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## Tremendous Trio

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A rare opportunity to experience classical music up close and personal in a casual setting is what you'll find at a free recital by Trio La Milpa, a Baltimore-based chamber music group, at 4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, at Margate Community Church in Margate.

Trio La Milpa is comprised of two oboes and an English horn. Scared of chamber music? Don't be, says Michael Lisicky, ensemble member and English horn player. "We're very casual. There's lots of conversation in between pieces," Lisicky says.

The recital will include works by Beethoven, Handel and Bartok. The trio also is pleased to present "An Irish Fantasy" and "Lady Greene Sleeves," two works by Baltimore Symphony Orchestra musician and composer Jonathan Jenson. Lisicky, second oboist in the BSO, is a Cherry Hill native whose family owns a summer residence in Somers Point. Other trio members are Katherine Needleman, principal oboist with the BSO, and Sandra Gerster, Lisicky's wife and an oboist and teacher.

"The Jersey Shore is my second home," Lisicky says. "I felt there was a need for a concert there." The fact that the group is visiting Margate in the middle of winter is no accident. "I'd like to gear the concert to the locals, and students, too," Lisicky says. Asked how the group got its name - milpa means "cornfield" in Spanish - Lisicky said it stems from a dish the three group members all loved at a favorite Mexican restaurant they used to frequent in Richmond, Va., where Lisicky and Needleman played in the symphony. The ensemble is active in the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's BSO On-The-Go community outreach program.

As such, it is constantly seeking venues and locations and seems to have made a habit of bringing its music to remote outposts, Lisicky says. Last August, the group became the first American music ensemble to visit the country of Greenland. There, the trio performed for a largely Inuit audience eager to hear instruments they had never heard. There are no oboes in Greenland and no word for the instrument in the native language.

The group also performed with local music students before an overflow crowd. In September, Trio La Milpa spent a weekend residency on Smith Island, Md., 12 miles off the state's coastline in the Chesapeake Bay. The group brought formal and educational concerts to the island's 240 residents and 14 schoolchildren. Next stop: Absecon Island.

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