



White Rock Concerts *Presents*

The Vetta Chamber Players
And
The Quartet Arthur-LeBlanc



Friday, October 15, 1999

The Quartet Authur-LeBlanc

Hibiki Kobayashi – *violin*

Nadia Francavilla – *violin*

Jean-Luc Plourde – *viola*

James Darling – *cello*

The Quartet Arthur-LeBlanc gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council, the Government of New Brunswick, the University of Moncton and the "Chaine culturelle de Radio Canada".

The Vetta Chamber Players

Victor Costanzi – *violin*

Ruth Schipizky – *violin*

Yariv Aloni – *viola*

Eugene Osadchy – *cello*

Discography

The Penguin Guide to Classical CDs gives a three star rating for the Hyperion recording of the Mendelssohn Octet, Opus 20, performed by Divertimenti (CDA 66356). They describe the recording as a "natural and unforced account of the celebrated Octet...giving great pleasure with great recorded sound."

This CD is available locally at Tapestry Music, 1371 Johnston Road, White Rock. 538-0906

**The Quartet Arthur-LeBlanc
and
The Vetta Chamber Players**

Programme

The Vetta Chamber Players

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Divertimento (String Quartet) No. 1 in D Major, (K.136)
Allegro – Andante - Presto

The Quartet Authur-LeBlanc

Rachel Laurin (1961 -)
Fantasy on a Japanese theme, *Yashinomi*

Franz Schubert (1797 – 1828)
String Quartet No. 13 in A Minor “Rosamunde” (Opus 29)
Allegro ma non troppo – Andante – Minuet – Allegro Moderato

Intermission

**The Quartet Arthur-LeBlanc
and
The Vetta Chamber Players**

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)
Octet, Opus 20 for four violins, two violas and two cellos
Allegro Moderato – Andante – Scherzo – Presto

Compact discs will be for sale in the lobby
During intermission and after the performance.

The Quartet Arthur-LeBlanc

Hibiki Kobayashi – *violin*

Nadia Francavilla – *violin*

Jean-Luc Plourde – *viola*

James Darling – *cello*

The Quartet Arthur-Leblanc has been resident at the University of Moncton Music department since September of 1988. Their name was chosen in honour of a brilliant Acadian violinist, Arthur-Leblanc, who made an enormous contribution to music from 1930 to 1960.

The Quartet has toured extensively in France, Canada and Japan often sharing the stage with world renowned musicians such as clarinetist James Campbell and violist Rivka Golani. They are regularly featured on Radio-Canada and the CBC and have performed to great acclaim at major music festivals such as the Orford Festival and Festival of the Sound.

Critics have described the Quartet Arthur-Leblanc as having a “marked sense of lyricism, and a sound that is fresh and light... The tone of the first violin is sweet and pure. The cello anchors the sound, and the inner voices (the second violin and viola) play with discipline and restraint.”

The Vetta Chamber Players

Victor Costanzi – *violin*

Ruth Schipizky – *violin*

Yariv Aloni – *viola*

Eugene Osadchy – *cello*

Since they were formed in 1983, the Vetta Chamber Players have always lived up to their name, which means, “peak” in Italian. Their founder, Artistic Director and first violinist Victor Costanzi has fashioned a true ensemble, which produces a rich, tightly woven tapestry of sound that suggests a much larger group of instruments.

Drawing its players from Vancouver’s pool of classical musicians, they have enjoyed a enthusiastic and loyal following during the past sixteen years. Not only has their highly acclaimed technical performances kept audiences coming back, but their innovative programming has always given their fans something which they eagerly anticipate.

Programme Notes

The Vetta Chamber Players

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart [1756-1791]

Divertimento [String Quartet] #1 in D Major, [K. 136]

Allegro-Andante - Presto

Mozart's earliest quartets were written in Salzburg in 1772, and published as a group of three "Divertimenti", [K 136, 137 and 138]. The title "divertimento" suggests an un-demanding kind of music, the sort of piece that Telemann, 50 years earlier, might have called "Tafelmusik" and which in those days would have been only half listened to over a good dinner and a glass of wine.

But in fact the K 136 Quartet is not such a Divertimento. For Mozart and his contemporaries, the distinction between "serious" and "light" or "entertainment" music was never entirely rigid, but most Divertimenti had several diverse movements, often including two Minuets. This Quartet-Divertimento [and the other two in the group] doesn't even have a single Minuet. It is in just three sections, almost orchestral in style, featuring a brilliant virtuoso violin part in the first movement, a gentle slow movement that is tender and graceful, while the last movement, marked Presto, has all the earmarks of an orchestral finale, complete with splendid counterpoint.

Alfred Einstein, the musicologist cousin of the great Scientist of the same name, has a unique theory about these works. He writes that Mozart was busy working on an early Opera - *Lucio Silla* [K 135] and he didn't want to be disturbed while completing it. Since he was travelling at that time to Milan, he knew that he might need to toss off a Symphony or two for any one of his wealthy Italian patrons. The three Quartet-Divertimenti in this early group were carried along by way of "instant-symphonies". All that Mozart needed to do was add wind instruments [probably a pair of oboes and horns] in the outer movements, according to need and command.

In fact, there was no such command. *Lucio Silla* was completed, and is seldom performed, today, while the Divertimenti were saved from symphonic alteration, and stand as glorious examples of Mozart's early Quartet writing.

The Quartet Arthur-LeBlanc

Franz Schubert [1797 – 1828]

Quartet # 13, in “A” minor “Rosamunde” [Opus 29]

Allegro ma non troppo – Andante – Minuet – Allegro Moderato

This quartet was written in 1824, the first of Schubert’s so-called “last quartets. It is no coincidence that – like Mendelssohn in the Octet, which is being played after intermission – Schubert wrote about this Quartet, “it points the way to the symphony!” What was it about all these magnificent romantic composers, that even when they wrote in the most delicate and translucent of musical forms – the string quartet – they longed for the fuller sounds of the orchestra?

The slow movement of the Quartet is based on a melody which appears in the incidental music which Schubert wrote for the play “Rosamunde” [hence the title of the quartet]. He also used the same melody in the piano Impromptu Op. 142, #3. The theme of the Minuet is borrowed from an early Schubert song – “The Greek gods”, which is based on a poem by Schiller. In the text, the poet calls out “Schoene Welt, wo bist du?” [“World of beauty, where are you found?”]. Fortunately for us, it is in works like this Quartet that Schubert answered, for all time, Schiller’s poignant cry of despair.

Rachel Laurin [1961 -]

Fantasy on a Japanese Theme, Yashinomi

Quebec composer, Rachel Laurin, is an Associate professor of Organ at the Institute St. Joseph in Montreal. She wrote this short piece on a commission from the Arthur-LeBlanc Quartet. It consists of a set of variations on a popular Japanese classic entitled Yashinomi [Coconut].

The Quartet Arthur Le-Blanc and the Vetta Chamber Players

Felix Mendelssohn [Bartholdy] [1809-1847]

Octet, Op. 20 for 4 violins, 2 violas, 2 ‘cellos

Allegro Moderato – Andante – Scherzo - Presto

The *Octet* Opus 20 was written when Mendelssohn was just 16 years old, only half a year before his other youthful masterpiece, the “Midsummer Night’s Dream” Overture. Both works are imbued with a fairy-like lightness and dexterity, and the sheer youthful exuberance of the young composer comes across in every note. Yet, both works are symphonic in nature. On the original manuscript of the Octet, the instructions read that it should “be played like a symphony”. So Mendelssohn, had this dream of transcending the limits of chamber music and creating works that would become “virtual symphonies” - in instrumental writing if not in their inner spirit.

Indeed, the decade of the 1820's was the time of expanded ensembles. While at the core of all chamber music there was always the string quartet, Beethoven and Schubert experimented with septets and octets using standard string ensembles, which became quasi-orchestral through the addition of solo winds and the double bass.

Mozart added a second viola in his sublime quintets. Schubert - like Boccherini before him - added a second 'cello in his glorious string quintet. Brahms and Tchaikovsky went one better and cultivated the sextet by adding both a second viola *and* a second 'cello. Only Mendelssohn at age 16 had the musical courage to add two more violins, one more viola and one more cello - a complete string quartet, - and thus create a glorious work for double quartet.

There is no doubt that Mendelssohn was an extraordinary prodigy. Born into a wealthy Hamburg household [his grandfather was the famous philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn] he led a stimulating family musical life. Aside from composing, he was a remarkable pianist, violinist and organist.

And he also was a highly skilled painter. In Romantic eyes, all art became one. Composers could paint landscapes, poets were expected to play flutes in pastoral settings, and artists might pen songs to the texts of their poet colleagues.

One such fortuitous overlapping of artistic disciplines occurred in the great centre of Weimar in 1812, when the 12-year-old composer Mendelssohn met the 72-year-old poet Goethe. It was an encounter engineered by Mendelssohn's teacher, the composer Karl Friederich Zelter, who had also set many of Goethe's poems to music. The elderly poet and the young composer must have made an odd couple, but Mendelssohn's musical life was profoundly influenced by the occasion, while Goethe, who was not particularly musically knowledgeable, recognized genius when he saw it. He was probably on the lookout for another Mozart.

Two decades later Robert Schumann was ready to declare that Mendelssohn was "the Mozart of the 19th century". While closer to our own times, Richard Strauss, [who claimed that he held his nose while he survived in Nazi Germany's climate of anti-creativity] was at one time ordered by the Nazi regime to come up with a substitute for Mendelssohn, whose music could not be tolerated because of the composer's Jewish origins. To his credit, he is reputed to have responded that there could be no substitute for such sublime greatness.

Notes by gz , edited by eb

Help us support the arts in White Rock when you shop at Tapestry Music!

*Our community rebate program donates 3% of your purchase to
the White Rock Concerts Society to support young musicians.
Just mention White Rock Concerts when you shop in our store!*

Sheet Music & Books • Classical & Jazz CDs • Accessories
Keyboards • Guitars • Band Instruments • Rentals • Lessons

Tapestry
MUSIC

1371 Johnston Rd. White Rock, B.C.

538-0906

Open 9:30-5:30 Monday through Saturday. Major Credit Cards Accepted.

The Handel Society Choir presents

Joseph Jongen's

Mass (Opus 130)

John Rutter's

Requiem and O Clap your hands

Benjamin Britten's

Festival Te deum

Soloists:

Debra DaVaugh, Soprano

Anna Borowska, Alto

John Bacon, Tenor

Chad Louwerse, Bass

Johan Louwersheimer, Conductor



Sat. Nov. 20, 1999 8:00 p.m.

Good Shepherd Church

2250-150 St. Surrey

Tickets

\$20 & \$15 Students & Seniors

call 597-8855 or 948-9604

or at the door