

Zukerman Trio

“With Pinchas Zukerman’s matchless musicianship and charisma at its core, this is a trio made in heaven.”

– *Limelight Magazine*



Zukerman Trio
Pinchas Zukerman (Violin); Amanda Forsyth (Cello); Shai Vosner (Piano)
2023-2024 Biography

With a celebrated career encompassing five decades, Pinchas Zukerman reigns as one of today's most sought after and versatile musicians. A prodigious talent recognized worldwide for his artistry, Zukerman has been an inspiration to young musicians throughout his adult life. In a continuing effort to motivate future generations through education and outreach, the renowned violin and viola soloist, conductor, and chamber musician teamed up in 2002 with four protégés to form a string quintet called the Zukerman Chamber Players. The quintet amassed an impressive international touring schedule with close to two hundred concerts and four discs on the CBC, Altara and Sony labels.

The Zukerman Trio emerged out of the Zukerman Chamber Players with an official launch in 2013. Since then, the ensemble has performed globally in Japan, China, Australia, Spain, Italy, France, Hungary, Canada, South Africa, Istanbul, Russia and Germany. The Trio has appeared at major North American festivals, including Ravinia, Tanglewood, Aspen, Bravo! Vail and Banff and European festivals in Edinburgh, Verbier and Schleswig Holstein. In 2020, pianist Shai Vosner joined Zukerman and cellist Amanda Forsyth, and the three continue to find joy and inspiration performing the classical trio and duo literature.

In the 2023-24 season, the Zukerman Trio can be seen in Taormina, Sicily; Stockholm, Sweden; Geneva and Lausanne, Switzerland; Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; and in the US in Orange County and Aliso Viejo in Southern California as well as El Paso and Phoenix. They embark on a European Tour in summer of 2024, including stops in Berlin, Germany; Concabella, Alicante, and Valencia, Spain; and Geneva and Lausanne, Switzerland. Mr. Zukerman and pianist Shai Vosner travel to China for a recital tour, while Mr. Zukerman and cellist Amanda Forsyth are joined by pianist Michael Stephen Brown for a concert at Wolf Trap in Virginia.

Born in Tel Aviv, **Pinchas Zukerman** came to America in 1962, where he studied at The Juilliard School with Ivan Galamian. The renowned virtuoso has long been admired for the expressive lyricism of his playing, singular beauty of tone, and impeccable musicianship, which can be heard throughout his discography of over 100 albums for which he earned two GRAMMY® awards and 21 nominations. Zukerman has been awarded a Medal of Arts, the Isaac Stern Award

for Artistic Excellence, and was appointed as the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative's first instrumentalist mentor in the music discipline. A devoted and innovative pedagogue, Mr. Zukerman chairs the Pinchas Zukerman Performance Program at the Manhattan School of Music, where he has pioneered the use of distance-learning technology in the arts. He continues to serve as Artistic & Principal Education Partner for joined the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. He currently serves as Conductor Emeritus of the National Arts Centre Orchestra of Canada, as well as Artistic Director of its Young Artist Program.

Canadian Juno award winning cellist **Amanda Forsyth** is considered among her peers and critics alike to be one of the most dynamic cellists on the concert stage today. Describing a recent performance, California's *Ventura County Star* raves: "In Forsyth's hands, it was sheer magic." She has achieved an international reputation as a premiere soloist and chamber musician and previously enthralled audiences as the principal cellist of both The Calgary Philharmonic and Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestras. Her intense richness of tone, exceptional musicality and passion are reminiscent of cellists of a former age. She captivates audiences with every phrase.

Pianist **Shai Wosner** has attracted international recognition for his exceptional artistry, musical integrity, and creative insight. His performances of a broad range of repertoire—from Beethoven and Schubert to Ligeti and the music of today—reflect a degree of virtuosity and intellectual curiosity that has made him a favorite among audiences and critics, who note his "keen musical mind and deep musical soul" (NPR's *All Things Considered*). Mr. Wosner is a recipient of Lincoln Center's Martin E. Segal Award, an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award. He is on the faculty at the Longy School of Music in Boston.

OCTOBER 2023. AT THE REQUEST OF THE ARTIST – PLEASE DO NOT ALTER THIS

BIOGRAPHY

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Zukerman Trio

Critical Acclaim

“Their combination of outsized string sound, exciting ensemble precision, and compelling interpretation puts them at the head of the Piano Trio division in the Chamber Music Major League.”

San Diego Union-Tribune

“With Pinchas Zukerman’s matchless musicianship and charisma at its core, this is a trio made in heaven. His South African-born wife Amanda Forsyth brings passion and formidable technique as a cellist, and Canadian pianist Angela Cheng is the dream accompanist who lives every note.”

Limelight Magazine

“This was an autumnal cameo, in Sydney's winter twilight, of supremely beguiling charm and masterly musical intimacy.”

Sydney Morning-Herald

“The cleanly articulated performance was elevated by an uncommon passion, both in the tender Adagio and in the finale that shifts abruptly from sadness to joy.”

The Chicago Tribune

“The balance among the three was flawless and their execution seamless. Forsyth is a bodacious performer — she's doesn't do "tentative" — and it was glorious. Cheng's keyboard work was nuanced and delightful. Zukerman, meanwhile, is something of a Zen master to whom technique and expression are exact and mature. This was an auspicious start to the season.”

Commercial Appeal

“Consummate and charismatic musicians, the trio made for a tight-knit chamber ensemble.”

The Scotsman

“The folk-like, gypsyesque lines skipped and sparkled wildly between the two string players - whose music came flashily alive - roaring like lions, serenading like larks, swarming like bees and painting a magically vivid panorama of fresh and enormous Hungarian landscapes – it was musically intoxicating.”

Edinburgh Guide

“Those who came to gawk at Zukerman got some great music-making in the bargain...this was a superb performance that lifted the listener out of everyday worries.”

Montreal Gazette

“It was remarkable how well-balanced the group sounded.”

The Washington Post

ZUKERMAN TRIO

The West Australian

April 25, 2017

Trio to pack a Zuker-punch

By William Yeoman

Two's company, three's a crowd: unless you're conducting Beethoven's Triple Concerto with three of the world's greatest soloists and the WA Symphony Orchestra.

This Friday night WASO welcomes back acclaimed Israeli-born violinist Pinchas Zukerman and cellist Amanda Forsyth, this time joined by award-winning Canadian pianist Angela Cheng, for what promises to be a performance as fun as it will be profound.

On the podium will be WASO principal conductor Asher Fisch, a long-time friend and collaborator of Zukerman.

"It's such a fun piece," Fisch says as he relaxes in the upstairs library of Perth's Como Hotel. "And with the Zukerman Trio, you have three great players who aren't just a trio but fantastic soloists. It's the perfect combination."

So much so that Fisch doesn't expect too many difficulties. "Well not when I'm just conducting anyway," he laughs. "I did it once conducting from the piano. That was difficult. Fun, but difficult."

Also on the program is Beethoven's "Egmont" Overture and Alban Berg's intensely lyrical Violin Concerto: To the Memory of an Angel, written in 1935 and dedicated to Manon Gropius, who died of polio at the age of 18. It was also to be Berg's final work: he died in December of that year.

"I'd performed the Berg with Pinchas in New York some years ago," Fisch says. "I knew it was his piece. We knew we'd be playing the Beethoven trio and thought it would be a waste not to do something else, maybe just a small work for violin and orchestra. We never thought he'd say yes to the Berg. Which I was overjoyed about, naturally. I'm always looking for any excuse to perform Berg or Schoenberg here and this is a big one."

Zukerman is one of today's greatest violinists, having studied with the likes of Isaac Stern at

New York's Juilliard School before going on to perform under famous conductors such as Leonard Bernstein and instrumentalists such as Daniel Barenboim and Jacqueline du Pre (their recording of the Beethoven Piano Trios is legendary).

Asked whether there's a difference between orchestral and chamber music, Zukerman answers in the negative. "There's no difference," he says. "It's all chamber music."

Award-winning Forsyth was principal cellist at Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra and began playing the cello aged three. She is the daughter of composer Malcolm Forsyth and her former teachers include William Pleeth (who also taught du Pre) in London, Harvey Shapiro at Juilliard and Lynn Harrell in Los Angeles.

"Communication is the best part of chamber music," cellist Forsyth says. "As a soloist in a concerto, my back is to the orchestra, so I tend to try to turn around so there's some more communication. Because he plays the violin, it's much easier for Pinchas to do. I'm a bit jealous of that."

Fisch says music such as that by Beethoven and Berg is here to stay. It's how we present classical music that's got to change.

"When I first came (to Perth) and suggested the Beethoven symphony cycle, the reaction was 'we're not going to sell it'. But we could have sold it two or three times over. Because that kind of thing draws audiences."

Which is why he wants to make sure there will be "more and more special events" such as complete cycles and complete opera performances in concert, like next year's presentation of Wagner's Tristan and Isolde.

"Old structures have to be rethought," Fisch says. "Things are moving from subscription-based concerts to out-of-season, out-of-the-city events. And we have to move with them."



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ZUKERMAN TRIO



February 16, 2017

Cellist Amanda Forsyth returns to Calgary with Zukerman Trio

By Eric Volmers



This probably shouldn't be taken as an invitation to behave badly at a classical music concert.

But Amanda Forsyth says she wouldn't mind it if you behaved badly at a classical music concert.

"I think they should do what they want," says the cellist, on the line from her home in New York City. "The whole problem with classical music is that everyone thinks they have to behave. What has to happen is the music fills their bodies and makes them feel something, whatever it is they want to feel."

This doesn't mean we are likely to witness mosh pits when the Zukerman Trio, which includes Forsyth, husband and virtuoso violinist Pinchas Zukerman, and pianist Angela Cheng, takes the stage on Friday at the Bella Concert Hall. But her relaxed attitude when it comes to audience behaviour seems to reflect a joy she has

found in her own new-found freedom. Both Forsyth and Zukerman left their posts at the National Arts Centre Orchestra in 2015, she as principal cellist and he as director, to pursue other interests. That includes concentrating on what had already been a busy solo careers and touring globally with the trio.

"I've felt really free since I've left being a member of an orchestra," Forsyth says. "It's just been very freeing and exciting."

"Let it go. Let it go," she sings, for added emphasis.

Being principal cellist for an orchestra is clearly very different from playing in a string quartet or Chamber ensemble, which is also very different from playing in the trio.

She describes the unique chemistry between players in the Zukerman Trio as musically "telepathic," an intimate bond that has developed over time.

"You get used to each other and you know what's going to happen," she says. "Playing concerts isn't ever finite. Things can go wrong, you play that phrase better than you did last time, or worse, or different. That's what's exciting about life performing, it's never going to be the same. I always make the analogy: if you fold the towels and put them in the cupboard, that's finite. You can do them perfectly and you can line them all up and you can't do it any better. But with music, you can always do something



different or better and there's many different ways to do it."

"It's three soloists coming together and then making one," she says. "It's beautiful."

Few would argue with that. At the time of this interview, the plan was for the trio to perform pieces by Franz Schubert, Dmitri Shostakovich and Reinhold Gliere at the Bella Concert Hall.

The group was formed in 2011 to allow Forsyth, Cheng and Zukerman to offer trio pieces as an alternative to the quintet works they performed as part of the Zukerman Chamber Players.

Once described by the Ottawa Citizen as "the golden couple of the National Arts Centre," Zukerman and Forsyth added glamour and romance to the classical music

scene. Their signature piece became Brahms Double Concerto for violin and cello, which they played in concert halls throughout the world.

Married for 18 years, the romance actually began in Calgary. It was during her six-year tenure as principal cellist at the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra in the 1990s.

"When I was principal cello he came to play a Beethoven concerto and he decided he would marry me," says Forsyth. "He only told me that later. It was just a strange fluke that I went to Ottawa to be principal cello, it was the week he was doing a guest week as conductor. I got the job and he told me he was getting the job as well. That was kind of nice. We were just buddies and really good friends and colleagues. All that changed eventually."

Born in South Africa, Forsyth moved to Edmonton with her family when she was two years old. She began playing the cello less than a year later. The daughter of composer Malcolm Forsyth, who passed away in 2011, she studied in London, Los Angeles and New York City. After a short stint with the Toronto Symphony, she joined the Calgary Philharmonic as principal cellist at the age of 24.

Future plans for the trio include Forsyth going back to her roots and taking on her father's composition, Six Episodes After Keats for piano trio.

"No one has played that in a long time," she said. "I used to play that as a kid. That's another important thing for me, to make sure Malcolm Forsyth's music is still played since he has passed away and he is such a great Canadian composer. I'm a big ambassador of his music."

The Zukerman Trio will perform at Mount Royal University's Bella Concert Hall on Friday.

ZUKERMAN TRIO



March 3, 2016

IPO plays the palace at 80



A Kensington Palace dinner and concert featuring violinist Pinchas Zukerman launched the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's 80th anniversary celebrations and raised well over £300,000.

Hosted by the British Friends, the Ottolenghi-catered event attracted IPO supporters from Europe, America and Israel.

Co-chairs Denise Esfandi and Marsha Lee spoke passionately about the orchestra's commitment to artistic freedom and musical excellence and bringing the soul of Israel to the world.

Lots in the auction, conducted by Sotheby's Lord Dalmeny, included concert tickets and dinner with David Garrett and the IPO at the Dresden Music Festival and a trip to Mumbai to see Zubin Mehta and the IPO in concert.

Performing with Amanda Forsyth (cello) and Angela Cheng (piano), Mr Zukerman played selections from Brahms, Schumann and Mendelssohn.

He said he was "honoured" to perform at the palace. "It gives us great pleasure to play music and brings us all closer as people and as a nation."

Ms Lee said afterwards that "the IPO continues to be the greatest cultural ambassador for Israel. Inside Israel, its community programmes inspire future generations, ensure world-class musical excellence and bring together Jewish, Christian and Muslim citizens."

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The Sultry, Enchanting and Brilliant

Amanda Forsyth

The National Arts Centre Orchestra's Reigning Queen

As quick to laugh as she is quick to judge, mostly herself, Amanda Forsyth is a dedicated musician, creative artist, stylish beauty, and engaging personality.

Born in South Africa, Forsyth came to Canada when she was very young with her father, composer Malcolm Forsyth, and her mother Lesley, a former ballet dancer. The University of Alberta, near where the family lived in Edmonton, offered a Suzuki music program in cello and so, at the tender age of three, she was enrolled to begin her musical training and take her first steps towards what has already been an impressive career.

"As a kid, music was just something to do initially but my parents saw hints of talent, even at that age, so they encouraged me in that direction. And I was a bit of a stage bunny so I loved the performing aspect. I was a typical kid so I didn't always want to practice but luckily had enough natural talent to make it seem I had."

As she got older, music became her outlet for expression, and her joy. "The work and discipline of music are a gift to children. Music opens their minds, their imaginations, and gives them something they have control over. When a child plays, they have control over the sound and feeling their music creates."

Later, she was off to London to continue her music instruction. While many will recognize this as a natural progression in her education, and some might think it exciting, for 13-year old Forsyth, it was a challenge.

"The time I spent with my teacher was wonderful, but the times away from the music were hard. I had to carry my cello back and forth on the tube and back then it was as big as I was. My dad lived in London with me that first year and I remember once he was supposed to meet me to help carry my cello up the hill to home but he was late so I tried to do it alone and by the time he found me I was struggling and near fainting."

During her two and a half years in London, Forsyth studied music, continued her regular education, saw regular concerts, and met many inspiring musicians as part of her musical development.

She recalls attending one concert right after a music lesson so she was still carrying her cello. "I put the cello in the cloak room and then after the concert met the performer and I was so excited I

left without it." On the way home she realized her mistake and had to return, then find someone who could give her access to the locked theatre.

Though the instrument she played then was certainly common compared with what she plays now – a 311-year-old Carlo Giuseppe Testore – even then she was very attached to her instrument.

"When you are a musician, your instrument becomes your voice. With the cello especially, and the way it is played, its sound and feel resonate through your body and it becomes part of you. I could get very poetic about it all but there is a bond between musician and instrument. Our instruments become entities all on their own; but also part of us."

Returning to Canada at the age of 15, Forsyth continued her training at the Vancouver Academy of Music, and then completed her education at the Juilliard School of Music in New York. At 21 she began her working career with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and then went on to become the youngest principal ever selected by the Calgary Philharmonic. In 1998 she joined Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra as principal cello and soloist. She is also a cellist with the Zukerman Chamber Players and performs around the world, both with the Chamber Players, and as a guest soloist.

To earn the role as principal artist with an orchestra, musicians go through an intensive screening process beginning with an application, and then auditions. The auditions, which can run through many, many rounds, are done from behind a screen so the judging is based solely on the sound and accuracy of the musician. Forsyth has experience on both sides of the screen – as an artist auditioning, and as judge. "It's strange in a way because music is such an emotional thing, and with this style of audition, you never get to see how the artist feels about their work or what they are giving it."

Initially her move to Ottawa came from wanting a change and a desire to be more central for touring. "I don't know that I'll ever really feel anywhere is home forever, but Ottawa is certainly home for now. It is a beautiful place to live with green spaces and culture. If I could be picky I'd want just a few more of the things they have in Toronto or New York in terms of fashion and food, but...."

As part of the orchestra, soloist, and

part of the Chamber ensemble, Forsyth says there are distinctions. As part of an orchestra, members dress all in black and very similarly in order to present one body, one unit. Though the uniformity goes against everything her personal style and flair suggest, she understands and supports the logic and tradition behind it. "As a member of an orchestra it's not about my own musical interpretation; it's about following the conductor's direction to achieve their interpretation. You become part of the singular voice the group puts forward."

As passionate as she is about her music, Forsyth finds it hard to hide her emotions. "I have a very high standard for myself, and a high standard for the music I am involved with. When things aren't done well there is a choice, I suppose, to let it go and move forward, but for me that feels as if I have to play like I don't care, and I do, very much, so I find it hard to be stoic in the face of things gone wrong."

As a soloist though Forsyth finds an outlet for her artistry and creativity. "What's so amazing about playing solo is that the music is never the same twice. Music is a living thing, constantly changing and evolving, and as a soloist you can be influenced by your emotions, by the energy from the audience, and you can let that carry the music in a new direction."

But such energy and interpretation can be challenging and Forsyth says coming home from a tour she sometimes desperately needs a break and will insist on taking on tasks she normally doesn't fuss with herself – like folding towels. "You flatten and fold, flatten and fold. There is a way to do it and when it's done, it's done and there aren't a lot of interpretations and you don't go back and wonder if you gave it all you had, or if it was done right. If it's folded, it's done, and that's it."

Applause for a performer is certainly part of the job and some may say the icing on the cake. For the person who is often her own harshest critic, though the applause is noted, it does not convey the meaning she seeks. "Even as a child people would tell me I had done well and I'd want to know how, what had I done well, what did they like or not like? As a musician I am always trying to improve and grow so those are the things I'm always wondering." Forsyth says when she sees a performer who moves her

she is always inclined to tell them her reaction and why, not necessarily because it is customary in the industry, but because it reflects the kind of input she herself seeks.

Forsyth says the expression "good job" is one that has always made her crazy, number one because it tells her nothing, and number two because, although she does practice and put a great deal of effort into her music, to her it is not a job. "I recognize I am very lucky to do what I love and am passionate about. There is certainly effort involved but it is not work."

Another artistic outlet is through the Zukerman Chamber Players, which Forsyth says has been an exceptional experience. "When we play together we are all equal. There is a level of trust and faith between us and when that exists, something magical happens with the music. Someone can take a note and play it just a little bit longer, and suddenly we're all moving with it and improvising and being spontaneous. We can play the same piece every night of a 20 stop tour and the music is not the same on any two nights."

Though some might think a life of

travel would be exciting, most often it is quite grueling, with tours lasting a week or more and stops in different countries every night of the journey, to the tune of about 40 different places a year. Forsyth though does try to take time to be a tourist and to appreciate the places she sees. "I try to research where we're going and find out what is famous or important to see and then make time to go visit things. I feel bad if I have to leave a place and I haven't had a chance to see what's around me. We've been to some really interesting places like Istanbul, Mumbai, Seoul.... and I always have my camera along to take pictures so I won't forget.

In her travels, besides sightseeing, Forsyth takes the time to teach Master's classes whenever and wherever she can. "Teaching itself is a great experience and having the ability to teach these Master's classes in far off places means I am meeting exceptional young musicians all over the world."

Does she get lonely on her travels? "My cello rests beside me, Yoji is under my seat, and that makes everything right." Continues on page 38



“What’s so amazing about playing solo is that the music is never the same twice. Music is a living thing, constantly changing and evolving, and as a soloist you can be influenced by your emotions, by the energy from the audience, and you can let that carry the music in a new direction.”



Amanda began her musical training at the age of three



Amanda Forsyth is a dedicated musician, creative artist, stylish beauty, and engaging personality

Yoji, a Maltese dog, is her constant companion. "Yoji has been with me for five years now and travels with me everywhere and very well."

Her other constant companion in her travels is, of course, Carlo, her cello, named for the maker who brought the instrument to life. Being such an important part of her music, Forsyth says she constantly worries when she travels with it. "Even as a kid, we'd get to the airport and I'd throw up right away because I was so worried about my cello." These days the worry can be even greater. "Some people just don't realize what Carlo is so it can be handled quite roughly. I am constantly watching to make sure nothing happens."

When she is not on the road, Forsyth doesn't spend much time far from her house, the home she shares with husband, violin virtuoso, violist, and conductor, Pinchas Zukerman. Through extensive renovations, with the creative inspiration of her friend and interior decorator, Lee-Ann LaCroix, she has made their home into a retreat where she can escape the chaos and bustle of her life. "I have too much clutter in my head and too much chaos sometimes in my life so our home is very soothing, very peaceful and clutter free. We don't have ornaments or knick knacks; it's all very calming really."

So, what does the artist do in her free time? Combat karate and weightlifting of course. Forsyth says that, because as

a musician she spends so much time sitting, when she has the chance to get up and move she feels she has a lot of energy to release. "I love being with my trainer and master, Mark Slater. As an artist I am very aware of my body so I can mold myself to do what I'm told. I love being able to get my heart rate up really high and then see it come down again quickly." Former strength and conditioning coach for the Ottawa Senators, Slater is more than capable of reining in and directing Forsyth's energy. Protected athletically as a child for fear of injury to her hands and arms, as an adult she enjoys the freedom of being able to let loose and go a little crazy physically. She says it gives her the balance she needs.

Forsyth has had the unique experience, more than once, of playing a composition written especially for her – by her father. "Playing the work of a living composer is such a wonderful experience. When you play something that has been studied and played for many years, there are already traditions and interpretations in place. When you are performing a work that has never been done before, you are creating the artistic outcome; you are responsible for interpreting the piece and that is so much more challenging and rewarding artistically." In 1997 Forsyth was honored with a Juno for her performance of *Electra Rising*, a cello concerto her father composed for her.

"Music is the most complete art form there is. Film needs music, dance needs music, but music doesn't need anything to support it; it can create and deliver a message all on its own. Music for the listener can be an escape, a chance to relax. For the performer, it is an outlet and an expression of who and what they are at that moment."

Though there are always going to be different levels of listening in an audience – enjoyment, learning – the goal for Forsyth is simple. "My father once said that if he could change or influence someone's outlook or feelings, even for a minute, then he had succeeded in writing something worthwhile. The same is true for me with performing."

Though clearly Forsyth is an incredible talent, she is humble about her success and grateful for the gift she has been given. "Without music as my yoga, my prayer, what I go to every day, I don't know where I'd be. I know whatever else is happening, it is there waiting for me. It inspires and moves me, and hopefully that sense of being sustained and enriched carries forward to those who are listening. I believe in my talent but I never fully trust it and I certainly never take it for granted. I feel I'm always very vulnerable as an artist and a musician so I am always working and honing my craft." And perhaps that is part of what has made her the remarkable talent she is. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY Paul Couvrette | **CLOTHING STYLIST** Christopher Massardo | **HAIR STYLIST** Lucas Nault | **MAKE-UP ARTIST** Kit Sena
CLOTHING (above) Amanda Forsyth is featured in a red strapless dress by Sue Wong and in a mosaic pattern dress by Rinascimento. Both dresses are courtesy of ENVIED, 513 Sussex Drive, 613-241-0003 | The black dress (above and opening spread) was designed by David Meister. The red halter-styled dress (featured on the cover and contents pages) is by Nicole Miller. Both dresses were provided courtesy of HOLT RENFREW, 240 Sparks Street, 613-238-2200

ZUKERMAN TRIO

JewishJournal

October 27, 2016

Zukerman focuses on quality, not quantity of shows

By Rick Schultz

In his heyday, Israeli violinist, violist and conductor Pinchas Zukerman performed chamber music with such superstars as violinist Itzhak Perlman, cellist Lynn Harrell and pianists Vladimir Ashkenazy and Daniel Barenboim. Together and as soloists, these great musicians commanded large audiences.

Recalling that era during a recent phone conversation, Zukerman, 68, lamented how the field of music has changed.

“Pure violin recitals have dropped drastically over the last 30 years,” Zukerman said. “I used to play 20 to 30 recitals worldwide. Now it’s more like five to 10. Presenters back then wanted more chamber music.”

Zukerman may perform less often in larger venues, but he acknowledged that chamber music benefits from the intimacy and fine acoustics of smaller halls. The 500-seat Bram Goldsmith Theater at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills is such a hall. On Oct. 30, Zukerman, playing violin, will perform there with the Zukerman Trio, which includes cellist Amanda Forsyth — Zukerman’s wife — and pianist Angela Cheng.

The trio, officially established in 2013, will perform Reinhold Glière’s Duets for Violin and Cello (Op. 39), Dmitri Shostakovich’s Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor (Op. 67) and Franz Schubert’s Piano Trio in B-flat major (D.898).

“For someone who has been in the business for 50 years now, I pick and choose what I want to do,” Zukerman said. “We’re doing about 10 to 15 trio concerts internationally. You can’t rely on one aspect of the profession and say, ‘I will only play violin recitals this year.’ Well, you may be sitting at home more than performing.”

Zukerman has found ways for his career to grow without compromising on essentials. He’s not the sort of musician, for example, who puts a group together haphazardly just to continue

working. Zukerman, who has played chamber music since he was 9 years old, counts cellists Jacqueline du Pré and Leonard Rose, and violinist Isaac Stern, as among his illustrious partners.

“I’m not a fly-by-night musician,” Zukerman said. “I like to find the people who will play the music better with me, or I will play it better with them. I have to know them as people, not just as players. And then we choose the right music and try not to do it just once.”

For his highly regarded 1997 set of Schubert trios with Ashkenazy and Harrell — included in a newly released 22-CD career retrospective on Deutsche Grammophon — Zukerman said the process was all-consuming.

“We worked very hard on those trios — practiced them, recorded them and then went on tour in Europe and Japan. When the music becomes part of your existence, that’s when there’s some depth. The different people I’ve played with I first knew as mentors, like Stern or Rose — or friends, like Harrell. I played with the Guarneri Quartet, the Cleveland Quartet. I’ve done a lot of work with friends I’ve known since I was a teenager.”

Similarly, work with the Zukerman Trio musicians evolved over time. Zukerman met cellist Forsyth in 1999 while he was music director of Canada’s National Arts Centre Orchestra, a position he left last year. Forsyth was the ensemble’s principal cellist. In 2003, the pair formed the Zukerman Chamber Players, a string quintet, then began collaborating as a trio in 2011 with pianist Cheng.

“Our trio repertory with piano is growing,” Zukerman said. “We have over a half-dozen pieces and are slowly learning more. Some of it is a question of when to rehearse. Angela has her own solo career and teaches at Oberlin [College

in Ohio], and Amanda goes to festivals. We perform together and apart.”

Forsyth said a trio is unlike a string quartet, which strives to blend into one instrument. “A trio consists of three soloists,” Forsyth said. “I’m a tiebreaker if questions arise regarding tempo or interpretation, but Pinchas knows a lot of tradition and has a longer background, so we discuss a lot.”

Along with his passion for chamber music, Zukerman also has a thriving career as a conductor. His new recording on the Decca label features works by Ralph Vaughan Williams and Edward Elgar, performed by London’s Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Zukerman is in his eighth season as the ensemble’s principal guest conductor.

The album includes Zukerman’s second go-round as soloist in Williams’ rhapsodic “The Lark Ascending.” The violinist’s other recording, in 1973 (on Deutsche Grammophon), was done as a favor to his friend, pianist-conductor Barenboim. “Daniel was conducting the English Chamber Orchestra, and he asked me if I knew

the piece. I said, ‘What’s a lark?’ We didn’t have larks in Tel Aviv.”

For Zukerman, Elgar’s music had an even greater impact. “I first heard Elgar’s music in 1967, performed by du Pré,” Zukerman said. “It was mesmerizing. In two seconds, I fell in love with his sonority, with the personal way he wrote music. His orchestration is unique. It’s like a figure eight that goes from one section to the other.”

Zukerman, who is also head and founder of the Zukerman Performance Program at the Manhattan School of Music, shows few signs of cutting back on his hectic schedule as a soloist, chamber musician and conductor. He likens life as a musician to being an athlete.

“I go to fundamentals every day,” Zukerman said. “Not just in the classes I teach. I spend my life every day on the fiddle, practicing scales and passages, playing with the right pitch. As I tell my students, after everything is said and done, if you play with a beautiful sound, the right rhythm and the proper musical intention, you’re going to do just fine.”

Zukerman Trio

theStrad

VOICE OF THE STRING MUSIC WORLD SINCE 1890

June 2014

TELLING TALES

Challenging, intricate, complex – the works of the late-Romantic composer Richard Strauss inspire passion and trepidation in equal measure. Concertmasters from orchestras around the world tell TOBY DELLER how they get to grips with his demands



Amanda Forsyth has shed tears while performing *Don Quixote*

AMANDA FORSYTH

Principal cello, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Canada

WHEN PEOPLE ASK ME for my favourite composer I always have the same answer for them: Richard Strauss. And my favourite of his works is *Don Quixote* (or in my case *Dona Quixote*, as the cello represents the main character). I've played it in Lisbon with my husband Pinchas Zukerman playing the solo viola part.

When Don Quixote is dying, the slide down the C string breaks my heart

As an orchestral musician I tend to have my playing under control, but for *Don Quixote* I really need to keep myself together because I have shed tears when performing this piece, which isn't helpful.

When *Don Quixote* is dying, and there's the slide down the C string, it just breaks my heart. Listening to the old recordings of Emanuel Feuermann and Gregor Piatigorsky, and the emotional way they executed that slide, I always find myself responding a bit differently. Rather than a constant slide, it goes down in fits and starts as if you're actually hearing the gasping of a dying man.

Leaving aside the emotional aspect of Strauss's music, there's the sheer technical aspect: it's very thick writing with millions of notes. As with any composer, once you've played a lot of Strauss it comes naturally to your fingers. But it's certainly not something you can just throw off.

My father was a trombone player in South Africa and knew a violinist who had played for Strauss. He was playing *Don Juan* and Strauss kept turning to the viola section and saying, 'No, that's not right. Do it again.' Finally the player said: 'Maestro, we're playing what you've written.' He said, 'But I don't want to hear all the notes!' It's funny because that is the piece we have to learn for orchestral auditions, and we do have to learn all the notes. But in music there's no such thing as perfection. It's not folding towels and making sure everything's at right angles then closing the cupboard and shutting the door. So absolutely we have to go for accuracy in auditions, yet still retain a beautiful sound.

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ZUKERMAN TRIO

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

March 30, 2013

4/7: Violinist Zukerman's ChamberPlayers in Scottsdale

By Kevin Downey



The Zukerman ChamberPlayers, from left: Jethro Marks, Jessica Linnebach, Angela Cheng, Amanda Forsyth and Pinchas Zukerman.

Pinchas Zukerman, the world-renowned violinist, conductor and chamber-music player, is performing concerts around the world this year as a soloist, conductor and with his Zukerman ChamberPlayers.

Now four decades into his career, Zukerman formed the ChamberPlayers 10 years ago when he gave some of his former students an opportunity to perform with him.

"We were all living in Ottawa, Canada, and we all played in the orchestra," said Zukerman, who is also the music director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra of Ottawa. "Two of them were my students about 15 years ago — Jethro (Marks) and Jessica (Linnebach). I thought we should try to

perform some chamber music together. I knew they would be fine.

"Now, it has become a steady group."

Zukerman plays violin. Marks plays viola, and Linnebach plays violin. Amanda Forsyth plays cello with the ChamberPlayers. Angela Cheng, who joined the group three years ago, plays piano. The group comes to Scottsdale on Sunday, April 7.

"Pinchas is an iconic musician," said Bill Banchs, CEO of the Scottsdale Cultural Council, the non-profit group that runs at Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts. "His recognition goes well beyond classical music. Pinchas, along with Leonard Bernstein, Itzhak

Perlman and Placido Domingo, transcends classical music. The kind of magic that these big names create is what attracts people to the art form.”

Zukerman said the ChamberPlayers’ performances are notable for being cohesive and consistent. These are traits he attributes to the members’ longtime friendship.

“There is a tradition with chamber players where they play and stay together because they like each other,” Zukerman said. “That is what people know about the Zukerman ChamberPlayers.”

The members perform together when not working other engagements.

“We book concerts when the orchestra is not playing,” Zukerman said. “We would play around the world non-stop if we could. On this trip, we are going to China, Taiwan, Japan and the U.S. West Coast. We are playing a lot of different pieces.”

The music on this tour, as it has in recent years, includes piano.

“Most of what we play now is piano quintets, piano quartets, piano trios and we do some string trios,” Zukerman said.

In Scottsdale, they will begin their performance with Brahms’ Piano Quartet in C Minor Op. 60.

“We play music that we all like and that we like to perform together,” Zukerman said. “This is one of the great works.”

The second half of the program is a performance of Piano Quintet Op. 57 by Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich.

“They are playing the monuments of chamber music,” Banchs said. “It is not every day that people in the Valley get to hear these great works. Both pieces are difficult, but Shostakovich is incredibly difficult to perform. But not only that, it is a great work of 20th-century chamber music.”

ZUKERMAN TRIO

THE JERUSALEM POST

April 30, 2009

by Maxim Reider

Israeliness intact

Nowadays, acclaimed Israeli violinist Pinchas Zukerman, who has been the Artistic Director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa for about 10 years, divides his time between solo performances with major orchestras throughout the world and conducting. And he also performs chamber music.

The Zukerman Chamber Players - violinists Zukerman and Jessica Linnebach, violists Jethro Marks and Ashan Pillai and cellist Amanda Forsyth - will give a concert on May 3rd at the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center. The program of the evening, presented in the framework of the Master Musicians at the Center, will feature Schubert's String trio D. 471, Beethoven's String quintet Opus 29 and String quintet No. 2 by Brahms.

Zukerman inaugurated his current ensemble about six years ago. "The [Ottawa] orchestra members are excellent musicians, he says, and we immediately started playing string quintets and trios together. From the very beginning it was simply good - and it keeps going."

Now, the ensemble performs about 30 concerts a year, to say nothing of appearances at various summer festivals throughout the world. Zukerman

accentuates that he enjoys full understanding with the ensemble members. Not only are three of them Ottawa orchestra players, but three of them are also his former students, "and we speak more or less the same language, which gives us the opportunity to play chamber music according to the international standards.

"And I've been playing music together with my wife [the orchestra's first cellist Amanda Forsyth] since we first met. This is the ensemble's base - we live, play chamber music and work in the orchestra together."

Lately, the ensemble has begun performing with pianists like Yefim Bronfman, as well as with woodwind and brass players. Ashan Pillai is the only musician who does not belong to the Ottawa orchestra. "He is the first violist of the Barcelona orchestra; I've known him for years and he suits the ensemble perfectly, both as a musician and as a human being, because this is what chamber music is about."

Still, this successful international career has not changed Zukerman a bit - he speaks in a straightforward Israeli manner and does not pretend to be what he is not. When asked about the ensemble members as his pupils, he immediately replies: "Well, once they



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were students, but not anymore. We all play on the same professional level. And I am not a violin professor."

And he is not ready to talk about teaching music in a newspaper interview. "Concept? Approach? No. I have not even written a book about teaching violin, because you have also to show the things, so how can you write it? Learning takes years and years and years. And this is not about playing, because what is violin? Just an instrument, after all, and it is not that important. But you have to develop a personality, it is like raising your child; you give to him and you hope that something will come out of it."

Zukerman Trio

VIOLIN VIOLA CELLO BASS FIDDLE STRINGS

March 2008

By Rory Williams

Big Daddy

PINCHAS ZUKERMAN believes that a great musician must be uncompromising. "You compromise once and you're dead in the water," he says. "You play the wrong note, you're out of the parade."

The late, great Isaac Stern ingrained this hard-line attitude into the former child prodigy violinist/violist, and these days 59-year-old Zukerman is holding his pupils to the same standards. But don't call the ZUKERMAN CHAMBERPLAYERS protégés. To Zukerman, violinist JESSICA LINNEBACH, violists JETHRO MARKS and ASHAN PILLAI, and (his wife) cellist AMANDA FORSYTH are colleagues. "We have great respect for each other," Zukerman says. "We have a tremendous ability as individual players so we can talk on an elevated level, which very few people can do in their lifetime in a group."

Zukerman's hand-picked quintet also serves in the NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE ORCHESTRA in Ottawa, Canada, where Zukerman is music director.

Linnebach found the transformation of student to colleague difficult at first. "It was weird for me because I thought, 'Here is this amazing superstar, and he's my teacher,'" she says. "But you have to get past that. He called us all colleagues, but it's hard for me to see it that way because I think he's on his own ped-



UNCOMPROMISING: Zukerman ChamberPlayers.

estal, but somehow it doesn't feel like that in the group."

For Zukerman, the pleasure of making music with this group is the opportunity to share feelings and ideas openly. "The inner satisfaction, the inner completeness, is boundless," he says. "It's beyond description. When we can come off after a performance and smile at each other, that is so great. The only thing I can compare it to is looking at a child's face, when that child is content and happy, and when that child says, 'Dad, I really love you.'"

US fans can catch the love on March 16 in New York; May 1 in Portland, Oregon; May 2 in Las Vegas, Nevada; and May 3 in La Jolla, California.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

THE ASPEN TIMES

August 21, 2021

Review: Zukerman Trio at Aspen

By Harey Steiman

Tuesday's all-Beethoven recital by the Zukerman Trio also included something quirky. Beethoven probably probably dashed off his "Variations on Wensel Muller's 'Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu'" in 1803, when the tune was a big hit in Vienna, but it wasn't published until 13 years later. It does not rank among his biggest hits, but it was the fun to hear after two serious sonatas.

Pinchas Zukerman's carefully shaped violin playing and ardent work from his wife, cellist Amanda Forsyth, benefited the proceedings, but the revelation was pianist Shai Wosner. Playing with fluidity, he paid particularly careful attention to the shadings the other musicians applied to their lines. Everything he played fit beautifully with their work.

The solo pieces, both early Beethoven, managed to capture that extra edge the composer was already adding to the basic Mozart-like approach many musicians take. Zukerman pushed dynamics and expanded on phrasing in the Violin Sonata No. 1, without taking it too far, and Wosner was right there with him. In the Cello Sonata No. 2 Forsyth channeled her ability to coax plenty of drama out of her cello into emphasizing the cello's commentary in the piano's grand opening Adagio and the rhythmic interplay in the extended Rondo.

After a straight-faced slow prelude, in the same vein as the Adagio introduction to the cello sonata and which Beethoven probably added for publication, the trio made a quick right turn into a jolly romp that gave each of the members a moment in the sun. It's not the greatest set of variations by this composer, but it's still Beethoven, and it brought the recital to a happy close.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

The Boston Musical Intelligencer

November 21, 2019

Chamber Music Without Addling Traffic

Geoffrey Wieting

The Concord Chamber Music Society welcomed the three world-class musicians of the Zukerman Trio to Concord on Sunday afternoon in an imaginative and impeccably performed concert. A sold-out audience filled raked arena seats of the Concord Academy of the Performing Arts and enjoyed the intimacy, egalitarianism, and collegiality of the genre in the estimable hands of violinist Pinchas Zukerman, cellist Amanda Forsyth and pianist Angela Cheng.

Beethoven's Variations in G on Wenzel Müller's *Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu* ("I am the tailor Kakadu"), Op. 121a, is largely characterized by earthy good humor but no less skillfully composed for that. Taken from a musical play, Müller's aria is clearly inspired by *Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen* that Mozart gave Papageno to sing in *Die Zauberflöte*, so closely does it resemble Mozart's aria of several years earlier. The significant exception to the work's high spirits is the fairly lengthy slower, minor-mode introduction which, as Steven Ledbetter speculated in the program notes, could very possibly have been a later addition "to spruce up the work before offering it to a publisher." The players made it doleful to heighten its contrast to the jaunty main theme when it arrived at length. Beethoven designed these delightful variations both to show the theme's possible permutations as well as to display the performers' musicianship. The jocular violin triplets in the second variation, the piano's broken octaves, and strings' "chirps" in the sixth, the string duet of the seventh wherein the cello and violin swap figures, and the deeply expressive ninth in the minor mode, with strings largely playing in alternation with the piano, particularly pleased this reviewer. The artists rendered this charming *aperitif* with smiles.

From the variety of moods that permeate his Piano Trio No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 32, it's clear that Anton Arensky (1861-1906), a Russian Romantic who deserves to be better known, influenced his student, Sergei Rachmaninoff. The first movement's main theme had yearning, Slavic melancholy, playfulness, and sternness in the hands of all three musicians, successively. The development began with a series of interesting modulations that in a lesser composer's hands might have sounded far-fetched. Again, the ensemble's affection for the music was palpable, particularly at the ethereal and haunting end of the first movement. The effervescent Scherzo delighted: it is largely a display piece for the piano with delicious, delicate commentary from the strings. In the Elegia's first theme, Forsyth's cello sang poignantly, soon joined by Zukerman. For its sunny second theme, the strings set up a lush, undulating accompaniment while Cheng rendered a lovely cantabile melody. The rondo Finale opened forcefully but again offered an attractive range of moods and textures in this masterful performance. For an extended episode, the composer brought back the beautiful second theme of the Elegia, followed by the chiaroscuro first theme of the entire work. With a final reprise of the Rondo's central theme the artists brought the trio to a stirring conclusion.

Brahms's piano trios form a cornerstone of the genre, and his second (C major, Op. 87) is a perennial favorite, notwithstanding its unusual gestation: Brahms wrote the first movement in early 1880 but subsequently let the work lie fallow for over two years, writing the following three movements in the summer of 1882. In his engaging and informative preliminary lecture and essay Ledbetter remarked on the "symphonic" quality of the writing,

characterizing it as akin to a contest between the strings and the piano that frequently has the violin and cello playing in octaves to compete with the orchestral writing of the demanding piano part. Interestingly, though, to my ears Cheng's playing, though far from subdued, sounded restrained enough to make an overall impression similar to that of the prior two works: largely an equal three-way conversation in which each musician had moments in the spotlight. The threesome gave continuous attention to balance and graceful trade-offs of the solos in an entirely convincing interpretation very much their own. Though the first movement had more than a whiff of Brahms's piano concertos, Zukerman and Forsyth didn't have to hold their own against the keyboard. The second movement's variations, in A minor, decidedly contrasted with those of the earlier Beethoven. The rhapsodic and beautiful third variation, for instance, played piano arpeggios against fragmented melodies alternating between cello

and violin. The Scherzo was, as often with Brahms, not jocular but quivering with nervous energy and unrest, a precursor to the D Minor Violin Sonata's scherzo. The delicate filigree figures from the three artists riveted throughout. The Finale commenced rather secretively (Brahms marks it *mezza voce*) but quickly gave way to vigorous statements. An extensive range of colors and moods enhanced the changing textures and the varied articulations. Though Brahms posed plentiful technical challenges to the three players, the Zukerman Trio made its subtler brand of virtuosity its hallmark: a consummate mastery of intention and execution, to be sure, but also collaboration at the highest level, each member listening and responding sensitively to the others. Residents of Concord and the nearby exurbs owe profound gratitude to Concord Chamber Music Society for booking international-caliber performances without subjecting them to the vicissitudes of Boston traffic.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

Memphis Flyer

December 12, 2019

An Inspired Weekend of Beethoven With Iris & The Zukerman Trio

By Alex Greene

This past weekend's performance by the Iris Orchestra, complemented by the Zukerman Trio, was highly anticipated all around. As noted in October, the entire current season is loaded with significance on the most personal, local, and global levels. As the orchestra's conductor, Michael Stern, said then, "We have a rather happy confluence of anniversaries. It's the 20th anniversary of Iris...And we're celebrating 250 years of Beethoven...There's also the anniversary of my father, Isaac Stern, who would have been 100."

Last Saturday and Sunday's offerings, the second weekend of Iris' season, resonated with all of those milestones, perhaps most powerfully with the centenary of Isaac Stern. As Michael Stern noted to the audience at the Germantown Performing Arts Center (GPAC) Saturday night, his father was at first skeptical of this somewhat unorthodox ensemble when it was launched, asking, as Michael put it, "What is my son doing in Tennessee?"

With bittersweet emotion, he then recalled how his father warmed to the idea of Iris, an orchestra of world-class players who converge in Memphis on a regular basis, inviting notable guest performers as each season unfolds. The most telling moment was when the father asked the son, "When are you going to invite me?"

That was in 2001, and arrangements were made to feature Isaac Stern, backed by Iris, that December. Everything changed when the legendary violinist died in September. As his son described it, his memory was instead honored in Memphis when Iris backed Jaime Laredo, Yo-Yo Ma, and Emanuel Ax, who had recorded with the elder Stern as a quartet.

Michael Stern also noted the special connection between his father and the namesake of the trio

hosted this week, Pinchas Zukerman. Hearing Zukerman play at the age of nine in Israel, the elder Stern promptly facilitated his enrollment at The Juilliard School, and the rest is history: Zukerman is now one of the most celebrated violinists of our time.

However, Saturday's concert began with the Iris Orchestra on its own. And from the first notes of Beethoven's *Coriolan Overture*, it was made clear what a treasure to Memphis the orchestra really is. It was a fittingly grandiose opening salvo, but it was the next piece, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 4*, which really showed the orchestra's full range. This symphony in particular, full of coordinated, rhythmic hits in sync with the timpani, can truly be said to "rock," and can show off an orchestra's power. But it was in the quieter moments that Iris displayed its sensitivity. The subtle moments revealed an organic lightness of touch that was all the more moving by way of contrast. Moments featuring pizzicato cello patterns felt like an unfolding flower.

These strengths were all the more apparent once the Zukerman Trio took the stage to perform the *Concerto for Violin, Cello & Piano, Op.56 (Triple Concerto)*. Amanda Forsyth, cello, and Angela Cheng, piano, looked resplendent, and Forsyth was an especially striking presence on the cellist's pedestal. Zukerman was in more reserved attire, but his gravitas was commanding.

The orchestra's lightness of touch provided a perfect setting for the more commanding tonalities of the trio, with Zukerman's almost Klezmer-like sonority, Cheng's rhythmic, rolling piano arpeggios, and Forsyth's melodic passages in the cello's higher registers being especially captivating.

On the next day, audiences were able to hear the trio, as Stern facetiously noted in his introductory remarks, "without the pesky orchestra" behind them. And that too was a revelation. The intimacy of the Brooks Museum of Art, where the featured artists of Iris' season always perform on Sundays, was an ideal setting for appreciating the trio's almost telepathic connection in even the most rubato passages of Beethoven's *Archduke Trio*. As a weekend exclusively devoted to the works of Ludwig van Beethoven, it was a revelation. This

December 17th will mark the 249th year since his birth, and next year the world will celebrate his 250th anniversary. As Stern noted in October, "Nobody needs to rescue him from obscurity," but his very omnipresence can numb us to the rare beauty and innovation of his works. Yet here in Memphis, where we can boast the unique collective project of the Iris Orchestra, it was all made new again, as the players leapt once more unto the breach, breathing life into some of the greatest music ever conceived.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

Picture this Post

May 21, 2018

Music Institute of Chicago ZUKERMAN TRIO Review—Anguish Amid Romance

By Jacob Davis



It takes both technical mastery and a deep emotional investment to make Shostakovich's notoriously atonal music as affecting as the Zukerman Trio does. The chamber musicians performed three pieces during a concert at Evanston's Nichols Concert Hall presented by the Music Institute of Chicago on May 20. Bookending Dmitry Shostakovich's 1944 Piano Trio No. 2 in E minor were two nineteenth century romantic works. Truly, they were lovely, but it was clear from watching how Pinchas Zukerman (violin), Amanda Forsyth (cello),

and Angela Cheng (piano) physically transformed during the half-hour long centerpiece that their hearts were with Shostakovich that day.

Musicians' Bodies and Instruments in Tune with Each Other

The concert opened with Ludwig van Beethoven's Allegretto for Piano Trio WoO.39. A short, cheerful piece, it provided the trio with a chance to warm up to each other before the challenging work ahead. Forsyth swayed and Cheng bobbed her head as their instruments, as times, became nearly indistinguishable. Zukerman, as maestro, was intensely focused as the single-movement allegretto flowed between the trio, becoming more excited in its variations.

A Small Taste of the War's Stress

Shostakovich's trio starts with a screeching cello wail before turning into something more conventionally gloomy when the minor key violin and piano join in. The piece was written after the worst fighting of World War II and the death of one of Shostakovich's close friends. Over the course of its four movements, its jarring notes are anxious, antic and exhausted, yet driven to continue. There's a section of the second part, an allegro ma non troppo, played by Zukerman that sounds like someone trying to catch their breath. Besides pushing the boundaries of how much emotion he could put into notation, Shostakovich also pushed the instruments to make sounds they normally do not. Zukerman and Forsyth's technical abilities were visibly evident here, as they strummed and played pizzicato at the extremes of their instruments ranges.



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Zukerman threw his body into the largo that makes up the third movement and its folk-inspired melody. Undoubtedly, a great deal of the music's emotional power comes from seeing the physicality of the people producing it. The trio tensed and released much like the strings of their instruments as they passed energy among them during the Shostakovich section.

Zukerman Trio Cools Down with a Folk Song

The final piece of music, Antonin Dvořák's "Dumky" (Piano Trio in E-flat Major) is as long as the middle, but in this context, it felt like a return to normalcy. Written to show off Czech folk stylings to the world, it contains the graceful melodies more typical of somber mediation. Though a pretty-cry in

contrast to Shostakovich's ugly-cry, it's not all gloomy. During the faster moments, it's easy to imagine people dancing to it. Still, the trio's adagios and andantes spun out into a delicate, arcing shape as the piece returned to its dramatic mood. At this performance, it even matched the weather. As storms do, it ended with a feeling of tranquility, no doubt bolstered by the audience's affection for these performers in an intimate concert hall. The chamber concert format matches the Music Institute of Chicago's formation of a close-knit community and it was evident how inspirational this sort of performance is for students seeking their own meaning in classical compositions.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

The Advertiser

October 2, 2017

Up close and personal with Pinchas Zukerman and friends at Ukaria

By Peter Burdon

Getting up close and personal to chamber music royalty is a treat at any time, and when the artists are the Zukerman Trio, with friends from the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, it's truly rich and rare.

Pinchas Zukerman's trio partners Amanda Forsyth (cello) and Angela Cheng (piano) got off to a rousing start with Beethoven's *Cello Sonata No. 3 in A Major*, the first movement in particular sounding especially lush in the intimate surrounds of the Ukaria concert hall.

Forsyth was a model of confidence and security in this serene work, the first of the cello sonatas to really allow the instrument to shine in its own right.

Enter Zukerman for Beethoven's *Sonata for Piano and Violin No. 5 in F Major*, certainly the

best-known of these works, and another sunny piece, as its nickname "Spring" suggests.

Like the cello sonata, this was another forthright performance, almost too much for the venue, though after a week in the Town Hall the temptation to go big must have been well ingrained.

Nothing wrong with ramping it up, however, in a scintillating account of Tchaikovsky's superb and justly popular *Souvenir de Florence* string sextet.

Zukerman and Forsyth were joined by Natsuko Yoshimoto (violin), Imants Larsens and Michael Robertson (violas) and Simon Cobcroft (cello) in a really lavish performance of this small symphony.



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ZUKERMAN TRIO

The Advertiser

September 28, 2017

Limpid, crystalline sonics accompanied persuasive lyricism

By Rodney Smith

Virtuoso violinist Pinchas Zukerman with cellist Amanda Forsyth and pianist Angela Cheng have the priceless asset of mutual empathy based on working together in music long before their Trio was officially formed in 2013. And it showed to great effect in Anton Arensky's *Trio No 1 in D minor Op 32* during this opening program of their mini festival of performances now taking place around town.

This is one of Arensky's few works still regularly played and it certainly deserved its outing on this occasion. All three performers threw themselves into its sometimes heroic, sometimes reminiscent first movement *Allegro* with considerable passion and verve. Forsyth has developed a wonderfully rich cello tone that almost matches Zukerman's peerless violin sonorities, and with Cheng noticeably notching up her fine piano tonalities to trio mode rather

than duo mode, the movement took off in an attractive flurry of Schumann, Tchaikovsky and Faure influenced musical ideas.

Its second movement, strongly reminiscent of Litolff's famous *Scherzo*, caused smiles of delight from listeners all around and the beautiful *Elegia: Adagio* third movement positively shimmered with limpid, crystalline sonics accompanying all three players' persuasive lyricism.

Earlier Forsyth and Chen had given a strong account of Chopin's late *Cello Sonata in G Minor*, a work that confuses with its over written piano part. Preceding it, Zukerman's performance of Beethoven's early *Violin Sonata in D Op 12* contained just enough flashes of his performing genius to keep listeners on their toes.



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ZUKERMAN TRIO

The Daily Telegraph

April 24, 2017

Stars from home and away make Musica Viva Festival a feast of musical heaven

By Steve Moffatt

For four days each second year chamber music fans get to feast from a table creaking with musical culinary delights when the Musica Viva Festival takes over Sydney's Conservatorium.

Marquee acts from overseas mingle with Australia's best musicians, and perhaps most exciting of all, music lovers get to see the coming generation of performers through concerts and workshops featuring the Australian Youth Orchestra's most gifted players.

This year, while across the road at the Intercontinental streets were shut down and police and security staff swarmed around the hotel where US Vice-President Mike Pence was staying, the faithful converged for a program promising six concerts, all featuring violin megastar Pinchas Zukerman and his trio and Sydney's star export to the UK, saxophonist Amy Dickson.

Also on the bill were top-notch British ensemble Elias String Quartet alongside our finest quartet, the Goldner, and legendary American pianist Lambert Orkis, favourite accompanist of the late

great Russian cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and German violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter.

Concert 1

... It's hard to imagine a work further removed from the Britten than Dvorak's Dumky Trio — six movements of yearning melodies, manic dance rhythms and Bohemian passion — which closed this concert with the festival's marquee act, the Canadian-based Zukerman Trio comprising Zukerman, his cellist wife Amanda Forsyth and the supremely talented pianist Angela Cheng.

This was a full-blooded interpretation full of joie de vivre but with a keen eye to all the subtleties and emotional shifts of slow-fast dumka dances which give the work its name.

Concert 2

This Friday evening concert opened with another matchless performance by Zukerman, this time with pianist Angela Cheng, of Cesar Franck's rhapsodic and beautiful Sonata in A major for violin and piano.

The Advertiser

November 24, 2016

Adelaide luxuriates in presence of violin master Pinchas Zukerman

By Stephen Whittington



Anyone with even a passing knowledge of classical violin playing will know the name Pinchas Zukerman, who has ranked among the elite in this field for decades.

Anything he is associated with is more or less guaranteed to be very good indeed.

Adelaide is currently luxuriating in his presence here for an exceptional series of three concerts. The first in this series was a superb evening of chamber music in which Zukerman played with his wife, cellist Amanda Forsyth, and pianist Angela Cheng.

They opened with seven short pieces for violin and cello duo by the relatively little-known Russian Reinhold Gliere.

These are delightful pieces, modest in size and deceptively simple but well-crafted, with interesting interplay between the two instruments. Forsyth and Zukerman gave a

lovely, characterful performance of these little gems.

Still in Russia, but in an utterly different place psychologically was Shostakovich's *Piano Trio No. 2*, a tense and gripping masterpiece that puts players and listeners through an emotional mill that teeters on the edge of unendurable.

Zukerman and Forsyth were joined by pianist Cheng in a performance that powerfully captured the bleakness and nihilistic despair of this music.

Schubert's *Trio in B flat* seemed like light relief after Shostakovich. Pianist Cheng displayed an admirable lightness and delicacy of touch, beautifully complementing the lyrical lines of violin and cello.

Forty minutes listening to this sublime music played as well as this was time very well spent. The next concerts in this series will be awaited with keen anticipation.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

Classical Voice

Lifestyle blog for serious music lovers

October 30, 2016

Sunday at The Wallis with Zukerman Trio

By Truman C. Wang



In its new 2016/17 season, the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts in Beverly Hills continues to program innovative works and introduce fine new classical musicians who otherwise would not get heard. Last Sunday evening was the Zukerman Trio, playing two Russian works with happy dance music and a Schubert that's full of songful melodies. Among the highlights, it was memorable for making late 19th-Century Russian music actually seem fun to hear on a lazy Sunday evening.

At first glance, the 7 Pieces for violin and cello duo by Reinhold Glière (1875-1956) appear to be a normal suite of 7 Baroque dances, but a closer look reveals them to be a collection of miniatures from different periods of music history – Scherzo (Classical), Prelude, Intermezzo, Berceuse, Impromptu, Canzonetta (Romantic)

and Gavotte (French Baroque), although they're delightful miniatures nonetheless. Violinist Pinchas Zukerman and cellist Amanda Forsyth played these lyrical morsels with obvious relish and enjoyment, giving each piece an air of authenticity it deserves – the Berceuse a gently rollicking boat song, the Gavotte a sprightly French court dance, the Intermezzo an Italian love song, and so on.

Dimitri Shostakovich's Piano Trio No. 2 was dedicated to the composer's best friend Ivan Sollertinsky who had died unexpectedly. The dark, somber first three movements of the Trio gave way to boisterous klezmer music in the final movement, a joyful celebration of his Jewish friend's life. Canadian pianist Angela Cheng joined Zukerman and Forsyth in the Trio, playing with great sensitivity in the dark movements and joyful brilliance in the Jewish dance music. This work is one of the few dedicated to a music critic. (Another is Elgar's Piano Quintet, dedicated to the English music critic Ernest Newman.)

Following a brief intermission, the evening concluded with a Schubertiade, a sunny account of the Piano Trio in B-flat Major D.898 played with infectious enthusiasm by all three musicians.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

NEW JERSEY
Stage

October 13, 2016

“Perfection.” The Pinchas Zukerman Trio LIVE! at St. John’s Church



The sanctuary within St. John’s Church in Summit, NJ on Sunday, October 2, 2016 is set up with a stage containing a grand piano, two chairs, two benches, and two music stands. And just to the right of the stage, a beautiful tapestry hangs.

Created for St. John’s 100th anniversary in 2008, the vibrant colors of the tapestry currently reflect the “ordinary” season, which began in the summer and which continues into the early fall of October.

But there is nothing “ordinary” about the concert experience which is to take place in this divine setting within the next few moments.

As explained by Ken Bryson, the man responsible for this—the third season of world-

class concerts at St. John’s—the brilliant tapestry which ornaments this concert space was created by a group of volunteers from the church, using swatches of cloth donated by its members. Some of the pieces, explains Bryson, had personal significance for their donors, whereas others were chosen especially for their hue. All of them together, however, symbolize the sense of community and oneness of this very special place.

And currently filing in to this extraordinary setting is an audience of music lovers, here at St. John’s to listen to the music of a man who has been an inspiration to musicians and audiences alike for his entire adult life—Pinchas Zukerman.

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Born in Tel Aviv, Zukerman came to America in 1962 where he studied at The Julliard School in NYC. Since then, he's gone on to become one of the leading violinists of the second half of the twentieth century, not to mention a world-reknown conductor and an esteemed faculty member of the Manhattan School of Music. His extensive collection of recordings includes over 100 titles, earning him two Grammy awards and 21 Grammy nominations. He has also been awarded the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists as presented by the President of the United States, and the Isaac Stern Award for Artistic Excellence, a National Arts Award, presented by Americans for the Arts.

Opening this afternoon's performance with "7 pieces for violin and cello, Op. 39," by Gliere, Zukerman, on violin, along with Amanda Forsyth, on cello, simply astonish the audience with their incredible virtuosic talent.

Forsyth, a Juno-award-winning instrumentalist, is a Canadian musician considered one of North America's most dynamic cellists.

As the duo proceeds through the seven movements of the Gliere—"Prelude," "Intermezzo," "Gavotte," "Berceuse," "Impromptu," "Canzonetta," and "Scherzo"—Zukerman and Forsyth completely command each listener's attention. Effortlessly sliding and gliding, these magicians make their instruments sing, the audience unable to distinguish where each instrument ends and each musician begins. As they continue to play, the music shifts and changes colors and textures—for example, at one point, the drone of the violin captivates the audience as the cello's melody floats above. But then, in an instant, the music changes from high and playful to mellow and dramatic—each movement of the piece connecting to the next, creating a magical and satisfying whole.



Following enthusiastic applause, Zukerman and Forsyth are joined on stage by pianist Angela Cheng. Also from Canada, Cheng is a performer

who is consistently praised for her superb musicianship, thus finding herself in demand in North America as both a recitalist and an orchestral soloist.

As a member of the Zukerman Trio, however, Cheng—along with her colleagues—has traveled the globe, performing in such countries as Japan, China, Australia, Spain, Italy, France, Hungary, South Africa, and Russia, in addition to the United States. In this season alone—the sixth since the founding of the group in 2011—the Trio has already given performances in such diverse places as Oslo, Los Angeles, Sonoma, and Sanibel, before traveling here to perform in Summit, NJ.



For their first Trio selection, Zukerman, Forsyth, and Cheng play the "Piano Trio N^o2 in E minor, Op. 67," by Shostakovich.

As they perform, the natural sounds of their instruments are beautifully amplified by the room, which provides the musicians with the power necessary to forcefully communicate even the most fortissimo passages of the Shostakovich, yet at the same time, to gently play even the piece's most pianissimo segments.



As the Trio plays through the four movements of the Shostakovich—"Andante-Moderato," "Allegro non troppo," "Largo," and "Allegretto"—they are joined on stage by Michael Cook, a church member who volunteered to come up from out of the audience and turn pages for pianist Angela Cheng.

Cook, a pianist himself, revealed after the performance that he had no idea he was going to be turning pages for this piece of music, saying, “The music was so complex, at times it was difficult to know if the pianist was motioning for me to turn the page or if she was communicating with the string players!”

This challenge aside, Cook also hinted at the joy this task can bring, disclosing, “You are being enveloped in the music.” At the same time, however, he acknowledged his goal of remaining in the background while on stage, revealing, “This is a small intimate venue, so you have to understand that intimacy.”

Symbolizing the great sense of community at St. John’s, Cook’s volunteer activity is appreciated by the audience as the Trio flawlessly performs, leaving Cook to conclude about his experience in the limelight, “It’s great to think everyone is getting something out of this gift of music.”



And what music it is!

The Shostakovich is simply majestic—the intensity beautifully amplified by the magnificent room and its wonderful acoustics—a round warm collaborative sound filling up this sacred and glorious space.

As they play through the various movements of this very complex piece, one can appreciate, for example, Forsyth as she plays her cello high on the fingerboard, her muscles rippling as she coaxes her instrument to produce sounds which, at times, border on the stratospheric and ethereal.

And with Cheng’s piano supporting him below with its rumbling tones, Trio leader Pinchas Zukerman’s violin simply sings along up top, floating out over the audience, its vibrations reaching every listener’s ear, mind, and heart.



As the staccato bouncing of bows of Zukerman’s violin and Forsyth’s cello echo the piano part, all three instruments bounce right into their own unique melodies, all building as they move through space and time together.

Further, as they continue, one can see Cheng on the piano alternately watching her sheet music and, then, her two partners on stringed instruments as she and her colleagues ultimately become one with the music.



As the piece advances, these virtuosos expertly execute command of their respective instruments while, at the same time, pouring their souls into the music, magically making three instruments disappear into one.

And in doing so, they transport their listeners to places they’ve never been, allowing each audience member to breathe in the group’s masterful sound. Moreover, as the sound changes moment to moment—from happy to sad, peaceful to frenetic, joyful to sorrowful, harmonic to dissonant—members of the audience can be seen weeping real tears filled with feeling, light, and breath.

The Trio triumphantly concludes the “Trio” and is met with wild applause for these three master musicians.



Following intermission, Zukerman, Forsyth, and Cheng return to the St. John's sanctuary to perform the "Piano Trio in B-flat major, D. 898" by Franz Schubert.

In this piece's four movements—"Allegro moderato," "Andante un poco mosso," "Scherzo. Allegro—Trio," and "Rondo. Allegro vivace"—the audience is again treated to the rhythmic bouncing of bows on strings and hands on keys. Fingers fly over catgut and ivory, setting strings both seen and unseen into vibrations of glorious motion and sound.



The music of Schubert fills the entire room with wonder whether each instrument is playing its own part or all three musicians are playing together as one.

When a listener hears a classical instrumental recording, he or she simply does not see the sweat and the dance of instruments as they are played. As this piece continues, however, the lucky audience at St. John's can clearly see the joy that fills the expressive face of Cheng on the piano as she interprets the notes on the printed page. It's almost as if the music comes straight through the keys to inform and illuminate her face.

They can also see the master—Trio leader Pinchas Zukerman—his body moving with the music, swaying to and fro, giving life to magical sounds which, for over a half century now, have taken music lovers to a new dimension.

After yet another simply triumphant performance, the audience responds with exuberant applause, each listener joyfully showing his or her appreciation for the sheer talent of these extraordinary musicians.

Following the concert, we're given an opportunity to meet with Mr. Zukerman and ask him about his feelings regarding performing here in the Garden State.

"Playing in New Jersey is like performing anywhere," replies Zukerman, smiling. "It's the *music*—you play it as well as you know it."

Then Zukerman goes on add, "Like I tell my students, 'Whether you're in Berlin or Oklahoma—anywhere you play, as soon as you open your case, you do your best.'"

"And if a student ever says, 'I don't feel like playing,'" continues Zukerman, "I just tell him, 'then you're out of the parade.'"

True to form, then—not only in the parade, but leading the parade here today at St. John's—is Pinchas Zukerman, along with Amanda Forsyth and Angela Cheng. And marching right beside them are the members of the St. John's community who organized and supported this magnificent musical achievement.

But what about the audience? How did they feel about it?

When asked for an opinion of this world-class performance right here in the heart of the Garden State, one audience member summed up the feelings of many with a single word:

"Perfection."



ZUKERMAN TRIO

The San Diego
Union-Tribune.

August 10, 2016

Zukerman Trio brings passion, precision to SummerFest Violin, cello sound like one at times

By Christian Hertzog

There are minor compositions and compositions in minor keys. A major talent, the Zukerman Trio, played both types of works Tuesday night for La Jolla Music Society's SummerFest.

Mendelssohn's "Piano Trio no. 1 in D minor" and Dvořák's "Piano Trio in E minor, Opus 90" are major contributions to 19th-century trio repertory.

Reinhold Glière's "Duets for Violin and Cello, Opus 39" is a minor work that never rises above the qualitative level of salon music.

Brahms' "Scherzo in C minor" is a minor curiosity in Brahms' impressive roster of expansive chamber music, yet as the earliest surviving chamber music by Brahms it has major musicological significance in addition to being one of the major 19th-century single-movement violin and piano works.

Are you confused?

Don't be. No matter the key or aesthetic worth of the compositions heard that evening, the members of the Zukerman Trio — violinist Pinchas Zukerman, cellist Amanda Forsyth and pianist Angela Cheng — enthralled a full house at Sherwood Auditorium. Their combination of outsized string sound, exciting ensemble precision, and compelling interpretation puts them at the head of the Piano Trio division in the Chamber Music Major League.

The trio's core is the violin-cello partnership of Zukerman and Forsyth (a union that continues offstage in marriage.) Zukerman's large vibrato, intensity of tone, and expressive phrasing is matched in mirror-like fashion by Forsyth. Her cello seems a bass extension to Zukerman's violin. When playing in octaves or in harmony, they sound like a single super string instrument. When melody switches from violin to cello and vice versa, it flows magically.

These pairings were most evident in the Dvořák and Mendelssohn trios. Dvořák's trio is a poignant juxtaposition of doleful slow sections with giddy Slavonic dances. Zukerman and Forsyth played with big vibratos. They teased out the mournful melodies, and furiously dug into the Allegros.

Sympathetically supporting them, but dazzling in her own right, was Angela Cheng. She executed sparkling scales and turns without fumbling at breakneck speeds in tandem with Zukerman and Forsyth. There was admirable lightness to her playing that was exactly what was needed in Mendelssohn and Dvořák. Her piano lid was raised all the way up, but she never overwhelmed the strings.

Glière's violin and cello duets were so harmonically conservative for 1909 that they make Rachmaninoff sound like Arnold Schoenberg. Unadventurous and formally insubstantial, their appeal eluded



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me until Zukerman and Forsyth polished them up and pumped them full of passion and humor. Thanks to the duo's musicality, for 15 minutes or so these pieces seemed appropriate to a serious chamber music concert instead of being relegated to a Sunday afternoon student recital.

Zukerman and Cheng opened the concert with a dazzling rendition of Brahms' "Scherzo in C minor," which the young composer wrote as one movement of the collaborative "F-A-E Violin Sonata." Zukerman's big sound was complemented by Cheng's steady, sympathetic support.

A prelude is a short composition, but the Musical Preludes offered at SummerFest concerts are full-blown works interpreted by accomplished groups. The Verona Quartet is only 3 years old, but the group's account of Mendelssohn's "String Quartet in E minor, Op. 44, No. 2" was a mature reading, impressive for its fiery ensemble work and big vibrant sound overall. They are playing another "Prelude" next Tuesday — Bartok's String Quartet no. 5. I highly recommend arriving early enough to hear them.

ZUKERMAN TRIO



August 17, 2015

★★★★★ Zukerman and co give a faultless recital of top-notch chamber music.

By Steve Moffatt

It is customary to award five stars for a faultless musical recital, but I wonder whether the rules could be bent in the case of the Zukerman Trio in the latest of the Utzon series at Sydney Opera House. For if any 90 minutes of top-notch chamber music deserved six stars this must have been it. With Canadian-based Israeli maestro Pinchus Zukerman's matchless musicianship and charisma at its core, this is a trio made in heaven. His South African-born wife Amanda Forsyth brings passion and formidable technique as a cellist, and Canadian pianist Angela Cheng is the dream accompanist who lives every note. Their programme opened with Dvořák's Four Romantic pieces for violin and piano, and although these pieces were composed for amateurs rather than virtuosi, they have bags of charm. The simple double stopping of the yearning larghetto which closes the set showed Zukerman's delicate control of the bow, as well as his precise intonation. A change of programme introduced Forsyth to the intimate audience of 200. She and Angela Cheng were originally down to play Schumann's Three Romances but substituted those for his Adagio and Allegro, Opus 70. Forsyth explained that this could also be played on the horn, although judging from the prodigious runs and rapid bowing of the andante it's difficult to imagine even the finest exponent of that cruelly difficult instrument pulling it off with ease. Forsyth is an

extrovert performer and brings to the trio a theatrical streak with eye-catching frocks and, for this concert, the hypnotic visual effect of a delicately designed tattoo of gold leaf on her bowing arm with an impressive collection of rings on her fingers. But Zukerman and his golden tone were the drawcard here and we got it in full measure in the next piece on the programme, Beethoven's First Violin Sonata. Here Cheng too showed her artistry in the equally demanding piano part, lending a beautifully nuanced partnership with Zukerman's 1742 Guarneri 'del Gesù' fiddle. At 67, silver-haired and bespectacled, Zukerman presents a picture of quiet concentration as he plays. Cheng's facial expressions, by contrast, provide a visual commentary on what's happening in the music. Together they are a magical combination. There was a moment when, at the beginning of the second movement, a child in the front row made a belated re-entry from a restroom stop and the Zukerman smiled warmly before resuming. The recital ended with Dvořák's irresistible Dumky piano trio with its bipolar swings between richly melodic slow passages and high-octane dance sections. As if that wasn't enough the trio returned for an encore and the swagger and charm of Fritz Kreisler's Miniature Viennese March sent the audience off into the night.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

THE
COMMERCIAL APPEAL
MEMPHIS

September 29, 2015

IRIS blooms early

The **IRIS Orchestra's** 16th season was supposed to start next month with pianist Jon Kimura Parker as guest performer with the band. The season is fully intact, but a delightful turn of events dictated an earlier start with Monday evening's performance by the **Zukerman Trio** at the **Germantown Performing Arts Center**.

It was just the trio this time, so artistic director _____ and _____ principal conductor **Michael Stern** got up on stage to introduce the group and admitted that it felt odd not to have the orchestra behind him. Last season, Stern brought his lifelong friend, violinist **Pinchas Zukerman**, along with Zukerman's wife, cellist **Amanda Forsyth**, to perform with IRIS. The audience loved their sublime performance, and the couple loved doing it, so they asked Stern if they

could come back. Since the season was booked, they found a date when they could come in for a performance along with pianist **Angela Cheng**, although sans orchestra.

They played Dvorak's Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 90 "Dumky," and Beethoven's Piano Trio in B-flat major, Op. 97, "Archduke," two achingly beautiful pieces that shimmered with the trio's performance. The balance among the three was flawless and their execution seamless. Forsyth is a bodacious performer — she's doesn't do "tentative" — and it was glorious. Cheng's keyboard work was nuanced and delightful. Zukerman, meanwhile, is something of a Zen master to whom technique and expression are exact and mature. This was an auspicious start to the season.



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ZUKERMAN TRIO

The Sydney Morning Herald

August 17, 2015

Masterly mix brings glorious shades to the stage

By Peter McCallum

Pinchas Zukerman's distinctive sound blossomed from the first note of Dvorak's Four Romantic pieces Opus 75.

Once heard, it is never entirely forgotten. Zukerman has a manner with the violin that is all his own: a natural way of creating lines that fills them with expressive shape while adapting them to their wider musical purpose and an impeccable mastery of a tone of creamy richness.

Admittedly, performing this program for the second time that afternoon because of demand, the first work had subdued moments.

Canadian pianist Angela Cheng accompanied with attentive musical sensitivity, providing a fabric of mellow gentleness and fluidity. Canadian cellist Amanda Forsyth joined Cheng for a more romantically surging account of Schumann's *Adagio and Allegro, Opus 70*.

Schumann's form in this work is typically idiosyncratic, relying on strong expressive

characterisation to hold together its disparate sections and Cheng and Forsyth established a persuasive narrative.

Equally persuasive was the poised classical dialogue Zukerman and Cheng brought to Beethoven's Violin Sonata in D, Opus 12, No. 1.

With the confidence of the full flowering of his early style, Beethoven combines a range of gestural types: a fanfare, a thoughtful response, a graceful cadence to create a refined dialogue. Zukerman and Cheng conducted the dialogue with intensity and well-moulded phrases, building a fluent sense of tension and repose.

Dvorak's Piano Trio No. 4 Opus 90 – the so-called "Dumky" trio – asks for a different discourse, aiming to capture in its six sections points of haunting loneliness interleaved with passages of galloping life and boisterous energy.

This was an autumnal cameo, in Sydney's winter twilight, of supremely beguiling charm and masterly musical intimacy.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

EdinburghGuide.com

August 30, 2013

EIF 2013: Zuckerman Chamber Players Review

By Marc Corbett-Weaver

At 11am on Wednesday 28 August 2013, the morning after his performance of Bruch Violin no. 1 with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Pinchas Zuckerman's sprightly attack, rhythmic vitality and vibrant vibrato were to be heard again, this time by a packed out Queen's Hall in Edinburgh for a recital with pianist Angela Cheng and cellist Amanda Forsyth. In Beethoven's Piano Trio in B flat Wo039 – written within a few months of the famous Archduke Trio of the same key, and possibly a postscript to this - Angela Cheng was full of elegance and charm. Utterly at one with the piano, her technical freedom, long sweeping legato lines and emotional connection with the artistry of each note, made us yearn to hear more of her playing.

The far left and far right of the balcony at the Queen's Hall were cluttered with 40 or so of the audience, standing sheepishly and swaying like blades of grass in the wind. 20 or so chairs provided on either side would comfort them and distract us, and the artists, less at future performances. The second half of the recital featured Mendelssohn's mighty D minor piano trio, in which the player's accomplished sense of

ensemble came into its own. The close musical connection between players was paramount as melodic lines were passed around beautifully intimately, like three family members sharing together a special celebratory supper. The tempo of the scherzo was so ambitiously brisk – and carried off with such flair and panache – that it achieved an impressed giggle from the audience, who clung to the edge of their seats, as if on a whirling fairground ride.

The true highlight of this performance though was Zoltán Kodály's titanic Duo Sonata for Violin and Cello Op. 7 – a great rustic beast with a rich warm heart, a cool cunning head and a nimble set of dancing feet. Flowing with intense Hungarian full-bloodedness, this colourful, sometimes nostalgic, sometimes haunting, often programmatic work demonstrated the flexible virtuosity of Zuckerman and Forsyth in every bar. The folk-like, gypsyesque lines skipped and sparkled wildly between the two string players - whose music came flashily alive - roaring like lions, serenading like larks, swarming like bees and painting a magically vivid panorama of fresh and enormous Hungarian landscapes – it was musically intoxicating.



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ZUKERMAN TRIO

THE SCOTSMAN

August 29, 2013

Music review: Zukerman Chamber Players



By Carol Main

It's a pity that the violin and cello duo combination isn't one that appears more often. Kodály's Op 7 is a splendid example of its merits, especially when performed by such distinguished musicians as Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth.

In their recital yesterday morning at the Queen's Hall, their fulsome sound was ideally suited for this folk music and dance-influenced three-movement Duo.

At times conversational, at times with the individual lines more integrated or as if something that had been split up was coming together to make a whole, Zukerman and

Forsyth brought their kindred personalities to Kodály's warmly coloured score.

A married couple, they conveyed a sense of a strong, well-founded partnership that allowed the music its flow. Joined by pianist Angela Cheng for a second half's programme of Mendelssohn, the now threesome gave a meaty performance of his first Piano Trio in D minor. Cheng's opening solo in the romantic slow movement was exquisite in its poetic expression. Consummate and charismatic musicians, the trio made for a tight-knit chamber ensemble, although the balance in the opening Beethoven B flat major Piano Trio Allegretto was too weighted in favour of the piano.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

The New York Times

November 18, 2009

Music Review

Starting a Chamber Series with a Bittersweet Brahms

By Allan Kozinn

Early in Pinchas Zukerman's career, when he was best known as a star violin soloist and just starting to conduct, he carved out a place in his concert schedule for chamber music, often — though not always — with other headliners. More recently, the balance of his commitments has shifted from solo performance to conducting, as he has taken on music directorships, like that of the National Arts Center Orchestra in Ottawa, a post he has held since 1998. But he has maintained his devotion to chamber music, and as part of his work in Ottawa, he has established the Zukerman Chamber Players, drawing on members of the orchestra.

The Zukerman Chamber Players performing Brahms's String Sextet No. 1 at the 92nd Street Y on Sunday afternoon.



and guest performers offered this season's opening installment. In a way, it was two concerts yoked together. The first half was a vocal recital by the mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung, with Kevin Murphy as her supportive, eloquent pianist, and Mr. Zukerman playing the viola in the first group of works, the two songs of Brahms's Opus 91. After intermission Mr. Zukerman and

company played a full-fledged chamber work, Brahms's String Sextet No. 1.

Ms. DeYoung is a powerful singer with a warm, seductive tone that she used to consistently fine effect.

Her rendering of Brahms's "Geistliches Wiegenlied" had a meltingly gentle core, and she brought subtle changes in coloration to



the seven songs in Dvorak's "Zigeunermelodien." But she was at her most highly

charged in the closing Strauss group, which included a steamy performance of "Heimliche Aufforderung" and an impassioned account of "Cäcilie."

In the Brahms sextet Mr. Zukerman played one of the two viola lines; Jethro Marks played the other, with Jessica Linnebach and Yosuke Kawasaki, violinists, and Amanda Forsyth and Winona Zelenka, cellists. It would be tough to say whether Brahms's First or Second Sextet is the greater work, but one thing the First has going for it is its exquisite slow movement, a set of variations on an irresistibly bittersweet theme. These players seemed keenly aware of the movement's charm, and that of the Haydnesque Scherzo. Despite moments when a listener could have wished for a lighter touch and a less throbbing vibrato, this was a worthy performance.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

South Florida
CLASSICAL REVIEW

March 28, 2012

Zukerman Trio presents fiery, full-blooded playing for Drucker's return

By Lawrence Budmen



Pinchas Zukerman and Amanda Forsyth performed in a chamber concert Tuesday night at New World Center.

The anticipated debut of Judy Drucker's Great Artists Series on Tuesday night at the New World Center featured the Zukerman Trio in a generous program of Mendelssohn's Piano Trio in D minor and duos by Mozart, Schumann and Kodaly. There was a palpable sense of excitement in the nearly-full house and Drucker received a prolonged ovation when she came on stage to make a pre-concert speech. That sense of occasion carried over to the performance with violinist Pinchas Zukerman, cellist Amanda Forsyth and pianist Angela Cheng playing at fever pitch.

Mozart's Sonata in G Major for violin and piano was the lively opener. Cheng's crisp attack and lightness of touch were ideal for Mozart's engaging score, the

first of four sonatas written in Mannheim by the 22-year-old composer. A fine Mozartean, Zukerman exhibited fleet, light bowing and his stylish approach utilized only moderate vibrato.

Forsyth, Zukerman's wife, is principal cellist of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa. She commands a darkly burnished sonority and formidable technique. Schumann's *Adagio and Allegro* is an emotionally volatile, romantic score. Originally written for horn and piano, Schumann later transcribed the wind part for cello. Forsyth attacked the introduction with intense fervor, dashing off the Allegro at a fierce clip. She brought passion, depth of expression and splendid musicianship to this beautiful vignette. Cheng was a sympathetic collaborator, shaping Schumann's pianistic line in grandly romantic manner.

Zoltan Kodaly's virtuosic Duo for violin and cello contrasts the timbres of the two instruments and challenges the players' dexterity, and Zukerman and Forsyth gave a bravura performance. Like his friend Bartok, Kodaly combined Hungarian folk elements with the new sounds sweeping Europe in the early 20th century. The opening Allegro of the Duo presents an agitated, angular motif, exploiting the instruments' highest and lowest registers.



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Zukerman brought an expressive anguish to the Adagio, a dark, Bartok-like lament. In the central interlude, the



Angela Cheng

violinist played a rustic melody while Forsyth strummed her cello like a huge guitar. The married musicians threw off the finale at a whirlwind tempo, conveying the music's wild gypsy abandon.

Zukerman, Forsyth and Cheng joined forces for the Mendelssohn trio. The performance offered less of the angst-ridden darkness that many artists bring to the score. Their lighter, more muscular approach was refreshing while still true to the spirit of Mendelssohn's music.

Cheng was somewhat hampered by the bright sound and limited tonal color of the New World Center's house Yamaha but she managed to work miracles with the instrument's limitations. The Andante provided a moment of contrast in this high-spirited performance, with its rapt, song-like interlude. The Scherzo was brisk and danced lightly. The drama of the outer movements was manifest with finely honed interplay by the three musicians in an exciting finale.

With the cheering audience on its feet, the trio offered Fritz Kreisler's *Miniature Viennese March*, a delightful confection for an encore. Zukerman reveled in the witty touches of dissonance amid Kreisler's musical schmalz.

Zukerman Trio

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VOICE OF THE STRING MUSIC WORLD SINCE 1890

September 2008

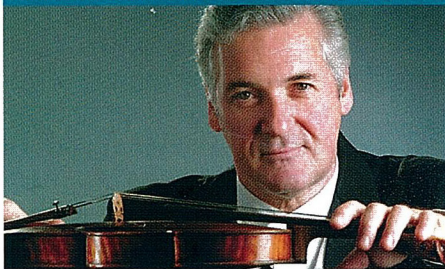
CD reviews

CHAMBER



theStrad SELECTION

Pinchas Zukerman leads a serious 'Trout' Quintet



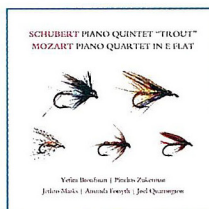
PAUL LABELLE

SCHUBERT Piano Quintet in A major D667
'Trout'

MOZART Piano Quartet in E flat major K493

Pinchas Zukerman (violin) Jethro Marks
(viola) Amanda Forsyth (cello)
Joel Quarrington (double bass)
Yefim Bronfman (piano)

RCA 88697 16044 2



The standard of playing and musicianship is so high here that normal criticism seems impertinent. Even the Canadian-made recordings are irreproachable, with firm, audible bass lines, good piano tone and agreeable 'air' round the upper strings.

So I offer the following remarks in a spirit of discussion rather than of disputation.

The opening bars of the 'Trout' are made to seem even more like a miniature introduction than usual. I sampled several other versions and there are only a few seconds in it, but enough to make those bars sound extra slow in relation to the main tempo.

I cannot get the impression out of my head that despite the warmth of the string playing, this is a rather serious 'Trout', with an urgent surge to the first movement and quite a tough Scherzo. In between comes that idyllic Andante, with the pillowy tone of Jethro Marks's viola to the fore.

The theme for the variations is quite slow and courtly. I personally prefer a more constant pulse for the variations but they are pleasingly performed. The finale is again a bit on the serious side. If you like that approach, rather than a Viennese lilt, this recording could be for you.

The Mozart is lovely and well shaped, with the proviso that I prefer to have every repeat, having been treated to them by other groups. How nice to hear Amanda Forsyth's cello so clearly delineated. Yefim Bronfman and Pinchas Zukerman are as excellent in all their doings as you would expect.

TULLY POTTER



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ZUKERMAN TRIO



June 17, 2008

by Julie Amacher

New Classical Tracks: Zukerman and friends sparkle in chamber music

Pinchas Zukerman's latest recording isn't a violin concerto. Instead, he's teaming up in a chamber ensemble that delivers buoyant performances of two beloved pieces by Schubert and Mozart.

St. Paul, Minn. — For more than a decade, violin master Pinchas Zukerman has been using videoconferencing technology to instruct students who may be in Minnesota or at the Manhattan School of Music. It's just one way he strives to motivate future generations of musicians.

Five years ago, he teamed up with four proteges to form the Zukerman Chamber Players. One member of the quartet, violist Jethro Marks, first studied with Zukerman during some of those early videoconferencing sessions.

On this new recording, the Zukerman Chamber Players join pianist Yefim Bronfman to perform two masterpieces of chamber music, Schubert's "Trout" Quintet, and Mozart's Piano Quartet in E flat.

During the summer of 1819, 22-year-old Franz Schubert traveled outside his native Vienna to stay with a music patron in upper Austria.

Sylvester Paumgartner was an amateur

cellist who held musical gatherings at his home. It was Paumgartner who requested that Schubert compose a quintet based on his favorite Schubert song, "The Trout."

It's easy to hear why this early instrumental work is one of Schubert's best-loved works. This piece is joyously effervescent, especially in the hands of top-notch performers.

In the first movement, the piano shimmers as Bronfman sails up to the high end of the keyboard. The four string players perform in tandem providing glorious harmonies, and a strong support system for the piano.

The third movement of the "Trout" Quintet is a lively musical game between the five players. Quick tempo changes and an expressive range of dynamics make this a "fish tale" that's a pleasure to listen to.

Schubert based the fourth movement on his song which recounts the saga of the carefree trout, which is eventually caught by the clever fisherman. This is a delightful set of variations on that song. The rippling piano part really makes the melody shine.

It was Mozart's Piano Quartet in E-flat major that established the piano quartet



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as a winning instrumental combination. He added his favorite instrument, the viola to the more standard trio of violin, cello and keyboard. It became a musical recipe that resonated with the composer and the public.

Mozart wrote most of his opera, "The Marriage of Figaro," between his two early piano quartets. The spirit of that comic opera, with its lively interplay between the characters, is felt especially in the third movement of the quartet.

Mozart learned early on that his quartets were most effective when there was a strong dialogue between the players. Yefim Bronfman, Pinchas Zukerman, Jethro Marks and Amanda Forsyth prove Mozart's point by generating an exquisite musical conversation in this performance.

For more than 40 years, Pinchas Zukerman has been inspiring music lovers and performers alike. With this new recording of two of the most popular works in the chamber repertoire, he continues that legacy.

ZUKERMAN TRIO

AUDIOPHILE AUDITION

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April 18, 2008

MOZART: String Quintet in D, K 593; DVORAK: String Quintet in E, op. 97 – Zukerman Chamber Players – Altara

How wonderful to hear this violinist again with superb colleagues in top notch performances!



MOZART: String Quintet in D, K 593;
DVORAK: String Quintet in E, op. 97 –
Zukerman Chamber Players – Altara ALT
11025, 62:44 *****

[Distr. by Albany]:

The Zukerman Chamber Players are a relatively new ensemble composed of violinist's Pinchas Zukerman's protégés. The notes state that they have recorded four other CDs, but perhaps some of these have not been released yet—I could find only one other (2006) of another Mozart String Quintet and a Brahms String Quintet. Zukerman has long been a respected and avid Mozartian, and the performance here is really top notch, spirited, confident, and beautifully realized. His younger colleagues play with a devotion and enthusiastic breeziness that catapults this reading to one of the top recordings available. I don't know if I can ever part with my older and yet

equally luscious Juilliard String Quartet versions on Sony, but this one is certainly its peer.

The Dvorak fares no less well. There is a warmth and Czech flavor that this international group captures as if they hailed from Prague themselves, and what proves most reliable in this recording in general is the exceptional tonal qualities of the group. There are no weak links, and each member sports a robust and simply succulent string sound that leaps out of the speakers. Dvorak wrote three of these quintets, and this last one has always been the most popular and ingratiating. With readings like this from a well-established violinist (and how good it is to hear him again after so long) and his fine company, Dvorak is very well served indeed.

The sound is truly exceptional, with an ideal amount of resonance and warmth. This is a not-to-be-missed release despite the number of other recordings you may have, and I do hope that Zukerman and company continue their series.

-- Steven Ritter

Zukerman Trio

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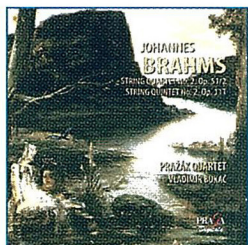
April 2007

MOZART String Quintet in C major K515

BRAHMS String Quintet in G major op.111

Zukerman Chamber Players

Altara ALT 1011



Had he written only the late G major String Quintet, Brahms would still be immortal. For lovers of the viola it is a key work, but the other players have wonderful opportunities – and all ten involved in these two performances make the most of them.

The excellent Czechs on Praga give a strong reading, with a magnificent bronze tone. The guest player is that skilled soloist Vladimír Bukač (see Concerto), who has played both second violin and viola in the Talich Quartet but now concentrates on viola; I have heard fine recitals from him in London and at the Tertis

Competition on the Isle of Man.

The group led by Pinchas Zukerman takes a more expansive view of all four movements, especially the first three. The leader's talented younger colleagues are Jessica Linnebach, Jethro Marks, Ashan Pillai and Amanda Forsyth. Like the Czechs they are very well recorded, with every instrument coming through. Finely focused tone prevents

any suggestion of wallowing in Brahms's textures, even though they project a fair degree of warmth.

On their own, the Pražák Quartet players find a quite different kind of lyricism for the tricky A minor Quartet. They move nicely and naturally through what, with the repeat, is a long first movement, following it with warmth for the Andante moderato (though I wish the cellist would not put a swell into every note of his solos); charm for the Quasi minuetto; and drama for the finale, spoilt only by one slightly wild patch of intonation.

This is the third of the Pražák Brahms series to come my way and I rate it a success, along with the coupling of op.51 no.1 and the Clarinet Quintet (I had reservations about op.67 and the Piano Quintet).

Zukerman's players bring us Mozart's great C major Quintet. Like the Brahms, it gets a vigorous kick from Forsyth's cello at the start; and it is given a spacious, affectionate performance that almost silences criticism. Is violist Jethro Marks too bold in the Adagio? He makes a wonderful sound but I am used to a more equal duet between first violin and first viola.

Presentation of the Praga disc is excellent. The printer does one or two strange things in the Altara booklet.

TULLY POTTER

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