

## Music roundup: Morris delightful at Four Arts; Han and trio shine at Flagler

*Written by Rex Hearn on 26 January 2014.*

<http://palmbeachartspaper.com/index.php/2343-music-roundup-morris-delightful-at-four-arts-han-and-trio-shine-at-flagler.html>



### Gloriosa Trio makes an impressive debut

A clear night sky Tuesday greeted audience members as they entered the Flagler Museum for the world premiere performance of the Gloriosa Trio.

The glittering stars in the firmament were echoed by the tastefully designed rhinestone decorations on Yoonie Han's lovely green evening gown. A distinguished pianist, Han, founder of the Trio, chose violinist Jennifer Carsillo and cellist Arnold Choi as partners. A full house delighted in this auspicious occasion with enthusiasm and warm applause: a new trio for our time.

Winner of numerous piano competition first prizes, Han tackled three of Franz Liszt's transcriptions of Schubert's famous songs. Liszt created a new style of piano playing, influencing many future composers and performers when he took to reworking operas, songs and even symphonies for the keyboard, opening up music to a whole new public and popularizing unknown works.

In the three songs Han played, Liszt was able to reproduce the vocal line in the midst of pianistic virtuosity. First came *Gute Nacht (Good Night)*. A disappointed lover leaves without saying goodbye to his love, at night, in the moonlight. Liszt places the song's melody in the pianist's left hand, which was displayed touchingly by Han, playing from memory. Now the famous Liszt treatment takes over, with embellishments beautifully done by Han with a touch like running water, pardon the simile. Next came *Der Müller und der Bach (The Miller and the Brook)*, a dialogue between the the miller and the brook.

It begins quietly with the tune picked out in the middle register. Softer embellishments begin, a change of key suggests the young man talking, and here, it is as if Han was actually "voicing" his speech in her delicate fingertips' touch. Now Liszt turns to *Wohin? (Where to?)* from Schubert's *Der Schöne Müllerin*, putting the tune in the right hand. Continuous arpeggios flow as the miller's apprentice follows the babbling brook on his journey, all of which is reflected in the music. A standing ovation greeted Han's interpretation, all the more impressive considering her tiny hand span, in carrying off the great Liszt's massive piano transcriptions so adeptly.



Enter Carsillo and Choi, to complete the Gloriosa Trio. First, they warmed up with Brahms' *Hungarian Dance No. 1* (in G minor). A very careful trio trepidatiously attempted this stirring, familiar and popular piece. Its rousing ending launched them with aplomb into their new milieu.

Joaquin Turina's Piano Trio No. 2 (in B minor, Op. 76) followed. A member of the loosely convened school of nationalist Spanish composers of the 20th century that also includes Albeniz, Granados and de Falla, Turina's trio has a romantic start, with compelling low cello notes reassuringly played by Choi. Intelligent music influenced by Cesar Franck, it is nonetheless vigorous and Spanish-sounding. Reflective passages from all three instruments build forcefully to a rhythmic Allegro.

The music captures the mysteries of the Alhambra with ghostly, skittering violin playing and hints of de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*. The third movement showed the trio at its best. The cello leads, piano and

violin debate, then the pianist has some ravishing chords. Almost waltz-like, there was more lovely playing from Han, including trills, delicate runs and the hint of a campanella somewhere off in the distance.



After intermission came Beethoven's *Archduke* Trio (in B-flat, Op. 97). Suffering from hearing loss, this is the only major piece of music he wrote in the year 1811. The work is nicknamed after one of his three annual income guarantors, Archduke Rudolph of Austria, which accounts for its noble opening. The scales here proved to be a challenge for Han, I thought. But Beethoven's expansive approach provided some bright memorable music nicely performed by the trio, ending triumphantly with a long extended piano run all the way up the keyboard.

Jig-like music opens the second movement, marked *Allegro*. Mysterious rumblings on the cello lead to a proud statement from the piano. A long exposition follows returning to a friendly talk between cello and piano, syncopated rhythms take over for a lovely ending.

The last two movements are smoothly joined by a coda. The piano starts, hymn-like, majestically. Violin and cello, in octaves, pick up the tune. Beethoven then writes a variation that increases with intensity. Han played sensitively here, not as heavy-handedly as in the *Turina*. Carsillo has a sweet violin solo, played with tenderness. Beethoven, getting more reverential, gives slow pointed solos to each player, beautifully handled by all three.

The joyous Rondo that ends the piece is fun and lighthearted. I felt the violin ought to have been stronger here. Beethoven labors the exposition as if wanting to hear it through his deafness before it ends. A fine *rallentando* brings the trio to a close, and an immediate standing ovation greeted the players of the newly formed *Gloriosa* Trio.

Han took a solo bow, and for an encore played an arrangement of a melody from Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

*Rex Hearn founded the Berkshire Opera Company and writes frequently for Palm Beach ArtsPaper.*