

Inspired concert by reunited Alma Trio

By MITCHELL S. KLEIN
The Alma Trio, reunited by the return of Andor Toth as violinist, performed under a hot sun at the Music at the Vineyards series Saturday afternoon in Saratoga.

Toth has moved back from the East to take over the conducting duties at Stanford University. This will enable him to rejoin his Trio colleagues, cellist Gabor Rejto and pianist Adolph Baller.

Saturday's program consisted of three familiar and well-loved works, all played with maturity, refinement and that special feeling of friends making chamber music together.

First was Beethoven's Trio No. 1, in E-flat Major. The earliest of Beethoven's published works, it and its two companion trios in Op. 1 brought the young composer his first public attention and praise. It is still doing so.

Although still in the Haydn-Mozart mold, the E-flat trio is exceptionally rich and personal. The Alma Trio brought out the wide range of moods and ideas of the piece, from the inspired melody of the slow movement, through the rousing scherzo, to the wry humor of the finale.

The unusual heat of the afternoon did cause some problems,

particularly with intonation in the Beethoven. As the day cooled somewhat, the situation improved, and the large audience became warmer and warmer in its response.

Brahms' C Major Trio, op. 87 was next. It received a straightforward and subtle performance. The Alma ensemble doesn't go in for highly charged and personalized accounts of the music; they let the composer speak for himself. The Brahms was beautiful and expressive, but with everything kept in perspective.

After intermission, the performers undertook the epic Schubert Trio in E-flat, Op. 100. The Schubert piece is long and difficult, especially out of doors where it is difficult for the players to hear one another, and in such heat, it was a real challenge. The result was the best playing of the day.

Schubert's special melodic inspiration is bountiful in the E-flat Trio, and the performance came alive with song. Even *al fresco* there was the sense of shared intimacy which makes Schubert's chamber music unique.

It was apparent from the audience reaction on Saturday that many people will be looking forward to the regular appearance of the Alma Trio in this area.

Rich, unusual dance by David Gordon

By GAY MORRIS
The works that David Gordon presented Friday night at the Margaret Jenkins Dance Studio in San Francisco were so rich and multi-layered, it's a pleasure just thinking about them.

The concert, which Gordon performed with his wife Valda Setterfield, consisted of two pieces lasting just a little more than an hour.

But there was more imagination in that hour than there is in the entire season of some companies.

Gordon has been active for a number of years in the vanguard of New York dance where he has been called a satirist, ironist, parodist, writer in choreographer's

clothes, (or possibly choreographer in writer's clothes).

He's certainly some of these things, but even if he is all of them, he's more, too. And here it's necessary to describe the work.

The first piece was called "WORDSWORTH and the motor," and it had six sections. In the first, Gordon and Setterfield executed a series of movements, describing each movement verbally as they did it — "circle, arm, leg, hop, hop," etc. Next, things were turned around and gestures described phrases — "put it here," "too hot." In the third section the phrases were enlarged into a story, or rather a repetitive and disjointed narrative.

Then Gordon, facing the audience downstage, recited Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy while using movements from the previous sections which were descriptive before but now were used abstractly so that they had no meaning in relation to what Gordon was saying. In the meantime, Setterfield, facing to the back upstage, recited what sounded like a speech from Shakespeare when you could catch a word or two. But mostly it was impossible to hear distinctly what she was saying. One could only hear that she was speaking and moving in a way similar to Gordon's.

In the fifth section the dancers repeated the movement without the speeches and in the last section they returned to the less descriptive movement of the first section, occasionally emitting humming noises or held notes while they moved.

It isn't hard to imagine the multitude of associations, comparisons, juxtapositions, and so forth that the viewer can make regarding the relationship between speech and movement in this work.

But that's just the beginning.

The piece actually started with a tape which talked about the many ways the use of energy is exemplified through movement (running, jumping, falling, pushing). It then continued on about the relationship of energy to change and to systems. So that one could then look at the piece in terms of various kinds of energy, not only between different movements, but what happens when the movements are repeated at a different tempo, or with a different accent, or by a different body.

From there, it's possible to go on to the texture of the movement. Gordon is not a highly trained dancer technically. He executes the movement as if he were an

athlete, in a casually controlled but not meticulous way. Setterfield, on the other hand, is a highly skilled technician and her movement is precise and elegant. Gordon is dark and shaggy, Setterfield is light-haired and neat. Everywhere there are contrasts between them and Gordon emphasizes them. When they do the same steps the steps look very different.

It should be mentioned, too, that in the tape, a man and a woman speak the same words, their voices overlapping. The movement in the piece overlaps, too, sometimes exactly, sometimes with variations as Gordon and Setterfield go through the steps.

As for the choreography itself, the tape mentions systems, and that's what the movement looks like — an elaborate system of steps. It has little of the feeling of freedom one normally associates with dance.

On the other hand, Gordon leaves room for accidents, although one is unsure whether they are choreographed or not. At one point, for instance, Setterfield said that she had forgotten something and started the movement sequence again.

It's not possible in the amount of space here to speak in any more detail about "WORDSWORTH and the motor," although it would certainly be easy to do. The other work on the program also can only be mentioned, although it was as dense and challenging to the viewer as the first.

It was called "parts of NOT NECESSARILY RECOGNIZABLE OBJECTIVES" and it concerned performance, beginning with a tape that described all the ghastly things that can go wrong at a performance. There was also a lovely, very funny section on confusion about performing in which Gordon and Setterfield argued about directions.

South Bay Chamber concert to be held at Stanford

Works of Weber, Beethoven, and Brahms will be performed by the South Bay Chamber Orchestra, directed by Daniel Robinson, at 8 p.m. Saturday in Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University.

The program will open with the Overture to Weber's "Der Freischutz" to be followed by Beethoven's Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Op. 13, and Brahms's Concerto for Violin and Cello in A minor, Op. 102. The soloists in the Brahms concerto will be Roy Malan, violin, and Richard Eade, cello.

Robinson founded the South Bay Chamber Orchestra in 1976. He earned a bachelor's degree in English literature at Harvard, and a master's degree in musicology and a doctorate in conducting at Stanford. He served as the orchestral assistant for two years at Stanford, and in 1973 founded the Stanford Savoyards, which he conducted for three years. Robinson has been appointed conductor

of the Kenyon College choir in Gambier, Ohio.

Malan is a native of Pretoria, South Africa, where he began violin study at the age of 4. As a child he won competitions in London and appeared as soloist with English orchestras. He came to America in 1963 to study at the Juilliard School and the Curtis Institute. Malan currently resides in San Francisco, where he concertizes frequently both as a soloist and with the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, and the San Francisco Trio.

Eade, born in Nottingham, England, sang in the boys' choir at St. Paul's Cathedral in London and attended the Menuhin School. He later studied at the Royal College of Music in London, and with Andre Navarre at the Hochschule fur Musik in Detmold, Germany. Eade came to the United States in 1975 as principal cellist with the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra.

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