

The Red Bank
Chamber Music Society

presents

Trio Delicioso

Carol Wincenc, Flute

Rafael Figueroa, Cello

Bryan Wagorn, Piano

ADVANCE NOTES

Bach • Debussy • Mozart • Poulenc

Villa-Lobos • Weber

Sunday Afternoon

April 8, 2018 • 4:30 PM

Trinity Church Auditorium

Red Bank, NJ

PROGRAM

Sonata in E Minor for Flute and Keyboard, BWV 1034 J. S. Bach

- I. Adagio ma non tanto
- II. Allegro
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro

Sonata for Flute and Piano (1957) Francis Poulenc

- I. Allegro malinconico
- II. Cantilena: Assez lent
- III. Presto giocoso

Sonata in D Minor for Cello and Piano, L. 135 (1915) Claude Debussy

- I. Prologue: Lent, sostenuto e molto risoluto
- II. Sérénade: Modérément animé
- III. Finale: Animé léger et nerveux

INTERMISSION

Syrinx Claude Debussy

Assobio a Jato (The Flute Whistle), A. 493 Heitor Villa-Lobos

- I. Allegro non troppo
- II. Adagio
- III. Vivo

Trio for Flute, Cello, and Piano in G Minor, Op. 63 Carl Maria von Weber

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
- III. Schäfers Klage: Andante espressivo
- IV. Finale: Allegro

Notes on the Program

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Sonata in E Minor for Flute and Keyboard, BWV 1034

(~12 minutes)



Over all composers looms Bach whose music, though often defined as quintessentially Baroque, knows no boundaries and somehow suffers few ills from its many treatments. In Bach, the whole is never a simple sum of the parts. His contrapuntal writing, for example, is more than a mere use of multiple voices at once, but rather a disciplining of those lines into profoundly expressive music that transcends style or technique. We are reminded of what Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach said of his father as quoted by Karl Geiringer in his *The Bach Family: Seven Generations of Genius* (Oxford University Press): “He who possessed the most profound knowledge of all the contrapuntal arts (and even artifices) understood how to make art subservient to beauty.” Bach is as inventive as Beethoven and as modern, in many ways, as Ravel. Chopin, who represents the soul of Romanticism, looked to him as a model for his famous 24 Preludes. He stands alone in his transcendence of style and impact. As George Bernard Shaw said of him, “Bach belongs not to the past, but to the future—perhaps the near future.” With the beauty and popularity of his work, it is difficult to grasp that it went unheard for a century until Felix Mendelssohn generated a new appreciation of Bach with a performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* in 1829.

Bach’s admiration for the flute or *traverso* (as it was called in his time) was obvious not only in his some five or six sonatas for the instrument (the fourth in question) but also for his extensive use of it in the Brandenburg Concertos and the B Minor Mass. Johann Joachim Quantz probably first brought it to his attention, and Alessandro Scarlatti, on hearing Bach’s flute sonatas, wrote six concertos for the instrument, certainly a statement of Bach’s impact.

As you will easily hear, it is a mistake to think of the E Minor Sonata, BWV 1034, as merely four movements in the order of slow, fast, slow, fast. Within that format is great variety and ingenuity as only Bach can provide. The first movement, *Adagio ma non tanto*, brings a lyrical and emotional quality beyond our usual concept of Baroque music. Much of that emotional demand is put on the flute as the keyboard keeps things in order yet has its own expressiveness. The movement also displays the highs and lows of sonority for the flute. The second movement *Allegro* is as lively as the first was solemn. Within that liveliness, however, are virtuosic demands for both instruments with the flute leading the way. The third movement *Andante* brings a new sense of solemnity as the flute sings its lovely minor key song. A fresh liveliness dominates the final movement with new ideas and demands for both instruments. Here we have another show of virtuosic leaps, turns, and twists for the flute.



Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)
Sonata for Flute and Piano (1957)

(~12 minutes)



Although Poulenc was a member of the famous group of French composers known as Le Six (Poulenc, Auric, Durey, Honegger, Milhaud and Tailleferre), he transcended any collective musical thought and left his singular imprint. He is sometimes underestimated by those who hear only the charm of his music and not its originality and excellence. He was profoundly influenced by Mozart, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, and Erik Satie, but on any ideas from those composers he left his own stamp. Perhaps his greatest borrowings were from himself. Scholarship often suggests that the sharp contrasts in his music—from the profane to the deeply spiritual—can be explained by the upbringing of his free-thinking artistic mother and conservative Catholic father, but there are many other factors in his life that shed light on his conflicts. Simply Paris in the 20s, 30s, and 40s says much about Poulenc. Composed in 1957, the Sonata for Flute and Piano came

closely on the heels of Poulenc's operatic masterpiece, *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (1956), a work so definitive that its musical qualities pervade his final achievements, the three expert and beautiful wind sonatas for, respectively, flute, clarinet, and oboe. All three works are elegiac, but the *Flute Sonata*, composed for flutist Jean-Pierre Rampal, bears its own singular imprints. It was dedicated to the great American patron of music, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge.

The work follows Poulenc's pattern of contrasting sections within movements but in a unique way. He eschews actual key signatures, and instead swings freely between major and minor in many keys, as immediately evident in the first movement. More than any technicality of the work, however, is its utter Frenchness. What that actually means in musical terms is difficult to define, but rather, a case of knowing it when you hear it. Perhaps it is the sense of café music that permeates the work. At the same time one can pull a distinctly Classical—specifically Mozart—sense from the *Flute Sonata*. Everywhere the sacred wars with the profane. We go from heartbreaking lyricism to bawdy banality. With Poulenc, we have one foot in the café and one foot in the grave.

Essential to the first movement is the sense of melancholy that pervades it. Interestingly, the score will call for much pedal from the piano and, moments later, ask specifically for a dry sound without pedal. Poulenc will instruct both instruments on various techniques that lend the work much of its emotional impact. An example is the curious direction to play both *léger et mordant* (lightly and bitingly). One has a sense that almost anything can happen.

The second movement is, as its tempo marking indicates, a song, in this case, a lovely ballad. Here Poulenc tells the pianist that the music should be *doucement baigné de pedal* (sweetly bathed with pedal.) There are also contrasting moments when Poulenc will demand a harsh fortissimo from both instruments. The movement ends with the softest sound possible.

The final *Presto giocoso* is just that—fast and funny—except for the sudden melancholy moment inserted before a return to the joyful. Poulenc is

insistent on no retard in the closing measures. We end with a bang—a triple forté one at that!

Poulenc and Rampal gave the world premiere of the Flute Sonata at the Strasbourg Festival in June of 1957 with a private performance one day earlier for Arthur Rubenstein. The American premiere, again with Poulenc and Rampal, took place at the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress on February 14, 1958..



Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Sonata in D Minor for Cello and Piano, L. 135 (1915)

(~12 minutes)



Claude Debussy established a new direction in music which put Impressionism on the musical map. Despite that association with the famous movement in painting, it is important to note that Debussy saw himself more as Symbolist than Impressionist and was as much influenced by the Symbolist poets as Impressionist painters. The significant point remains, however, that Debussy represented a daring departure. “Any sounds in any combination and in any succession are henceforth free to be used in a musical continuity,” he ruled. Yet this statement should not lead us to think that Debussy lacked form in his composition. Quite to the contrary, his music reflects a thorough understanding of Classical form even if its actual sound suggests new concepts. While most of musical Europe was dividing its loyalties between Brahms and Wagner and focusing attention on the emergence of the Second Viennese School, Debussy, along with Fauré and Ravel, took an entirely new direction in French music that transcended those situations. We assign the name “Impressionism” to that direction, but we should understand that the term is a reference to a new sense of harmony and color in music rather than a total disregard of Classical form. Nor is Impressionism in music one and the same idea as it is in painting. If we

are having a hard time defining it in regard to Debussy, it is because the composer himself eluded classification with the exception that he wished to be understood as French. That, of course, introduces the question of national identity in music, another elusive subject.

The Cello Sonata came late in Debussy's life, in 1915, just three years before his death from cancer. It is one of his final chamber works along with the Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp and the Sonata for Oboe, Horn, and Harpsichord. The title without connotations reflects his late interest in "absolute music," an interest that did not curtail his freedom of expression. "I am more and more convinced," he wrote, "that music, by its very nature, is something that cannot be cast in a traditional and fixed form. It is made up of colors and rhythms. The rest is a lot of humbug invented by frigid imbeciles riding on the back of the masters." On the structure of the work, Debussy commented, "The proportions and the form of the Sonata were almost Classical in the true sense of the word."

Here we have a darker, more defined Debussy, as suggested in the opening statement by the piano. The great variation of tempo in the first movement Prologue and throughout the piece seems almost to belie the movement markings, and the freedom of modulation suggests a composer fully confident of his own harmonic sense. He ignores the traditional legato sounds of the cello in the *Sérénade* with its pizzicato double-stops. This rhapsodic but finely organized movement is linked without interruption to the Finale. The last movement, with its stark middle section, opens and closes with a kind of variant of the Prologue.

Debussy himself referred to the Cello Sonata as "Pierrot angry at the moon." His fascination with the clown figure masked his own suffering that, nevertheless, is clearly evident in the Cello Sonata.

Syrinx, L. 129 (1913)

(~3 minutes)

Debussy's *Syrinx* of 1913 was composed as incidental music for Gabriel Mourey's play, *Psyché*. Although hesitant at first to undertake the commission, Debussy obviously found much inspiration in the classical

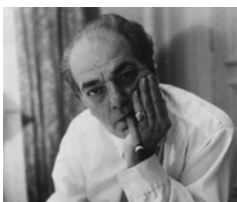
myth concerning the river nymph Syrinx who, fleeing from the lustful god Pan, transformed herself into a river reed which Pan then used for his famous flute. In his brief *Syrinx*, Debussy manages to reveal the dramatic power and emotional effectiveness of the solo flute.



Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Assobio a Jato (The Flute Whistle), A. 493 (1950)

(~11 minutes)



Rio de Janeiro-born Villa-Lobos made many trips to Brazil's primitive interior to collect the folk music that would affect his own compositions. Although he received a sophisticated musical education and created a whole Brazilian system of pedagogy, his work remains personal, idiosyncratic, and non-academic. At times it even reflects his early years as a café musician, although his remarkable *Assobio a jato* (The Jet Whistle) of 1950 reaches well beyond that.

In the first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, the cello gives an impressive opening while the flute makes repeated exclamations above. The flute soon joins in with elaborations that are indeed just that: elaborate. There is a return to the opening format when the cello takes charge and the flute briefly imitates the qualities of a whistle before charging into another amazing set of elaborations.

In the second movement *Adagio*, the flute leads the way with the cello adding inner strength to the dialogue. The whole work could easily be described as a conversation between the two instruments as made so readily evident in this movement. In this case, the conversation is a moving one.

The third movement *Vivo* brings the cello's strong accompaniment to the flute's demanding flights of fancy. Here one is aware that Villa-Lobos transcends any one national flavor yet retains a certain Latin American spirit—a unique accomplishment in itself.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826)

Trio for Flute, Cello, and Piano in G Minor, Op. 63 (1820)

(~25 minutes)



Many consider Weber to be the father of Romanticism although he was born close on the heels of Haydn and Mozart, the culminators of Classical style. Although both Haydn and Mozart moved in the direction of Romanticism, it was Weber who seemed to formalize it not only in the freedom and expressiveness of his own music but also by founding the *Harmonischer Verein* (Harmonic Society) dedicated to defining the new musical spirit and promoting works that reflected it. His

best-known work, the opera *Der Freischütz* of 1821, is considered to be a forerunner of Wagner.

Weber's Romantic spirit is immediately evident in the opening *Allegro moderato* of the Trio with lovely lyrical lines for the flute over the pulsing rhythm of the piano and sad undercurrents of the cello. Things brighten momentarily and become almost ebullient before a return to the mood of the opening. Notable in this movement is a balance of instruments not typical of the period.

The happy—almost merry—second movement *Scherzo* brings much challenging staccato playing with a display of virtuosity for the flute. The cello adds strong pulses, and some quick minor shifts color the movement. Weber omits a Trio section typical of Classical style, another bow to freedom of form.

In the third movement, *Schäfers Klage* or “Shepherd’s Lament,” Weber leans to his Classical side with a gracious melody for the flute supported by simple plucking from the cello. The piano takes up the melody and then shares it with the cello. Something of wigs and pantaloons is in this movement but with a sense that both could slip at any moment. A sense of drama pervades.

The piano once again offers its throbbing rhythms in the *Finale* but soon takes off into virtuosic runs. The keyboard shines here in a manner well ahead of its time, but still a balance of instruments prevails with each one given its moment in the sun. All comes to a brilliant and satisfying conclusion.



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Lucy Miller Murray is the author of *Chamber Music: An Extensive Guide for Listeners* published by Rowman & Littlefield and available at rowman.com and amazon.com

Note

As a favor to your fellow concertgoers, please remember to turn off your cell phones. If you feel you might have a cough coming on, please try to unwrap any lozenges before the concert begins or between movements.

Artists

Hailed "Queen of the Flute" (New York Magazine) at the outset of her, now, brilliant 48 year career, flutist **Carol Wincenc** was First Prize Winner of the (sole) Walter W. Naumburg Solo Flute Competition, as well as the Lifetime Achievement Award recipient from the National Flute Association, the National Society of Arts and Letters Gold Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Music, and Distinguished Alumni Awards from Manhattan School of Music and the Brevard Music Center. During the past two seasons she performed, recorded and gave masterclasses as an exclusive Burkart Flutes Artist in Beijing, Shenyang, Seoul, Warsaw, Prague, Venice, Nice, and Thessaloniki. In North America she performed as soloist and chamber musician from coast to coast, including Seattle, Phoenix, Dallas, Edmonton, Banff, Iowa City, Minneapolis, New Orleans, Tucson, Palm Beach, Sarasota, Philadelphia, Boston and her home city, New York. Recently she recorded an all Uebayashi album with the award winning Escher String Quartet, and video/audios in partnership with her collaborator/pianist Bryan Wagorn of the Metropolitan Opera. Most recently she and Mr. Wagorn performed to a sold out house at Weill Carnegie Hall for the "Naumburg Looks Back" series.

Delighting audiences for over four decades with her signature charismatic, high virtuosity and deeply heartfelt musicality, she has appeared as soloist with such ensembles as the Chicago, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Detroit and London Symphonies, the BBC, Warsaw and Buffalo Philharmonics, as well as the Los Angeles, Stuttgart and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestras, the latter for which she was Principal and Solo Flute from 1972-77. She has performed in countless festivals such as Mostly Mozart, Aldeburgh, Budapest, Frankfurt, Santa Fe, Spoleto, Music at Menlo, Aspen, Yale/Norfolk, Sarasota, Banff and Marlboro. The muse of today's most prominent composers, Ms. Wincenc has premiered numerous works written for her by legends Christopher Rouse, Henryk Gorecki, Lukas Foss, Jake Heggie, Paul Schoenfeld, Tod Machover, Yuko Uebayashi, Thea Musgrave, Andrea Clearfield, Shi-Hui Chen and Joan Tower. In great demand as a chamber musician, Ms. Wincenc has collaborated with the

Emerson, Tokyo, Guarneri, Cleveland, Juilliard and Escher String Quartets, and performed with Jessye Norman, Emanuel Ax and Yo-Yo Ma.

A Grammy nominee, she has recorded for Nonesuch, London/Decca, Deutsche Grammophon, Telarc (Diapason D'Or Award), Music Masters (Recording of Special Merit with Andras Schiff) and Naxos (Grammophone Magazine "Pick of the Month with Buffalo Philharmonic). Ms. Wincenc created and directed a series of International Flute Festivals at the Ordway Theater in St. Paul, Minnesota, featuring such diverse artists as Jean-Pierre Rampal, Herbie Mann, Steven Kujala and the American Indian flutist, R. Carlos Nakai. She had the privilege of working directly with legendary music luminaries Aaron Copland, Olivier Messaien, Rudolf Serkin, Joshua Bell, Christophe Eschenbach, Loren Maazel, Michael Tilson Thomas, Philip Glass, Andre Previn, Paul Simon and Judy Collins, to name a few!



Principal cellist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra since 1995, **Rafael Figueroa** has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician throughout the United States, Europe, South and Central America and Japan. He is the winner of many distinguished competitions and awards including the First Prize at the Gregor Piatigorsky Competition in Boston, the Bronze Medal at the International Pablo Casals Competition in Budapest and the Concerto Competition at the Third American Cello Congress.

Rafael has been a frequent soloist with the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico as well as the Casals Hall Festival in Tokyo, The Pacific Music Festival in Japan, Aspen Music Festival, Marlboro Music Festival, the "Musique et vin au Clos Vougeot" Festival in Burgundy, France and the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival.

His solo work with the Met Orchestra can be heard and seen worldwide at the popular Met HD broadcasts to movie theaters over several continents as well as the legendary Met radio broadcasts on Saturday afternoons and at the Met Orchestra Carnegie Hall Series. Together with Maestro James Levine and his colleagues from the Met Orchestra, Rafael is heard frequently at the Met Chamber Ensemble Series at Weill and Zankel Halls

where he has performed a large range of repertory starting from the baroque and extending to world premieres of works by Elliot Carter, John Harbison and Charles Wuorinen.

Mr. Figueroa has appeared in recitals at the Kennedy Center, The Library of Congress, Merkin Hall, Jordan Hall and nationwide on National Public Radio. In 2003 Rafael made his Carnegie Hall solo debut performing the Brahms Double Concerto with Concertmaster David Chan and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under James Levine to critical acclaim. Mr. Figueroa and Mr. Chan can be heard in their critically acclaimed CD of music for violin and cello which includes the Duo by Zoltan Kodaly and the Sonata by Maurice Ravel.

Rafael completed his studies under the legendary Janos Starker and Gary Hoffman at the Indiana University School of Music where upon graduation he became a member of the cello faculty. He performs on a cello by Roger / Max Millant , Paris 1937.



Canadian pianist and vocal coach **Bryan Wagorn** serves as Assistant Conductor at The Metropolitan Opera, and regularly performs throughout North America, Europe, and Asia as pianist, chamber musician, and recital accompanist to the world's leading singers and instrumentalists.

In the 2013-2014 season, Mr. Wagorn made his Metropolitan Opera debut as Assistant Conductor in their new production of Falstaff. He has performed with James Levine and the Met Chamber Ensemble at Carnegie Hall as solo pianist and chamber musician, and in recital for the George London Foundation, the Marilyn Horne Foundation and Richard Tucker Foundation, and also serves on the music staff of the Glyndebourne Festival. At the Metropolitan Opera he has worked on productions with singers including Anthony Roth Costanzo, Placido Domingo, Anna Netrebko, Renee Fleming, Feruccio Furlanetto, Nadine Sierra, and most of the world's leading operatic singers.

A participant at the Marlboro Music Festival, Mr. Wagorn has also been engaged as Staff Coach at the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, and has served on faculty of the National Arts Centre Orchestra's Summer Music Institute directed by Pinchas Zukerman. He made his solo recital debut at New York's Carnegie Hall in 2009, and has since made over a dozen Carnegie Hall appearances. He has performed two extensive tours with Jeunesses Musicales de Canada, and performed chamber music with members of The Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. He recorded with Elmira Darvarova and Philip Myers a disc of Brahms and Amanda Maier for the Urlicht label.

Mr. Wagorn holds degrees in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Canada, and the University of Ottawa (Bachelor of Music), the Mannes College of Music (Masters of Music), and the Manhattan School of Music (Doctorate of Musical Arts). He is a former graduate of The Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Development Program.

