

# *Myriad Trio*

chamber music concerts at UC San Diego  
sponsored by the Sam B Ersan Chamber Music Fund

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UC San Diego

KPBS™

**Trio Sonata in G Major, BWV 1038** (1720)

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

- I. Largo
- II. Vivace
- III. Adagio
- IV. Presto

**Zodiac Trio** (1976)

William Mathias  
(1934-1992)

- I. Pisces
- II. Aries
- III. Taurus

**Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp** (1915)

Claude Debussy  
(1862-1918)

- I. Pastorale
- II. Interlude
- III. Finale

*Myriad Trio*

Demarre McGill, flute  
Che-Yen Chen, viola  
Julie Smith, harp

- intermission -

**Sonata for Cello and Piano, op. 19** (1901)

Sergei Rachmaninoff  
(1873-1943)

- I. Lento – Allegro moderato
- II. Allegro scherzando
- III. Andante
- IV. Allegro mosso

Charles Curtis, cello  
Reiko Uchida, piano

## About Tonight's Program

Despite the fact that the trio sonata was an extremely popular 'classical' genre of the Baroque period, only four trio sonatas by Bach have survived. Most likely his works in this field have proved particularly vulnerable to the ravages of time. All evidence suggests that he did indeed write assiduously in this form, but when his musical estate was divided amongst his four sons, much of the chamber music ended up in the hands of poor custodians of their father's priceless musical legacy. The **Sonata in G Major BWV 1038** is partly based on the Violin Sonata BWV 1021, and most likely was a collaborative effort between Bach and one of his sons. Dating from the early 1730's, it was probably intended for one of the weekly concerts of Bach's Collegium Musicum. This version of the G Major Trio Sonata was arranged for flute, viola and harp by the Myriad Trio.

William Mathias, composer of **Zodiac Trio**, began composing in his twenties and, throughout his career, developed a sustainable reputation as one of the best-known Welsh composers of his time. Born in Whitland, Carmarthenshire in 1934, Mathias wrote for a variety of genres including choral and orchestral works as well as an opera, chamber music, and instrumental studies specializing in organ, piano, and harp scores. However, he is probably best known for composing the anthem sung at the 1981 royal wedding of Charles Prince of Wales to Lady Diana Spencer. A believer that composers must "get out of the way of the music" in order to write uncomplicated works which get to the center of what there is to be said, Mathias's music is accessible to listeners and (by its nature) uniquely Welsh. Written for the Robles Trio, the *Zodiac Trio* was premiered in August of 1976 and, as described in the opening page of the work, the title is "derived entirely from the fact that it was composed for and dedicated to three personal friends each of whom was born under a different sign of the Zodiac." With distinctive imagery, the three movements of the piece - Pisces, Aries, and Taurus - truly come alive with clarity and uncomplicated simplicity. Pisces, a water sign, represents the fish which come to life through the playful quality of the flute, in motion with the water-like fluidity of the harp. Aries, the first sign in the Zodiac, represents the Ram. Portrayed by the viola, the regal character of the Ram is interspersed with the emotional outbursts of the flute creating a deep intensity. Taurus, the sign of the Bull, has an earthy quality and maintains a grounded and gripping energy in the movement. Together, combining the vigorous configurations of the flute and viola with the weighted

patterns in the harp, the instruments fuse together to create a blend of sharp, contrasting colors.

Claude Debussy's **Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp** is the second entry in a projected series of six chamber sonatas (of which the composer completed three). The sonata is at once evocative and emotionally ambiguous, though a great deal less harmonically adventuresome than its two companions. The sonata opens with a freely constructed movement marked *Pastorale: Lento, dolce rubato*. Debussy subjects six essential musical cells to a free variation treatment as the music unfolds. When he reprises these melodic strands, he does so without regard for their initial ordering, and yet with a clear dramatic impact. The atmosphere, seemingly relaxed, is nonetheless charged with a sense of repressed passion. The second movement, *Interlude: Tempo di minuetto*, recalls the Menuet of Debussy's *Suite bergamasque* (1890) in its vague implication — rather than explicit modeling — of a dance form. Here, though, the rhythmic structure is more sharply defined. In the finale, marked *Allegro moderato ma risoluto*, the reason for Debussy's decision to abandon the sonata's original scoring — flute, oboe, and harp — becomes clear. Without the viola's passionate pizzicati, the finale would lose much of its essential character; indeed, its opening would be unrecognizable.

Sergei Rachmaninoff's **Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 19** comes after a period of inactivity following the unsuccessful premiere of his first symphony in 1897. Distressed by his incapacity, the composer undertook three months of private therapy with Nicolai Dahl, a physician with a special interest in hypnotherapy. Dahl, himself an amateur musician, was interested in Rachmaninoff's case and charged no fees. It is not clear what went on in their frequent sessions together, but the outcome was a burst of creativity in which he composed his Op. 19. Desiring an equal partnership between the two performers, Rachmaninoff's piano writing is virtuosic, so much so that his contemporaries criticized him for favoring the instrument at the expense of the cello. Perhaps it was for this reason that the piece, written in 1901, was overshadowed by the acclaimed premiere of his second piano concerto that same year. Nonetheless, the Sonata for Cello and Piano remains widely performed, its shimmering lyricism helping it endure as a major staple of 20th-century cello repertoire.

## About the Performers

Winner of a 2003 Avery Fisher Career Grant, flutist **Demarre McGill** has performed concerti with the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Baltimore Symphony and Milwaukee Symphony, among others. An active chamber musician, Mr. McGill is a member of the Jacksonville, Florida based Ritz Chamber Players and has been a member of Chamber Music Society Two, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's program for emerging young artists. He has been featured on a PBS "Live From Lincoln Center" broadcast with the Chamber Music Society performing Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 as well as on an Angel Records CD playing Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 with pianist Awadagin Pratt and the St. Lawrence String Quartet. Mr. McGill has participated in the Music from Angel Fire, Santa Fe, Kingston, Cape Cod, Music@Menlo, Bay Chamber Concerts, Mainly Mozart, La Jolla and Marlboro music festivals. He has also performed on the Ravinia Festival's "Rising Star" series, the A&E Network Series "The Gifted Ones," and was special guest on the Mr. Roger's Neighborhood television program. Currently principal flutist of the San Diego Symphony, Mr. McGill has held the same position with The Florida Orchestra and the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra. He also served as acting principal flutist of the Pittsburgh Symphony during the 2005-06 season. In addition to his performance schedule, Mr. McGill is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Art of Élan, a chamber music organization in San Diego that aims to expose new audiences to classical music. Mr. McGill received his Bachelor's Degree in Flute Performance from The Curtis Institute of Music where he studied with Julius Baker and Jeffrey Khaner. He continued his studies with Mr. Baker at the Juilliard School, where he received a Masters of Music degree.

Taiwanese violist **Che-Yen Chen** has established himself as a prominent recitalist, chamber, and orchestral musician. Principal violist of the San Diego Symphony, he captured the first prize of the 2003 William Primrose Viola Competition and "Yuri Bashmet prize" of the 2003 Lionel Tertis Viola Competition and will be making his New York concerto debut with the New Amsterdam Symphony Orchestra as the winner of NASO Concerto Competition. He has performed throughout United States and abroad in venues such as the Alice Tully, Carnegie, Jordan, Merkin, Snape Malting Concert, Taiwan National Concert, Weill Recital, and Wigmore halls, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Library of Congress, and Kimmel Center. An advocate of

chamber music, Mr. Chen is a founding member of the Formosa Quartet, was a member of Chamber Music Society Two at Lincoln Center, a Jupiter Chamber Player, and took part in Musicians from Marlboro and Musician from Ravinia tours. His festival appearances include Chamber Music International, the Aldeburgh, Bath International Music, Kingston Chamber Music, Marlboro, Primrose, and Ravinia festivals, La Jolla SummerFest, International Viola Congress, Mainly Mozart, and Taiwan Connection. Mr. Chen began studying viola at the age of six. A four-time winner of the National Viola Competition in Taiwan, he came to the United States and studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and the Juilliard School under the guidance of Michael Tree, Joseph de Pasquale, and Paul Neubauer.

Concert artist and orchestral musician, **Julie Ann Smith** has established herself as one of the most stimulating young harpists today gaining international recognition for her charismatic performing style and diverse repertoire. Principal Harpist of the San Diego Symphony, Ms. Smith was the Silver medalist in the 2004 USA International Harp Competition and Bronze medalist in 2001. She made her National Symphony Orchestra debut in 2003 and has been honored in numerous competitions throughout the country. Her other honors include grand prizes in the Corpus Christi International Young Artist Competition and the Midland/Odesa National Young Artist Competition, both open to all instrumentalists. Captivating audiences worldwide with her dramatic presence and engaging style, Ms. Smith is active as a recitalist and soloist with orchestra. Her appearances include performances with the New World Symphony Orchestra in Miami, FL, the South Dakota Symphony, the Midland/Odesa Symphony Orchestra, the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra, the National Repertory Orchestra, and the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. In February 2010 she will be a featured soloist with the San Diego Symphony Orchestra as well. She has been the opening recitalist for the American Harp Society National Conference and the 2007 USA International Harp Competition. She continues to perform as a soloist on concert series across the country each season. Ms. Smith is equally experienced as a chamber and orchestral musician collaborating with renowned musicians across the country. A founding member of the San Diego-based Myriad Trio, she regularly appears in chamber concerts and has performed abroad in Italy and Japan. She has attended the Tanglewood Music Festival, the National Repertory Orchestra,

Spoletto USA Festival, and the Pacific Music Festival in Japan. During the 2006-07 season she was the Acting Principal Harpist of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra and prior to that held the position of Principal Harpist for the New World Symphony Orchestra under Michael Tilson Thomas as Music Director. She has held other principal positions throughout the country and continues to serve as substitute harpist with the St. Louis Symphony. Ms. Smith has experience in teaching both piano and harp students. She currently maintains a harp studio and teaches students of all ages. She has served on faculty at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp and supplements her performance schedule with master-classes across the county. Coinciding with her solo engagements, Ms. Smith frequently performs outreach activities going into the schools, retirement homes and communities to share about the harp. Ms. Smith has released her first album, *The Rhapsodic Harp*, which is available from her website, [www.harpjas.com](http://www.harpjas.com). Attending the Cleveland Institute of Music, she received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in harp performance where she studied with Yolanda Kondonassis. Her other primary teachers have included Patrice Lockhart and Alice Chalifoux. A native of Hastings, NE, Ms. Smith began studying the harp at age eleven.

**Charles Curtis** has been a professor in the Music Department of the University of California, San Diego, since Fall 2000. Previously he was principal cello of the Symphony Orchestra of the North German Radio in Hamburg, a faculty member at Princeton, the cellist of the Ridge String Quartet, and a sought-after chamber musician and soloist in the classical repertoire. He holds the Piatigorsky Prize of the New York Cello Society, and received prizes in the Naumburg, Geneva and Cassado international competitions. He has appeared as soloist with the San Francisco Symphony, the National Symphony, the Baltimore Symphony, the Symphony Orchestra of Berlin, the NDR Symphony, the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Orquestra de la Maggio Musicale in Florence, the Janacek Philharmonic, as well as orchestras in Brazil and Chile; under the baton of distinguished conductors such as André Previn, Herbert Blomstedt, Max Rudolf, John Eliot Gardiner and Christof Eschenbach. His chamber music associations have taken him to the Marlboro, Ravinia, Wolf Trap, La Jolla Summerfest and Victoria Festivals, among many others. He has recorded and performed widely with soprano Kathleen Battle and harpsichordist Anthony Newman, as well as with jazz legends such as Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and Brad Mehldau. A

leading interpreter of new and contemporary music, Curtis performs a unique repertoire of major solo works created expressly for him by La Monte Young, Alvin Lucier, Éliane Radigue and Alison Knowles, rarely-heard compositions by Terry Jennings and Richard Maxfield, and works by Cornelius Cardew, Christian Wolff, Morton Feldman and John Cage. Curtis' solo performances this past year have taken him to the Angelica Festival in Bologna, the Guggenheim in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Bordeaux, the Galerie Renos Xippas in Paris, the MaerzMusik Festival in Berlin, Dundee Contemporary Arts, as well as Chicago, Austin, Hamburg and Ferrara. This month he will perform at the Auditorium of the Musée du Louvre in Paris in Éliane Radigue's Naldjorlak trilogy, a three-hour work for solo cello, two basset horns, and cello with two basset horns, in its long-awaited Paris premiere.

First Prize winner of the Joanna Hodges Piano Competition and Zinetti International Competition, pianist **Reiko Uchida** has appeared as soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Santa Fe Symphony, the Greenwich Symphony, the Princeton Orchestra, among others. She made her New York solo debut in 2001 at Carnegie's Weill Hall under the auspices of the Abby Whiteside Foundation. She has performed solo and chamber music concerts throughout the world, including the United States, Japan, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Finland, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic, in venues including Avery Fisher Hall, Alice Tully Hall, the 92nd Street Y, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the Kennedy Center as well as the White House in Washington D.C., and Suntory Hall in Tokyo. Her festival appearances include Spoleto, Schleswig-Holstein, Tanglewood, Santa Fe, and Marlboro. As a chamber musician, she was one of the first pianists selected for Chamber Music Society Two, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's program for outstanding emerging artists. She has been the recital partner for Jennifer Koh, Thomas Meglitoranza, Jaime Laredo, and Sharon Robinson, with whom she performed the complete works of Beethoven for cello and piano. Her recording with Jennifer Koh, "String Poetic", was nominated for a Grammy Award. She has also collaborated with the Borromeo and Tokyo String Quartets. She is a member of the Laurel Trio and a member of the Moebius Ensemble, a group specializing in contemporary music and in residence at Columbia University. Reiko began studying the piano at the age of four with Dorothy Hwang at the R.D. Colburn School and made her orchestral debut with the Los Angeles Repertoire Orchestra at the age of nine.

As a youngster, she performed on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show. She holds an Artist Diploma from the Juilliard School, a Bachelor's degree from Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Claude Frank and Leon Fleisher, and a Master's degree from the Mannes College of Music, where her principal teacher was Edward Aldwell.



