

Musical Program

Megan and James Holland

Piano Trios

Megan Holland, Violin
James Holland, Cello
Judith Gordon, Piano

Benjamin Godard (1849-1895)

Aubade for Violin and Violoncello, Op. 133 (1874)

- I. Andante quasi adagio
- II. Andantino

Hans Werner Henze (1926-2012)

Adagio adagio, Serenade for Violin, Cello, and Piano (1993)

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Piano Trio in E-flat Major, Op 1 No.1 (1795)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio cantabile
- III. Scherzo. Allegro assai
- IV. Finale. Presto

INTERMISSION

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904)

Piano Trio in f minor, Op. 65 (B 130) (1883)

- I. Allegro ma non troppo
- II. Allegretto grazioso. Meno mosso
- II. Poco adagio
- IV. Finale. Allegro con brio

Opera Basics

PAS is partnering with the Santa Fe Opera in sponsoring free outreach education events, to introduce the operas featured in the upcoming SFO summer season.

Please join Oliver Prezant, music and art educator, for the fun and informative three talks remaining in the series:

May 10 Rigoletto by Giuseppe Verdi

May 24 The Turn of the Screw by Benjamin Britten

June 7 Die Walküre by Richard Wagner

From 2:00pm to 3:30pm

at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church

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The Placitas Artists Series

Presents

Megan and James Holland
with special guest Judith Gordon

Piano Trios

Sunday, April 27, 2025



Megan Holland, Violin
James Holland, Cello
Judith Gordon, Piano

Concert generously sponsored by

The Firestone Family Foundation



Placitas Artists Series projects are made possible in part by New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Notes On Today's Concert

Benjamin Godard was a French violinist and composer of the Romantic era best known for his opera "Jocelyn." In addition to eight operas and five symphonies, he composed piano and violin concertos and sonatas, string quartets, piano pieces, and more than 100 songs.

According to Bruzanemediabase.com, Godard's Aubade for Violin and Violoncello is "a colorful piece, written in a popular, picturesque vein, whose folkloric inflections might be compared to those of Dvořák's 'American Quartet'." They call it "a lively duo according total equality to the cello and the violin." And they suggest that the pizzicato accompaniment that the cello provides for the violin melody (and that the violin later provides for the cello in return) brings to mind the plucking of a guitar. This provides "a texture typical of the aubade, a musical genre that owes its name to the fact that it was originally performed at dawn (French aube) beneath the windows of a loved one, frequently on the mandolin or the guitar."

Hans Werner Henze was a prolific 20th-century German composer with more than 250 works to his credit, including operas and musical theatre, symphonies and other orchestral works, choral pieces, and compositions for instrumental soloists and chamber ensembles. Stylistically eclectic, he was influenced by "serialism, atonality, Stravinsky, Italian music, Arabic music, and jazz, as well as traditional schools of German composition." [En.Wikipedia.org]

According to the biography section of Hans-Werner-Henze-Stiftung.de, a website dedicated to the composer's life and works, "Henze was undoubtedly one of the most important composers of his time. Living in Italy for over 59 years, he developed his own musical language, shaped by the Italian spirit. Henze's music, which, as he himself said, 'emanates from the theater,' always takes a political stance, and from and within it, the great humanitarian concerns speak in a moving way."

The 1993 world premiere of "Adagio, adagio" featured Yehudi Menuhin on violin. James H. North, in notes to a 2010 Ensemble Recherche CD of some of Henze's shorter chamber pieces, calls today's serenade "a four-minute movement for piano trio that could be Rachmaninoff with a splash of dissonance."

German composer **Ludwig van Beethoven** is among the most widely regarded composers in the history of Western classical music. Born in 1770 in Bonn, he displayed musical talent at an early age, studying piano first with his father, Johann van Beethoven, and then with opera composer Christian Gottlob Neefe. It was under the latter's tutelage that the 13-year-old Beethoven composed – and published – his first pieces, a set of keyboard variations. He moved to Vienna in 1792, where he studied composition with Franz Joseph Haydn. He quickly established a reputation as a virtuoso pianist, and recognition of his compositional genius was soon to follow.

Beethoven wrote seven piano trios that were published during his lifetime. The most famous is his Opus 97, known as the "Archduke Trio," published in 1811. The trio we will hear today was one of a set of three published in 1795 as Three Trios for Pianoforte, Op. 1. According to an essay on PopularBeethoven.com, the "first public performance [of the three trios], in which Haydn was also present, took place in 1793."

Notes (Continued)

The fact that Beethoven chose to present these pieces for publication as his "Op. 1" indicates his confidence in them as examples of his mature compositional style that would appeal to the musicians and audiences of the day.

Czech composer **Antonin Dvořák** is probably best known for his "Slavonic Dances," prime examples of his incorporation of elements of folk music from his native Bohemia. Americans have a great fondness for some of his later works, such as his "American Quartet" and "New World Symphony," written in the 1890s while living in the U.S.

According to Dvořák scholar David R. Beveridge, writing trios for piano, violin, and cello "seems to have held a special allure" for the composer. In the case of today's piano trio, Beveridge mentions that Dvořák was so immersed in its composition that he skipped the world premiere of his own sixth symphony by the Vienna Philharmonic. (Eight months later this trio premiered in the Bohemian city of Mladá Boleslav, with Dvořák himself playing the piano part.)

In the essay quoted above, which accompanied a 2012 CD of this and the later "Dumky" trio, Beveridge remarks that both today's trio and the "Dumky" are "predominantly in minor keys and gravitate primarily toward darker moods. It is true, however, that Dvořák's outlook on life was, in the last analysis, positive, and he was a master at salvaging a convincing 'happy end' from the seeming depths of despair." [Artistled.com/dvorak-piano-trios]

Program notes compiled by Jay Rodman from cited sources and Wikipedia.

About The Ensemble

Playing for the Santa Fe Symphony, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Albuquerque Chamber Soloists, and Chatter; James and Megan Holland are a presence in the classical music community of New Mexico. In addition to appearing many times with Willy Sucre at Placitas Artists Series presentations the Hollands have hosted several performances here as well. James Holland became a member of the Miami-based New World Symphony, where for two years he performed, toured, and recorded under the baton of Michael Tilson Thomas. In 1996, he successfully auditioned to become principal cellist for the Charleston Symphony Orchestra and cellist for the Charleston Symphony String Quartet. For many years he has been an active and enthusiastic cello teacher and chamber music coach. Megan Holland, whose performances are noted as "poised" and "powerful," has held principal positions in the Charleston Symphony, Breckenridge Music Festival Orchestra, and Opera Southwest. The Hollands will be joined by pianist Judith Gordon who performs regularly with the musicians of Chatter. Her presence at Placitas Artists Series is becoming more prominent as she leads concert ensembles and accompanies other lead performers.

Exhibit Six Artists

Laverne Bohlin

Landscape paintings by Laverne Bohlin have been described as serene, tranquil, and peaceful. Using pastel or oil paint, her contemporary impressionist work strives to capture the poetry and mood of the unique New Mexico landscape.

Kurt Wuerker

"Like many artists, my work is inspired by the surroundings that drew me to New Mexico. I am inspired by the landscape. I seek to make common forms interesting by representing them in copper and combine with wood or other materials when needed."

Katherine Irish

"When I moved to New Mexico, I made a conscious decision to contribute beauty to the world through my art. I find the world of natural color to be endlessly inspiring - whether it be reflections from a setting sun or light dancing on leaves."

Jeri Burzin

"My challenge as a photographer continues to be finding beauty to photograph in my 'backyard' as well as in my travels. 'Designs in Nature' are often the subject of my work and I enjoy showing how the commonplace may become the unusual with my images."

Art On Exhibit 4/18/2025 - 5/29/2025



Laverne Bohlin
oil on panel



Kurt Wuerker
copper mixed media



Katherine Irish
pastel on paper



Jeri Burzin
fine art photography