

PROGRAM

Clarinet Trio in E-flat major, K. 498 “Kegelstatt”

W. A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Andante
Menuetto
Rondo: Allegretto

Thomas Hill, clarinet Marcus Thompson, viola Mihae Lee, piano

Madrigals for Violin and Viola

Bohuslav Martinu
(1890-1959)

Poco allegro
Poco andante
Allegro
Allegro maestoso

Lynn Chang, violin Marcus Thompson, viola

INTERMISSION

Märchenerzählungen (Fairy Tales), Opus 132

Robert Schumann
(1810-1856)

Lebhaft, nicht zu schnell
Lebhaft und sehr markiert
Ruhiges Tempo, mit zartem Ausdruck
Lebhaft, sehr markiert

Thomas Hill, clarinet Marcus Thompson, viola Mihae Lee, piano

Contrasts

Béla Bartók
(1881-1945)

Verbunkos, recruiting dance
Pihenó, relaxing
Sebes, fast dance

Thomas Hill, clarinet Lynn Chang, violin Mihae Lee, piano

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756-1791)

Trio in E flat for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, K.498, *Kegelstatt*

No modern instrument owes more to the imagination of a single composer than the clarinet does to Mozart, who wrote for his friend, clarinetist Anton Stadler, music that exploits both registers of the instrument and at the same time gives it a real personality. From the time he composed *Idomeneo* in 1780, clarinets became an essential and memorable part of his opera orchestra, and they contribute to the special color of Symphony No. 39. But most of all Mozart wrote three works in which the clarinet is especially featured: the present trio, K.498, in 1786, the Clarinet Quintet, K.581, in 1789, and the Clarinet Concerto, K.622, not quite two months before his death in 1791.

Mozart wrote the Eb Trio for the Jacquin family, or rather for the daughter of the family, Franziska, who would have played the piano part in home performances while Stadler played the clarinet and Mozart the viola (his own favorite instrument when performing chamber music). The music is small-scaled and intimate, obviously intended for the personal pleasure of the performers, but it is also a remarkably unified score, with basic motives recurring in different movements.

There is an old tradition that Mozart composed the trio while playing skittles (a form of bowling), hence the German nickname "*Kegelstatt*" ("skittles-lane" or "bowling alley"). Alas, there is little evidence to support the tale. The nickname should really be applied to the charming horn duets, K.487, which Mozart had composed about a week earlier; there he actually wrote on the manuscript "*untern Kegelscheiben*" ("while playing skittles").

--From program notes © by Steven Ledbetter

BOHUSLAV MARTINU (1890-1959)

Madrigals for Violin and Viola (1947)

Martinu, a Czech who fled his homeland to escape the Nazis, spent much of the 1930s in Paris, where he studied with Albert Roussel and came under the spell of Debussy, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. After 1941, he made the United States his home. A busy and prolific composer, he ought to be a household name in classical music. For American orchestras he wrote a succession of gorgeous symphonies, and his large output includes concertos, operas and chamber works that never fail to delight and engage musicians and listeners.

The 1947 duo for violin and viola, titled "Madrigals," is regarded as one of the finest of all string duos. It was written in New York City and premiered there by Juilliard musicians Joseph and Lillian Fuchs. Martinu revealed diverse influences for this duo in a 1942 radio interview: "In my music, I have been influenced most of all by the national music of Czechoslovakia, [by] Debussy, and, in particular, by English madrigals which attracted me with their freedom of polyphony, which I found very different from that of Bach." Not surprisingly, the duo has a folk quality, with dance rhythms, drone effects, a singing polyphony, and suggestions of birds and insects.

--Program notes © by Brett Rutherford

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Märchenerzählungen (Fairy Tales) for Clarinet, Viola and Piano, Opus 132

Schumann's last years were clouded by declining health and, finally, insanity. The tendency to overlook almost everything he composed from about 1850 on may be attributed to this, but on September 30, 1853 the Schumanns were visited by the violinist Joachim, who brought with him his new friend, the twenty-year-old Brahms. Brahms made an enormous impression on Robert

Schumann, who expressed his enthusiasm in an article (his first in a decade), *Neue Bahnen* ("New Path"), for *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Schumann then composed his *Märchenerzählungen* ("Fairy Tales"), Op. 132. In his youth, Schumann had invented the mythical *Davidsbund* ("League of David") to fight against the philistines of German artistic life; that struggle returns in these last works, partly because of the inspiration he gained from the young Brahms and Joachim, musicians in whose idealism he recognized a common enthusiasm for the highest artistic goals.

The title tells us that these lyrical miniatures are character pieces intended to suggest favorite stories of childhood. But if Schumann had particular tales or situations in mind, he never identified them, and we can enjoy the music without being burdened by such details. The characters who were most active in *League of David* (aspects of Schumann's own artistic personality) were the heroic Florestan and the dreamy Eusebius, and their personalities are still evident in this music, particularly in the third movement (Eusebius) and the final movement, in which one can imagine Schumann and his Florestan marching out one last time against the forces of philistinism.

--From program notes © by Steven Ledbetter

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881-1945)

Contrasts for Clarinet, Violin and Piano

With one exception, all of Bartók's chamber music is for stringed instruments, with or without the addition of a piano. Only once did he turn to a wind instrument — a commission from Benny Goodman and Joseph Szigeti, this work's dedicatees. Bartók completed the work in Budapest on September 24, 1938, after having heard some Benny Goodman band records Szigeti sent him. Far from trying to blend the three very different instruments into a single complex sonority, Bartók exploits their differences as much as possible. He had long since become a master of violin effects — multiple stops, bowed and pizzicato notes played simultaneously, glissandi, and so on — here he investigates the possibilities of the clarinet as well, while keeping the piano part (conceived for himself) modestly in the background.

Goodman's original wish was a two-movement work that would fit on a single twelve-inch 78-rpm record, but Bartók found that he needed greater scope for the working out of his material, and the planned two movements became three. The music is strongly nationalistic, possibly Bartók's response to the unchecked advance of Nazism. The *Verbunkos*, or recruiting dance, was employed to encourage Hungarian army enlistments in the late 18th and early 19th centuries; thereafter it remained a characteristically Hungarian musical genre featuring sharply dotted rhythms in a slow march tempo with ornamental turns, runs, and arpeggios decorating the melodic lines. The *Verbunkos* begins with a slow section (*lassu*) followed by or alternating with a wildly fast one (*friss*), and the original two-movement plan of *Contrasts* was designed to reflect this format.

The *Verbunkos* ends with a clarinet cadenza leading to the languid slow movement, in which piano and clarinet begin by mirroring one another, while the piano contributes soft percussive tremolos inspired by Balinese gamelan music. The fast dance, *Sebes*, begins with a short passage on a "scordatura" violin (with the E-string tuned to Eb and the G-string to G#), after which the violin is directed to return to a second, normally tuned instrument. The outer sections of the dance are in a lively 2/4 meter, but the extended middle section uses "Bulgarian rhythm," which Bartók learned in his folk music studies: (8+5)/8, or more properly (3+2+3+2+3)/8. When the original 2/4 returns, the dance gets wilder and wilder before reaching its brilliant conclusion.

--Program notes © by Steven Ledbetter

Musician Bios

LYNN CHANG, VIOLINIST, was a top prize winner in the International Paganini Competition in Genoa. He has appeared at Musicorda, Gerhart, Wolf Trap, Great Woods, Marlboro, and Tanglewood festivals, and as soloist with orchestras in Miami, Salt Lake City, Oakland, Seattle, Honolulu, Beijing, and Taipei. He has performed at Davis Hall in San Francisco, Weill Recital Hall in New York, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. Recently Mr. Chang traveled to Moscow to perform and record a new concerto written for him by the late Ivan Tcherepnin. A native of Boston, Mr. Chang began his violin studies at age seven. He continued his studies at the Juilliard School with Ivan Galamian, and then received his Bachelor's Degree in Music from Harvard University. He is a faculty member of Boston University, the Boston Conservatory, MIT, and the New England Conservatory. He has been a member of BCMS since 1982.

MARCUS THOMPSON, VIOLIST, has appeared as soloist, recitalist, and chamber music player in series throughout the Americas, Europe, and the Far East. He was featured as soloist with the orchestras of Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, St. Louis and with the Boston Pops, and has recorded with the Slovenian Radio Symphony and the Czech National Symphony. He has received critical acclaim for performances of the John Harbison Viola Concerto with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and the Chicago Sinfonietta, and for performances of the Penderecki Concerto in Boston and London. He has been a guest of the Audubon, Borromeo, Cleveland, Emerson, Lydian, Orion, Shanghai, and Vermeer Quartets, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, and a frequent participant in chamber music festivals in Amsterdam, Anchorage, Dubrovnik, Montreal, Seattle, Sitka, Los Angeles, Okinawa, Portland and Vail. Mr. Thompson earned the doctorate degree at The Juilliard School following studies with Walter Trampler. He is a winner and alumnus of Young Concert Artists, Inc. Born and raised in the Bronx, he currently lives in Boston where, as the Robert R. Taylor Professor of Music at M.I.T., he founded programs in chamber music and performance study; he also serves on the viola faculty at the New England Conservatory. He has been a member of BCMS since 1982.

THOMAS HILL, CLARINETIST, is a graduate of the New England Conservatory. He also attended the Cleveland Institute of Music, a member of the celebrated class of Robert Marcellus. As a chamber musician, Mr. Hill has performed and recorded throughout the Americas and Asia as a member of the Aeolian Chamber Players and the Boston Chamber Music Society. Mr. Hill is principal clarinetist of the Boston Philharmonic, and has served as principal clarinet of the New Haven Symphony, the Long Beach Symphony, the Mainly Mozart Festival Orchestra, the Handel and Haydn Society, the Cascade Festival Orchestra and the San Diego Symphony. His teaching credentials include artist-professor affiliations with the New England Conservatory, the Boston Conservatory, Longy School of Music, the Foundation for Chinese Performing Arts and the university systems of New York, California, Massachusetts and Missouri. He has been a member of BCMS since 1983.

MIHAE LEE, PIANIST, has captivated audiences throughout North America, Europe, and Asia in solo recitals and chamber music, appearing frequently with *das Symphonie Berlin* and in recitals in Lincoln Center, Jordan Hall, and the National Philharmonic in Warsaw. She is a member of The Triton Horn Trio, and has premiered works by Gunther Schuller, Paul Lansky, and Henri Lazarof. Ms. Lee appears frequently at festivals, including Dubrovnik, Amsterdam, Groningen,

Great Woods, OK Mozart, Mainly Mozart, Chestnut Hill, Rockport, Sebago-Long Lake, Bard, and the Seattle Chamber Music Festival. She has been a guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, at Bargemusic, and has collaborated with the Muir, Cassatt, and Manhattan string quartets. Born in Seoul, Korea, Ms. Lee made her professional debut at the age of fourteen with the Korean National Orchestra. Upon coming to the United States on a scholarship from The Juilliard School Pre-College in 1972, she subsequently won many further awards including First Prize at the Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition and the Juilliard Concerto Competition. A graduate of The Juilliard School and the New England Conservatory studying with Martin Canin and Russell Sherman, she has released CDs on the Bridge, Etcetera, EDI, Northeastern, and BCMS labels. She has been a member of BCMS since 1987