

THE FIRM

SERIES 2001

Concert two

Seraphim Trio

Tonight's program is an amalgam of two concerts THE FIRM presented in Vienna in June, 2001 as part of the Festival of Vienna's Schönberg Festival. The festival commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the death of the great composer, and the concerts by the Seraphim Trio were very enthusiastically received by the Viennese audiences.

Seraphim Trio

Helen Ayres	violin
Timothy Nankervis	cello
Anna Goldsworthy	piano

MONDAY JULY 30, 2001

Arnold Schoenberg
Vielseitigkeit Op.28 No.2

Anton Webern
Drei Kleine Stucke Op.11

Josef Matthias Hauer
Etudes Op.22 Nos.2 and 1

Raymond Chapman Smith
Piano Trio No.3

Arnold Schoenberg
Seven Fragments for Piano Pieces

John Polglase
Phantasie

Quentin S.D. Grant
Fantasie

INTERVAL

Ludwig van Beethoven
Piano Trio in E flat Op.1 No.1

Arnold Schoenberg
Vielseitigkeit Op.28 No.1

Arnold Schoenberg

Two Canons from Drei Satiren Op.28

(transcribed for piano trio by R.Chapman Smith)

These two delightfully ironic puzzle canons, the first two pieces from Schoenberg's Drei Satiren Op.28, are rarely heard in their original choral form (especially in Australia). We use them here, in very direct transcriptions, to frame our concerts and to capture a little of Schoenberg's witty exhilaration at the time of his early elucidation of the Twelve Tone Method - an expressive character which is clearly present even without his richly sardonic texts.

Anton Webern

Drei Kleine Stucke Op.11
for cello and piano

- 1 Massig
- 2 Sehr Bewegt
- 3 Ausserst Ruhig

Completed in 1914, after an abandoned attempt at more expansive forms and numerous searching communications with Schoenberg, Webern's Op.11 is the final and most extreme example of the High Expressionist musical aphorism. These extraordinary pieces do, however, maintain, in the most distilled form, the linguistic and lyrical structures so essential to Webern and his colleagues. It is perhaps significant that Webern employed the two instruments with which he was most familiar as a performer in this most intensely wrought composition.

Josef Matthias Hauer

Etudes Op.22 Nos.2 and 1

Hauer's Etudes Op.22 were dedicated to Arnold Schoenberg on the occasion of his 50th birthday in 1924. Distinctly representative of the published works that employ Hauer's very idiomatic system of Tropes, the Etudes provide the performer only with pitch and duration, leaving them free to determine the tempo and dynamics for these pieces, which seem to be conceived as individual items rather than an integrated set.

Raymond Chapman Smith

Piano Trio No.3 (2001)

"In Memoriam Arnold Schoenberg"

Molto Moderato, quasi Andante

Vivace ma non troppo - piu Lento - Molto Vivace e Grazioso

The material for my Trio, in memory of Arnold Schoenberg, is made from the first hexachord of the series employed in the 4th movement of Schoenberg's Serenade Op.24 - his setting of a Petrarch Sonnet. The hexachord is combined with its own mirror form, producing a series of a somewhat more "classically" symmetrical nature than Schoenberg's complex original. The formplan for my Trio makes reference to the much earlier Viennese practice, in many of Haydn's wonderful trios, of a two movement structure that pairs a slow sonata with an Allegretto hybrid of Minuet/Scherzo - Trio (and Landler) - a formal model which finds a particular resonance in three of Anton Webern's essential, early twelve tone works. The first movement of the Trio was conceived as a gentle "Weheklag" with the Allegretto finale resolving on the tritone A-Es, an allusion which, in this context, needs no explanation.

Arnold Schoenberg

Seven Fragments for Piano Pieces

Fragment 9 Massig, aber sehr ausdrucksvoll (1918)

Fragment 10 Langsam (1920)

Fragment 11 (1920)

Fragment 14 Sehr Rasch (1931)

Fragment 15 Andante (1931)

Fragment 16 (after 1933)

Fragment 17 Moderato (after 1933)

This selection of seven of Schoenberg's seventeen fragmentary piano pieces presents examples from the Moedling years - pieces which were possibly intended for Op.23 - to the time of Schoenberg's residence in Berlin and undated sketches on American music paper. However fragmentary, these intriguing statements illustrate the range of Schoenberg's initial inspiration - from pieces that arrive with detailed precision to those that reveal a more gradual generative process. The later examples, in particular, make plain the very linear/lyrical origin of many of the composer's ideas.

John Polglase

Phantasie for piano trio

This short trio movement was composed especially for the Seraphim Trio's Viennese performance. It is a real fantasy, following no formal mode and with the intention of simply being fun to play.

The pitches of the work are a result of a very free use of a tone row which, according to my information, comes from Schoenberg but is one which he never used; and I think I can see why. I have plundered the row for thematic ideas which I then utilise developmentally.

Bright and energetic, it is a piece which was quick to compose (but at nowhere near the speed that Arnold Schoenberg reportedly wrote) and enjoyable for me to work on.

Quentin SD Grant

Fantasie on themes by Schönberg

This short trio, written in humble dedication to the great creative artist uses one of his unused tone rows (as also used by John Polglase in his piece) and also uses material from the second of his Five Orchestral Pieces (where it is played by the celeste). The work's tone is, fittingly for one being written in reference to the greatest of musical expressionists, disturbed and unsettled in tone.

The Seraphim Trio

The Seraphim Trio was formed in 1995, and has fast developed a reputation as one of Australia's most exciting young chamber groups. The trio has enjoyed numerous engagements at the Barossa International Music Festival, the Mildura Arts Festival, and has performed in major concert venues throughout Australia. In 1999 they launched their own series at the Art Gallery of South Australia, the "Seraphim Gallery Series", to critical acclaim. The trio plan to extend this series to regional areas in South-Eastern Australia. Other highlights include performances for the Musica Viva 'Menage' series in Melbourne and Sydney, and a performance at the Sydney Opera House Studio for radio 2MBS.

Recently, the trio worked briefly but intensely with Hatto Beyerle in Hannover. It returned to Australia to perform in the National finals of the Australian Youth Chamber Music Competition where it was awarded the prize as the leading piano trio as well as the audience choice prize.

The Seraphim Trio is committed to contemporary music and working with Australian composers. They have been broadcast extensively on national radio ABC-FM and 2MBS. The trio is grateful for the influence of several distinguished musicians, including Bill Hennessy, Dene Olding, Eleonor Sivan and Hatto Beyerle.

THE FIRM

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