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News

For Release: March 2008

NEW CD OF POETIC TRIOS EXTENDS AN INSPIRED COLLABORATION

*Violist Richard Young and Oboist Alex Klein,
With Pianist Ricardo Castro, Perform Passionate
Late Romantic and 20th Century Works*

A new Cedille Records CD of works for oboe, viola, and piano is a happy consequence of the Vermeer Quartet's farewell recording of music by Britten and Bliss (Cedille CDR 90000 093), on which the revered quartet was joined, to great acclaim, by oboist Alex Klein.

Poetic Inspirations: Works for Oboe, Viola, & Piano (Cedille CDR 90000 102) reunites former Vermeer violist Richard Young and oboist Klein, with the addition of Brazilian pianist Ricardo Castro. Young was the Vermeer's violist from 1985 to 2007. Klein, former principal oboist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, currently performs as soloist and conductor. Castro, who is making his Cedille Records debut, won the 1993 Leeds International Piano Competition and went on to record eight CDs for BMG's Arte Nova Classics label and a disc with Maria João Pires for Deutsche Grammophon.

Poetic Inspirations offers August Klughardt's *Schilflieder* (*Songs of the Reeds*), Op. 28 (1872); Charles Martin Loeffler's *Two Rhapsodies for Oboe, Viola, and Piano* (1901); Felix White's *The Nymph's Complaint for the Death of her Fawn* (1921); Marco Aurélio Yano's *Modinha* (1984); and Paul Hindemith's *Trio for Viola, Heckelphone, and Piano*, Op. 47 (1928).

The Yano is a world-premiere recording.

“This recording project has revealed a number of unexpected treasures,” Young writes in the CD booklet. In addition to program notes and artist bios, the 20-page booklet includes texts of the poems that inspired the music.

Klughardt (1847-1902), a German composer who’s virtually unknown today, wrote his hauntingly beautiful *Schilflieder (Songs of the Reeds)* in a grand romantic spirit reminiscent of Franz Liszt, to whom it was dedicated. (The “reeds” refer to marsh grasses, not woodwind instruments.) A highlight of the work is the fifth movement, with its touchingly poignant “conversation” between the viola, representing a man mourning his lost lover, and the reassuring voice of the oboe, representing the consoling spirit of his beloved. Near the end, the oboe’s tender melody is seamlessly passed to the viola “as though the lovers’ salty tears are mingling one last time,” Young writes.

Of the five works on the CD, Loeffler’s *Two Rhapsodies* comes closest to occupying a place in today’s standard repertoire, Young says. Loeffler (1861-1935), a German-born American composer, based the *Rhapsodies* on evocative poems by Maurice Rollinat. The music is reminiscent of Fauré and Chausson. “The Pool” expresses a vivid and macabre fantasy world. “The Bagpipe” imitates the hauntingly expressive sounds of that instrument in a lush, Romantic setting. Young describes them as “colorful and dramatic tone pictures that capture the spirit of French Impressionism, but are also imbued with a wide-eyed New World freshness.”

It’s astonishingly difficult nowadays to find information about British composer Felix White (1884-1945), whose professional success and public recognition never matched his considerable talent and the quality of much of his music. However, White’s *The Nymph’s Complaint for the Death of her Fawn* won a Carnegie Award in 1922 and, subsequently, the praise of Ralph Vaughan Williams. Based on a psychologically complex poem by Andrew Marvel, the piece traces a dark and tragic story in broad strokes, rather than through links to

textual specifics. Young describes it as “colorful, evocative, and very skillfully composed.”

Yano’s *Modinha* takes its name from a traditional Brazilian melody. A native of Brazil born to Japanese parents, Yano’s brief life (1963-1991) was marked by severe physical disabilities and illness. *Modinha* was composed as a gift to oboist Klein when they were classmates at the Universidad Estadual Paulista in São Paulo, Brazil. “The influence of Japanese culture is not difficult to hear in his music,” Klein writes in the CD notes. Yano’s music first came to the attention of record buyers worldwide with the recorded premiere of his *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra* on Cedille Records, performed by Klein and the Czech National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Paul Freeman (Cedille CDR 90000 079).

The Trio for Viola, Heckelphone, and Piano, Op. 47, by Hindemith (1895-1963) sizzles with drama from beginning to end, packing a tremendous variety of ideas into a tight and efficient framework. It consists of two large parts, each divided into smaller sections. The First Part (*Erster Teil*) opens with a wild piano *Solo*, followed by a brooding *Arioso* for heckelphone and piano. (Like most oboists, Klein performs this piece on bass oboe, rather than on the bassoon-like heckelphone.) Lastly comes a *Duett* for viola and heckelphone with piano accompaniment.

The Second Part (*Zweiter Teil: Potpourri*) consists of four contrasting sections played without pause. The first two are both vigorously contrapuntal, but something quite interesting happens in the second, where additional layers of music contribute contrast and drama. “The effect,” Young writes, “is similar to what one hears in culminating choruses of Mozart operas,” when unique, sharply defined characters sing simultaneously from different parts of the stage.

Cedille Records (pronounced say-DEE) is dedicated to showcasing the most noteworthy classical artists in and from Chicago. The nonprofit label is an arm of The Chicago Classical Recording Foundation. For a free catalog and the locations of local retail outlets, contact Cedille

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Poetic Inspirations: Works for Oboe, Viola, & Piano
(Cedille Records CDR 90000 102)

August Klughardt: *Schilflieder* (Song of the Reeds), Op. 28 (19:35)
Charles Martin Loeffler: Two Rhapsodies for Oboe, Viola, and Piano (21:23)
Felix White: *The Nymph's Complaint for the Death of her Fawn* (8:08)
Marco Arélio Yano: *Modinha* (2:45)
Paul Hindemith: Trio for Viola, Heckelphone, and Piano, Op. 47 (14:44)

Alex Klein, oboe and bass oboe
Richard Young, viola
Ricardo Castro, piano