piano Quartet TBA

Prokofiev - Sonata for Flute and Piano

Joseph Marx - Quartetto in Modo Classico

Mendelssohn - String Quartet Op. 80

Schubert - TBA

Paul Juon - Piano Suite (Trio)

Beethoven - String Quartet Opus 59 No. 3

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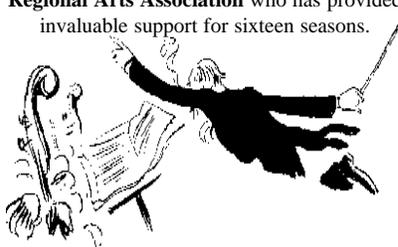
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