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Cello, Clarinet and Piano Pass Around the Spotlight

By Allan Kozinn, December 20, 2009

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The pianist Alon Goldstein, the cellist Amit Peled and the clarinetist Alexander Fiterstein all have busy careers as soloists, but they have been touring together lately. On Saturday evening they gave a concert as the Goldstein-Peled-Fiterstein Trio. The program, part of the Peoples’ Symphony Concerts at Washington Irving High School, was arranged to put each player in the spotlight with a cello sonata and solo piano works at the center and clarinet trios to begin and end. And satisfying as all the performances were, it was as a trio that these musicians made their deepest impression. They began with [Beethoven](#)’s youthful Trio in B flat (Op. 11), a cheerful, energetic work that thrives on the interplay among the instrumental lines and demands balances that sound free-spirited but are actually carefully considered. **That balance was established quickly in the work’s opening bars, in which Mr. Fiterstein’s energetic phrasing and sweet, bright clarinet tone were offset by Mr. Peled’s dark-hued cello sound and the crisp clarity of Mr. Goldstein’s piano lines.**

Mr. Peled rendered the lyrical theme that begins the Adagio with a dreaminess that Mr. Fiterstein and Mr. Goldstein matched as Beethoven’s even-handed scoring moved the melody among them. And they gave a vital account of the playful set of variations that end the work.

The Brahms Trio in A minor (Op. 114), which closed the program, is a more sober, settled work, written nearly a century after the Beethoven, toward the end of Brahms’s life. It is an autumnal score but does not always sound it. Though the opening bars are given to a wistful cello line, and the inner Adagio and Andantino grazioso convey a sense of backward-glancing melancholy, Brahms summons considerable passion and power in the outer movements.

The ensemble recalibrated its sound with the flexibility necessary to touch on these conflicting emotions and played with the kind of spotless technique that keeps the attention focused on the score rather than the vagaries of the performance.

Goldstein-Peled-Fiterstein Trio

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Between the trios Mr. Peled and Mr. Goldstein collaborated on an acidic account of [Shostakovich](#)'s Cello Sonata (Op. 40), and **Mr. Goldstein offered colorful readings of [Schubert](#)'s appealing but slight Six German Dances (D. 820) and Ginastera's characterful "Danzas Argentinas" (Op. 2).**

Goldstein-Peled-Fiterstein Trio