



Beethoven, Stravinsky, Debussy and Weber at the USCB Festival Series

There are leaders and followers, pace setters and pack members. The Sunday, February 8, Chamber Music Concert features trail blazing music written at a crucial point in each composer's career.

Beethoven's first published work was *Piano Trio, Opus 1*, his coming out party as a composer on the big stage—Vienna. Within this three-work set, “Trio No. 3 in c minor” was unusual for a composition meant to appeal to a large audience. It was not pleasant, salon-listening music but immediately recognizable as the work of a fiery, rule-breaking personality.

Igor Stravinsky had already shocked the world by the time he wrote *L'histoire du*



Soldat (The Soldier's Tale). World War I had turned him in a more inward direction, searching for order and control, and this piece led him to begin an entirely new period of composition, Neo-Classic. Originally written for seven players as part of a multimedia show, the trio version—arranged by Stravinsky—places formidable demands on the performers. Although exhibiting classical balance and proportion, the tight rhythm, crisp articulation, and jagged phrases stamp the language as 20th century.

Ground-breaker Claude Debussy wrote what he wanted and how he wanted it from his earliest days. The solo piano prelude “Feux d'artifice” (Fireworks) features huge rainbows of sound depicting Bastille Day fireworks exploding overhead. *Sonata for Violin and Piano* was Debussy's last major composition, and it displays his acute ear for sound color and degrees of shading. Richly articulated, it is wrapped in a gossamer veil.

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