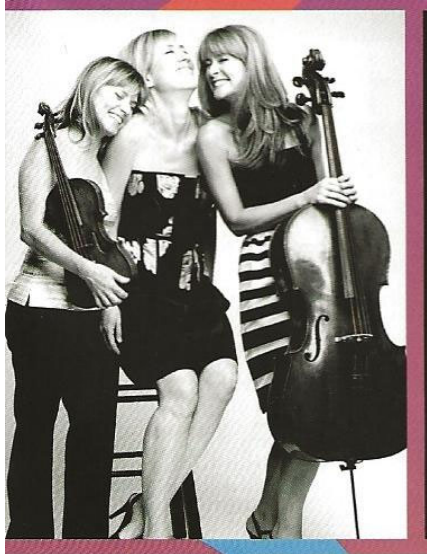


## National Philharmonic Orchestra Resumes 2019/20 season.

After a near-death experience, the National Philharmonic resurrected its 2019/20 season at the Music Center at Strathmore, in Maryland, on Sept. 21 and 22. This was an all-Beethoven program.



The first half was the Triple Concerto, Op. 56, the soloists being the all-woman Eroica Trio: Erika Nickrenz, piano; Sara Parkins, violin; and Sara Sant'Ambrogio, cello. It is common wisdom that the solo parts of this work are best performed by a chamber ensemble rather than an ad-hoc collection of prima-donna soloists, and that was certainly borne out by this performance. The three played with great rapport, since they have been playing together since their teen-age years. One effect that struck me: in live performance, the leading solo instrument is the cello. This is often lost in recordings, where the piano stands out and the cello (and violin) tend to be subsumed in the orchestral sounds. The cello part is indeed challenging, and was performed with great virtuosity by Ms. Sant'Ambrogio.

The second half of the concert was, appropriately, Symphony No. 3, Eroica, expertly conducted by Maestro Piotr Gajewski sans score and brilliantly performed by the orchestra. This work was the first symphonic piece I heard in live performance as a young child, and it remains a formative memory in my music education.

We are indeed fortunate that the National Philharmonic continues as a cultural treasure of the National Capital Area. Its founding and ongoing life is Piotr Gajewski's crowning achievement.