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The Merling Trio, 1/12

College of Fine Arts

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2000–01 Season
205th Concert

Faculty Recital
Friday 12 January 2001
Dalton Center Recital Hall
8:00 p.m.

THE MERLING TRIO

Renata Artman Knific, Violin

Bruce Uchimura, Cello

Susan Wiersma Uchimura, Piano

assisted by

Igor Fedotov, Viola

Franz Joseph Haydn
1732–1809

Piano Trio in C Minor Hob. XV:13
Andante
Allegro spiritoso

Joaquin Turina
1882–1949

Piano Trio Number 1 Opus 35
Prelude et Fugue
Theme et Variations
Sonate

intermission

Johannes Brahms
1833–1897

Piano Quartet Number 1 in G Minor Opus 25
Allegro
Intermezzo: Allegro (ma non troppo)
Andante con moto
Rondo alla Zingarese: Presto
with Igor Fedotov

PROGRAM NOTES

by Greg Fitzgerald

Haydn, *Piano Trio in C Minor*

Haydn's C minor trio is one of three composed during 1788-89. He titled these trios as written for clavier "accompanied" by violin and cello, indicating that the strings still played their traditionally subservient role to the keyboard. But Haydn did experiment by varying the numbers and sequences of movements and using unusual harmonic progressions. Often he gave the violin more independence, and his keyboard style took advantage of improvements in the sonority of those instruments.

Hans Christoph Wobst writes that when Haydn delivered this trio to his publisher on March 29, 1789, he wrote a letter indicating that he had "indulged his publisher's taste" by including a variation movement, which were always popular and sold well. This movement is the first of the two in the trio. It opens with the folk-like theme in the major key, stated first by the piano. This is followed by an *Allegro spiritoso* movement in C major, in more-or-less traditional sonata form with multiple themes that form the basis for the musical content and are repeated in the closing section.

Turina, *Piano Trio Number 1*

Born in Seville in 1882, Joaquín Turina became one of Spain's most popular musicians, and since his death in 1949 has been among the most highly regarded and influential figures in Spanish music. His major music study was in Paris with Vincent d'Indy, but he was influenced even more by compatriots Manuel de Falla and Isaac Albeniz, who encouraged him to use more elements of the music of his native Andalusia. Most of Turina's works are descriptive of some aspect of provincial life, and are characterized by inventive uses of Spanish rhythms, along with a subtle grace, charm, and humor.

Certainly this is true of his first piano trio. While obviously "Spanish," it is also a personal and intimate work, requiring both

brilliance and sensitivity from the players. The titles of the movements are usual enough, but the style is uniquely Turina's—where, in the words of writer Richard Freed, "the mercurial Iberian temperament is reflected throughout, particularly in the final movement, which calls for no fewer than eleven changes of tempo within its relatively short span."

Brahms, *Piano Quartet Number 1 in G Minor*

Brahms began work on his G minor piano quartet as early as 1856, and, as was typical of him, revised it extensively before calling it finished in 1861. Brahms moved from his native Hamburg to Vienna the following year, and the quartet's first performance there proved to be an auspicious introduction to the musical capital. Johannes Hellmesberger, a leading quartet player who was chiefly responsible for the Vienna premiere, proclaimed Brahms "Beethoven's heir." The quartet has remained one of the most popular of his chamber works.

Still in his twenties, Brahms was just establishing a personal style, incorporating such influences as German and Hungarian folk song and gypsy music, along with the Viennese tradition embodied by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert. His style at this time is best described as expansive: using many musical ideas and ways of developing them, he creates expanded versions of traditional structural forms. The opening movement of Op. 25 is a good example. While it shows Brahms' mastery of the requisite sonata-allegro form, it is a large-scale piece, with three themes in the exposition instead of the usual two, a second development section, and a long coda. Brahms titled the second movement *Intermezzo*, or interlude. It is more subdued than the typical scherzo, for which it substituted, and its style seemed to suit Brahms, for he used it frequently thereafter. Brahms' longtime friend Clara Schumann, who played piano for the quartet's Hamburg premiere, called it "a piece after my own heart." She was less kind about the slow movement, where she said the emotion seemed "too forced." It begins quietly, moving to a loud outburst, then back like the beginning. But Schumann loved the exuberant finale, which, with its breathless rhythm, represents Brahms' first use of a gypsy tune in a chamber work.