

Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio at the Kennedy Center
“...robust, exuberant performances ...”

Trio triumphs at Terrace

By Joe Banno Thursday, January 19, 5:38 PM

The Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio delivered robust, exuberant performances of Beethoven’s “Ghost” Trio and Schubert’s B-flat Major Piano Trio at the Terrace Theater on Wednesday.

Violinist Mark Kaplan and cellist Clancy Newman made a fine team, twining and dovetailing their lines to eloquent effect, not least in Schubert’s expansively lyrical writing. Underpinning the strings was pianist Yael Weiss’s liquid tone and unfailingly wise phrasing, with particular effectiveness in the first movement of the Beethoven piece.

Between those two classic works, the ensemble performed a pair of relatively brief, exceptionally colorful contemporary scores: Jennifer Higdon’s 2003 Piano Trio and a 2010 piece by Clancy Newman titled “Juxt-Opposition.” The two works shared some striking elements — openhearted melodies, stretches of counterpointed string harmonics, passages that worked themselves up into a frenzy of barely-contained chaos — but which ultimately spoke their own distinctive languages.

Higdon, in this piece, explored the relationship of color to sound, crafting music of quiet warmth and, at times, a wide-eyed ecstasy in the “Pale Yellow” first movement of this two-movement work. The second movement, “Fiery Red,” was a perpetual-motion machine that suggested the bursting energy of overheated sub-atomic particles.

Newman’s piece built from a lush, chorale-like treatment of its folk-melodic material into an increasingly violent furor on the strings — punctuated by percussive eruptions from the keyboard — before starting to wittily jump-cut back and forth between well-mannered chorale and haywire explosiveness.

Both works received passionate advocacy from the Trio.



The Weiss-Kaplan-Newman Trio, from left, Clancy Newman, Mark Kaplan and Yael Weiss, delivered robust, exuberant performances of Beethoven’s “Ghost” Trio and Schubert’s B-flat Major Piano Trio at the Terrace Theater on Wednesday.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/trio-triumphs-at-terrace/2012/01/19/gfQAY2jpBQ_story.html