

ainen was born in

a competent, not ter-
synthesis of 18th-
style, offered proof
ences had taken hold
200 years ago. In a
e Kaipainen Trio ac-
n the same thing. The
nalized, indeed occu-
its length a world of
st movement is filled
gework, the last with
ensity. The predomi-
ever, implies an ele-
om human passions
tion with clean, spare

Sonatina veers be-
itan high spirits and
own special ear for
The beginning of the
ent is notable for its
ies and the curious
ne piano parts; most
is sophistication and

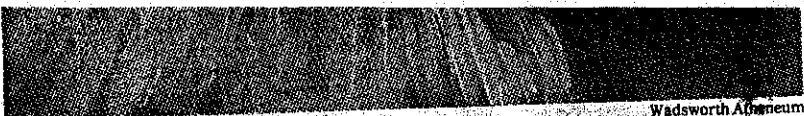
erest was the Sallinen
ch the composer pays
age to a native folk
never surrenders his
7. Played an octave
and cello, an old fid-
nes persistently as if
urdy. The variations
ne modern metaphors
folk dancing to bitter
ures to little snippets of
and gesture. It is the
in all its original char-
; that survives at the

t was also the best
f Wednesday's music,
Coid, Erica Kiesewet-
n and Maria Kitsopou-
cians. Ms. Kiesewetter
otent violinist in the
ystrom duos, Harold F.
ntly struggling pianist.
1, an experienced prac-
-music high-wire acts,
vice as clarinetist in the
e players operate un-
ella title of the Arioso

's singer was Taru Val-
no of jarring power but
worn and sometimes
upper register. The
were for the most part
reprepossessing — mod-
ention and accomplish-
enet" or "Two Shep-
with its recitative-like
ents, the only striking

country scenes that ran
between 1882 and 1885 in Nuenen, the
Netherlands. The image is consistent
with other Nuenen paintings, some of
which are on the backs of self-port-
raits.

Mr. McCaughey said the radio-
graph supports the self-portrait's au-
thenticity. "Why would a faker paint



X-ray examination of a van Gogh self-portrait has revealed the image of a seated peasant woman underneath the top layer of paint.

The New York Times December 9, 1990

Reviews/Music

New Work by American Opera Projects

By ALLAN KOZINN

American Opera Projects, an orga-
nization that presents new works and
works in progress, has a video project
it calls Op-TV, in which it aims to
make films of arias and short work-
sand to win new audiences for opera
by playing the clips on television. The
project's prospectus lists standard
repertory arias of all kinds as suit-
able subjects.

But the program is also commis-
sioning new works, and on Tuesday
evening at the Blue Door Studio, it
presented its first two commissions
of the year, "Blind Witness News," by
Ben Yarmolinsky and Charles Bern-
stein, and "The Funeral of Jan Pa-
lach," by Connie Beckley and David
Shapiro.

"Blind Witness News," toys with
the project's television esthetic by
adopting one of the medium's for-
mats, a local newscast. Mr. Bern-
stein's libretto catches with near per-
fection the stock verbal moves — the
forced laughter, empty banter, catch-
phrases and cutesy segues — in
which television news reports are
cushioned. He also has some fun with
the two anchors, giving them not only
inane stories but also a few that make
so little sense they cannot figure out
how to project them.

Mr. Yarmolinsky's wildly eclectic
score suits this parody well. Like the
fictional news report in the libretto,
the music has a coherent formal
structure that serves as a frame for
the deliberately lightweight, flighty
material. Opera itself is skewered
here: a financial report is presented
as a Gilbert and Sullivan patter song;
minor tragedies are couched either in
a bluesy, Gershwin-like style or as
Baroque recitative, and the weather
report is set as a florid bel canto aria.
There was even a hint of Frank
Zappa in the work's introductory sec-
tion.

The singers — Rondi Charleston,
James Javore, Suzanna Guzman and
Lynn Randolph — were comfortable
in this stylistic mélange, which was
sung to a synthesizer accompaniment

played by Elizabeth Rodgers and
Steve Tyler.

"The Funeral of Jan Palach," an
eerie, 14-minute fantasy about the
Czechoslovak dissident who commit-
ted suicide during the 1968 uprising,
was an acidic counterbalance to the
frivolity of "Blind Witness News."
Mr. Shapiro's spare, otherworldly po-
etry has Palach (David Frye) speak-
ing from the grave as his mother
(Jane Shaulis) laments. An unidenti-
fied man (Harlan Foss) and woman
(Margaret Bishop) serve as a kind of
Greek chorus.

In her dark, appealing score, Ms.

Beckley gives Palach and his mother
evocatively modal, chantlike music in
their solo sections. But her most
striking music is in the madrigal-like
ensembles, supported only by a pair
of flutists (Jayn Rosenfeld and Debi
Pellkofer). Taken together with Ms.
Beckley's minimal, Bergmanesque
staging, in which the characters are
illuminated by the orange neon bulbs
that represent death, the music is a
powerful, concise reflection of the
text.

Grethe Barrett Holby directed both
works, and found the spirit in each.
Robert Black conducted the small
ensembles.

A Trio of Spanish Brothers

By ALLAN KOZINN

Jaime Bolipata has made an im-
pression as a piano recitalist in re-
cent years, and his brothers Alfonso,
a violinist, and Ramon, a cellist, have
been heard in various chamber
groups and orchestras. In 1988, the
three brothers, who are from the
Philippines, began performing as the
Bolipata Trio. The group made its
New York debut on Tuesday evening
at Town Hall.

Fraternal bonds notwithstanding,
the players seemed imperfectly
matched through most of the pro-
gram. Jaime Bolipata's piano lines
were consistently well shaped, and
what color and nuance there was in
the Beethoven "Ghost" Trio (Op. 70,
No. 1) and the Brahms Trio No. 1 (Op.
8) almost invariably came from the
keyboard.

The Beethoven began promisingly,
alternating between fitful energy and
quiet refinement. But the violin and
cello lines in the Largo assai ed
espressivo sounded tentative rather
than truly ghostly, and even the mal-
evolent rumble of the keyboard could
not pull the work's departed spirit
back onto the stage. In the Brahms,

the string intonation was irredeem-
ably sour.

The Bolipatas seemed more at
home in the Ravel Trio. Although it
was not entirely immune to moments
of scrawny string tone, the work drew
a focused, energized and unified
sound from the three musicians.

The program also included the
United States premiere of a Trio com-
posed for the Bolipatas by Lucrecia
Kasilag, a composer from the Philip-
pines. A simple work in a melodic,
unassuming style, the piece chugged
along prettily with little to distinguish
it.

Judaica Crafts Fair

The 10th annual Hanukkah Arts
Festival and Judaica Crafts Fair will
continue today at Temple Anshe
Chesed, 251 West 100th Street, Man-
hattan, with jewelry, clothing, books,
tapestries and such ritual items as
handmade menorahs, mezuzahs and
dreidels for sale. From noon to 5
P.M., there will be children's activi-
ties, home-cooked food and a concert
by Richie Havens. Festival tickets,
\$4; \$1 for children age 12 and youn-
ger. Concert tickets, \$12. Informa-
tion: (212) 865-0600.