

Preview

Tuesday Musical to present A Far Cry with Matt Haimovitz on March 11

by Mike Telin



Cellist Matt Haimovitz will be the featured soloist with the Boston-based chamber orchestra, A Far Cry, on the Tuesday Musical Series at E.J. Thomas Hall in Akron on March 11 at 7:30 pm.

Haimovitz, who made his debut at the age of 13 with Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic, and his first recording four years later with James Levine and the Chicago Symphony, first appeared on the Tuesday Musical series in 1991. A Far Cry, a self-conducted ensemble, was founded in 2007 by "The Criers," a collective of 17 young professional musicians who intended to develop an innovative, rotating leadership both on and off stage.

The Akron concert will include two works by Luigi Boccherini, his *Quintet in C*, subtitled "Night Music on the Streets of Madrid," and his *Cello Concerto in C*. Haimovitz will also be featured in the first performance of Luna Pearl Woolf's arrangement of Bloch's *Prayer* from *Jewish Life*, and the orchestra will complete the program with Elgar's *Introduction and Allegro* and Janáček's *Idyll*.

Haimovitz and A Far Cry have collaborated only once before, but the cellist told us in a telephone conversation from his home in Montreal that they really hit it off. "I love playing with them. They're an energetic young group that's interested in exploring different kinds of thematic programming. We're just starting to get to know each other so we'll see where it goes in the future, but for now I'm just looking forward to playing with them again."

Of all the dozen cello concertos Boccherini wrote for himself, why did Haimovitz choose the C Major? "First, A Far Cry is a string orchestra so there are no winds and there are only a couple of his concertos that can work for stings alone. So that's one reason, and I just played it last summer on a tour in Italy with The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra, a youth orchestra I used to play in when I was eight and nine years old. They made a documentary of the tour and they just premiered a film about it by Ty Kim, *Playing Well With Others*. I hear it was received really well and now it's circulating at film festivals."

Haimovitz admits that Boccherini's music sometimes gets a bad rap, but he loves it. "First of all, as a cellist his writing is so virtuosic and so idiomatic for the instrument. As technically demanding as it is, you know that he was able fit it under his hand. And there's such a lovely sense of drama and harmonic invention in the music. Things repeat, but they do that because that was the sensibility of the time. He's trying to get his audience to imagine the picture of his music, so he's framing it that way. Back in those days they thought you couldn't feel the music unless you could see it. So in repeating it he's ingraining it in your mind. And he must have been a pretty good cellist if he could play what he wrote!"

Bloch's *Prayer* has been arranged by Luna Pearl Woolf and that version will be receiving its premiere on Tuesday. "We've had this for a while and I've never done it so I was happy to bring it out for this great occasion. It's a complete contrast to Boccherini but again something close to my own heart. And with everything going on in the world right now, it's nice to take a little time to meditate."

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