



## HOUSE MUSIC

### Greetings and Salutations!

We at Tulsa Friends of Chamber Music including Trio Spiritoso would like to give our audiences and hosts a hearty "Thank You", for attending our concerts and even making our concerts possible. More recently, we have had wonderful hosts invite us to gatherings at their houses. I will not name any names (just kidding). "Chamber Music", or "House Music" is something that grew out of the Classical era into the Romantic era. It originally began as a European middle class dream that was what Dukes and Princes would have in their huge living rooms regularly. Small groups of music. It became (in the Romantic era) a cozy, 'mantinee'/'soire' get-together of musicians and music lovers that would play this type of music (written perhaps for the occasion) for both their own enjoyment and for all else in the room. It would be a concert, or an informal rehearsal.

A poetry reading(s) or prose could be a prelude to the music, and snacks or Hors D'oeuvres (depending on the occasion) would be provided. Sometimes wine and apertifs. But the centerpiece of the occasion was the music. Many composers wrote specifically for this type of small gathering, and it came to be known as Chamber Music.

America, surprisingly, did not have the European-like popularity for this until around 1950. An organization in New York entitled The Friends of Music rallied behind existing groups and promoted them in concerts and encouraged other groups to pop up around the country. "Concert etiquette" and concert programming order became important. But what happened in the houses before the "big concert" was the real joy. (you have to experience it first hand to know what I'm saying).

Whether you are an audience member or a performer, there is a special belonging that happens at these cozy gatherings (fire logs or not). I have nothing more that can be said on top of what I have just said. Experience it! But I will provide more material here: Some historical background about Franz Schubert and his groups. This is a wonderful take-off point when having discussions about chamber music. (I

would encourage all to delve into biographies about Schubert, actually). Schubert was a quiet, reserved, peaceful and yet incredibly pleasant and fun loving fellow. All he wrote was, of course in his many hours spent alone. But by the time he was about 20, he was invited to many gatherings of friends to perform. This was the story of the rest of his life. And he was a humble man, a Christian. Due to his non-aggressive nature, he never strove to be rich. This was, perhaps, his only real downfall, but he enjoyed life nevertheless and this spiritual element can be found in the countless melodies and lyrics to his songs, trios, quartets and symphonies. Schubert's Song Cycles are some of the most expressive and difficult for both pianist and singer, and offer fine examples of Chamber Music. Schubert was always at piano (though in his earlier years he had studied violin and had been a choir boy). Salieri, Mozart's rival, had actually been Schubert's music theory teacher, but when listening to Schubert, you sure don't find a trace of Salieri.

James Ruggles, Editor

