

# *PAAA Chopin Concert*

*Embassy of the Republic of Poland*

*March 8, 2015*



The Borowsky siblings: Elizabeth on piano, Frances on cello and Emmanuel on violin, played works by various composers for trio, duos and solo piano. They opened with Mozart's Piano Trio in B-flat major, K. 502 – a very tuneful piece with flashes of virtuosic brilliance. Next were two works for violin and piano: Chopin's posthumous Nocturne in C-sharp minor, in an arrangement by violinist Nathan Milstein, and Henryk Wieniawski's Grand Caprice Fantastique Op. 1, his first published

composition, written at the tender age of 12! It exhibits not only virtuosity but great musical maturity, and is an apt precursor to a long and brilliant musical career.

The centerpiece of the program was Chopin's solo Piano Sonata in B Minor, Op. 58. It is a pillar of the Romantic piano repertoire, a large-scale virtuosic work in four movements, with its crowning moment in the bravura finale. Musicologist Herbert Weinstock wrote about it in 1949: "Its master must be not so much a virtuoso as a giant." And Elizabeth was certainly that. She played with dazzling technique, yet always with clean definition that allowed the emotional depths of the music to shine through.

The final work was Chopin's Introduction and Polonaise for Cello and Piano, Op. 3. By Chopin's own admission, this is not profound music, but its lively polonaise rhythms are dear to Polish hearts. Frances and Elizabeth gave a stirring performance.

As an encore, the Borowskys played a trio of their own composition entitled Postcards from Dilsberg, a collection of five musical pieces portraying the history, legends and people of Dilsberg, Germany. It was composed in 2008 during their residency at the historic Dilsberg Castle. Although containing somber allusions to war (the theme of "Dies Irae" is heard in one of the sections), for the most part it resounds with rollicking good fun, complete with glissandos on the piano.

Afterwards, many in the audience remarked on the interaction between the musicians, by means of glances, gestures and other body language. This is a particular characteristic of chamber music, quite different from solo or orchestral performances. It shows that the performers were totally enjoying themselves, which serves to heighten the enjoyment for the audience.

We are grateful to the Embassy and the Consular Division for making the venue available.