

Sunday, February 25 at 4:00 pm  
Cultural Arts Center

**Madeleine Forte, *piano***

**Raphael Ryger, *violin***

**Karen Ryger, *cello***



Trio for piano, violin, and  
violoncello opus 97

*dedicated to the Archduke Rudolph*

**Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)**

Allegro moderato

Scherzo Allegro

Andante cantabile, ma pero con moto

Allegro moderato

**Franco-American pianist Madeleine Forte** has won prizes in international competitions (Viotti, Maria Canals, Guanabara). As a girl she studied with Cortot and Kempff. She holds an Artist Diploma from the Frederic Chopin Conservatory in Warsaw, B.M. and M.S. from The Juilliard School, and Ph.D. from NYU. Her book OLIVIER MESSIAEN was published by Fairleigh Dickinson Press in 1996. She toured all over the world with her late husband Allen Forte, Battell Professor emeritus of the Theory of Music, Yale University.

**Raphael and Karen Ryger, violinist and cellist**, husband and wife, have been playing together since their Juilliard School of Music -- Preparatory Division (as it was then called) days as teenagers. They found themselves assigned to the same quartet in a chamber music workshop mentored by the renowned Budapest Quartet. They have since studied and performed with fine ensembles both in Israel and in the U.S. Raphael has been concertmaster and soloist with orchestras in Israel and in Connecticut, and is currently in his thirtieth season as Concertmaster of Orchestra New England, based in New Haven. Karen, previously a member of the Jerusalem String Quartet, the Jerusalem Symphony, and the Israel Chamber Orchestra, now appears regularly with area orchestras and in smaller ensembles. Raphael and Karen continue to perform together in a variety of ensembles, sometimes with their daughter Yonitte, a brilliant violinist in her own right.

## **Beethoven Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello, Op. 97, "Archduke"**

In March of 1811, Beethoven wrote to his 23-year-old piano student, Rudolph. But this particular young man, from the age of fifteen Beethoven's pupil, happened also to be Archbishop of Austria, brother to Emperor Franz, and already for some years, and for years yet to come, Beethoven's greatest benefactor! Beethoven wrote, "Your Imperial Highness! For over a fortnight now I have again been afflicted with a headache ... During the festivities in honor of the Princess of Baden and when Your Imperial Highness was hampered by your sore finger I began to work rather hard; and one of the fruits of this diligence is a new pianoforte trio. ..." This trio, Beethoven's last and greatest work for the ensemble, would come to be known universally as *the* "Archduke", alone so overtly attributed in common parlance among the many great works that Beethoven dedicated to this patron.

Beethoven was notoriously disdainful of nobility. Yet he had genuine affection and respect for Archduke Rudolph -- apparently a truly decent fellow, quite a competent pianist, and a passable composer, the only composition pupil Beethoven would take on -- and the affection and respect were mutual. Rudolph would go on to become archbishop and cardinal, and Beethoven would go on to compose in his honor his monumental *Missa Solemnis*.

The Archduke Trio marks a new level of conception as to what a composition for this small ensemble could be in terms of emotional range and sheer scale, serving as inspiration and model for great subsequent piano trios such as those of Schubert, Mendelssohn and Brahms. The first movement is symphonic in its expansiveness and variety of texture. Following it, the Scherzo opens with solo cello in a startlingly childlike ascending scale in a biting, if perhaps tongue-in-cheek, rhythm, inviting a response from solo violin. The cello and violin seem to come to agreement, and the piano joins in. Eventually the playful conversation is dispelled with a smack, giving way to a brooding, mysterious middle section. The alternation of moods goes through another round before the movement ends in a sort of convergence, with a tighter back and forth of the opening simple scale, in pianissimo, and a concluding shout-out of its final tetrachord. The third movement, *Andante cantabile*, in the form of theme and variations, includes some of the most deeply moving writing in all the chamber music literature, and its passion is delivered in D major, of all keys to be chosen for this kind of contrast! It flows directly into the fourth movement, a joyful, optimistic romp enriched by some of the playful flavor of the scherzo, and even a chromatic motive harking back to the mysterious sections of that movement, all coming to a triumphal ending befitting this grand work.