

PROGRAMME

The New Zealand Chamber Soloists

At the heart of the New Zealand Chamber Soloists are pianist Katherine Austin, violinist Lara Hall and cellist James Tennant, formed in 2006 when Lara Hall joined the teaching faculty at the University of Waikato.

James Tennant graduated with Distinction from the Interlochen Arts Academy and the University of Michigan, and counts as his major teaching influences William Pleeth, Gregor Piatigorsky and Jerome Jelinek. He has since established himself as an extremely popular soloist and chamber musician, performing in 18 countries throughout Europe, Asia, USA and South America. He is a founding member of the Tennant-Austin Duo, the Ogen Trio and the NZCS, and has collaborated in concerts with such international artists as Piers Lane, Karen Adam, Dene Olding, Alexa Still and the New Zealand String Quartet. James is currently Senior Lecturer in Cello at the University of Waikato.

Katherine Austin is Senior Lecturer in Piano at the University of Waikato. She was winner of the 1982 New Zealand Young Musician of the Year and the NZ National Piano Award in the same year. Seven years of study and performance in London and Europe included a full scholarship at the Royal College of Music London studying with Russian pianist and teacher Irina Zaritskaya, and winning top duo prize, with cellist Vincenzo Giuliani, in the Stresa International Chamber Music Competition in Italy in 1987.

Lara Hall is Lecturer in Violin and Viola at the University of Waikato, She holds a Doctorate from the University of Michigan where she studied with Paul Kantor and Yehonatan Berick. Lara began performing throughout New Zealand at an early age, first performing on NZ television at the age of 7, and appearing as soloist with orchestras including the Auckland Philharmonia (the first time at age 15 in Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto). She is currently Concert Master of the Opus Chamber Orchestra.



TAURANGA MUSICA
2018
CONCERT SERIES

NZ Chamber Soloists

Sunday 15 July

4.00PM

GRAHAM YOUNG YOUTH THEATRE,
TAURANGA BOYS COLLEGE



TAURANGA MUSICA
2018
CONCERT SERIES

Aroha String Quartet Sunday 12 August
4.00PM TAURANGA PARK AUDITORIUM, PYES PA

Richard Mapp* Sunday 9 September
4.00PM X SPACE BAYCOURT, TAURANGA

Music for Wind Instruments Sun 7 October
4.00PM TAURANGA BOYS COLLEGE

* In association with Chamber Music New Zealand.

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Trio op. 11 for Piano, Clarinet and Cello.

Beethoven (1770 - 1827)

Beethoven wrote his trio for Clarinet, Cello and Piano in 1798 when he was starting to make his mark in Vienna as an inventive and unorthodox improviser and composer of strong new ideas. These ideas still adhered to many classical era forms and compositional structures, although Beethoven would soon start to break the mould of these as well.

Since arriving in his new home city in 1792, Beethoven's reputation as a pianist was becoming established and with wind instrumental music writing being in vogue at this time, he wrote 9 works for a variety of popular wind players concluding with his 1780 Septet. Also with a promotional trip in 1795 to the court of the Prussian King, who was an amateur cellist, in Berlin, seeing the creation of his first works for cello as a solo instrument in the sonatas op 5, the seeds were planted in bringing the three instruments together for the op 11 trio.

Beethoven probably wrote it primarily for the excellent clarinetist Joseph Bahr, and to ensure its success he utilised a famous popular tune of the time, 'Pria ch'io l'impegno' (before beginning this task, I need a snack!) from Joseph Weigl's opera "The Corsair in Love" as his main theme of the 3rd movement. This melody was so popular that Hummel, Wolf and Paganini all wrote variations on it in the next decade.

Corybas

John Psathas (1966 -)

Corybas was commissioned by the NZCS with funding from their patron Ian Graham and was premiered in Crete in 2011. It was a request for a piece, a gift to celebrate the birthday of Ian's wife Agi. This poses an interesting situation for a composer; how much does one take into account the occasion of the commission? How much does it shape the composition? I asked Ian for a reference point, and learned that Agi was interested in the corybas flower. It's called that because it has a helmet shape like the Corybantes (the dancers of Corybas) in ancient Greece wore. Also Ian and Agi's boat was named Corybas; so there was a connection.

In writing this piece I finally wrapped my mind around a Macedonian dance groove that is in 17/8. The 17 beats are divided into a 4+6+7. It's a fantastic groove but it takes some doing to internalize. To simply bang out a 4+6+7 would get boring fast. So the rhythm needs play; but in a

way that won't have the performers tearing their hair out. And merely introducing a complex layer of syncopation over this meter would make it unsatisfying, a stress rather than a really exciting experience. So getting that balance between these two elements right is the challenge.

I obsess about evanescence, the dissipation of energy, because I feel that as soon as a piece of music begins it starts to lose energy. I liken it to a balloon with a slow leak. A composer is always looking for ways to inject new energy into their music-new air into the balloon-without getting in the way of the flow. All of these little variations need to be hidden in such a way that what one hears is never predictable but always inevitable.

- J. Psathas

Trio op. 100 in E flat Major for Piano, Violin and Cello

Schubert (1797 - 1828)

During the majority of Schubert's short but extremely productive life, he wrote for and performed music almost entirely within the intimate atmosphere of the drawing rooms of his many friends and family. Since he had virtually no patrons or commissioners, he achieved his humble successes within the comfortable environs of the cultured middle-class of Vienna. And it would be in these 'house concerts' that his music would remain known until after his death at the age of 31 in 1828. But fortunately for posterity, he wrote a full lifetime of compositions that contained some of the most original music and of the highest quality that any composer would write either before or after.

During his last year of life, he would produce his most monumental works including the Trout Quintet, last 4 string quartets, the last piano sonatas, the String Quintet as well as his op 99 and 100 piano trios, of which the second in E flat major you will hear tonight.

The monumental E flat Trio has established itself alongside Beethoven's Archduke Trio as one of the truly great piano trios of the entire repertoire. It is huge in every way; it's structural dimensions, it's wealth of ideas and the continual transformation of these ideas through imaginative harmonic shifts, and the playfulness of passing these ideas between the three instruments. Its 4 movements contain the complete range of human emotion, from passion, pathos to anger, while also expressing wonderful moments of unexpressed joy, grace and triumphant beauty. It is no wonder, but still quite surprising, that this trio was the only work by Schubert published during his life and one of the few pieces of his that was actually performed away from his soirees in a public concert hall before his untimely death.