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Chamber Music for Strings and Piano, November 8, 2007

Sarah Gentry Violin
Illinois State University

Emily Morgan Violin

Katherine Lewis Viola

Adriana La Rosa Ransom Cello

Tuyen Tonnu Piano

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Illinois State University

College of Fine Arts

School of Music

Charles W. Bolen Faculty Artists Series

Chamber Music for Strings and Piano

Sarah Gentry, *Violin*

Emily Morgan, *Violin*

Katherine Lewis, *Viola*

Adriana La Rosa Ransom, *Cello*

Tuyen Tonnu, *Piano*

Kemp Recital Hall

November 8, 2007

Thursday Evening

8:00 p.m.

This is the sixty-third program of the 2007-2008 season.

Program

Please turn off cell phones and pagers for the duration of the concert. Thank You.

String Quartet in F Major, Op. 59 No. 1
Allegro
Allegretto vivace e sempre scherzando
Adagio molto e mesto
Theme russe: Allegro

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

~ Intermission ~

Piano Trio in E Minor, Op. 67
Andante – Moderato – Poco più mosso
Allegro non troppo
Largo
Allegretto

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

Program Notes

String Quartet in F Major, Op. 59, No. 1

Count Razumovsky was the Russian ambassador to the city of Vienna. A great patron of all the arts and an amateur cellist, he commissioned a set of three string quartets from Beethoven in 1806, who quickly composed the set that very year. As a sign of gratitude to the Count, Beethoven not only incorporated a more prominent cello part into the texture but also vowed to include Russian themes in each of the works. The Op. 59 No. 1 Quartet is a prime example of the large scope typical of Beethoven's middle period. The Scherzo and Adagio are particularly expanded. The third movement continues without pause into the final movement, subtitled "Theme Russe." The Op. 59 quartets were not initially well received by the Viennese public. A German music publication referred to them in this way: "The three new, very long and difficult Beethoven string quartets...are...attracting the attention of all connoisseurs. The conception is profound and the construction excellent, but they are not easily comprehended." The quartets, in fact, remained unpublished until 1808.

Piano Trio in E Minor, Op. 67

Shostakovich's Second Piano Trio was written during the winter of 1944. Throughout the work there are obvious harmonic and melodic musical references to Jewish culture. Although Shostakovich was not Jewish, many of his close friends were, including his Ivan Sollertinsky to whom the work is dedicated and who died that year.

Reports of Hitler's atrocities against Jews were finally becoming known in Russia during this time, horrifying Shostakovich along with most of the world. The macabre dance that is the last movement is said to have been inspired by reports of how the Nazis made their victims dance on their graves before execution.

The Trio opens with a stark theme played eerily by the cello using harmonics. The movement becomes more and more ominous, increasing in intensity with each tempo change. The second movement is an aggressive scherzo, at times quite maniacal. The piano begins the third movement with an eight-bar chord progression that becomes the obbligato accompaniment to a lamenting melody in the strings. The final movement is Jewish dance turned very sinister. Near the conclusion, the theme from the first movement returns at a faster tempo accompanied by very rapid scales in the piano; the resulting effect is as though scenes from life are passing rapidly before a victim's eyes. The premiere of the Trio was given by Shostakovich and members of the Beethoven Quartet at a concert in the Leningrad Philharmonic Hall. It occurred less than a year after the city had been rescued from a three-year siege during which over a million residents died of starvation and illness.

- Notes by Dr. Ransom

Upcoming Events

November

09	8:00 a.m.	CPA	Madrigal Festival
10	1:00 p.m.	KRH	Senior Recital, Jessica Twohill, <i>clarinet</i> *
10	2:00 p.m.	KRH	Senior Recital, Kelly Simon, <i>horn</i> *
10	3:00 p.m.	KRH	Senior Recital, Matthew Gabriel, <i>trombone</i> *
10	7:00 p.m.	NLC	Veterans' Day Big Band Dance
11	1:00 p.m.	KRH	Senior Recital, Lawrence Rogers, <i>percussion</i> *
11	2:00 p.m.	CPA	Symphonic Winds, Symphonic Band & University Band
11	5:00 p.m.	CPA	University Men's Glee & Women's Choir
12	8:00 p.m.	KRH	Jazz Combos*
13	11:00 a.m.	KRH	Convocation: Music Education*
13	2:00 p.m.	KRH	Convocation: Music Education*
13	8:00 p.m.	KRH	Charles W. Bolen Faculty Recital Series: * Todd Schendel, <i>trombone</i>
14	7:30 p.m.	KRH	Guitar Potpourri*
15	7:00 p.m.	KRH	Senior Recital, David Victor, <i>violin</i> *
15	8:00 p.m.	CPA	Gold Series: Wind Symphony
18-25			Thanksgiving Break

• -Free Admission

KRH - Kemp Recital Hall

CPA - Center for Performing Arts

NLC - New Lafayette Club