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By Daniel Webster
FOR THE INQUIRER

Listening to members of the chamber ensemble Opus One play a Haydn trio on Friday brought a touch of nostalgia to the concert at the Convention Center.

Until two years ago, violinist Ida Kavafian and cellist Peter Wiley had been Side A and Side B of the equilateral triangle of the Beaux Arts Trio, and here they were, with pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, the geometry as exact as ever.

Exact but a little aslant, of course, for the Beaux Arts Trio has a personality that was greater than the sum of its members, but Kavafian and Wiley explored again the nuance and expressivity of Haydn with assurance and flexibility gained from years in that ensemble.

Meant to be an introduction to a program of music for piano quartet, this performance of the Trio in G was the jewel of the evening. The three players were in top form from the opening note. This late work begins with a set of variations that gives each player expansive solo roles, moves to a slow movement in which the pianist strums chords and creates a rich atmosphere of questing, and closes with a Hungarian rondo.

The group's rhythmic spring in that last movement doubled the sense that this was new music, full of modern gestures. The middle movement rose above the others through the intensity and coherence of the ensemble.

Violist Steven Tenenbom joined the trio for Steven Hartke's *The King of the Sun* and Brahms' magisterial Piano Quartet in A.

The Hartke music includes a playful movement based on a quirky 14th-century canon and other sections that mine other medieval sources as a way of illustrating titles of paintings by Joan Miro. Its five movements turn on the middle movement, "Dancer listening to the organ in a Gothic cathedral," which includes huge piano chords, (some left to resound), slashing string accents, and metallic sounds drawn from playing at the bridge.

The final movement, in which the pianist stuffed damping material onto the strings, was delicate, intricate and a quiet summary of jokey music. The work tests each member with rhythmic angularity and rewards each with soaring lyrical moments.

The Brahms piano quartet drew from all four playing that was expansive, unhurried and finely measured. Brahms asks rhythmic sophistication, too, and all four energized the music with their precision.