

## Tetzlaffs make two-thirds of a formidable ensemble

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Photo: SF Performances  
The Tetzlaff Trio: pianist Lars Vogt (left), cellist Tanja Tetzlaff and violinist Christian Tetzlaff.

I have to confess a personal fondness for sibling acts, whether in music or any other branch of the performing arts. There's something appealing about the idea of artistic sensibilities nurtured together from childhood, even when I suspect I may be imposing an invented narrative on the proceedings.

The Tetzlaff Trio, which gave a formidable recital in Herbst Theatre on Saturday night under the auspices of San Francisco Performances, is an oddly partial example of this phenomenon. The group's namesakes are violinist Christian Tetzlaff, whose appearances both solo and with the San Francisco Symphony have become increasingly electrifying over the past decades, and his sister Tanja Tetzlaff, a cellist who is new to these parts.

Completing the ensemble is pianist Lars Vogt, who doesn't get top billing but whose sturdy, robust keyboard work served as a foundation for the entire program. The two Tetzlaffs, meanwhile, seemed to be working with an uncommon closeness — one responding to the other's choices of phrasing, balancing the two string instruments in carefully weighted interactions, and so forth.

The fruit of early collaborations in the home? Who can say, but let me imagine it so.

Now, it's true that another ensemble might have assembled a more inventive recital program than the Tetzlaff Trio presented — a selection of 19th century mainstays by Schumann, Dvorák and Brahms, with a second helping of Dvorák as an encore.

But few could have brought such authority or expressive force to this music. Schumann's F-Major Trio led off the evening in a powerful, strong-limbed performance that brought out both

the rhetorical urgency of the first movement and the soft-grained lyricism of the trio's more intimate moments.

Brahms' Piano Trio in B — the first of the composer's three efforts in the genre, which are assembled on the Tetzlaffs' most recent recording — also boasted a winning combination of fervor and tenderness. The trio's forthright delivery of the first movement found a telling contrast in the crisp, light-footed scherzo and the winsome grace of the slow movement.

In between came Dvorák's "Dumky" Trio, whose six-movement celebration of Slavonic dance forms — with their sharp transitions between slow and fast tempos — always presents a challenge to performers. The Tetzlaffs rose to it with splendid alacrity, making each transition seem both surprising and oddly logical.

Saturday's recital was dedicated to the memory of Jerry Rosenstein, a longtime board member of San Francisco Performances (and other organizations as well), who died Jan. 1 at 88. For many local concertgoers, Mr. Rosenstein's witty and gregarious presence in the hall will long be missed.

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