



“This concert is presented in association with Chamber Music New Zealand”

TORU

Sonate en trio

Claude Debussy (1862 – 1918)

- I. Pastorale: Lento, dolce rubato
- II. Tempo di minuetto
- III. Allegro moderato ma risoluto

Although Debussy won the Prix de Rome at the Paris Conservatoire in 1884, he was something of a wayward student as he never wished to follow the prescribed rules of harmony. He liked to choose chords for their colours rather than their progressive functions - musical impressionism. This style of harmonic thought characterises most of Debussy's musical output, including this trio.

One of Debussy's last works, this is largely responsible for popularising this combination of instruments. His creative use of the three different tone colours captured the imaginations of many future composers. He wrote to a friend about this trio: “it is terribly sad. And I do not know whether one should laugh or cry about it. Perhaps both at the same time?”

Fantasy Sonata

Arnold Bax (1883 – 1953)

- I. Allegro molto
- II. Allegro moderato
- III. Lento espressivo
- IV. Allegro

In 1926 Bax made the acquaintance of the Russian Count and Countess Benckendorff, who had settled in the UK. The following year he wrote this sonata and dedicated it to the Countess, Maria Korchinska, who was a virtuoso harpist. She gave the première of the work in London's Wigmore Hall with violist Raymond Jerry.

Bax once described himself as “a brazen Romantic...my music is the expression of emotional states. I have no interest whatever in sound for its own sake or in any modernist ‘isms’ or ‘factions’.” Although some of Bax’s harmonic choices show 20th Century influences, this sonata has its feet firmly in the romantic idiom.

Bax referred to this work interchangeably as being for “viola and harp” and for “harp and viola”, emphasising the unusual equality of the two instruments.

INTERVAL

Impressions

Tabea Squire (1989 –)

- I. Kowhai Contrast
- II. Rain Dance
- III. Fantail Over the Path

Originally entitled 'Impressions of a Childhood Home', the piece 'draws on specific moments or sights experienced living in New Zealand.

The first movement, 'Kowhai Contrast', illustrates the strong but lovely contrast of the yellow kowhai flower against the rich blue sky of the New Zealand spring.

The second movement, 'Rain Dance', was conceived of while walking through the tail-end of a tropical hurricane. It also harks back to when the composer was newly arrived in New Zealand: two children would have been observed one autumn day, dancing outside their new house in swimming togs, enjoying the warm Antipodean rain (to the presumed astonishment of neighbours).

The last movement, 'Fantail Over the Path', reminisces on the flight habits of fantails, who sometimes choose empty patches of air in which to perform their mercurial flutters and figures-of-eight.

Toru commissioned this work with the support of Creative New Zealand.

Serenade, Op. 25

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827), arr. Ami Maayani

- I. Entrata Allegro
- II. Tempo ordinario d'un minuetto
- III. Allegro molto
- IV. Andante con variazioni
- V. Allegro scherzando e vivace
- VI. Adagio
- VII. Allegro vivace disinvolta

This Serenade originally for flute, violin and viola, was completed it in 1801, although preliminary sketches of it have been dated back to 1797. In 1803, Franz Kleinheinz made an arrangement for flute or violin with piano, which Beethoven checked and approved.

The present arrangement was done by Israeli composer Ami Maayani in 1981, for his sister Ruth, who is a prominent harpist. Her trio was looking for a large-scale work to balance out a programme which included the Debussy Sonate en trio. Of his arrangement, Maayani wrote, "I found it proper to use a combination of the two editions [Beethoven's original, and the later flute/piano arrangement] in the formulation of a harp trio... I have kept intact the musical rendition of the Serenade, Op. 25."

In the late 18th Century, a serenade was not specifically a romantic work; rather it referred to a multi-movement instrumental composition, often featuring wind instruments and intended for outdoor performance. The "entrada" in the first movement marking indicates that it was intended to accompany the entrance of an important person.

Toru

Acclaimed New Zealand harpist Ingrid Bauer is making her mark on the classical music scene. Recent invitations include the 2014 Huntington Estate Music Festival, where Ingrid worked with musical luminaries including Emma Matthews and the Amaryllis Quartet. The festival's artistic director, Carl Vine (AO), described her as a "fantastic new find". As a soloist, Ingrid has performed with the Australian National Academy of Music Chamber Orchestra, the Bay of Plenty Symphonia, the Kāpiti Concert Orchestra, and the Wellington Youth Orchestra. Ingrid has given solo recitals in six countries, and has a solo CD, "Dreambird", on the Master Performers label. Ingrid loves to make music with others, and has played in a wide variety of ensembles, including with Australian jazz legend James Morrison. She is a founding member of the Australian harp septet SHE, and plays casually in the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Wellington, and many other orchestras across Australasia. In February Ingrid won the audition for the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra's Principal Harp position; she will be starting her new job in Auckland in mid-2018. She also holds a Masters degree in Philosophy.

A Wellingtonian, Karen Batten's first degree was from Victoria University. She then went on to study at the State University of New York, graduating with a Master of Music. Whilst in the States, she also attended masterclasses, summer schools and flute conventions. Choosing to return to Wellington, Karen has developed a varied freelance career. She is Principal Flute for Orchestra Wellington and frequently works with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Karen has taught extensively throughout the Wellington Region, including at the New Zealand School of Music at Victoria University. Chamber music is a passion for Karen. She has been part of several groups, including Ethos (flute, clarinet and piano), Elios (flute and strings) which have toured for Chamber Music New Zealand. Outside of music, Karen loves to ride her mountain bike, play tennis and keep fit with Pilates. She has two teenage sons she has to keep up with.

Sophia Acheson from Christchurch, studied performance viola in Wellington where she graduated with first class honours. She was then invited to study in Barcelona with Ashan Pillai, violist with Pinchas Zukerman Chamber Players, and was subsequently awarded scholarships to study with Donald McInnes at the University of Southern California and later with Roger Myers at the University of Texas at Austin. During this period, she furthered an interest in early music, learning the viola d'amore and viola da gamba, performing solo in the US at Berkeley and Evanston, and since her return to NZ, in Auckland.

Since 2012, Sophia has enjoyed working as a freelance musician with the Auckland Philharmonia, Auckland Chamber Orchestra, Bach Musica and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, until her appointment in 2014 as principal violist of Orchestra Wellington. Apart from orchestral work, Sophia is also keen to continue her interest in playing early music and chamber music.