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Chamber music group sets concert series in Farmington Hills

By Sharon Dargay
Staff Writer

A year after taking on a new name and mission, Chamber Soloists of Detroit has found a new home.

The organization will kick off its three-concert series Oct. 13 at First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, 26165 Farmington Road, at 11 Mile, Farmington Hills.

"Last year we were at the Birmingham Unitarian Church and we've moved to Farmington primarily for logistical reasons," said Pauline Martin, artistic director since 1999. "We started looking around and we found this space that we thought was ideal. They have a stage. You need people to be able to see your artists. We'll see how the audiences responds this season. I hope they'll enjoy it."

Audiences liked what they heard last season when the former Pro-Mozart Society of Greater Detroit took on a new name — Chamber Soloists — that was more reflective of its evolving mission.

"The reaction has been wonderful. I think we needed the name change because we weren't primarily performing Mozart. We always featured Mozart but it wasn't what our mission was all about," Martin said. "I think it made it more appealing and interesting for the audience. It was a risk to make that change, but I was delighted when things went well last year."

Martin has focused on promoting Detroit-area talent, especially young musicians who got their start in the area or who are based in Michigan. One concert last year featured a "talk back" session that enabled audience members to ask musicians about their lives. Martin has expanded the program to all three subscription concerts this year.

"It was something you wouldn't read in a biography. They asked even simple things, like 'Do you like practicing?' We didn't just focus on the music, we focused on the artist and what life as a musician is like."

Experiencing the music

The organization also continues to promote chamber music concerts as an intimate listening experience — the way the composers intended their works to be heard, Martin said.

"Ours is exactly how it would have been in that period of time," Martin said. "There is something about the chamber music experience, that you're not an observer. You really are part of the experience if it's done in the right setting and in the right way."

She said organization's first concert of the season with violinist Aaron Berofsky, Kathryn Votapek on viola, Una O'Riordan on cello and herself on piano, is a perfect introduction to chamber music. The program will include music by Mozart, Brahms and Martinu. Martin also will perform at the two other concerts, which are set for March and April 2014.

"I'm very fortunate, because I have some incredible colleagues to work with."

In addition to its three-concert subscription series, Chamber Soloists of Detroit also performs throughout southeastern Michigan. Concerts are scheduled Nov. 9 in Midland, Dec. 5 in Grosse Pointe Shores, March 8, 2014 in Ann Arbor and April 2, 2014 in Dearborn. For more information visit chambersoloistsdetroit.org.

Additional Facts

Chamber Soloists of Detroit

- Aaron Berofsky and Friends, 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 13, will include Aaron Berofsky, internationally acclaimed violinist; Kathryn Votapek, University of Michigan faculty violist; Una O'Riordan, Detroit Symphony Orchestra cellist; and Pauline Martin, pianist and Chamber Soloists artistic director, playing "Mozart Piano Quartet in E-flat, K, 493," "Brahms Piano Quartet in c minor, Opus 60" and "Martinu Madrigals for Violin and Viola, H. 313"
 - Violinist Itamar Zorman and pianist Paulin Martin perform, 3 p.m. Sunday, March 9, 2014. The program will include "Brahms Sonata No. 3 in d minor" and "Gernsheim Sonata No. 4"
 - Violinist Amy Schwartz Moretti, cellist Edward Arron, and pianist Pauline Martin perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 4, 2014. The program will include "Beethoven Trio, Opus 1, No. 1 in E-flat," "Brahms Trio in B Major, opus 8," and Paul Schoenfeld's "Cafe Music"
- Concerts are held at First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, 26165 Farmington Road, at 11 Mile, Farmington Hills. Tickets are \$30 per concert or \$75 for three concerts. Students pay \$10 per ticket.
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