

Lyric Arts Trio to perform Saturday

BY JEFF KALEY
FOR THE DUNCAN BANNER

Lyric Arts Trio is not your grandma and grandpa's chamber ensemble.

However, in it's 20-year mission to be fresh and innovative, clarinetist Elena Lence Talley said the Kansas City-based trio does pass the "Mom and Dad test."

"We're not your typical string quartet," Talley said about the trio that will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, as the next concert in the 2010-11 CTAC Live series hosted by the Chisholm Trail Arts Council.

In fact, Lyric Arts Trio isn't a quartet at all, but a trio comprised of Talley's clarinet, the piano styling of Daniel Velicer and the soprano vocals of Sarah Tannehill. That combination alone makes the Lyric Arts Trio unique.

And the group's repertoire and stage presence are what help Talley, Velicer and Tannehill score highly on the "Mom and Dad test."

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Lyric Arts Trio will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, as the next concert in the 2010-11 CTAC Live series hosted by the Chisholm Trail Arts Council at the Simmons Center.

TRIO

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"Unlike traditional chamber groups, we don't play fugues and sonatas. We commission a lot of different composers to compose for us and we aren't bound by classical music — we also play popular music from different eras. Our programs are varied, with something for everybody," Talley explained.

"We'll be dressed up for the performance, but we're pretty informal and relaxed on stage. And we don't want people to feel intimidated by the music. In selecting the music, I always think of my mom and dad — if they would be bored, we don't play the piece.

"There's some chamber music that would put my dad to sleep."

All three artists have extensive and impressive backgrounds.

Talley is a product of the outstanding school of music at the University of North Texas. The wife of well-known Kansas City jazz musician Doug Talley, whose quartet played previously at CTAC Live, she's performed with the Missouri Symphony, Kansas City Camerata and Kansas City Chamber Orchestra.

Talley is a music librarian, has taught at Emporia State University and Mid-America Nazarene University, and joins Velicer as a member of the Kansas City Symphony.

A music and anthropology major at Cornell University, Velicer has a master's degree in piano chamber music and accompanying from Rice University. Performing regularly with the Kansas City Ballet's outreach programs, he's in heavy demand as an accompanist and vocal coach.

Tannehill, a coloratura soprano has performed leading roles with the Boston Lyric Opera, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Opera Omaha, Fort Worth Opera, Opera Theatre St. Louis and the Saarländisches Staatstheater

in Saarbrücken, Germany.

In keeping with its reputation for innovation, Lyric Arts Trio presents a variety of programs, including a relatively new program dubbed "American Voices," which will be presented at CTAC Live.

Talley said "American Voices" picks up on regional themes.

"We're based in Kansas City and play a lot in smaller Midwest Communities where one of the common themes is pioneers," she noted. "The program we're doing in Duncan begins with 'Prairie Diary,' which was composed by a woman in Minnesota, who actually wrote a music based on 'Oh, Pioneers' by Willa Cather.

"'Oh, Pioneers' is the first literary novel to use the subject of pioneers and it's a neat, accessible piece, written in Broadway style.

"It has some humor. In fact, there's a piece called 'No Rain,' and we can guarantee it will rain after we leave!"

Talley and Tannehill will perform a duet with a setting of three poems by Emily Dickinson, and another setting features three poems by Robert Frost.

"Frost is the most iconic poet of the 20th century," Talley said. "We commissioned Stella Sung, a young composer in Florida to compose this, because she has a wonderful, lyrical way of composing."

The "American Voices" program also features works by Aaron Copland that are based on Oklahoma folk songs, and a commissioned-work featuring the music of Stephen Foster, who Talley called, "The Michael Jackson of the 19th century."

During its visit to the CTAC Live, Lyric Arts Trio will also conduct a master's class for clarinet and piano. The free class for musicians of all ages and skill levels, will be held at 3 p.m. Saturday, in the Simmons Center auditorium.

Advance tickets for the fourth concert in the CTAC Live series are on sale at the Chisholm Trail Arts Council office, 717 W. Willow, Suite 6 or by calling 580-252-4160.

Tickets are also available online at www.chisholmtrailarts.com.