

Program Notes by

A Living Tribute to Jens Nygaard

**JUPITER SYMPHONY
CHAMBER PLAYERS**

Louis **SPOHR** Duo in E minor *Op. 13* ■ 1808

violin & viola

Allegro moderato • Adagio • Tempo di minuetto

grand in eloquence and virtuosity, the Duo for violin and viola was composed in his 24th year

Spohr was a dominant force in German music and as famous as Beethoven—he served in a number of court positions, he was the celebrated leading violin virtuoso, he was one of the most sought-after and prolific composers of the first half of the 19th century, and is considered a forerunner of early Romanticism. He was also an ideas man—he invented the chin rest, introduced the use of the baton and rehearsal numbers, developed the double quartet after Andreas Romberg first proposed the idea, and revived the music of Bach and Handel. In addition to his musical activities, he was a family man who enjoyed a happy social life and varied pursuits like swimming, ice-skating, hiking, gardening, and painting.

BEETHOVEN Piano Trio in D Major “Ghost” *Op. 70 No. 1* ■ 1808

Allegro vivace e con brio • Largo assai ed espressivo • Presto

famous for its highly original dark and mysterious *Largo* movement, thus named “Ghost” by his pupil Carl Czerny because it reminded him of Hamlet’s ghost

Beethoven’s own notes reveal that he was sketching an opera about Macbeth at the time! The Belgian musicologist Harry Halbreich states that “this is one of the first atmospheric ‘mood-pieces’ in music history, where elements of tone-color tend to blur the formal outline. The dark gloom of this *Largo*, which stands in such striking contrast to the brightness of the outer movements, is further enhanced by the frequent low rumblings on the piano.”

In 1808, Spohr rehearsed the “Ghost” with Beethoven at the latter’s home. He recounted that the piano was out of tune and that Beethoven’s playing was “harsh or careless.” The two men were friends, and Spohr admired Beethoven’s music, especially the early string quartets, which he usually played in most of his chamber concerts until the end of his performing career in 1858. Although Spohr did not understand or appreciate Beethoven’s later works he felt it his duty to promote his music by conducting it in orchestral concerts.

