All-Newton Baroque Trio plays captivating but restrained music

ALL-NEWTON BAROQUE TRIO
Works by Vivaldi, Handel, Frescobaldi, Bach, and Corelli.
Saturday, April 9, Symphony Hall.

BY DAVID STERN

ITZHAK PERLMAN is probably the most renowned violinist playing today, and Sunday’s performance at Symphony Hall once again made clear. His performance was consistently nothing short of amazing.

Perlman is the quintessential Baroque violinist; when he played the first violin sonata, it was as if he were playing his own work. Next came Webern’s Four Pieces for Violin and Piano, an early 12-tone work. Perlman’s playing was masterful, and the performance made it quite enticing. After the piece, Perlman charmingly stated, “Due to the short duration of these pieces, it is a tradition to repeat them,” at which point he performed another.

Stravinsky’s Dovletti was a complete delight. With Perlman’s synergistic performance, parts of the piece were as powerful as a symphonic performance of Rite of Spring, while in other parts, Perlman had his tone in his check as he played. As amazing as the fact that Perlman can play as he were the composer of a work is his adaptability to composes as diverse as Beethoven, Webern, and Stravinsky.

After perhaps a too romanian version of Ernest Bloch’s Sonata No. 2, the performances were a stack of sources from which to choose additional pieces to play. The concert again amazed the audience by closing his eyes, pulling out a source from the stack, looking at it, and then putting it back. They played several baroque pieces which were Hefetz transcription of Graetzer, now gone, but such as all were light, charming, and virtuosic. Perlman is never more true to his Baroque vision than on this concert, and it is more than worthwhile to catch him.