



## CAPUÇON-ANGELICH TRIO

*Sunday, January 31 at 7 p.m.*

*Monday, February 1 at 8 p.m.*



*Friends of  
Music at  
Dumbarton  
Oaks*

# CAPUÇON-ANGELICH TRIO

January 31 & February 1, 2010

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Renaud Capuçon, violin  
Gautier Capuçon, cello  
Nicholas Angelich, piano

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## TRIO IN G MAJOR, HOB. XV:25, “GYPSY”

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809)

*Andante* | *Poco adagio, cantabile* | *Rondo a l’Ongarese: Presto*

## TRIO NO. 3 IN C MINOR, OP. 101

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

*Allegro energico* | *Presto non assai* | *Andante grazioso* | *Allegro molto*

## INTERMISSION

## TRIO NO. 1 IN D MINOR, OP. 49

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

*Molto allegro e agitato* | *Andante con moto tranquillo* | *Scherzo: Leggiero e vivace* |  
*Finale: Allegro assai appassionato*

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**Franz Joseph Haydn’s** piano trios show an evolution from offhand, two-movement pieces that feature the piano to more solidly elaborated, three-movement works that display a wider range of modulation and that treat the instruments more equally. Among the late piano trios, this **Trio in G Major**, composed in 1791, is unusual because it lacks a sonata movement. It is an essay in creative repetition.

The first movement charmingly blends a rondo form with theme and variations. The slow, middle movement is in the far removed key of E major, a favorite device that Beethoven, Haydn’s young student at the time of this composition, was quick to emulate in his own second piano trio. The last movement is the famous *Rondo a l’Ongarese*, familiarly known to young pianists as the “Gypsy Rondo,” which is pervaded by a strong national dance idiom.

—Columbia Artists Management Inc.

**Johannes Brahms** wrote the **Trio in C minor, Op. 101**—his last for violin, cello, and piano—during the summer of 1886, which he spent at Hofstetten on Lake Thun in Switzerland. From the windows of his room, Brahms could look out over the lake to the immense glaciers of the Bernese Oberland, and some feel that the elemental power of that vista is present in the music he composed there. Certainly this work communicates tension from the start. For all its power, the Trio in C Minor is probably Brahms’s most

concise work: despite having four movements, it is one of the shortest of his twenty-four pieces of chamber music.

The opening of the *Allegro energico* explodes off the page, driving forward on a triplet rhythm that energizes much of the movement. The *Presto non assai*, also in C minor, is more restrained. Brahms mutes the strings and marks the beginning *semplice* (“simple”). The music skims along fluidly in the piano, and the strings echo. The middle section, with arpeggiated pizzicato chords riding above the staccato piano, is particularly effective.

Much has been made of the rhythmic complexity of the *Andante grazioso*. Brahms originally thought the movement should be set in the unusual meter 7/4, but later changed it to one measure of 3/4 followed by two measures of 2/4. The middle section, marked *quasi animato*, is equally intricate, switching between 9/8 and 6/8. Brahms alternates sonorities throughout this movement, the melodic line flowing back and forth between the piano and the combined strings.

The *Allegro molto* finale returns to the mood and C-minor tonality of the first movement. The subdued beginning quickly gives way to the same outbursts that marked the opening movement, and only in its final moments does Brahms relent and let the music break free to end in the tonic major. Rarely has C major sounded so fierce.

—Eric Bromberger

**Felix Mendelssohn** wrote his first piano trio—the exuberant **Trio in D minor**—in the summer of 1839, during a joyful holiday spent with his family in Frankfurt and the Rhineland. The work was completed on September 23, and was published the following year. A second Trio, in C minor, followed in 1845. Of these two splendid, mature piano trios, the D minor Trio caught on immediately, and is considered one of Mendelssohn’s greatest achievements. Mendelssohn’s friend and admirer, Robert Schumann, wrote of this work: “This is the master-trio of our time . . . an exceedingly fine composition which will gladden our grandchildren and great grandchildren for many years to come.” Schumann went on to say: “Mendelssohn is the Mozart of the 19th century; the most illuminating of musicians, who sees more clearly than others through the contradictions of our era and is the first to reconcile them.”

Although the three instruments share motivic materials in this work, the piano stands a bit apart from the strings. In the second movement, for example, the strings form a duo behind which the piano spreads a backdrop. Likewise, the fourth movement treats the piano as the star of the ensemble in its brilliant, concerto-like passages. This may be due to the virtuoso pianist Ferdinand Hiller, who asked the composer to “polish up” his part. Nevertheless, the writing flows effortlessly throughout, and no rough edges remain to mar the seamless expanse of melody. The capricious, airy *Scherzo* brings to mind the forest-world of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, alive with elfin frolic. This sparkling movement requires great agility from the performers, as the strings rush to overtake the piano that always seems to be puckishly scampering away. The final movement is more openly passionate, recalling the mood of the first movement. Yet, with Mendelssohn there is always a hint of reserve—a sense of classical propriety that exercises restraint on his emotional outpouring.

—Columbia Artists Management Inc.

Brought together by Martha Argerich, the **Capuçon-Angelich Trio**, one of the most promising ensembles in the world of chamber music today, features the French duo of violinist Renaud Capuçon and cellist Gautier Capuçon, considered internationally to be two of the world's most gifted young string players, along with the American-born, award-winning pianist Nicholas Angelich. In February 2008, the Capuçon-Angelich Trio received rave reviews for their first tour of North America, including debuts in San Francisco, New York, Québec, and Montréal. Their second tour of the United States in November of 2008 included performances of Haydn, Shostakovich, and Mendelssohn piano trios in Vancouver, Charlottesville, Washington, DC, and New York.

Named "Instrumentalist of the Year" for 2005 by the French Victoires de la Musique, **Renaud Capuçon** has taken his place among the top echelon of young violinists. He has performed with world-renowned orchestras such as the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Bayerische Rundfunk, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre de Paris, NHK Symphony, and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, with conductors Bychkov, Chung, Dudamel, Dutoit, Eschenbach, Fischer, and Robertson. His chamber music partners include Yuri Bashmet, Yefim Bronfman, Mikhail Pletnev, and Jean-Yves Thibaudet.

Award winning cellist **Gautier Capuçon** has taken the international music world by storm with his recital, orchestral, and chamber music performances around the globe since winning the Victoires de la Musique "New Talent of the Year" award in 2001. His collaborations include performances with Martha Argerich, Daniel Barenboim, Pierre Boulez, Myung-Whun Chung, Leonid Kavakos, Katia and Marielle Labèque, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Leonard Slatkin, and recently his first appearance with Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra for the Tchaikovsky Rococo Variations and Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante.

Pianist **Nicholas Angelich** has performed with the Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestre de Liège, Saint-Petersburg Symphony, and the Frankfurt Radio Orchestra. In May 2003, Mr. Angelich made his debut with the New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur at Lincoln Center. His chamber collaborations include critically acclaimed performances with Dmitri Sitkovetsky, Joshua Bell, Gérard Caussé, Alexander Kniazev, Jian Wang, Paul Meyer, and the Ysaÿe and Pražák Quartets. His engagements for the 2009–10 season include Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 5 with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Charles Dutoit, and his Philadelphia Orchestra debut performing Brahms's D minor Piano Concerto with conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

