

BOSTON TRIO DAZZLES IN WESTPORT

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There was no dancing in the aisles at Sunday's Boston Trio recital, a presentation of the Concerts at the Point Series at the Westport Point United Methodist Church. But there should have been.

The program included Schubert's E-Flat "Notturmo," Tchaikovsky's A-minor Trio, and, the reason for the dancing mood, Astor Piazzolla's tango-infused "Four Seasons" (the trio played only three seasons, skipping summer, appropriately on this frosty afternoon).

The Boston Trio — Irina Muresanu, violin, Allison Eldredge, cello, and Heng-Jin Park, piano — was formed in 1997, and has steadily made a name for themselves with effusive playing and adventurous repertory. This afternoon's performance was no different.

The Schubert "Notturmo" has only one movement, but three distinct sections, the first and the last nearly identical, slow and melodic, and the middle section quite lively, which was played with vigor and seemingly great appreciation of the score.

The trio took the first and last sections at a radically slow pace, which amplified the electricity of the middle section. Schubert, of course known for his more than 600 songs (lieder), easily transferred that vocal genius to his chamber works, and the "Notturmo" shows it.

So, let's dance. The Argentinean Astor Piazzolla helped change the face of classical music, much in the way that compatriot and current Massachusetts resident Osvaldo Golijov is doing now. Piazzolla began as a cabaret performer on the bandoneon (a smaller, more melodic version of the accordion) in his native country, but then later studied in France with the most famous of composer mentors, known in some circles as the dictator, Nadia Boulanger.

His "Four Seasons" — unsure whether he had Vivaldi's famous version in mind, but it doesn't sound like it — breaks the rules.

Most "classical" or "serious" music is either fast or slow. "Four Seasons" has everything: contemplation, energy, outrageousness, excess. The trio had it firmly in its fingers, and the energy was palpable. Ms. Muresanu has a beautiful instrument and touch, Ms. Park definitely knows her way around the keyboard, and Ms. Eldredge is an accomplished and intelligent cellist. "Four Seasons" was a revelation.

After intermission, the trio offered Tchaikovsky's great A-minor trio. Tchaikovsky is known mainly for his large works — the symphonies, the concertos — but his chamber and solo works show his deft hand at crafting beautiful music on a modest scale.

Not that the A-minor is modest. In three long movements — untraditionally, the final two are both theme and variations — he explores many dark moods, Ms. Eldridge noted in pre-performance remarks — but suddenly explodes into sunny and optimistic passages.

