



The recent house concert was at Margaret & Don Sewell's residence. ("Salon Concerts"). What a delight! Both husband and wife are excellent hosts. Margaret really enjoys putting on concerts at her place! She goes all out every other month (six concerts a year!) buying the necessary food items and then cooks/prepares them. Home made chocolate treats and cheese treats of a variety of kinds. And she even has a bartender or two to serve the wine (or champagne as it was this time). There was gourmet pizza called "chicken berry chiptole". Very tasty! The concert featured Trio Spiritoso (Gordon Robson, cello, Carol Hilborn, flute and Amy Pickard, oboe). They represented the first half of the program before the intermission party mingle. The pieces they played were: CPE Bach's Sonata in A Minor, Bartok's Rumanian Folk Dances, JS Bach's Musical Offering, Faure's Pavane and Haydn's London Trio #3 in G Major.

The CPE Bach piece was quite lively and catchy. CPE has by a contemporary Musicologist been called "The Andrew Lloyd Webber of his day". Like Webber, he wrote a lot of instantly popular Classical music and made a lot of money from it. So in a good way, this was a very appropriate piece to start the evening off with a bang and present Trio Spiritoso. In a way, in this work you can see the lilting, dance-like fancy free side of Bach, being less counterpunal and with less chordal development than his father's work. It is more in line with Rococo style music (for instance Boccherini and Haydn's early work).

The Rumanian Folk Dances is a Trio Spiritoso barn burner/stormer. Every time I see the trio perform the piece I can definitely see that it is a forte in the Trio's repertoire. Firey and with soul! Mr. Robson has arranged this piece, and brought out its' most important qualities that can be found in other early historical arrangements. He mentioned that he looked at the Bartok full orchestral score for ideas.

Much of the rest of the program I have mentioned in previous House concert reviews of Tulsa Friends of Chamber Music. Possibly the highlight of the entire evening was Trio Spiritoso's arrangement of Bach's Musical Offering. Highlights of this massive Chamber Music work were skillfully and artfully played by Trio Spiritoso and it proved to be the centerpiece of the night. The virtuosic/fugal interplay between the instruments can especially be seen in the two Allegro movements, which take your breath away with the outright complexity. Passionate in nature, they remind us of church Deacons/Elders feuding, but with a common purpose. The piece was written, however, for Frederick the Great, and the musical theme is the King's, cloaked in clever, complex counterpunal fabric.

The second half of the program (after Champagne punch, and Classical pizza), was Beethoven's Irish and Welsh Songs done by Margaret Sewell, Host and delightful vocalist, accompanied by a trio: Gordon Robson, cello, Anne Roberts, piano, and James Ruggles, violin. At the very end of the program was Kodaly's Duo for Violin and Cello, done by Mr. Ruggles and Mr. Robson.

The Beethoven pieces (7 total, out of maybe 200) were all characteristic of the style of Celtic and Welsh music. At the time, it was considered difficult music, moreso than the Haydn ones commissioned by the same collector of poems of those areas of Britain. (I am looking forward to Beethoven's Scottish ones too!) Margaret's voice is

absolutely lovely and expressive; more of a mid-range Soprano Voice perfect for a lot of pieces, that hits every grace note and nuance with aplomb. Every one of these numbers are delightful. All of them received a lot of applause and cheering from the audience at their completion.

Particularly noteworthy are The Vale of Clwyd (Welsh) and The Traugh Welcome. The Traugh Welcome (Irish) is a very upbeat- pompous yet cheery number that is actually a dance, in 6/8. (it is pompous because it talks of winning battles, and support your local clan), Its tempo is Allegretto. I added some dotted stacatto notes to the interpretation to let it take off. We came to consensus during rehearsals that The Vale of Clwyd is an example of superb Beethoven melodic/harmonic writing, and it goes to prove it when you see the Youtube.com video. And It really is great poetry and great song. Other Salon Concerts music from this evening's Youtube videos are being posted also on Facebook and Youtube. The drama of this piece is evident from the beginning. The big crescendo swell at the beginning in the violin part commences the beginning of each verse, and there are many of these written in the different parts. The story: The dying of the future bride's man before the wedding, due to ill health. At one point she really thinks he will recover, but he dies. In the last verse (which is interpereted in P, and crescendoes to F and morendos at the end) it says: "But soon we hail'd the briday and Love's fond hopes o'ercame its fears. Ah! Hopes too false. Ah! Fears too true, nor love nor joy could save. I can no more than mark your turf with flow'rs o'erspread, 'tis Henry's grave!

The final number of the evening (last but not least!) was Kodaly's Duo for Violin and Cello, Op. 7. This is a bold departure from the evenings' previous pieces, in that there is a time warp between the time placement and style displacement. Quite a gap between CPE Bach and Kodaly, or Folk Beethoven and Kodaly. Kodaly when he wrote this had started his collection of Folk Music with Bartok throughout the countryside of Hungary. They collected many thousands of songs and dances and soon after incorporated them, at least in style or character into their own compositions. This was evident in the nights' Duo. The first several minutes is a gypsy chant-like opening, that swells into cadenza material, the cello occasionally joining in agreement. Following a quick pause, is the Presto movement, which comprises the the bulk of the piece. Equally counterpuntal between cello and violin, it is very fast, and is comprised of varying spiccato tempos and Rondo (abacaba) slow tempos. These are slow meno mosso folk songs.

Apparently, the audience really ate this up! The piece raps up with Presto at "twice" the speed.

