

**AHN TRIO**  
Lucia Ahn, Piano  
Angella Ahn, Violin  
Maria Ahn, Cello

**Program 2, Mexico, August 2008**

Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano  
Adagio non-troppo – Allegro vivace  
Tempo di marcia  
Largo – Allegro vivo e molto ritmico

Leonard Bernstein  
[1918-1992]

danceband\*  
Slip Jig  
Sarabande  
Backsteps  
Waltz  
Disco Boogie

Kenji Bunch  
[b.1973]

**Intermission**

Magic Hour

Kenji Bunch

Heart Asks Pleasure First\*\*

Michael Nyman  
[b. 1944, England]

Riders on the Storm

Doors

Song on the Land

Ronn Yedidia  
[b.1960]

Mr. Twitty's Chair

Katrina Wreede  
[b.1960]

\*Commissioned by Wolf Trap Foundation of the Performing Arts

\*\* Written/transcribed for Ahn Trio

\*Program Subject to Change\*

No photos allowed during program

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**Leonard Bernstein's - Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano:** In 1937, Leonard Bernstein was in his third year at Harvard, studying piano with Heinrich Gebhard and composition under Walter Piston. One of his student contemporaries, Mildred Spiegel, recalled that in September 1936 Bernstein was in Alfred, Maine. "He borrowed the farmer's truck and drove to the Emerson House at York harbor, where I was playing with my trio. I was delightfully surprised." Bernstein's visit inspired his *Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano*, which he completed in 1937, aged nineteen.

**Kenji Bunch - Program Notes:** Commissioned by The Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. "*danceband*" is a celebration of the inextricable link between music and dance. For centuries, this symbiosis has infused concert music with the robust flavors of folk dances, the elegance of the court, the sensuality of an evening soiree, and much more. This suite of five dances (each about five minutes in length) travels in time between the Old and New Worlds to explore just a few of these many moments. I was especially interested in dances that were in some way idiomatic for the instruments of the piano trio.

"*Slip Jig*" focuses on the highly syncopated 9/8-feel characteristic of that Irish folk dance, with elusive, unpredictably winding melodic lines over an angular, syncopated backup.

The distinctive rhythm of the "*Sarabande*" is an emphasis on the second of three beats. This dance, which was actually brought back to Europe from Central America in the 1600's, often has a slow, somber, almost mournful quality. After a Baroque inspired opening, this Sarabande wanders into more contemporary, increasingly passionate territory before inevitably retreating to a final statement in the cello with plucked piano strings suggesting a harpsichord.

"*Backstep*" refers to a step in lively 2/4 Appalachian folk dances that is often reflected in the accompanying music by an extra, irregular beat, giving musical backsteps a "crooked" feel. To simulate the distinctive sound of this genre, the strings almost constantly drone an open A while playing their melodies, and the piano strings are muted with a towel to recall an open-backed banjo.

It's been suggested that the brutality of the 20th century killed the "*Waltz*", or at least reduced it to a ghostly half-life of sentimental, bittersweet memories— an Old World souvenir from a more innocent, elegant time. With this notion in mind, I wrote a waltz that drifts in and out of the angst-ridden present, at times indulging in nostalgic reverie with varying degrees of conviction.

"*Disco Boogie*" pays homage to the much-maligned music of the disco era. Ironically derided as synthetic, artificial drivel, this music was some of the last popular music to make full-fledged use of acoustic, orchestral instruments, with soaring string melodies over the insistent stride beat. I simply couldn't resist!

*Danceband* was written for and dedicated to The Ahn Trio through a commission from The Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts. It's a work that represents my long, fruitful, and ongoing collaboration with my dear friends the Ahns, who have been one of the most significant driving forces for my musical creativity throughout my career.

**Michael Nyman** (b: 1944, England) Michael Nyman is an English composer of minimalist music, pianist, librettist and musicologist, perhaps best known for the many scores he wrote during his lengthy collaboration with the filmmaker Peter Greenaway. Nyman studied music composition at the Royal Academy of Music in London. In 1969, he provided the libretto for Harrison Birtwistle's opera, *Down by the Greenwood Side* and directed the short film *Love Love Love* before settling into music criticism, where he is generally acknowledged to have been the first to apply the term "minimalism" to music (in a 1968 article in *The Spectator* magazine about the English composer Cornelius Cardew). Nyman's popularity increased significantly after he wrote the score to Jane Campion's award winning 1993 film *The Piano*. The album became a classical music best-seller. He rewrote "Heart Asks Pleasure First" from *The Piano* for the Ahn Trio.

**Ronn Yedidia** (b: 1960, Israel) **Program Notes:** "Song on the Land" was composed within one day in 1996 for Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's bassoonist Uzi Shalev who has been a long-time colleague of Ronn's and the lyricist for many of his songs. Ronn absorbed much of his love for his motherland Israel from touring the country as a child-prodigy pianist. Those tours acquainted him with the gorgeous rural places of the land - which always inspired the music of Israeli composers and songwriters. The strong imprint of battle and war on those lands is also apparent in the sound of Israeli music - reflecting sadness, poise and beauty. It was transcribed for the Ahn Trio in December 2004. He lives in New Jersey with his wife and children.

**Katrina Wreede** - (b: 1960) Katrina Wreede writes, "Mr. Twitty's Chair" is a 18-bar blues number named for a crotchety old hermit who lived in a shack in the Santa Cruz mountains for 40 years. After living in his place for several years myself, I came back to civilization with his chair, rain gauge and his attitude. This piece is dedicated to sociopaths everywhere." We (Ahn) heard the piece for the first time from a recording of the Turtle Island String Quartet. We loved the song immediately and wanted to program it for our concerts. It is arranged by Kenji Bunch for us.