



# Chamber-music festival ends season in style

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ORLEANS — The Meeting House Chamber Music Festival closed its 41st season Monday evening at the Church of the Holy Spirit Episcopal with a stylishly adventurous program.

Pianist Donald Enos, violinist Joyce Hammann and cellist Matthias Naegele presented works by Haydn, Shostakovich and Mendelssohn, and a jazzy piece by Fred Hersch.

Haydn wrote dozens of piano trios, but at a time before the idea of a threesome of equal partners become the norm. The keyboard dominates, although that is mollified somewhat in the later trios, like the C major presented here.

**In Concert**

What: Meeting House Chamber Music Festival

When: Monday night

Where: Church of the Holy Spirit Episcopal, Orleans

The piece still shows off Haydn's inventiveness. The C major has the piano mostly leading the melodic lines; even when the violin rushes forward, the piano doubles it underneath. Enos showed an understated flair in appreciating Haydn's surface simplicity, humor and jauntiness, especially with the galloping entrance to the finale.

Hersch is a popular jazz pianist, and a distinguished composer of many works large and small. His "Lyric Piece" grew out of his own keyboard improvisations, and still bears some of that flavor. Piano lines begin as ostinatos (repeated figures) that gradually grow into more complex ideas. The one-movement work gets interrupted by a strings-only interlude, changing the atmosphere. After this, a three-note melody appears and never leaves, explored in all possible instrumental combinations. The work ends with a striking figure, the cello plucking pizzicato, a long slow note on the violin, the piano silent.

Shostakovich's first piano trio (of two) predates almost all of his many familiar compositions. Written at 17, in 1923, the work comes before the dark years of war and Stalin that shadowed the great composer's life. Still, as Naegele pointed out in brief remarks before beginning, it has glimpses of Shostakovich's mature output.

It's only one movement, about 10 minutes long, but structured in ABA form, so that the beginning, a descending triad melody, returns near the end. There were many striking gestures. Most remarkable were a series of broken piano chords, played with one hand on the middle of the keyboard, that seemed intended to challenge the string players to carve out a melody above. A brief coda added a previously unheard idea.

Unusual works and rarities were set aside after intermission for a celebration of the end of a successful season with Mendelssohn's sweeping D minor trio. It's another of those great chamber works that introduces its principal melody right at the outset, then journeys far afield musically before returning lovingly to the original phrase.

Enos played insightfully. Such a demanding work is never produced without flaws — that's part of the beauty and appeal; the treacherous third movement Scherzo had plenty of musical brinksmanship. But Enos accompanied his talented partners elegantly, as if he were supporting a singer. Intelligent and articulate phrasing, always a key for audiences to understand complex works, were on display throughout.

The concert marks the end of the Meeting House Chamber Players Season. For more information about the group and about next season visit [www.meetinghousemusic.org](http://www.meetinghousemusic.org) or call 508-896-3344.

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