

From Bach to rock to hip hop



Project Trio consists of Eric Stephenson (from left) on cello, Greg Pattillo on flute and Peter Seymour on bass. (PHILIP SHARP) (Philip Sharp)

By Jessi Virtusio Daily Southtown

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“The second I beatbox a video game song on my flute, every kid in the room is paying attention.”

YouTube's power is evident in Project Trio and Greg Pattillo, whose beatbox flute videos went viral nearly eight years ago, garnering more than 20 million views.

"In less than a decade, YouTube and digital media has already changed. It is ubiquitous. What YouTube has given artists today is control of their music," said Pattillo, 37.

"It's amazing how the digital music medium can bring all these crosscurrents and culture together. I'm sure it's only going to change more in the next 10 years."

Pattillo, Peter Seymour (bass) and Eric Stephenson (cello) are Project Trio, which kicks off a residency for Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra with "From Bach to Rock to Hip Hop" youth concerts on April 29 and 30 at Frankfort's Lincoln-Way East High School.

"The second I beatbox a video game song on my flute, every kid in the room is paying attention. Sometimes you have to step outside your comfort zone to draw minds in. It turns out Project Trio has no problem doing that," Pattillo said.

The residency includes interactive mini concerts at Chicago Heights' Bethel Community Facility, the Music Connection in Orland Park for Music Connection and Suburban Youth Symphony Orchestra students, and Harvey's Brooks Middle School.

The 2015 residency week was made possible by Bimba Manufacturing and is dedicated to the late Thomas Fulton, a supporter of the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra.

The events were made possible by the late Thomas Fulton and include a private fundraiser for future music education projects.

"It's important to teach young people the value of instruments, get them acclimated to some of these sounds, bring in some of these outside sounds into the orchestra hall when normally patrons only hear raw classical music," said Pattillo, of New York City's Brooklyn borough.

"We like to blur boundaries of classical music and some of the influences we like."

Project Trio's residency culminates with "(The Symphony) Redefined and Refined: Project Trio and Brahms 3" on May 2 at Frankfort's Lincoln-Way North Performing Arts Center and May 3 at Joliet's Rialto Square Theatre.

"It's the best with orchestra because it shows off the dynamic range and so many different colors," Pattillo said. "For us, it's everything we've ever dreamed of."

IPO maestro David Danzmayr leads the program of Aaron Jay Kernis' "Musica Celestis," Project Trio's original works for trio and orchestra, and Brahms' Symphony No. 3. Also, Northern Illinois University music professor Brian Hart does a preconcert talk at 7 p.m. May 2 at LWN High School's Phoenix Hall.

"We are truly an act that needs to be seen and not just heard because of the amount of energy we put into what we're doing," said Pattillo of Project Trio, which has more than 82 million YouTube views.

Jessi Virtusio is a freelance reporter for the Daily Southtown.

Project Trio and Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra

When/Where: 8 p.m. May 2 at Lincoln-Way North Performing Arts Center, 19900 S. Harlem Ave., Frankfort; 3 p.m. May 3 at Rialto Square Theatre, 102 N. Chicago St., Joliet

Tickets: \$25 to \$55; reduced rates available for groups and students

Information: 708-481-7774 or ipomusic.org for LWN, 815-726-6600 or rialtosquare.com for Rialto, or projecttrio.com

Etc.: Program is "(The Symphony) Redefined and Refined: Project Trio and Brahms 3"