



CONCERT REVIEW: Years of experience shine through in performance

By Gayle Williams
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Hearing the Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio now, after 35 years of accolades and recognition as a world-class chamber ensemble, their technical fluency and supreme musicality should be no surprise.

The famed trio, consisting of pianist Joseph Kalichstein, violinist Jaime Laredo and cellist Sharon Robinson, appeared in this week's Sarasota Concert Association concert and was **greeted with awe and adulation by the full house at the Van Wezel.**

They began with an early Beethoven Piano Trio No. 4 in B-flat major, Op. 11. **Light, crisp and Haydnesque in its pure classicism, the merits of this youthful music were amplified by the collaborative maturity of Kalichstein, Laredo and Robinson. They allowed for bubbling energy in precise scale work and an elasticity of phrasing adding depth. The results were delightful.**

Mendelssohn's Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor, Op. 66 was in contrast a far more mature example of this composer's output. The first movement, a darkly etched Allegro energico e fuoco, revealed Mendelssohn at his moodiest. **Punctuated by some stunning virtuosic display by Kalichstein, the music is adventurous harmonically, with the tension of chromaticism fueling the fire.**

Throughout the four movements, one couldn't help but be impressed by both the never-ceasing passion and athleticism of these three seasoned musicians. There were no holds barred and they gave it their considerable all. Emotionally in the slower passages and even in the daring of the madly skittering Scherzo, so characteristic of Mendelssohn, we must cheer for their sacrifices.

It's the perfect season to draw the comparison with Olympic athletes who amaze with their strength and beauty of execution, but like any gold medalist, the perfect performance is rare. The



Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio /
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landing is a tad flat or in the speed of the movement, beauty of tone flags. Frankly, that is the human drama of it all which we crave.

With the addition of the truly young and athletic-looking violist Nokuthula Ngwenyama, the trio became a quartet ready for Dvorak's Piano Quartet No. 2 in E-flat minor, Op. 87. **This music comes alive with rich melodies, never lacking for Dvorak, and the uniquely colorful personalities of each instrument which seem to interact like characters on the stage. Delicate moments, precarious for precise pitch, alternate with lyric conversations leaving room for syncopated asides and enthusiastic outbursts.** Although with a careful ear, we can tell that Ngwenyama does not yet breathe as one with the original trio, **the ensemble delivered an exceptional performance. Gold medals for the whole team!**

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Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio, Joseph Kalichstein, piano; Jaime Laredo, violin; Sharon Robinson, cello. Sarasota Concert Association. Reviewed Jan. 27 at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall.