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Jewel Box Series: Oct. 17, 2008

Jewel Box Staff

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entice

*The Arts at
Northeastern Illinois University*

2008 • 2009

Northeastern Illinois University, Jewel Box Series
Friday, October 17, 2008
Recital Hall

La Catrina Quartet

Daniel Vega Albela, violin
Blake Espy, violin
Jorge Martínez, viola
Alan Daowz, cello

Program

Quartet Op. 76, No. 2, "The Fifths" Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

I. Allegro
II. Andante o più tosto allegretto
III. Menuetto: Allegro ma non troppo
IV. Finale: Vivace assai

Cristanemi Giacomo Puccini
(1858-1924)

Quintet No. 4 for Guitar and Strings "Fandango" Luigi Boccherini
(1743-1805)

Allegro maestoso
Pastorale
Grave assai-Fandango

Intermission

Quartet in F Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Modéré-très doux
Assez vif-très rythmé
Très lent
Agité

Huapango (1941) Jose Pablo Moncayo
(1912-1958)

La Catrina Quartet



Founded in 2001, the La Catrina Quartet has a triple mission: to promote Mexican and Latin American art music, to perform the masterworks of the string quartet repertoire, and to work closely with living composers in order to promote the performance of new music. Its members have played as soloists with a variety of orchestras in Mexico and the United States and given recitals in Japan, England, the United States, and Mexico. Recent concert

engagements have taken the La Catrina Quartet to Washington DC, Baltimore, Chicago, Los Angeles, and many other cities.

In 2007, the quartet was featured as one of the “next generation of classical stars” in a showcase performance at Carnegie Hall for hundreds of concert promoters from the around the world, having been selected through the highly competitive and prestigious Young Performers Career Advancement Program.

One of the quartet’s most important achievements is the publication by Arsis Press of *Our Hands Were Tightly Clenched*, a work written for them by composer Zae Munn, which they premiered at Roosevelt University’s Chicago College of Performing Arts, September 2003. They have recorded works by Mexican composer Germán Romero, under the Quindecim label, and collaborated with several other artists, including a recording of Mozart’s clarinet quintet with renowned Cuban clarinetist Alfredo Valdés-Brito. They have received important awards and recognitions, such as Western Michigan University’s All-University Research and Creative Scholar Award. At Kent State University the Miami String Quartet invited them to perform Mendelssohn’s octet, to showcase the accomplishments of Kent State University’s string department.

The La Catrina Quartet performs regularly at San Miguel de Allende’s chamber music series, Pro Música. Last fall they were in residence for two weeks in Hickory, North Carolina, where they were featured in the Western Piedmont Symphony Orchestra’s Chamber Classics series as part of a one-year search for the new Quartet-in-Residence of the WPS. La Catrina Quartet won the three-year appointment, which commenced in the fall of 2007.

La Catrina Quartet appears by arrangement with Lisa Sapinkopf Artists,

www.chambermuse.com

Brian Torosian



Brian Torosian is an active soloist and chamber musician on guitar, lute, and mandolin. In addition to completing bachelor, masters and doctoral studies at Northwestern University in guitar performance and composition, Brian studied at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy where he received Diplomas of Merit and an honorary scholarship.

Besides performing on the standard six-string guitar, Brian also concertizes on replicas of a Baroque guitar, a Terz guitar, and a 10-string guitar, the latter two made for him by Richard Bruné after rare mid-19th-century Viennese instruments. Concert performances include appearances with Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Grant Park Symphony, Chicago Opera Theater, Ensemble Español, Concert Dance Inc., Waller and Maxwell Duo, His Majesties Clerkes, North Suburban Symphony, and Classical Symphony Orchestra. Dr. Torosian serves on the faculty at DePaul University and directs the guitar program of Northeastern Illinois University, where he recently received an Instructor Excellence Award. Torosian’s published editions include the first two of five volumes of J. K. Mertz’s complete prodigious *Opere-Revue*, Mertz’s chamber work for violin/flute, viola, and guitar *Divertissement*, Op. 32 (DGA Editions), an anthology of operatic concert works entitled *Selected Operatic Fantasies of Mertz* (Mel Bay Publications), as well as new editions of Mertz’s selected works to be published by Chanterelle Verlag, Heidelberg.

Tonight’s concert is being broadcast live over WFMT Radio 98.7 FM. Please turn off all audio devices including pagers and cellular phones. Additionally, flash photography and recording devices are prohibited. We appreciate your cooperation.

Subscribers:

Please join us after the concert in the Golden Eagle room for a reception with the performers.

Program Notes

Quartet Op. 76, No. 2, "The Fifths"

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Over a period of 40 years Haydn wrote some 83 string quartets, just as remarkable in quality as in quantity. Early biographers of Haydn suggest that his first string quartets were written in place of the usual string trio, when an extra viola player was present at Baron von Furnberg's country estate.

Haydn began writing the six Op.76 quartets in 1796 at the same time he was writing *The Creation*. Op.76 No.2 takes its nickname from the opening theme of repeated falling fifths, a motif that is passed around all the instruments. The opening stormy *Allegro* in the key of D minor, is followed by a charming *Andante* in D major. The opening theme in the first violin is accompanied by *pizzicato* strumming and provides the basis for a series of ornate variations. The third movement is an extraordinary canon for two voices, with the violins pitted against the viola and cello and is also known as the "witches' minuet." The last movement opens in the minor with the spirit of a Hungarian folk dance and concludes joyously in the major.

Cristanemi

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Giacomo Puccini himself acknowledged that his true talent lay "only in the theater," and so his non-operatic works are understandably few. But there are more of them than the average concertgoer might imagine. The string quartet was a medium for which Puccini had a certain undeniable affinity, and over the years he composed some five works or groups of pieces for it. All of these string quartet pieces have been virtually forgotten except for the elegy, *Crisantemi* ("Chrysanthemums"). Puccini wrote it in 1890 in a single night as a response to the death of the Duke of Savoy. *Crisantemi* is a single, dark-hued, continuous movement. Puccini found his two liquid melodic ideas worthy enough to re-use in the last act of his opera, *Manon Lescaut* in 1893. Rarely heard in its original string quartet form, *Crisantemi* frequented the music stands of the world's orchestras in an arrangement for string orchestra throughout the twentieth century.

-All Music Guide

Quintet No. 4 for Guitar and Strings "Fandango"

Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805)

Luigi Boccherini was born in Lucca, Italy and was a prolific composer. During his relatively short life he composed more than four hundred and fifty works, most of them instrumental pieces that can be divided into concerti and chamber music work such as duos, trios, string quartets and quintets with other instruments. Boccherini's most important years as a composer were those in the service of Don Luis, the brother of Charles III of Spain. It was during this time, the 1770's, that Boccherini composed his first quartets and became friends with the great painter Spanish Goya, with whom he had a lifetime friendship. A certain fusion between Spanish and Italian music is unmistakable in Boccherini's music. It can be heard in the "Fandango" Quintet (No. 4 in D major - G. 448), which Boccherini pieced together from two of his earlier cello quintets and added the very lively sound of castanets in the final movement. This composition is one of the most celebrated Boccherini's works. It has three movements: a solemn and modest 1st movement *Pastorale*, a much more carefree and cheerful *Allegro maestoso* 2nd movement, and a short *Grave assai* that leads into the "Fandango" movement.

Quartet in F

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

French, of paternal Swiss and maternal Basque descent, Ravel combined skill in orchestration with meticulous technical command of harmonic resources, writing in an attractive musical idiom that was entirely his own, despite contemporary comparisons with Debussy, a composer his senior by some twenty years. Dedicated to his teacher Gabriel Fauré, Ravel's String Quartet was premiered in Paris in 1904. It became one of the pinnacles of chamber music literature. The quartet starts very unassumingly, producing the mellifluously sweet main theme from the start. It contrasts with a more delicate Spanish-Arabian melody in the development, and goes back with more yearning in a version of the original theme to complete the first movement. The catchy *Scherzo* is surely the Quartet's most innovative moment. Here the entire quartet plays *pizzicato* from the start to form a cool syncopated motif, much like a percussion ensemble. The following slow movement is almost like an attempt at depicting nightfall with its nocturnal atmosphere and growing lethargy. The listener is violently awakened by the hurricane of the concluding movement. Interspersed with lyric themes from the first movement, the driving *tremolo* passages are dangerous, flowing underneath like lava threatening to boil out of a volcano. Ravel's interest in instrumental virtuosity is clearly exhibited here, pushing the performers to the limit by sustaining the drama and concluding with a blazing finale.

Huapango (1941)

Jose Pablo Moncayo (1912-1958)

Jose Pablo Moncayo was born in Guadalajara, Mexico. He entered the Mexico City Conservatory where he studied piano, as well as composition with Carlos Chávez. He also studied with and became friends with Aaron Copland. One of Moncayo's first professional jobs was as a percussionist with the Orquesta Sinfónica Mexicana, of which he became the conductor from 1949-1954. He also played in jazz orchestras. As a member of a set of composers nicknamed the "Group of Four," Moncayo, along with Galindo, Contreras and Ayala, wrote music that reflected the melodies, rhythms, and harmonies of Mexican folk music.

Aside from the *Huapango*, Moncayo's output includes many other pieces of a high quality, notwithstanding their lesser fame. Among these are his opera *La Mulata de Córdoba*; *Muros Verdes* for solo piano; *Amatzinac* for flute and string quartet; a Symphony; a Sinfonietta; the orchestral piece *Bosques*; the ballet *Tierra de Temporal*; and *Homenaje a Cervantes* for two oboes and string orchestra.

The authentic *Huapango* is a lively Mexican dance of Spanish origin that is especially popular in the area along the Gulf of Mexico. Performed by singers and instrumental ensembles ranging from a duo of guitars to a full mariachi band, it is characterized by a complex rhythmic structure mixing duple and triple meters which reflect the intricate steps of the dance. The *Huapango* is danced by men and women as couples. The men sing and the women do not. Moncayo's *Huapango*, originally written for orchestra, incorporates the music of three Mexican folk dances: *El Siquisiri*, *El Balaju*, and *El Gavilan*. It has become so popular that it is called "Mexico's Second National Anthem."

Upcoming Events

Thursday, October 23 at 7:30 p.m.

The NEIU Varsity Big Band with trombonist **Luis Bonilla**
Auditorium - Admission Free

Friday, November 21 at 8:00 pm.

The Jewel Box Series presents pianist **Vanessa Perez**
Recital Hall - Tickets \$10-\$25

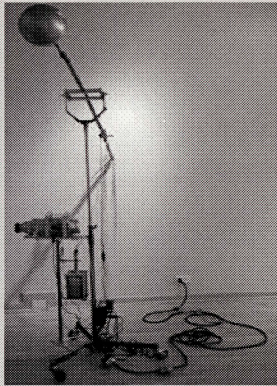
Friday, December 19, 2008 at 8:00 p.m.

The Jewel Box Series presents **The Rose Ensemble**
Recital Hall - Tickets \$10-\$25

Saturday, December 20, 2008 at 8:00 p.m.

Spanish Dance Theater **Ensemble Español**
Auditorium - Tickets \$10-\$25

Coming Soon in the Fine Arts Center Gallery:



Mark Porter: *Nurture/Alter*
Anthropomorphic kinetic sculpture

September 22 - October 17

Closing Reception: Friday, October 17, 6-9 p.m.

FINE ARTS CENTER GALLERY

www.neiu.edu-art/gal.html

h-weber@neiu.edu

For more information on the Fine Arts Center Gallery call
Heather Weber, gallery coordinator, at 773-442-4944



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