

The Leonari Trio

Piano Trio No 5 in D, Op 70 No 1 “Ghost”
Allegro vivace e con brio
Largo assai ed espressivo
Presto

Beethoven
(1770 – 1827)

In the summer of 1808 around the time he wrote this Trio Beethoven was planning to compose an opera based on Shakespeare’s Macbeth. This project advanced to the stage of his setting a few parts of text to music before deciding the libretto by his friend Heinrich Collin (author of the tragedy Coriolan which inspired Beethoven’s overture) did not meet his requirements. At the top of a page of sketches for the slow movement of the Piano Trio in D is a short jotting with words “Macbeth” and “End”. There are long-standing though unsubstantiated claims that this small sketch was to become a witches’ chorus in the opera. Its presence in the Piano Trio sketches has given rise to the nickname ‘Ghost’ applying to the whole work, but the slow movement in particular.

Trio Élégiaque No 1 in G minor
Lento lugubre

Rachmaninoff
(1873 – 1943)

Rachmaninoff studied at the Moscow Conservatory for seven years from the age of twelve, graduating with distinction as both a pianist and a composer. Thanks to his prodigious technical gifts he was allowed to finish his piano studies a year early in 1891. The following year he was also allowed to take his finals in theory and composition early. The requirements for the finals were highly demanding, including the composition of a symphony, some vocal works and an opera. With the single movement symphony completed, Rachmaninoff set his sights on a piano trio, which he duly completed at break-neck speed between 18 and 21 January 1892. The first performance of this short and compact single movement work was given nine days later with Rachmaninoff himself at the piano, violinist David Krein and cellist Anatole Brandukov.

Piano Trio No 1 in D minor Op 32 “Elegy”
Allegro moderato
Scherzo and Trio
Elegia: Adagio
Finale: Allegro non troppo

Arensky
(1861 – 1906)

After graduating from the St Petersburg Conservatory he was appointed a professor at the Moscow Conservatory at the age of 22. Twelve years later he returned to St Petersburg as Director of Music at the Imperial Chapel. The first of two piano trios this is his most popular work. Unlike many of his Russian contemporaries he uses few obvious nationalist elements and in the case of this Trio, Mendelssohn’s work in the

same key is a striking antecedent. Arensky's Trio shares Mendelssohn's fondness for tunefulness and for brilliant keyboard writing.

The Leonari Trio was formed at the University of Waikato in 2009. Tutored predominantly by the New Zealand Chamber Soloists, they have played numerous concerts around New Zealand and are regularly broadcast on Radio New Zealand Concert. As winners of the 2009 Pettman/ROSL ARTS International Scholarship for a New Zealand Chamber Ensemble, they undertook a tour of the UK in 2010 where they played sold-out concerts in major venues such as St. Martin-in-the-Fields and St. James Piccadilly, and at the Budleigh Salterton and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals - receiving standing ovations and invitations to return.

Maria Mo - Piano

Maria Mo was born in South Korea and moved to New Zealand in 1995. She began learning the piano at age five and in 2009 she completed her Masters of Music (First Class Honours) at the University of Waikato, under the tutelage of Katherine Austin. Maria attended the University of Waikato under a full-fee music scholarship from the Sir Edmund Hillary Foundation, and was also the recipient of the Lili Kraus Piano Award, the Hillary Medal and numerous other Performing Arts awards. She has had many successes, gaining prizes at the likes of the National Concerto Competition, the Kerikeri National Piano Competition, the Hillary Foundation Chamber Music Competition and the University of Waikato Concerto Competition. She has toured as concerto soloist with Opus Chamber Orchestra and Trust Waikato Symphony Orchestra, and has participated in masterclasses of renowned pianists such as Alexander Melnikov, Noriko Ogawa, Martin Roscoe, Peter Jablonski, Edith Fischer and Bryan Sayer.

In September 2010, Maria presented a solo recital as guest artist at 'Semaine Internationale de Piano', a week-long chamber music festival and piano course held at the Hindemith Music Centre in Blonay, Switzerland. Since October 2010, Maria has been studying with Professor Johannes Kropfitch at the Konservatorium Wien in Vienna, Austria, with the generous support of the Sir Henry Cooper Memorial Scholarship from the Woolf Fisher Trust.

Hilary Hayes - Violin

Violinist Hilary Hayes made her concerto debut at the age of 11 with the Opus Chamber Orchestra, performing Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor. She has since performed as soloist with orchestras such as St. Matthew's Chamber Orchestra, Waikato Schools Symphony Orchestra, and was engaged to perform with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra in September of 2010.

Hilary has been successful in many competitions, including first prizes at the PACANZ National Young Performer of the Year Award and the KBB Music National Performers Competition. In November 2010 she was chosen as one of two performance students from around New Zealand to participate in the NZSO Young Originals Fellowship Programme. In 2008 she gained her ATCL Recital Diploma with distinction, and has gained the highest mark in New Zealand for Trinity College Grade Examinations on three consecutive occasions. She was a member of the NZSO National Youth Orchestra for the 2008-2009 season and is a contract player with Opus Chamber Orchestra. Hilary is regularly played on New Zealand Radio, including Radio NZ Concert and The Breeze, on which she broadcast live with a performance of Eugene Ysaÿe's second sonata for solo violin.

Hilary was selected in 2009 as one of twelve violinists in the world to participate in the London Masterclasses at the Royal Academy of Music. She has enjoyed receiving masterclasses and lessons with internationally renowned violinists such as Pinchas Zukerman, Jack Glatzer, Gyorgy Pauk, Feng Ning, Leland Chen, David Takeno and Professors Yair and Eyal Kless.

Edward King - Cello

Twenty-year-old Edward King is a graduate of the University of Waikato, where he was a Sir Edmund Hillary Scholar, and one of only two students invited to join the elite Soloist Stream. He regularly performs around New Zealand, having had concerto appearances with the major orchestras - the Christchurch Symphony, Opus Chamber, and the New Zealand Symphony. With the NZSO he recorded the Michael Williams Triple Concerto, collaborating with Katherine Austin and Lara Hall from the New Zealand Chamber Soloists. Edward has been prizewinner at several major competitions, including first prize at the 43rd National Concerto Competition of New Zealand, and third prize at the 19th Gisborne International Music Competition. He has been principal cellist for the New Zealand National Youth Orchestra, and has also played on contract for the NZSO. Edward has participated in masterclasses with the likes of Frans Helmerson, Ralph Kirshbaum, Philippe Muller, Julius Berger, Colin Carr, and Gautier Gapuçon, and he has participated in summer courses in Salzburg, London, and Kronberg, Germany. Most recently Edward was invited to compete in the 2010 Beijing International Cello Competition, for which 44 participants were selected worldwide.