

Bottom Line Duo offers diverse style with international musical selections

The "Bottom Line Duo," Traci and Spencer Hoveskeland, husband-and-wife classical musicians from Washington State, presented a diverting musical and humorous program in Three Lakes Thursday evening, April 12.

Their music served as the main course for the annual wine and cheese social

A Review

By Elmer Goetsch

evening in the Reiter Center. It was the last of the 2010-'11 season programs sponsored by the Three Lakes School/Community Arts Association.

The Duo is the one still performing of only three such ever-existing professional pairs of classical musicians playing that unusual, and somewhat difficult, combination of cello and double bass.

It was an entertaining evening with a wide-ranging musical program, from contemporary popular to baroque.

The commentary of Spencer Hoveskeland included some "marital dueling" tolerated with amusement by wife Traci. An explanation of the two instruments' origins and background on their uncommon performance combination was included.

The evening's music began with seemingly very classical and unfamiliar "Incidental Music from the Tsar Saltan," by composer Rimsky-Korsakov. But the music soon turned into a familiar tune, the well-known "Flight of the

Bumblebee," on the double bass. So Russia was just the first of nine different countries represented by the composers on the evening's program.

After more traditional music, "Humoresque," by the English composer Sir William Henry Squire, the Duo turned contemporary with an arrangement of a classic popular song, "Blue Moon," written in 1934 by Americans Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart.

That was followed by the familiar classical "Hungarian Rhapsody" by the Austrian cellist, David Popper. Then a switch to French opera, specifically an unusual arrangement for the two instruments of arias from Bizet's "Carmen."

The audience was then encouraged to participate, with hand claps, in "Crazy Train," a 1980 disco-heavy metal song by Englishmen Randy Rhoads and Bob Daisley.

Turning to baroque music, the Duo played an unusual but classical arrangement of the 1st movement from Bach's "Brandenburg Concerto No. 3."

The Duo concluded the first half of the program with a combination of three contemporary American songs, "I Walk the Line," "Walk Don't Run" and "Walk Like an Egyptian," by Johnny Cash, the Ventures and The Bangles. In the arrangement, both instruments were, at times, bowed, plucked and tapped.

The second half of the program was again widely diverse in both form and coun-

try represented. Spencer began by mentioning that the Duo had been in Spain a decade ago for a chamber music festival. There he'd composed "Cebrenos" with a distinct Spanish romantic flavor, which the Duo then performed.

Next came "Gigue" by Domenico Dragonetti, an Italian composer, who, in the late classical period, first attempted to compose concerti for solo double bass, a difficult task because of the instrument's very low register.

There followed a second composition by Spencer, his "Forgotten Waltz," actually in the jazz idiom and well played on the two instruments, uncommon to that modern American genre.

In a return to classical music and Giacomo Rossini, an Italian composer best known for his operas, the Duo played the first movement of his "Duetto."

Koji Kondo next represented Japan on the program with his composition, "Ground Theme," which turned out to have a familiar "Super Mario Brothers" theme. The final selection on the published program represented Mexico with the well-known "Besame Mucho."

The audience gave the Duo a standing ovation, which was rewarded with an encore, another much-loved popular song, "Autumn Leaves," with variations, to conclude a pleasant evening at the Reiter Center.

The afternoon prior to the program at the Reiter Center, the Duo presented a well-received, shortened program for seventh through 12th-grade students at Three Lakes High School, sponsored by the Arts Association.

The Duo's appearance in Three Lakes was supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board, with funds from the state of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.

VILAS COUNTY NEWS-REVIEW/THE THREE LAKES NEWS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2011 13

Elmer Goetsch is a long-time classical music host on the "MidDay Classics" program, broadcast weekdays on WXPR Public Radio, 91.7 FM.