

Chamber Music Corvallis presents: Valencia Baryton Project

December 1, 2023

First Presbyterian Church



Matthew Baker • *baryton*

Brett Walfish • *viola*

Alex Friedhoff • *cello*

Chamber Music Corvallis receives support from the Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency supported by the State of Oregon.



Program

Baryton Trio n. 61 in D major, Hob. XI:61
I. Allegro Moderato
II. Adantino
III. Menuet

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732–1809)

Prelude 1 (2021)

John Pickup

Baryton Trio n. 87 in A minor, Hob. XI:87
I. Adagio
II. Allegro di Molto
III. Menuet

Franz Joseph Haydn

Intermission

Baryton Trio n. 113 in D major, Hob. XI:113)
I. Adagio
II. Allegro di Molto
III. Menuetto

Franz Joseph Haydn

The River (2020)

Steve Zink

Baryton Trio n. 67 in G major, Hob. XI:67
I. Allegro
II. Menuet
III. Finale — Presto

Franz Joseph Haydn

Berceuse Rouge (2021)

Jose Zárate

Program Notes

The baryton, a bass string instrument with fretted strings that are bowed and a separate set of plucked strings, had moments of popularity at various points in history. First introduced during the seventeenth century, the lower set of plucked strings allowed the player to accompany themselves and enhance the sounds of the instrument with sympathetic resonances. This now obscure instrument reached its zenith in eighteenth-century Austria thanks to a zealous amateur, Prince Nicolaus Esterházy, and rising star and Kapellmeister in his court, Joseph Haydn.

Though Haydn was not the only composer to produce works for the prince, he standardized the compositional approaches to repertoire for his patron. Haydn had to account for Prince Nicolaus's abilities, who was known to prefer "safe" keys he could easily play, and personal tastes. To appease the prince's voracious appetite for chamber music, Haydn and his contemporaries were required to compose solos, duos, quintets, and concertos for the baryton, and—most importantly for today's concert—Haydn produced dozens of trios for baryton, viola, and cello. This combination of instruments, devised specifically for Nicolaus, offers a unique timbre. The bowed strings of the baryton blend well with the viola and cello, creating an effect of a unified sound by the ensemble, while its plucked strings offer a contrasting timbre. The overtones produced by the baryton compensate for the lack of a treble voice.

Haydn's trios, composed between 1765 and 1778, represent the current trends of diversional instrumental music of the time. Formulated in three short movements, many of the trios open with a slow movement, with the following two movements in progressively faster tempos. In addition, a common feature of his trios is the inclusion of a minuet and trio, a popular eighteenth-century dance form that was regularly danced at court. The minuet's characteristic triple meter and accompanying dance steps would have been familiar to the broad public throughout Europe, and especially to Prince Nicolaus. Some trios include theme and variations on the prince's favorite contemporary tunes, and others include fugues, proving Haydn's great compositional abilities. The trios performed today represent Haydn's output for this genre and the prince's taste for well-crafted chamber music.

for his favorite instrument. In addition to historical works for baryton, the Valencia Baryton Project will present three contemporary pieces for baryton trio. John Pickup's Prelude 1 (2021), Steve Zink's "The River" (2020), and Jose Zárate's "Berceuse Rouge" (2021) are framed by Haydn's trios, offering a unique juxtaposition of the new and the old.

—Kimary Fick, Ph.D.
Artistic Director, Chamber Music Corvallis

Upcoming Concerts

Spanish Brass

Spanish Brass (a)LIVE

January 19, 2024

Marion Anderson String Quartet

On Being Enslaved

February 23, 2024

Haerim Liz Lee & David Fung

Gershwin: My Time is Today

April 12, 2024