

Dana Piano Trio to celebrate school's 150th with Carnegie Hall recital

by Daniel Hathaway



It's not every day that a recently-formed ensemble gets to put a Carnegie Hall debut on its schedule, but Youngstown State University's Dana Piano Trio — violinist Joseph Kromholz, cellist Kivie Cahn-Lipman, and pianist Cicilia Yudha — is doing just that on Friday, March 22.

As the old saw goes, the way you usually get to Carnegie Hall is to practice, practice, and practice, but this gig essentially fell into the Trio's lap. As Yudha told us in a telephone conversation, "Our Dean just said that as part of the Dana School of Music's

150th anniversary celebrations and the Pippino Concert Series, 'I'd like to send you to New York.' How about that!"

Although Yudha and Kromholz had joined the Dana faculty earlier, Cahn-Lipman only arrived in 2017, and the Trio was formed soon afterward. "Since the three of us are in residence, we're able to do a bunch of outreach and recruitment activities with high school students, so that's worked out very nicely."

By way of preparation for their New York debut, the Trio will be trying out its Weill Recital Hall program in three upcoming concerts: on Wednesday, February 20 at 12:15 pm at Youngstown's Butler Institute of American Art, on Sunday, February 24 at 6:00 pm at the Steinway Piano Gallery in Boston Heights, and on Tuesday, March 5 at 6:30 pm on the Tuesdays at Tudor Series at Gilmour Academy in Gates Mills (see our [Concert Listings](#) for details).

The programs include Beethoven's "Archduke" Trio and Shostakovich's Second Piano Trio. How did the players decide on this repertoire? "We made our individual wish lists two summers ago, then cross-listed them. It turned out that the 'Archduke' was on all of our bucket lists, and it's such a massive piece, there's not a lot of room left to play with in selecting a companion work," Yudha said.

How long does it take for a new ensemble to gel? "I think that would be a more appropriate question to be answered by the Juilliard or the Emerson Quartet, who have been together for a long time. We've been getting good feedback, but it's tough because almost every time we rehearse or perform, the piano and the acoustics are different. It's unlike a string quartet who can rehearse with their own instruments everywhere and all the time, so we're constantly learning how to play with each other," Yudha said.

"We're all good chamber musicians to begin with, so it's not a fresh-out-of-college kind of experience. I feel like in another five years we'll still be learning a lot from each other. But I love working with these two — they're unbelievable players and great people, too, very sweet and loving."

Yudha said that playing the same pieces in different spaces with different pianos brings the repertoire to a different level of understanding. "We learn so much from each performance." It also forces the ensemble to adapt quickly to new venues — good experience for a group taking a program on the road. "We'll only have two hours in Weill Hall that afternoon to warm up and sound check."

The Dana Trio can count on a built-in set of groupies in the audience on March 22 — YSU's Office of Alumni Engagement and the Cliffe College of Creative Arts & Communication are sponsoring a bus trip to New York that includes a tour of the Steinway factory as well as the Weill Hall performance.

Published on ClevelandClassical.com February 19, 2019.

Click here for a printable copy of this article

[Return to the Front Page.](#)