



**The Diablo Regional Arts Association  
presents the**

**2004-2005 Season  
Program V**

**Linda Wang, violin  
Madeline Prager, viola  
Christina King, viola  
Nina Flyer, cello  
Marc Shapiro, piano**

**Grace Presbyterian Church  
Sunday May 15, 2005 3pm**



**Ernö Dohnányi**  
(1877 - 1960)

**Serenade in C for String Trio, Op.10**  
(1902)

- I Marcia
- II Romanza
- III Scherzo
- IV Tema con variazioni
- V Rondo (finale)

*Linda Wang, violin Madeline Prager, viola*  
*Nina Flyer, cello*

**Leos Janáček**  
(1854 - 1928)

**Sonata for Violin and Piano**  
(1914 - 21)

- I Con moto
- II Balada: Con moto
- III Allegretto
- IV Adagio

*Linda Wang, violin Marc Shapiro, piano*

### **Intermission**

**Antonín Dvorák**  
(1841 - 1904)

**Quartet for Piano, Violin, Viola and Cello**  
**in E flat major, Op. 87 (1889)**

- I Allegro con fuoco
- II Lento
- III Allegro moderato, grazes
- IV Finale: Allegro ma non thrip

*Linda Wang, violin Christina King, viola*  
*Nina Flyer, cello Marc Shapiro, piano*



**Ernö Dohnányi (1877 - 1960)**  
**Serenade in C for String Trio, Op.10 (1902)**

*Dohnányi never did succeed in achieving a personal identity in his music. He never allowed himself to be influenced by the new ideas and techniques and idioms springing up all around him. Even on those less frequent occasions when he derived his materials from Hungarian folk music – following the lead of his celebrated compatriots, Bartók and Kodály – his music never assumed a distinguished personality. He simply never outgrew his love for German postromanticism; and by the same token he never quite developed from an interesting and charming composer into a great one.<sup>1</sup>*

David Ewen

*... But he does show humour, if not wit, in some of his lighter works, and what may perhaps pass as a substitute for the latter quality is his craftsmanship. His craft, however, borders upon slickness and academicism, his music is voluble rather than eloquent and there is little individuality.*

Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians

The above rather sour-sounding estimations would probably not lead the reader to believe that Dohnányi was probably the foremost figure in the musical life of Hungary in the opening decades of the Twentieth Century. Bela Bartók and Zoltán Kodaly were small potatoes in comparison. (*That would make Dohnányi the big potato, which in itself is no small honor*). Dohnányi achieved fame, while yet a teenager, with the composition of his Piano Quintet Op.1 which was greatly admired by Brahms himself; in no small measure because it sounds like his own music. (The old curmudgeon seems to have had an affinity for the works of younger composers, Dvorák and Zemlinsky to name but two more, whose works, *at the time*, were flatteringly imitative or as Oscar Levant would have it; "Plagiarism is the sincerest form of imitation".)

Brahms friend, the violinist Joseph Joachim, invited Dohnányi to join the staff of the Berlin Hochschule as professor of piano; a position he held from 1905-1911. He then went on to become professor of piano at the Landesakademie in Budapest, before becoming its director in 1934. Dohnányi also served as conductor of the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as the director of Hungarian Radio. Early in his career, Dohnányi successfully toured Europe and America and both conductor and pianist. In the Grove's article,



his pianism was described: “Not only is his technical accomplishment extraordinarily complete, but the breadth of his phrasing, his command of tone—graduation and the exquisite beauty of his tone are such as to satisfy the most exacting listener.”

Harold C. Schonberg in *The Great Pianists* summarizes his career and piano playing: “His playing had power and propulsion and extraordinary finesse. Naturally he was a romantic pianist (his recording to the Mozart G major Concerto contains everything that is considered bad style today), just as his own compositions are in the romantic style. Later on, Dohnányi was to concentrate on composition and teaching with relatively little public playing. But when the force of circumstances made it necessary for him to reappear on the concert stage, after World War II, a very old man, it was still apparent that though age might have blunted his fingers, it had not taken away his broad, noble style.”

After the Second World War, Dohnányi fled Hungary’s Communist regime, first emigrating to Argentina, before finally arriving in the U.S.A. He settled in Tallahassee or Miami (*depending on who you believe*) to become composer-in-residence and teach at Florida State University. The five movement *Serenade in C for String Trio* was composed during a tour of London and Vienna, in 1902. It harks back to the multi-movement works of the 18th Century. Though utilizing only three stringed instruments, the sound is remarkably full and rich. The first movement is an entry March, which contains curious drone-accompanied folk music-like passages. The second movement is a lovely long-lined Romanza, featuring a pizzicato accompaniment, as well as a passionate central section. The third movement, Scherzo features a bit of spooky counterpoint, contrasted with a lyrical section of, as they say, “Brahmsian cast”, with which it becomes combined. The chorale-like theme of the slow fourth movement *Tema con variazioni*, is followed by a set of five variations reminiscent of Schubert. The finale is a vigorous Rondo that concludes with an exit march based on the themes from the first movement. The *Serenade* was premiered in Vienna, by the Fitzner Quartet in 1905.

<sup>1</sup>The Complete Book of 20th Century Music, David Ewen, Prentice-Hall, Inc. N.J. 1959



## **Leos Janáček (1854- 1928)**

### **Sonata for Violin and Piano (1914 - 21)**

It was not until the last decade of his life that Janáček achieved fame and international recognition as a composer (*better late than never, eh?*). This was due largely to the performance of his opera, *Jenufa*, given at the Court Opera in Vienna in 1918. Before this, Janáček had been a music teacher in Brno. “ Here in Brno I am a poor man - as though in a desert – where there is no proper music to be heard” he wrote in 1903. Janáček responded to recognition by producing a series of masterpieces, among them; the operas *Katya Kabanova*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *The Makropoulos Affair*, and *From the House of the Dead*, as well as the *Glagolithic Mass*, the *Sinfonietta*, and the two String Quartets, No.1 “The Kreutzer Sonata” and, No.2 “Intimate Letters” as well as the vocal work *The Diary of One Who Vanished* and the tone poem *Taras Bulba*. These works won him a place beside Dvorak and Smetana in his homeland , and revealed him to be an original and profound voice in twentieth century music.

Musicologist Joseph Machlis writes: “*Janáček’s art was nurtured by Slavonic folklore and nature mysticism. In his vocal music, which holds a place of honor in his output, he aspired to a plastic melody molded to the rhythms and natural inflections of speech. Janáček’s musical language is of the post-romantic period. His harmony is extremely mobile and expressive. In the later works he dispensed with key signatures. He had little interest in the traditional forms, preferring a mosaic structure based on the continual variation of a few basic motives. He has been compared to Mussorgsky for his unconventionality of thought, his roughhewn and original harmonies, the compassion and love of humble folk that inform his art.*” <sup>1</sup>

Janáček’s Violin Sonata displays all of the characteristics mentioned in the above quote. The speech-like melodies, the ostinato rhythmic accompaniments, the unusual harmonies and use of folk-inspired scales and melodies.

The sonata underwent a rather long gestation. The first draft was composed in 1914 at the beginning of the First World War, when according to the composer, the people of Moravia were expecting to be invaded by the Russians. Two revisions followed the first draft before the final version was completed in 1921. The first movement opens with a sinuous melody in the violin accompanied by tremolos in the piano evoking the sound of the cimbalom, a hammer dulcimer used in Central European Folk Music. The



second movement, *Balada*, which because of its rich harmonies and whole-tone scales sounds for all the world like a song by Debussy, was originally a separate work that Janáček revised slightly to fit into the sonata. The third movement is the most folksong-like of the four movements, with its modal tune thumped out on the piano. The final adagio opens with an atmospheric choral-like passage for piano interrupted by a recurring motif on the violin sounding like a dismissal of what the piano has to say. Eventually the violin takes up the choral melody to tremolos on the piano. The opening chorale and the violin's interjections return, only to slow down and die away.

The Violin Sonata was first performed in Janáček's hometown Brno on April 24, 1922. However, it was given wider exposure when it was performed as part of the International Society for Contemporary Music Festival held in Salzburg in 1923.

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Machlis - *Introduction to Contemporary Music* N.N. Norton & Co., N.Y. 1961

### **Antonín Dvorák (1841 - 1904)**

### **Quartet for Piano, Violin, Viola and Cello in E flat major, Op. 87 (1889)**

*San Francisco*

*November 14, 1894*

*Dear Sir,*

*I take great pleasure in sending you the enclosed programme, which you will see contains one of your master-works, the Quartet in Eb. It was received with the greatest enthusiasm. Our organization, which has been giving chamber concerts for the last four years, has already produced some of your Piano Trios, the Piano Quintet and has been especially successful with the beautiful Terzetto for strings. I have been enquiring for your latest String Quartet, but have not been able to get it.*

*Pray accept the expression of my sincere admiration, and believe me to be yours very truly*

*Sigmund Beel*

*1925 California Street*

*San Francisco, Cal.<sup>1</sup>*



*“Dvorák must be placed among the most richly gifted and versatile composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Truly, like Haydn, Mozart and Schubert, he was of the race of those divinely blest and naïvely inspired leaders whose thoughts and emotions manifest themselves spontaneously in musical forms, and whose musical imagination gives itself out in an inexhaustible wealth of pure, fresh and fascinating ideas, in melody, harmony and rhythm. He seemed to be a late offspring of the masters just mentioned, and his nature, fundamentally simple and unsophisticated, was nevertheless innately intelligent, perceptive and witty, robust and fresh, tenderly emotional and gifted. He had an ardent love of nature, a firm and simple faith in God, a joyous optimistic outlook on life. Such was his disposition, which during his whole life always preserved the typical features of the simple peasant origin that coloured his personality and his work.”*

Otakar Sourek<sup>2</sup>

The Piano Quartet was composed as a result of a request from Dvorák’s publisher Simrock. In those days there was money to be made publishing and selling chamber music, and recommended by Brahms, Dvorák became a cash cow for Simrock. The Piano Quartet followed on the heels of his Piano Quintet in A Major, Op. 81, composed in 1887. And, while he started sketching out the work in that same year, it seems that the bulk of the work was completed in 1889. Dvorák wrote to a friend, “As , expected, it came easily and the melodies just surged upon me, thank God!” This work differs somewhat from other works of his nationalist period in that it relies less on folk-like elements. Indeed, the opening movement of the Piano Quartet is more in the Heroic-Romantic style, as indicated by its tempo marking Allegro con fuoco “with fire”. In the second movement; Lento, the composer sets out five themes of different character, given to different instruments or as with the fourth theme, the entire group. The set of five themes are then repeated. In graceful third movement consists of folk dances in different tempi and meter, from waltz to gallop. One of these dances contains a striking passage in a form of the Phrygian mode ( it’s the “Mid-Eastern” sounding tune). The finale returns to the mood of brilliance and fire of the first movement, though based on its own new material. While this fiery music is contrasted with passages of sweetness and calm, the high spirits prevail to a rousing climax.

The Piano Quartet was premiered in Prague on Nov. 23, 1890, and four years later made it’s way to San Francisco. Perfunctory analysis? Yes. Better you should listen to the music.



On behalf of the Sierra Chamber Society, I would like to thank you, our loyal and gracious audience, for your continued enthusiasm and support. You have enabled us to provide you with wonderful performances of music familiar and unfamiliar for almost 20 years now. And with your continued support we hope to reach our 20 year mark and beyond.

Great performances and free bran muffins. Great music and regularity! It works.

We look forward to seeing you all next season.

J. Way

<sup>1</sup>Michael Beckerman ed.- *Dvorák and His World* Princeton University Press, N.J. 1993

<sup>2</sup>Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians- Fifth Edition. St. Martin's Press, New York. 1954

*Program Notes by Joseph Way*

### The Musicians

**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. 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.

**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.



**Madeline Prager**, viola, has performed extensively as a soloist and chamber musician in Europe, where she lived for 25 years. After receiving a BA in Music from UC Berkeley, and a Masters degree in Germany studying with Bruno Giuranna, she performed as principal violist of the Wuerttemberg Chamber Orchestra and the Stuttgart Philharmonic Orchestra. Until two years ago she held a Professorship of Viola at the Music Conservatory in Karlsruhe, Germany. In addition to playing as much chamber music as possible, Madeline Prager teaches at the Crowden School, in the Berkeley Public schools, at the University of the Pacific, and in her private studio.

**Nina Flyer**, cello, has toured and recorded throughout Europe, Scandanavia, and America. She has been principal cellist with the symphonies of Jerusalem, Bergan (Norway) and Iceland, and has held the post of acting principal cellist with the San Diego Symphony. She is presently principal cellist of the Women’s Philharmonic and the Bear Valley Music Festival, as well as cello and chamber music instructor and member of the faculty piano trio at the University of the Pacific. She also records for the TV and motion picture industry. Ms. Flyer plays regularly with Composers Inc. and the San Francisco Chamber Music Players.

**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.

**What’s in the Hopper For Next Year?**

For the classical old favorites we are considering the following:

- |             |                             |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| Haydn       | String Quartet Op 33 No 4.  |
| Beethoven   | Piano Trio Op 1 No 3        |
| Beethoven   | String Quartet Op 74 “Harp” |
| Mendelssohn | String Quartet Op 44 No 3   |
| Brahms      | Violin Sonata G major No 1  |
| Dvorak      | String Quintet Op 97        |



Pieces that we have not played before from familiar composers:

Nielsen	String Quartet Op 5 No 2 F minor
Prokofiev	Quintet Op 39 (this is scored for oboe, clarinet, violin, viola, and double bass)
Saint-Saens	Piano Trio Op 92
Stravinsky	Sonata for 2 Pianos
Dohnanyi	Piano Quintet Op 26 E flat or Op 1 C minor

And new, exciting things from composers we have not programmed before:

Albeniz	Suite Espanola Op 47 13 min
Durufle	Prelude, Recitatif et Variations Op. 3 (scored for flute, piano, and cello)
Takemitsu	<i>And then I knew Twas Wind</i> (scored for harp, flute, and viola)
Takemitsu	<i>Toward the Sea</i> (scored for flute and guitar)
Hovhaness	Bagatelles for String Quartet Op 30 No 1-4
Hovhaness	String Quartet Op 8 No 1 "Jupiter"
Roem	<i>Bright Music</i> (scored for flute, two violins, cello, and piano)
Roem	End of Summer (scored for clarinet, violin, and piano)

All these pieces are still under consideration in regards to availability and schedules. We'll have a complete announcement in our June mailing including dates.

Have a wonderful summer and, as always, thanks for your support.

**The Sierra Chamber Society:**  
 Stevan Cavalier, General Director  
 Greg Mazmanian, Executive Director  
 Joseph Way, Artistic Director  
 Richard A. Gylgayton, Program Editor  
 Mary Harvey, Audience Development



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