

# THE COMMUNITY CONCERT ASSOCIATION

*presents*

*Season 1964-1965*



## THE DON SHIRLEY TRIO

**DON SHIRLEY, Pianist**

**PETER STOLARCHYK, Cellist**

**RICHARD ARMIN, Cellist**

**JAMES CANDIDO, Bassist**

COMMUNITY CONCERT SERVICE  
affiliated with  
COLUMBIA ARTISTS MANAGEMENT INC.  
165 West 57th Street, New York 19, N.Y.

If by some miracle Calliope should descend from Olympus today to hear the musical riches of our time, and should she be called upon to appraise Don Shirley, it is likely she would use one word: unique. His special talents and those of Peter Stolarchyk, Richard Armin and James Candido cannot readily be classified. That four artists make up the current concert ensemble is a matter of Don Shirley's personal enthusiasm. Having auditioned both Peter Stolarchyk and Richard Armin, he decided they were so talented that both merited joining the current tour.

Audiences who have applauded these artists and critics who have referred to lexicons for new ways to describe their performances are in accord on one point: The Don Shirley Trio presents a program as refreshing as an early morning in spring, as new in concept as today's headlines and remembered with pleasure through many tomorrows.

Because the art of Don Shirley is so many-faceted, he has inspired praise and discussion among professionals in all fields of music. Igor Stravinsky has enthusiastically endorsed Don Shirley. "His virtuosity is worthy of the Gods!" exclaimed the master composer following a Shirley performance. Duke Ellington, eminent in the popular field, was just as excited. "Not only is he great musically," said Ellington, "but he has the fingers to execute his greatness."

Since the Don Shirley Trio seems equally at home in the classical, folk and contemporary idioms, one asks what is the magic which captivates audiences? Perhaps it is the attitude of freedom in Don Shirley's approach to music which adds extra dimensions and interest for listeners. His constant musical curiosity combined with a great gift of creativity have led him to experiment and discover new harmonic ideas and new concepts of form and unusual contrapuntal devices. The results are literally "re-creations" of musical works—often striking in their novel effects, sometimes disarming in their gossamer subtleties but certainly never hackneyed in the over-all effect.

A Don Shirley concert differs in other respects, too. Mr. Shirley offers no "formal" printed list of works as a program to be played at this performance. "We have quite a large repertory at our finger tips," the artist explained recently, "music in many styles to satisfy many audience moods. Early in a concert, almost instinctively, we can sense the personalities and tastes of our listeners. Each audience reacts differently. So by eliminating a 'set' program we are able to bring more pleasure to the majority in each audience. Each night is a bit different, and such flexibility keeps us on our toes and helps establish the kind of rapport we seek with each new group of music lovers we play for."

Such an informal approach is anything but improvisational in actual performance. The music which the Trio plays is carefully worked out by Don Shirley before each new season, and it is based on the solid musical foundations of the pianist's training.

Don Shirley was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and his mother was his first musical mentor when he was a mere tot. News of his talents traveled fast and, at the age of nine, he was invited to go to Russia to study at the Leningrad Conservatory with Nicolai Mittolovski. Later he studied with the famed organist Conrad Bernier, and advanced composition with both Bernier and Dr. Thaddeus Jones at Catholic University in Washington, D. C. There also in the late 1940s he studied liturgical music, and his work on Ambrosian and Gregorian chants qualifies him as one of the few experts in this rarefied strata of musicology.

Don Shirley made his American debut with the Boston Pops Orchestra in 1945 with Dean Dixon as guest conductor. The following year his first major orchestral composition, a symphony, was performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The spotlight focused on Don Shirley. His compositions were played and he was engaged by other major American orchestras. Among those which have performed his symphonic works are the Philadelphia Orchestra (Symphony for Strings) and the New York Philharmonic (Finnegan's Wake and Symphony for Strings). Other Shirley compositions include four "organ symphonies", numerous piano pieces, two string quartets and a piano concerto. With the Detroit Symphony in 1963 he performed the Khatchaturian Concerto on a program which also featured his "Adagio Serioso" for Orchestra. During the summer of 1964 Don Shirley was soloist with the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington and the Hartford Symphony.

Other areas of Don Shirley's background are no less intriguing. A Doctor of Philosophy with Phi Beta Kappa honors, he started in life as a teacher and lecturer in American colleges and universities. Circumstances led to his reference to music in studying its emotional effects on delinquents in big cities. His students compiled scientific data on the responses of his audiences. Moving on to New York from Chicago to continue his research, Dr. Shirley, psychologist, was discovered as Don Shirley, musician, and he was persuaded to give up clinical studies for a concert career.

Cellist Peter Stolarchyk is Russian. Born of Ukrainian parents near the great city of Kiev, he began his studies of the cello at twelve. Such was the promise of his talents that only shortly thereafter he was accepted to participate in classes of the Kiev Conservatory in 1940.

In 1942 the young artist went to Germany. Immediately after the war he continued his studies, 1946-49, at the Hochschule Institute of Trossingen. He emigrated to America in 1949 but his stay in his new home was short. Almost immediately he was drafted and returned to Germany where he performed many concerts with the Seventh Army Symphony Orchestra.

Following his release from the military, Peter Stolarchyk entered the New England Conservatory. From there, after class studies and private work with Alfred Zighra, he received his Bachelor of Music Degree with honors in 1956. In the interim he has been engaged by the National Symphony, the Tulsa Philharmonic and the Boston Pops Orchestra under Arthur Fiedler. This is Mr. Stolarchyk's first season with the Don Shirley Trio—a season immediately preceded by performances at Wisconsin's Peninsula Festival under Thor Johnson.

Cellist Richard Armin, who is only twenty years old, hails from Stratford, Ontario. His music studies began with piano as a child. At fourteen he began cello studies in Detroit with Thaddeus Markiewicz. Later he continued with Luigi Silva in Blue Hill, Maine, and with Janos Starker at Indiana University.

Mr. Armin comes from a musical family which may well account for his uncommon gifts. Two brothers and a sister are professional musicians who are perhaps best known as the founders of the Armin String Quartet which has made three extended tours of Canada.

Before joining Don Shirley this season, Richard Armin was first cellist with the Canadian National Youth Orchestra.

Brooklyn-born bassist James Candido began his musical studies with the violin when he was nine. Theory and related subjects later played an important part in his education so that during his service in the United States Air Force (three of four years of which he spent in Germany) he was able to put his knowledge in practice by organizing several performing groups of musicians. John Schaeffer of the New York Philharmonic was Mr. Candido's mentor upon his return to these shores. During this period he performed with several symphonic organizations including the Hofstra University Orchestra and the Huntington Symphony. After an absence of seven years, he has returned to the latter as bassist.

The stringed bass is sometimes deemed an obscure instrument in the minds of concertgoers. It actually is an instrument of great versatility. Mr. Candido's association with the Don Shirley Trio illustrates what an integral part the stringed bass is to the ensemble. His performances also demonstrate the solo capabilities and the highly individual qualities of the instrument.

When the Trio made its first soldout concert tour under the aegis of Columbia Artists Management season 1962-1963, press acclaim from cities large and small thoroughly indicated that the artists had brought a new kind of musical excitement to thousands across the land. This season's tour of over sixty cities is again proving the 'unique' qualities of these consummate artists.