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Trio performs festive Beethoven serenade

Wouldn't it be nice if some great composer wrote party music for you? Maybe a sprightly march so that you could dramatically enter the room, showing off some new clothes. Then a couple of dances, so the flirting and fun could get started.

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In Concert

Who: Carmit Zori, violin; Rebecca Young, viola; Bion Tsang, cello

Presented by: Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival

When: Monday evening only (festival runs through Aug...

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By Keith Powers Contributing writer

Posted Aug. 9, 2016 at 11:35 AM

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PROVINCETOWN – Wouldn't it be nice if some great composer wrote party music for you? Maybe a sprightly march so that you could dramatically enter the room, showing off some new clothes. Then a couple of dances, so the flirting and fun could get started.

That was the idea behind Beethoven's Serenade in D for string trio – at least in principle. Even by Beethoven's time the serenade was probably not really intended to kick off a rich patron's party, but the music still was created for that purpose.

And in the hands of Monday evening's trio at the Provincetown Art Association and Museum – violinist Carmit Zori, violist Rebecca Young, and cellist Bion Tsang – the opening serenade sounded very much like the start of something special.

Beginning the second full week of the Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival, the trio added intriguing works from Gideon Klein and Mozart to the program. In Beethoven and Mozart, they performed two of the most well developed compositions in the string trio repertory; with Klein, they offered an emotionally direct piece written just months before the composer's murder in a Nazi labor camp.

Beethoven's Serenade has six tightly constructed sections – this might be youngish (1797) Beethoven, but party music or not, this is hardly unschooled. The energetic opening march – Zori leading the way, raising herself up out of her chair with bold expressivity – repeats as the closing movement.

In between, a double scherzo, a minuet, a polonaise, and a theme and variations add colorful variety.



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Gideon Klein was Czech, in his 20s and making a name for himself as a pianist and composer, when the hideous events of mid-century began unfolding in Europe. He composed a few pieces in the concentration camps before his death, and this string trio was one of those works.

The first, short movement, almost an exclamation of joy, ends on one short, minor-key note – a harbinger. The middle section, a theme with a number of short variations, is ominously slow tempoed. The finale, beautiful but aching and treacherous, ends like Klein's life – ideas cut short. The playing was superb.

Begin a concert with Beethoven, and end with Mozart? Rare, but welcome. Mozart's E-flat Divertimento came late in life, after all the symphonies were written, in 1788. The composer, broke, with only three years left in life, let none of his personal turmoil into this amazing, uplifting work.

Each of its half-dozen movements has its own character and complexities. It includes two complete sonata movements, and two completely different slow movements – one sonata, and one theme and variations.

The theme and variations stood out. One variation especially, modulating to a new key, changed the mood so drastically it sounded as if they were playing three different instruments. The following final variation, aggressive and joyful, nearly jumped off the page.

The playing was focused throughout – the trio might have wanted a few pitches back for do-over, but tackled this extensive (45 minutes or so) work with visible passion.

The Cape Cod Chamber Music Festival continues through Aug. 26. The next program is Thursday in Chatham, featuring pianist Jon Nakamatsu, violinist Carmit Zori and cellist Bion Tsang.

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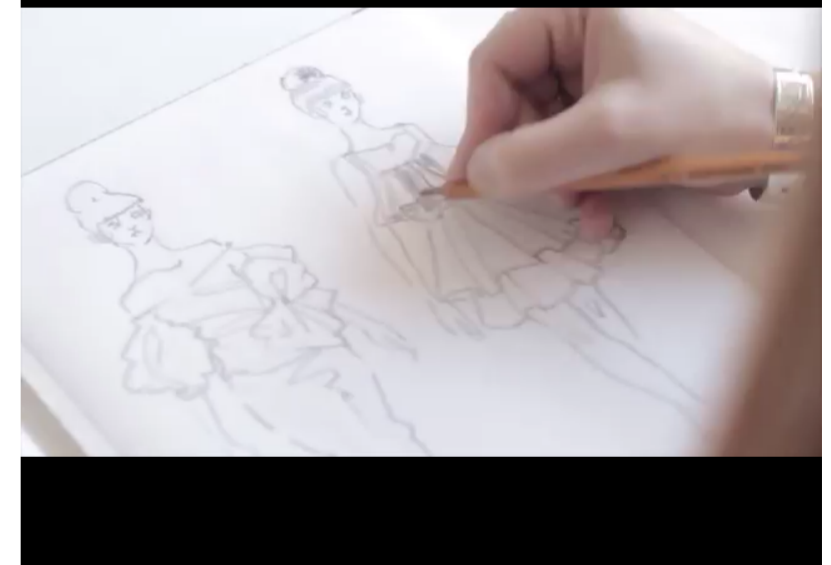
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