Emanuel Ax
Leonidas Kavakos
Yo-Yo Ma

Emanuel Ax / Piano
Leonidas Kavakos / Violin
Yo-Yo Ma / Cello

Tuesday Evening, March 3, 2020 at 7:30
Hill Auditorium
Ann Arbor

78th Performance of the 141st Annual Season
This evening’s performance is supported by Bank of Ann Arbor, Max Wicha and Sheila Crowley, Michigan Medicine, Sesi Lincoln, and Robert O. and Darragh H. Weisman.

Special thanks to Tim and Sally Petersen for their generous support toward the artists' travel for this evening’s performance.

Media partnership provided by WRCJ 90.9 FM.

The Steinway piano used in this evening’s performance is made possible by the William and Mary Palmer Endowment Fund.

Special thanks to Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra, visiting university carillonist, for coordinating this evening’s pre-concert music on the Charles Baird Carillon.

Mr. Ax, Mr. Kavakos, and Mr. Ma appear by arrangement with Opus 3 Artists.

In consideration of the artists and the audience, please refrain from the use of electronic devices during the performance.

The photography, sound recording, or videotaping of this performance is prohibited.
PROGRAM

Ludwig van Beethoven
Trio in c minor, Op. 1, No. 3

Allegro con brio
Andante cantabile con variazioni
Menuetto: quasi allegro
Finale: Prestissimo

Beethoven
Trio in E-flat Major, Op. 70, No. 2

Poco sostenuto — Allegro ma non troppo
Allegretto
Allegretto ma non troppo
Finale: Allegro

Intermission

Beethoven
Trio in B-flat Major, Op. 97

Allegro moderato
Scherzo: Allegro
Andante cantabile ma però con moto —
Allegro moderato — Presto

Third and fourth movements played attacca (without pause).
THREE PIANO TRIOS BY LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Ludwig van Beethoven
Born December 15, 1770 in Bonn, Germany
Died March 26, 1827 in Vienna

Beethoven revolutionized the piano trio, just as he did every other musical genre he touched. Whereas the trios of Haydn — and to a certain degree even those of Mozart — were “piano sonatas with violin and cello accompaniment” (they were often called just that on the title pages), Beethoven moved decisively toward a full equality of all three players. His innovative approach is evident not only in the later works (Opp. 70 and 97) but even in the three trios written soon after his arrival in Vienna in 1792. Publishing these trios as “Op. 1” meant that he considered them the first works that represented him as a mature artist. And while hindsight makes these trios appear more traditional than the later ones, they — and especially the third Trio in c minor — rocked the boat sufficiently to have a contemporary critic refer to them as “confused explosions of the impulsive bravado of a talented young man.” By the time the later trios were written, Beethoven’s reputation was well-established, and the works were admired without reservation by their first audiences.
TRIO IN C MINOR, OP. 1, NO. 3 (1792–95)

Beethoven

UMS premiere: Reginald Kell Players; February 1954 in Rackham Auditorium.

**Snapshots of History...In 1795:**

- The University of North Carolina opens, becoming the first state university in the US
- Jim Beam whiskey is founded as Old Jake Beam Sour Mash
- The metric system is adopted in France

Many qualities commonly associated with the “heroic” Beethoven of the middle years are already on display in this early work. The special emotional climate associated with the key of c minor in the “Pathétique” Sonata or the Fifth Symphony makes its first appearance just a few years after Mozart’s death, at a time when Joseph Haydn was still actively composing. Haydn must have felt that his erstwhile pupil had gone a little too far; he reportedly “doubted whether this trio would be easily understood and accepted by the public” — certainly a veiled criticism. In the event, Haydn’s worries notwithstanding, the three trios had a resounding success in Vienna’s musical circles.

The second movement is a set of variations on a *cantabile* (eminently singable) theme of utmost simplicity. In the course of five variations, the theme receives the usual virtuoso figurations, but it seems that the changes in melodic character were much more important to Beethoven than mere technical display. The piano melody of the first variation is more memorable than the theme itself in its intense lyricism. In the second, the roles of the three instruments (melody and accompaniment) change with great frequency, resulting in a novel instrumental texture. In the third, the *pizzicato* (plucked) notes of the strings are particularly effective against the fast notes of the piano. The fourth brings sighing accents, unsettling syncopations, and chromatic progressions along with the dark key of e-flat minor (with six flats!). The *staccato* (separated) notes of the piano and the double-
Drs. Henry Paulson and Andrew Lieberman have formed a unique coalition of more than 50 clinicians and scientists studying protein-folding disorders as a group, which holds the promise to establish new ways to prevent and treat these devastating conditions.
stops of the violin enliven the fifth and last variations, leading into the coda that recapitulates motives heard separately in some of the earlier episodes. (German musicologist Helga Lühning has pointed out that one of Beethoven’s shorter piano works, the Bagatelle Op. 119, No. 2, is so close to this movement that it could almost qualify as another variation on the same theme. Despite its high opus number, this bagatelle was actually written as early as the 1790s.)

The third movement is not quite the graceful “minuet” its designation in the score would suggest — but it is not a playful scherzo either. Its main theme is related to the agitated motive from the first movement, but it is put in even sharper relief here. In the trio, the tonality changes from minor to major and the mood brightens up accordingly. The fast runs of the piano alternate with a simple but engaging melody in the cello.

High drama returns in the finale, significantly marked “Prestissimo.” After a few introductory measures that function as a musical “curtain,” the violin intones a main theme full of nervous tension. Its insistent minor thirds are subsequently developed in an almost maniacal fashion; a more relaxed second theme brings only temporary calm. The movement ends with a most astonishing coda. For the first time, Beethoven used a strategy to which he would often return in his later works: just when one would expect the music to settle down in the home tonality, a surprise modulation sends the harmony off into very distant regions. In this instance, Beethoven resolved this last-minute complication only to make another unheard-of move. He modulated into C Major without resolving any of the dramatic tensions: the soft C-Major scales of the piano against the quarter-notes of the string instruments, repeated ostinato (without any changes), end the work on an oddly mysterious note.

Beethoven himself thought particularly highly of this early work of his. More than 20 years later he returned to it and made an arrangement for string quintet, which he published in 1819 as Op. 104.
Beethoven

UMS premiere: Peabody Trio; May 1989 in Rackham Auditorium.

This Trio revisits the world of early Beethoven from the height of the middle period. Written shortly after the Fifth Symphony, it has a gentle lyricism that reminded the first reviewer of the work, the Romantic writer and composer E.T.A. Hoffmann, of the music of Haydn and Mozart. Hoffmann wrote his review in 1813. In 2003, American musicologist Lewis Lockwood found much “humor and kindness” in the work but also more virtuosity in the string parts than there had been in Beethoven’s earlier trios. One has to agree: in this Trio, and its companion work, the “Ghost” Trio (Op. 70, No. 1), the three instruments have become fully equal in importance. The Romantic trio sound of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms, and Dvořák was in fact born in these two masterworks.

Certain telltale elements, such as the rich diversity of the motivic transformations, are typical of Beethoven’s middle years. The “mystery” introduction with which it opens is another such element, and its return at the end of the movement even looks forward, anticipating similar strategies in the late string quartets. Yet by the time the main portion of the first movement arrives, all “turbulence” is over, and the music assumes a lyric flow that is only occasionally interrupted by moments of tension.

The second movement is a set of “double” variations on two themes — the first, a graceful melody in the major mode, the second, more tempestuous and in the minor. The double-variation form was particularly dear to Haydn; in Beethoven’s hands it expands and gains in dramatic momentum. Most remarkably, the movement ends in the minor, denying the major-mode resolution that was the expected outcome in such “bimodal” movements.

The third movement is a minuet that, although not identified as such in the score, nevertheless adheres to the form and style of this classical dance that Beethoven had replaced by the more modern scherzo elsewhere (from Op. 1 onwards!). The middle section, the would-be “trio,” sounds even more archaic with its simple chordal progressions played in turn by the piano and the two string instruments. On the other hand, the fact that the middle section is heard twice and the main statement

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**Snapshots of History...In 1808:**
- Beethoven conducts and plays piano in a marathon benefit concert in Vienna, consisting of the premieres of Symphonies Nos. 5 and 6, Piano Concerto No. 4, and *Choral Fantasy*
- The importation of slaves into the US is banned
- Goethe’s *Faust, Part One* is published in full
three times is a more modern feature, repeating a procedure from his previous work, the Cello Sonata Op. 69, and anticipating the Seventh Symphony (as well as the “Archduke” Trio).

Effusive lyricism and instrumental virtuosity are the two poles around which the finale revolves. The sequence of keys is not what we would find in Haydn and Mozart — the music moves toward more distant tonal goals, yet this no way undermines the classical balance of the movement which, according to Beethoven’s pupil Carl Czerny, is “very quick, light, brilliant, and witty.”

We can’t help you complete the Sunday crossword.

But we can help you invest wisely.
TRIO IN B-FLAT MAJOR, OP. 97, “ARCHDUKE” (1811)

Beethoven

UMS premiere: Milwaukee Trio; April 1893 in the School of Music’s Newberry Hall.

The last of Beethoven’s piano trios owes its nickname to the fact that it was one of a large group of works by Beethoven dedicated to the Archduke Rudolph. The youngest brother of Emperor Franz, Rudolph was Beethoven’s composition student and one of his most loyal patrons. Fittingly, this “imperial” work is the most monumental of the six Beethoven trios, and marks the culmination point of Beethoven’s so-called “heroic” period. Yet it is not one of those highly dramatic, conflict-laden works that we most readily associate with Beethoven’s middle years: it is neither appassionata like the f-minor Piano Sonata, nor overly serioso like the f-minor String Quartet. The predominant mood is serene, peaceful, and witty; at the same time it is filled with rhythmic and harmonic passages that were highly unusual and certainly “modern” at the time.

The first movement opens with a broad and expansive melody that, surprisingly, does not reach closure but disintegrates instead into a series of figurations eventually leading to a more playful second theme. Musicians will notice that this second theme does not appear in the expected F Major but in G, a more remote key. This is a major departure from the rules that were already well-established at the time; as a result, the movement spans a wider tonal and emotional arch than usual. G Major, which allows the string instruments to use the clear sound of the open strings, also has a brighter sonority than F Major would.

This unusual move is followed by one of Beethoven’s most exciting development sections, where the composer isolates a tiny part of the opening theme from the rest and works with it separately. In a particularly suspenseful passage, the violin and cello play pizzicato (plucking the strings) while the piano keeps repeating a characteristic trill motif. After a full recapitulation, an energetic coda ends the movement.

The jaunty dance melody of the second-movement “Scherzo” is introduced by an unaccompanied cello. The three instruments toss the melody back and forth as if it were a ball in a game. The middle section, which is in the minor mode and starts with a tonally unstable chromatic melody (that is, one moving in half-

Snapshots of History...In 1811:

· Venezuela declares independence from Spain
· Inventor John Stevens’ boat, the Juliana, begins operation as the first steam-powered ferry service, between New York City and Hoboken, New Jersey
· Author and abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe is born
steps), is a little more serious, but it, too, soon erupts in a happy dance tune. Like in a number of mature Beethoven works, the alternation of the principal section (S) and middle section (T) is repeated, resulting in the scheme S-T-S-T-S, plus a brief coda, in which elements of the T section appear for the third time.

The slow movement is a series of variations on a hymn-like theme. The tempo marking (“Andante cantabile, ma però con moto”) stresses that the tempo should not be too slow; a certain momentum should be maintained at all times. In the course of the four variations, ever faster figurations are added to “dress up” the initial theme, which returns in its original, unadorned form at the end. Then another embellished passage leads directly (attacca, without pause) into the last movement.

Marked “Allegro moderato” like the first movement (that is, not too fast), the finale combines a dance character with a gentle espressivo style of delivery. It is a cheerful rondo with a central episode in a minor key that, for a moment, strikes a more serious note. Upon its return, the rondo theme is transformed into a breathtaking “Presto” passage, slipping into a foreign key (A Major) as an unexpected detour. The home key is, then, triumphantly reestablished in a lengthy and increasingly exuberant coda.

The first public performance of the “Archduke” trio took place at the Viennese hotel Zum römischen Kaiser (Roman Emperor) on April 11, 1814. Beethoven himself was at the piano in what remained his final appearance as a performer. His deafness had reached a stage where appearing on stage was no longer possible for him.

Program notes by Peter Laki.
Born in modern day Lvov, Poland, Emanuel Ax (piano) moved to Winnipeg, Canada, with his family when he was a young boy. Mr. Ax made his New York debut on the Young Concert Artists Series, and in 1974 won the first Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. In 1975 he won the Michaels Award of Young Concert Artists followed four years later by the Avery Fisher Prize.

Highlights of the current season include a European summer festivals tour with the Vienna Philharmonic and long-time collaborative partner Bernard Haitink, an Asian tour with the London Symphony and Sir Simon Rattle, and US concerts with the Rotterdam Philharmonic and Lahav Shani, in addition to three concerts with regular partners Leonidas Kavakos and Yo-Yo Ma at Carnegie Hall in March 2020. Further participation in Carnegie Hall’s celebration of Beethoven’s 250th birthday will culminate in a solo recital in May preceded by recitals in Madison, Santa Barbara, Orange County, Washington, Las Vegas, and Colorado Springs. With orchestra he will be heard in Houston, Baltimore, Atlanta, San Diego, San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York, Montreal, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and Indianapolis. In Europe, he will be heard with orchestras in London, Frankfurt, Berlin, Rome, Zurich, Rotterdam, and Tel Aviv.

Mr. Ax has been a Sony Classical exclusive recording artist since 1987, his most recent being Brahms trios with Yo-Yo Ma and Leonidas Kavakos. He has received Grammy Awards for the second and third volumes of his cycle of Haydn’s piano sonatas. He has also made a series of Grammy-winning recordings with Yo-Yo Ma of the Beethoven and Brahms sonatas for cello and piano. In the 2004–05 season, Mr. Ax contributed to an international Emmy Award-winning BBC documentary commemorating the Holocaust, which aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. In 2013, Mr. Ax’s recording Variations received the Echo Klassik Award for “Solo Recording of the Year” (19th-century music/Piano).

Mr. Ax is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and holds honorary doctorates of music from Skidmore College, Yale University, and Columbia University. For more information about Mr. Ax’s career, please visit EmanuelAx.com.

Leonidas Kavakos (violin) is recognized as a violinist and artist of rare quality, known for his virtuosity, superb musicianship, and the integrity of his playing. By age 21, Mr. Kavakos had won three major competitions: the Sibelius (1985), Paganini, and Naumburg competitions (1988). This success led to his recording the original Sibelius Violin Concerto (1903–4), the first recording of this work in history, which won Gramophone’s “Concerto of the Year” award in 1991. Mr. Kavakos was awarded Gramophone “Artist of the Year” in 2014, and is the 2017 winner of the Léonie Sonning Music Prize, Denmark’s most prestigious musical honor.

Highlights of Mr. Kavakos’ current season include the Sony release of his recording of the Beethoven Violin Concerto play-conducting with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and a US tour with Emanuel Ax and Yo-Yo Ma performing Beethoven trios, concluding with three concerts at Carnegie Hall. In North America, he performs with the symphony orchestras of Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, and Montreal, as well as with
the Munich Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall, and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in Boston. In Europe, he performs with the Vienna Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Mariinsky Orchestra, and Orchestre de Paris. He performs in Asia with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Singapore Symphony, Seoul Philharmonic, and Taiwan Philharmonic, and will give recitals in Shanghai and Xinghai.

Mr. Kavakos has developed close relationships with many of the world’s most prestigious orchestras, and more recently, he has also built a strong profile as a conductor. This season, he will conduct the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Czech Philharmonic, and the Rai National Symphony Orchestra in Torino.

Mr. Kavakos has an exclusive contract with Sony Classical, for whom he has previously recorded the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto and Mozart’s Violin Concertos play-conducting with the Camerata Salzburg. In 2017, he joined Yo-Yo Ma and Emanuel Ax for a recording of Brahms trios. Upcoming recording projects include the complete Bach solo Sonatas and Partitas. His other recordings include Virtuoso, Brahms violin sonatas with Yuja Wang, the Brahms Violin Concerto with the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, and the complete Beethoven Violin Sonatas with Enrico Pace, all on the Decca label. Mr. Kavakos plays the “Willemotte” Stradivarius violin of 1734.

Yo-Yo Ma’s (cello) multi-faceted career is testament to his enduring belief in culture’s power to generate trust and understanding. Whether performing new or familiar works from the cello repertoire, collaborating with communities and institutions to explore culture’s role in society, or engaging in unexpected musical forms, Mr. Ma strives to foster connections that stimulate the imagination and reinforce our humanity.

With partners from around the world and across disciplines, he creates programs that stretch the boundaries of genre and tradition to explore music-making as a means not only to share and express meaning, but also as a model for the cultural collaboration he considers essential to a strong society. It was this belief that inspired him to establish Silkroad, a collective of artists from around the world who create music that engages their many traditions.

In August 2018, Mr. Ma began a new journey, setting out to perform Johann Sebastian Bach’s six suites for solo cello in one sitting in 36 locations around the world, iconic venues that encompass our cultural heritage, our current creativity, and the challenges of peace and understanding that will shape our future. Each concert will be an example of culture’s power to create moments of shared understanding, as well as an invitation to a larger conversation about culture, society, and the themes that connect us all.
Tonight’s concert marks Emanuel Ax’s seventh appearance under UMS auspices, following his UMS debut in July 1978 in a recital in Rackham Auditorium. He most recently appeared under UMS auspices in April 2018 in a solo recital in Hill Auditorium. Leonidas Kavakos makes his third UMS appearance this evening, following his UMS debut in November 2014 in a recital with pianist Yuja Wang in Hill Auditorium. He most recently appeared under UMS auspices in April 2016 with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Mariss Jansons. Yo-Yo Ma makes his 16th appearance under UMS auspices tonight, following his UMS debut in April 1982 in Hill Auditorium with the Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Eugene Ormandy. In March 2013, Mr. Ma received the UMS Distinguished Artist Award with the Silk Road Ensemble. Mr. Ma most recently appeared under UMS auspices in February 2019 in Hill Auditorium with his presentation *Culture, Understanding, and Survival*, followed by a “Day of Action” comprised of activities with community leaders in Flint.
MAY WE ALSO RECOMMEND...

3/14  Hélène Grimaud
4/2    Benjamin Grosvenor
4/23  Chineke! Orchestra with Sheku Kanneh-Mason

Tickets available at www.ums.org.

ON THE EDUCATION HORIZON...

3/13  UMS 101: Jazz – Tarek Yamani Trio
(Michigan League, Michigan Room, 6:00–7:30 pm)

3/18  Post-Performance Artist Q&A: ANTHEM
(Jam Handy, 2900 E. Grand Boulevard, Detroit)
Must have a ticket to that evening’s performance to attend.

4/23  UMS 101: Classical Music – Chineke! Orchestra
(Hill Auditorium Lower Lobby, 6:00–7:30 pm)

Educational events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.