

Evolution of a New Kind of Trio: The Black Cedar Trio performs Old Europe, the New World, and Asia.

Music by Mozart, Paganini, Kolosko, and Ung

*Kris Palmer, artistic director and flute
Nancy Kim, cello; Steve Lin, guitar*

PROGRAM

Terzetto, M.S. 69 (1833)

Allegro Con Brio
Minuetto
Andante Larghetto
Rondo

Nicolò Paganini (1762-1840)

Luminous Spirals (1997)

Chinary Ung (b. 1942)

Intermission

Grand Trio in E minor, K.304 (1778)

Allegro Non Tanto
Minuet

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Hungarian Trio (2012)

Prelude
Round Dance
Ancient Melody
Spinning Dance

Nathan Kolosko

THE MUSIC

Terzetto, M.S. 69 (1833)

Nicolò Paganini (1762-1840)

Throughout the nineteenth century, the classical guitar in Europe played a significant role in music written for small chamber ensembles of one form or another. Approximately one-third to one-half of all surviving facsimile guitar scores written by European composers in this time period featured the guitar not as a soloist but as an ensemble voice with a variety of combinations of violin, viola, cello, flute, or piano.

One favorite format was a string trio comprised of violin, cello, and guitar, and Paganini's *Terzetto, M.S. 69* is one of the most beautiful examples of this instrumentation. He treats the three instruments equally in a compositional style that straddles the formal clarity of the departing Classical era and the impassioned expressiveness of the emerging Romantic era.

As is typical of Paganini, he features the violin line with the brilliance and virtuosity that was reflective of his own legendary capabilities on the instrument. Sadly though, this trio and others for the violin, cello, and guitar are not frequently performed due to the plethora of great string quartets and piano trios from which string chamber musicians can choose. Thus, these trios fall into the hands of flutists covering the violin line, adding a new tonal palate of a woodwind, plucked string, and bowed string instrument combination.

The title, *Terzetto* comes from the Romantic Terz Guitar, from the German word, *terz* for third. This was a smaller-sized classical guitar tuned a minor third higher than a regular guitar, and it was used for chamber ensembles as opposed to solo performances, since its higher range and brighter timbre projected more strongly.

Luminous Spirals (1997)

Chinary Ung (b. 1942)

"Life is so delicate," says Chinary Ung, when describing the casual twists of fate that kept him in the United States in the late 1960s and prevented him from returning to Cambodia – a fate surely to have caught him in the crosshairs of the murderous Khmer Rouge. In a May 2011 interview with James Chute of the San Diego Union-Tribune, Ung details his education at the Manhattan School of Music through a grant program that obligated his return to his native country upon the completion of his degree.

Close to his departure date, a chance meeting in an elevator led to a scholarship at Columbia University, thus keeping him in the West. *"If I did not go (to that office), and I did not take that elevator at exactly the perfect time, I would have been sent back to Cambodia (permanently)."* *With Pol Pot's disdain for intellectuals, "... I would be gone in no time at all,"* says Ung. His three brothers and one sister perished in the genocide.

Ung's music is highly spiritual, otherworldly, drawing on a range of Eastern traditions and techniques. Of his pupils at the University of California at San Diego, he asks, *"Where is your heart? What are you doing? What is your message? Does it boost your ego only, or does your music communicate to people? Does it empower humanity? Or is it just a form of self-indulgence?"* Ung studied composition with the Chinese-American composer Chou Wen-Chung at Columbia while earning his Doctorate of Musical Arts.

In response to the horrors in Cambodia, he took a decade-long hiatus from almost all composing in 1974 and immersed himself in the fate of his homeland: artistically through work with native musicians, dancers and scholars in performance and recording projects, and humanely by aiding relatives and artists escaping the Khmer Rouge.

He kept his two musical worlds separate, with his “serious” music rich in the post-serialist, experimental aesthetic learned at Columbia completely unmixed with his Cambodian folk heritage. Yet, *Khse Buon* for solo cello, written in 1980 in response to the genocidal killings, finally broke through that artificial boundary.

Luminous Spirals was written in 1997 during a period of prolific writing, and it draws upon the idea of a spiral – something that circles back but continues going.

Grand Trio, K.304

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Mozart’s Grand Trio, K.304 originally existed as the E Minor Violin Sonata, K.304, the fourth of seven sonatas for piano and violin written while Mozart was in Paris in 1778. Of these seven violin sonatas, this E Minor Sonata was the only one set in a minor key, which may be a reflection of the tragic event that occurred in Mozart’s life while in Paris in 1778. According to Dr. Julie Jaffee Nagel, psychologist and pianist, this sojourn was done in search of a job for the young Wolfgang, and it was the first between the mother and son without the accompaniment of the father, the domineering Leopold Mozart. The trip was at the insistence of Leopold, who felt Mozart needed to introduce himself to the court at Versailles, but the reception Mozart received was not favorable.

His command of the French language was poor, the Parisians were slow to warm to his distinct musical gifts, and a lack of funds required mother and son to take lodgings in a wretched hotel. The brutal cold, hunger, and filth were too much for the fifty-seven year-old Anna Maria, who succumbed to some as yet undiagnosed illness. The twenty-two year-old Mozart was at her bedside and found himself alone for the first time in his life. According to Dr. Nagel, the fact that this initial journey between Mozart and his mother ended in such tragic results caused Leopold to actually accuse Wolfgang of killing his mother. She believes this event was a watershed moment, not only in the young Mozart’s relationship with an overbearing father, but also in his career as a composer.

The *E Minor Violin Sonata, K. 304* is notable for having only two movements instead of the customary three or four. Jean Pierre Porro set the violin sonata as the *Grand Trio, K. 304* for violin, cello, and guitar in the early nineteenth century. Like the *Terzetto* by Paganini, this string trio fails to get the attention it deserves from performers and is offered here with the violin part carried by the flute.

Hungarian Trio (2012)

Nathan Kolosko

Born in Portland, Maine, American composer Nathan Kolosko is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including grants from the Allied Arts Foundation and D'Addario Strings. He has performed throughout the United States, Europe and Asia, and he is devoted to expanding the voice of the guitar through performance, composition, and improvisation.

In addition to being a performer and composer Nathan is a teacher dedicated to advancing the pedagogy of the guitar. His *Hungarian Trio* gives a musical depiction of traditional Hungarian folk melodies in the slow movements and traditional Hungarian dance steps in the fast movements, using techniques in all three instruments that mimic their Hungarian counterparts.

The *Ütőgardon*, or percussive cello is unique to Hungarian folk music, and as its English name suggests, it does not have a bow. The performer simply strikes the strings with a hardwood stick in one hand while plucking the strings with the other, effecting a drone-like accompaniment. The *cobza* is a multi-stringed instrument of the lute family of folk origin popular in Romanian, Moldovan and Hungarian cultural traditions.

Instead of the nylon strings of a fretted guitar, the *cobza* is metal-strung and lacks frets. Eastern European folk traditions often used it in elaborate and florid melodic passagework, and Kolosko draws upon this treatment in his *Hungarian Trio*. A Hungarian Flute, more similar to a Renaissance recorder than to a transverse flute, is blown into from the end with a fipple mouthpiece. It was often played by shepherds tending their flocks.

Program notes written by Kris Palmer

THE MUSICIANS

Kris Palmer, artistic director and flute

Dr. Kris Palmer made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2001 as a winner in the Artists International Competition. The New York Concert Review wrote, "*Palmer is clearly among the few current performers on any instrument to fully understand the nature of Baroque music...incisive and expressive...particularly enchanting...with sensuous tone and pace.*" Kris has performed as a concerto soloist in the United States and Europe, and she is the author of the book, *Ornamentation According to C.P.E. Bach and J.J. Quantz*.

Her awards include second prize in the National Flute Association's Young Artist Competition, first prize in the Ruth Burr Awards in Houston, and first prize in the Carmel Chamber Music Society Competition. She was a finalist in the Hemphill-Wells Sorantin Young Artist Award in Texas, the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Young Artist Competition in Texas, and the William C. Byrd Competition in Michigan. Kris holds a Bachelor of Music from the University of Southern California and both a Master of Music and a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Rice University. Kris is a former member of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, former Principal Flutist with the Chamber Orchestra of Albuquerque, and former Second Flutist with the Debut Orchestra of Los Angeles.

Nancy Kim, Cello

As a dedicated chamber musician, Nancy Kim has played with distinguished performers such as violinist Glenn Dicterow, violist Karen Dreyfus, and the composer Richard Danielpour. She is Principal Cellist with the Sonnet Ensemble, a tenured cellist with both the Monterey Symphony and the Santa Cruz Symphony, and a fellow in the Orchestral Studies Program of the San Francisco Academy Orchestra.

Nancy has also served as Acting-Principal Cellist with the Peninsula's West Bay Opera, she has performed in Tokyo's Suntory Hall, and in 2012 she toured the Sultanate of Oman as Principal Cellist with the late Lorin Maazel's Castleton Festival Orchestra.

Nancy served as Assistant Principal Cellist with the Chicago Civic Orchestra, and she has played under the batons of Sir Simon Rattle, Kurt Masur, Pierre Boulez, Bernard Haitink, Alan Gilbert, and Franz Welser-Most. She is a past recipient of a Fellowship Award from the Garth Newell Music Center and a Crutchfield Scholar with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago. Nancy holds both a Bachelor of Music and a Bachelor of Arts in English from Oberlin College and a Master of Music in Orchestral Performance from the Manhattan School of Music.

Steve Lin, Guitar

Steve Lin's awards include first prize in the Boston GuitarFest Competition, first prize in the East Carolina Guitar Competition, and a finalist placement in the Taiwan International Guitar Competition. He has performed at the Mérida Yucatán Guitar Festival, the Yale Guitar Extravaganza, L'Accademia Musicale Chigiana, the Chitarra Imperia Festival, and the Stetson Guitar Workshop. Acclaimed by Classical Guitar Magazine as "*a confident player with a powerful sound, quick hands, and a solid musical memory,*" Steve has two solo album releases, *Eliot Fisk Series Volume 1* and *Imagen*, which Classical Guitar Magazine called "*brilliant and virtuosic.*" Steve premiered *Journey into Desire* by Lei Liang and gave its Asian premier at the first Philippine International Guitar Festival in Manila in 2010. Steve has also commissioned works by Mu-Xuan Lin, David McMullin, Nomi Epstein, Joseph Johnson, Matthew McConnell, and Colin Stack. He has performed with the Boston Microtonal Society's NotaRiotous, the New England Conservatory's Summer Institute for Contemporary Performance Practice, and the New Gallery Concert Series of Boston. Steve is the guitar professor at San Jose State University, and he holds a Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory of Music and a Master of Music from the Yale School of Music.

Black Cedar is grateful for support from the San Francisco Friends of Chamber Music.