

2018-2019 OUR 62ND SEASON

TRIO TRE VOCI

VIOLA, FLUTE AND HARP

WITH KIM KASHKASHIAN, MARINA PICCININI AND SIVAN MAGEN

Friday, January 18, 2019

About the Artists



Trio Tre Voci is made up of three artists who have each been acknowledged for bringing a unique voice to their instruments. Grammy-award winning violist Kim Kashkashian, flautist Marina Piccinini, and harpist Sivan Magen met at the Marlboro Music Festival in the summer of 2010 and, after having discovered an unusually powerful common voice, they decided that their collaboration shouldn't be limited to one summer only. Tre Voci has since performed across the United States, Mexico and Europe, with a wide-ranging repertoire that includes many of their own transcriptions, traditional repertoire, and newly commissioned works. In the fall of 2014 they released a recording of works by Debussy, Takemitsu and Gubaidulina, on ECM New Series.

Kim Kashkashian, viola

Winner of the 2013 Grammy Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo Album for her recording "*Kurtág/Ligeti Music for Viola*," Kim Kashkashian is recognized internationally as a unique voice on the viola. A staunch proponent of contemporary music, she has developed creative relationships with György Kurtág, Krzysztof Penderecki, Alfred Schnittke, Giya Kancheli and Arvo Pärt.

Her association with the prestigious ECM label since 1985 has resulted in a rich discography which includes the complete sonatas of Hindemith and Brahms, an album of Argentinian songs, the concertos of Schnittke, Bartók, Penderecki and Kurtág, as well as the Bach viola da gamba sonatas, recorded with Keith Jarrett. Kim Kashkashian lives in Boston, where she coaches chamber music and viola at New England Conservatory.

Marina Piccinini, flute

Hailed as "the Heifetz of the flute" (Gramophone), Marina Piccinni enjoys an international career as soloist with major orchestras including the Boston Symphony,

the London Philharmonic, Tokyo Symphony, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Montreal Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, and the Vienna Symphony. Piccinini was the first flautist to win Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Career Grant, and she also won first prize in Canada's CBC Young Performers Competition, New York's Concert Artists Guild International Competition, New York Flute Club, National Arts Club, NEA's Solo Recitalist Grant, the BP Artist Career Award, the McMeen-Smith Award, and various grants from the Canada Council.

A graduate of The Juilliard School, Piccinini's mentors include Julius Baker, Jeanne Baxtresser and Aurèle Nicolet. She is Professor of Flute at the Peabody Institute in the USA and the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien in Hannover, Germany.

Sivan Magen, harp

Jerusalem-born Sivan Magen has been hailed by the press as "a magician" (New York's WQXR), whose "virtuoso playing conjures an astonishing range of colour and dynamic" (The Daily Telegraph). Magen transforms the harp into an expressive, colourful and virtuosic instrument.

As a graduate of the Paris Conservatory and the Juilliard School, Magen has appeared as a soloist across the US, South America, Europe and Israel, in venues such as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall and the Sydney Opera House, just to name a few. In addition to being a respected soloist, Magen is also a founding member of The Israeli Chamber Project, a group which performs in both outreach venues and major concert halls in Israel and the US, including Enav Center in Tel Aviv, the Embassy Series in Washington D.C. and Carnegie's Weill Hall. Since September 2017, he has been been the principal harpist of the Finnish Radio Symphony.

As a recording artist, Magen has released two solo recordings with Linn Records, as well as other acclaimed recordings with Avie, Azica, Koch International and ECM. Magen has gained considerable praise as a teacher, with some of the world's most prestigious institutions inviting him to present masterclasses. Further, he has been invited to serve as member of the jury for the International Harp Contest in Israel, a competition which he himself won back in 2006. Magen currently resides in New York, where he is also a faculty member at the Brooklyn College Conservatory of Music.

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TRIO TRE VOCI

VIOLA, FLUTE AND HARP

WITH KIM KASHKASHIAN, MARINA PICCININI AND SIVAN MAGEN

Piece de Clavecin en Concert No. 5

Sonata for flute, viola and harp

- *I. Pastorale (Lento, dolce rubato)*
- II. Interlude (Tempo di minuetto)
- III. Finale (Allegro moderato ma risoluto)

INTERMISSION

Sonatine en Trio

I. Modéré II. Mouvement de menuet III. Animé

Arabesque

Toshio Hosokawa (b. 1955)*

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

arr. Carlos Salzedo

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) arr. Gilad Cohen

I. Masks

Suite from Romeo and Juliet

- II. Juliet as a Young Girl
- III. The Montagues and the Capulets
- IV. Morning Dance
- V. The Street Awakens
- VI. The Fight

*Arabesque for flute, viola and harp was commissioned by Trio Tre Voci with support from the Adele and John Gray Endowment Fund, Elisabeth and Justus Schlichting, New England Conservatory and the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764) arr. Tre Voci

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

arr. Tre Vo

Sonata for flute, viola and harp - Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918)

For the inspiration, style, and temperament of the Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, Debussy looked back far beyond the impressionism of his earlier works to the elegance, emotional reserve and textural clarity of the music of the French baroque. In its revival of old techniques and modes of expression enfolded in 20th-century harmonic garb, the piece is one of Debussy's most uncompromisingly modern creations, about which the composer himself expressed some uncertainty: "The music is so terribly melancholy, that I can't say whether one should laugh or cry. Perhaps both at the same time?"

The Sonata's ethereal opening Pastorale unfolds as a series of episodes based on themes that seem like little more than wispy arabesques. There are, however, five fragmentary but distinct thematic entities which are later recapitulated in a different order to round out the movement's form. A quicker dance-like section occupies the middle of the movement.

The Interlude is Debussy's most obvious tribute here to the music of the baroque, but its whole-tone theme, parallel chord streams and modal harmonies plainly mark this as a product of the 20th century.

Most of the Finale grows from mutations of three motives that are presented in quick succession at the outset: snapping viola pizzicatos, quicksilver falling arpeggios from the flute, and a longer viola melody anxiously juxtaposing duple and triple rhythms. As the movement nears its end, the tempo slows to admit a brief recall of the flute theme that opened the first movement before a short, animated coda closes the Sonata.

Copyright: Dr. Richard E. Rodda (2016)

Arabesque - Toshio Hosokawa (b. 1955) Commissioned by and dedicated to Trio Tre Voci

The composer, Toshio Hosokawa, has provided the following note: "The arabesque is an Arab style of ornamental design, based on scrolling foliage and Arabic letters. It originated largely in desert areas of the Middle East, and it is said that the intention of those drawing such patterns was to create an oasis of imagination. Debussy may have had similar feelings.

My Arabesque is drawn with sounds, with two plant-like curves where the flute and viola have a yin-yang relationship. In ancient Chinese thought, opposing elements, yin and yang, create the cosmos and transform it by coexisting without killing each other. Behind the two lines, the harp provides and supports the place in which they exist. I wanted to entrust the arabesque, naturally formed of eastern-like sounds, to these three instruments."

Suite from *Romeo and Juliet* - Sergei Prokofiev (1891 - 1953) arr. Gilad Cohen (2015)

Prokofiev's classical ballet Romeo and Juliet from 1935 brings together folk-like melodies, unexpected harmonies, pounding rhythms and a wild collage of colours. To translate the music from the richness of a symphony orchestra into the intimacy of the flute-viola-harp trio was neither natural nor easy. It almost follows that Prokofiev's masterpiece takes this chamber instrumentation to unexpected places. The harp stomps dance rhythms that are seldom found in trios, while the flute and viola sing captivating tunes that are quite far from those of the avant-garde.

A central challenge in the arranging was to preserve the variety of colour Prokofiev masterfully created with the orchestra (as well as to find ways to reproduce brassy melodies and percussive patterns). A moment of revelation came when I looked at the composer's own arrangement of selections for piano solo and realised how much freedom he took when adapting the piece. As much as timbre is central for Prokofiev, the musical themes in this piece are so strong and idiosyncratic that they seem to work surprisingly well through different instrumental lenses. A different instrumentation might in fact reveal new facets that we have known and loved for years.

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George's Blog

Soothing the Savage Beast



In November I had fun writing about basset hounds. That turned my thoughts to animals in general. Does music have charms to soothe the savage beast? English playwright, William Congreve, wrote that famous line in his 1697 play *The Mourning Bride*... but with an extra letter "r". He was concerned about the effect of music on the "savage breast". Popular usage these days has altered the meaning. Present day references often

misquote the author and refer, instead, to "the savage beast", which is how I first learned the line. Early in my playing career I decided to test the effect of dulcet bassoon tones on any animal willing to stand still long enough to constitute an audience.

I never managed to play the bassoon for a rhinoceros, although I was close enough to one in Malawi. My concert at the University proceeded as scheduled, but the annual hang gliding competition from the Zomba plateau was precipitously cancelled because of rhinoceroses grazing on the beach. I'm not at all sure how they might have responded. Wild creatures (and even some domesticated ones) each have different reactions to modulated sound.

In Australia, I discovered that crocodiles were remarkably disinterested. At home, cows had too many other busy things to which they wished to attend. In New Zealand, sheep grazed safely, but did not show any signs of interest when I played Bach for them. Elephants on the other hand - at least those I encountered in the Knysna region of South Africa - seemed to respond with gracious approval, even nodding their trunks in rhythmic accord. It was a gratifying and salubrious moment for a Canadian bassoonist to be able to play for an African trumpeter.

At Gibraltar, I tried to play for the famously thieving Barbary Apes. They are not apes at all, but tail-less Macquarie Monkeys - the only wild monkey population on the European continent. They are impervious to tourists and notorious for grasping shiny objects such as watches, cameras, buckles on handbags and, presumably, also silver plated bassoon keys. I proceeded, cautiously, in the cable car to the top station. There I was about to assemble the bassoon and serenade a waiting simian family, when it started to rain furiously. My bassoon was certainly not waterproof, and I hastily packed it away. The monkeys scurried for shelter and I never found out how they would have reacted to the *Hall of the Mountain King* or even *The Old Castle* from Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Their distant cousins, the Cape Baboons of the Kanankop troop, were not so easily disbursed. I ran into them on South Africa's Garden Route, which links Natal to the Cape Province. It is a spectacular highway with magnificent views as it traverses the Indian Ocean coastline of the African continent.

At the toll booth outside of East London, I stopped to pay the tariff. Even as I opened my side window to hand the coins to the attendant, a troop of baboons – resident in the forest glade behind the toll booth – hurled themselves across the road and took up positions on the pleasingly warm hood of my vehicle. Fifteen or twenty of these animals, lying in front of the windshield, made it impossible for me to see the road ahead.

I contemplated playing for them but, if they had liked the performance, they might not have wanted to leave and that would have delayed me even longer. Instead, I looked helplessly out of the driver's window at the agent who had just collected my payment. He was obviously very familiar with this problem. In amused sign language he raised ten finger of both hands, then five fingers of his right hand. The message was wordlessly clear. I handed over 15 more rand (twice the toll cost). The attendant reached into his hut, and from there he tossed a large bunch of bananas over the heads of the animals. They immediately jumped off the hood of my car and dashed after the fruit which had fallen on the far side of the vehicle. I accelerated furiously and was quickly out of the toll gate en-route to Cape Town, sadly depriving the baboons of the opportunity to reassemble on the hood where they might have enjoyed their banana feast in the suffused warmth of my rental vehicle.

GZ, Jan 2019



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