

# Ludwig van Beethoven



## About the Work

The Piano Trio in B-flat major, Op. 97, by Ludwig van Beethoven is a piano trio for piano, violin, and cello, finished in 1811. It is commonly referred to as the Archduke Trio, because it was dedicated to Archduke Rudolph of Austria, an amateur pianist who was a friend and composition student of Beethoven.

The trio was written late in the "middle period" (spanning roughly 1803 to 1814) of Beethoven's compositional career. He began composing it in the summer of 1810, and completed it in March 1811.

The first public performance was given by Beethoven himself, Ignaz Schuppanzigh (violin) and Josef Linke (cello) at the Viennese hotel Zum römischen Kaiser on 11 April 1814, as his deafness continued to encroach upon his ability as a performer. The violinist and composer Louis Spohr wrote: "In forte passages the poor deaf man pounded on the keys until the strings jangled and in piano he played so softly that whole groups of notes were omitted." It was Beethoven's last performance in the role of pianist.

Although the "Archduke Trio" is sometimes numbered as "No. 7", the numbering of Beethoven's twelve piano trios is not standardized, and in other sources the Op. 97 trio may be shown as having a different number, if any.

## Program note originally written for the following performance:

*The Kennedy Center Chamber Players: Beethoven & Mozart Sun., Mar. 19, 2006, 2:00 PM © Richard Freed*

Despite the considerable contributions of Haydn and Mozart, it remained for Beethoven to give the piano trio an importance it had not enjoyed before. Without trespassing the boundaries of true chamber music, he achieved a *concertante* style of unprecedented brilliance and power that was to set the standards for the flowering of the genre throughout the 19th century (as exemplified most notably in the works of Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Dvořák).

The crowning masterpiece of Beethoven's cycle of piano trios is the last in his series, the celebrated Op. 97 in B-flat, the "Archduke" Trio, still regarded as the greatest of all works for this combination of instruments. In its own time, like the *Eroica* Symphony, it was as striking for its broad dimensions as for the depth of its substance. Beethoven sketched the work during the summer of 1810 and wrote out the final score the following March. The Archduke Rudolph of Austria was one of Beethoven's truest friends, for a time his pupil, and one of the three men who subscribed an allowance for the composer in March 1809 (the others being Prince Lobkowitz and Prince Kinsky). Beethoven dedicated to him not only this Trio, but nine other major works in various forms; it was Rudolph's appointment as cardinal and Archbishop of Olmütz, in 1819, that moved Beethoven to compose his *Missa solemnis*. The Trio in B-flat was probably performed at the Archduke's palace soon after it was written, but its public premiere did not take place until April 11, 1814, on which occasion the violinist was Ignaz Schuppanzigh (leader of the famous string quartet that introduced many of Beethoven's quartets and later some of Schubert's), the cellist was Joseph Linke (for whom Beethoven composed sonatas), and the pianist was Beethoven himself, in his last public appearance at the keyboard.

The first movement opens with the piano's statement of a broad, noble theme, similar to the one that opens the first of the three "Razumovsky" Quartets (the F major, Op. 59, No. 1). Repeated and amplified with the entrance of the strings, it leads to a second subject in the unexpected key of G major and then returns to be examined and discussed in the course of an impressive development section. Following the recapitulation there is a brilliant coda.

The second movement is a scherzo which again calls to mind the corresponding movement of the aforementioned quartet. The extended middle section presents two contrasting elements in alternation: a winding, tortured chromatic fugato built on very narrow intervals (anticipating the style of the late sonatas and quartets) and a dashing waltz tune. The coda underlines the humorous element with its abrupt break-off.

The serene slow movement (marked *Andante cantabile ma pero con moto*) is a series of variations on a hymnlike melody. (After Beethoven's death it was gratuitously adapted to a choral setting of verses by Goethe.) There are four variations, of great melodic and rhythmic interest, and of growing tension and complexity, but after the fourth the theme is restated in its original purity, to be followed by a dreamy coda which extends as a bridge to the finale (yet again as in Op. 59, No. 1—and numerous other works of its period). The concluding movement itself is a freely handled rondo, alternating lighthearted passages with heroic outbursts. The extended coda is full of surprises, ending in a manner Haydn would have loved—but which is thoroughly and unmistakably Beethoven.



*Home Concert Hosted By: James & Elena Rector*

# Classical Music

*Second in a series of recitals featuring student musicians*

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

Op.97 "ARCHDUKE" Op.1 No. 1  
Piano Trio in B-flat major

*May 10th*

8 PM

*Performed By:*

*Joseph Hauer - Piano | Alexa Ciciretti - Cello*

*Wyatt Underhill - Violin*



# LAKE ERIE RECITAL HALL

## PROGRAM

OP.97 "ARCHDUKE" OP.1 NO. 1

1. Allegro Moderato
2. Scherzo, Allegro
3. Andante Cantabile
4. Allegro Moderato-Presto

*Time: Approximatley 45 minutes*

*Ludwig van Beethoven  
(1770—1827)*

## PERFORMED BY

Joseph Hauer -Piano | Alexa Ciciretti -Cello | Wyatt Underhill -Violin

Oberlin Conservatory of Music Oberlin, Ohio

Piano: Steinway D Concert Grand

Piano Technician: Jeff Krill  
Cleveland Institute of Music



Left to right:  
James Rector,  
Alexa Ciciretti,  
Wyatt Underhill,  
Elena Rector and  
Joseph Hauer.



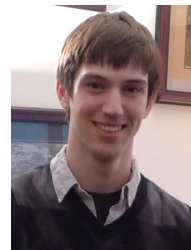
### Joseph Hauer

Joseph Hauer is a sophomore in the studio of Peter Takács. He has studied with Catherine Kautsky, Kyung Kim, Catherine Walby, and Charlene Reitz. He attended the Golandsky Institute Summer Symposium at Princeton University in 2008 and 2009, receiving instruction from Kendall Feeny and Marc Steiner. This year he attended Piano Summer at New Paltz, NY, where he studied with Alexander Korsantia, Vladimir Feltsman, Lev Natochenny, Paul Ostrovsky, Robert Roux, Anthony Newman, Robert Hamilton, Susan Starr, and Philip Kawin. He has soloed with the Fox Valley Symphony, the Madison Symphony Orchestra, and the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Joseph is attending Oberlin Conservatory on a scholarship from the Miller Family Music Education Scholarship of Appleton, WI. His other interests include jazz, Russian, and snowboarding.



### Alexa Ciciretti

Alexa Ciciretti is a junior cello performance major with Amir Eldan at Oberlin Conservatory, where she is a recipient of the Conservatory Dean's Merit Scholarship. Alexa received the New Horizon Fellowship to attend Aspen Music Festival and School, and has also attended Meadowmount School of Music, Bowdoin International Music Festival, and Orford Arts Center Academy. She has served as principal cellist of the Oberlin Orchestra and Oberlin Chamber Orchestra. When she is not playing cello, Alexa enjoys cooking for her co-op, speaking French, and enjoying the weather in her native New England.



### Wyatt Underhill

Violinist Wyatt Underhill is currently in his third year at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where he studies with Gregory Fulkerson. Over the 2010-2011 holiday season he served as concertmaster of the Oberlin Orchestra on a seven concert tour of China and Singapore. This year he has served as concertmaster for the world premiere recording of Kip Winger's ballet *Conversations with Nijinsky* as well as the world premiere of Lorenzo Palomo's *The Sneetches* (a tone poem based on the Dr. Seuss book of the same name). Wyatt also studies baroque violin at Oberlin with Marilyn McDonald and performed this spring with Apollo's Fire (the Cleveland Baroque Orchestra) in their production of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. In his spare time Wyatt enjoys the occasional game of racquetball with fellow trio member Joe Hauer.