



Chamber Music New Zealand

"This concert is presented in association with Chamber Music New Zealand"

Marimba and Percussion Duo

Programme

"Dances on Keys"

Dialogue (2005)

Gareth Farr (1968 -)

1. Introduction

2. Kotekan

3. Moto perpetuo

This piece was commissioned by Jeremy Fitzsimons in 2004 with funding from Chamber Music New Zealand and is Gareth's first work for two keyboard percussion instruments.

The piece explores the ability of the two instruments to blend into one, as well as highlighting the contrasts in tone between the two.

The first movement is a development of a chord progression played by the marimba at the beginning; Balinese interlocking techniques (kotekan) are used in the second movement; and the third movement is a moto perpetuo (constant motion) with two instruments dashing forwards in parallel, in counterpoint, and in canon.

Lunch with Pancho Villa (1999)**David Friedman (1944 -) (arr. Fitzsimons)**

David Friedman, internationally renowned vibraphonist, marimbist, composer and jazz educator, has his own musical style, born of fascinatingly diverse musical influences. As a leader in percussion and jazz education, Friedman heads the Jazz department at the University of Art in Berlin.

Lunch with Pancho Villa is from his solo CD Air Sculpture. He writes about his process on that album:

"I never felt so free to create spontaneously, to experiment without worrying about results. Wolfgang Loos and Stefi Markus gave me one of the most precious gifts a musician can hope for in the studio...time, endless time!"

Tango Suite (1984)**Astor Piazzolla (1921 - 1992)***No.1 (deciso)**No.2 (Andante, Rubato, melancolico)**No.3 (Allegro)*

An Argentinean composer and bandoneon player, Piazzolla is famous for his unique musical world, a mixture of traditional Argentinean Tango with classical and jazz music. In his music, the sorrowful yet energetic Tango music meets more complex harmonies, while keeping an approachable quality.

This suite was originally written for two classical guitars. The first and third movements have the cool Tango groove of 3+3+2, and both movements contain slapping of the guitar body, which will be played on a mini-cajon in this concert. The second movement is a contrasting slow and mellow ballad.

Interval**Wooden Music (1982)****Rich O'Meara (1957 -)**

Rich O'Meara is best known for his marimba compositions that are performed throughout the world by various artists. As a percussionist, he performs in a number of contemporary ensembles. This piece was one of a set piece for an International Marimba Competition in 2004.

Wooden Music utilizes many of the idiomatic techniques of marimba music, notably "ripple" patterns and chordal ostinatos. The initial Largo theme is presented in a series of free variations - the style changes drastically from one minute to the next - from ethereal, to African, to jazz, to minimalism, and more.

Three Tangos (arr. 2005)

arr. Fitzsimons

Por Una Cabeza (1935) by Carlos Gardel (1890-1935)

This famous tune has been used in many movies including "True Lies", "Tango Bar" and "Scent of a Woman." Although usually heard instrumentally, the original lyrics liken betting and losing at the horse races to relationships with women. It laments how the protagonist always seems to be losing "by a head" (por una cabeza) but is still addicted to the thrill.

Desde El Alma (1922)**Rosita Melo (1897-1981)**

Melo wrote the music for Desde El Alma (from the soul), a tango vals, at age 14. Her husband Victor Piuma Velez, a poet, wrote the first set of lyrics with a theme dedicated to the love of a mother. The song was used in the movie Pobre mi madre querida, with different lyrics, written by Homero Manzi, as demanded by the movie script.

El Choclo (1903)**Angel Villoldo (1861-1919)**

The song was premiered at the elegant restaurant El Americano in Buenos Aires, by the pianist Jose Luis Roncallo and his classical orchestra. Roncallo fretted at the idea of playing a Tango for the "crème-de-la crème" of Buenos Aires society, yet, the sound of the unnamed tune was so compelling that Roncallo decided to steal it but disguised as a "danza criolla", a Creole dance.

Marimba Spiritual (1984)**Minoru Miki (1930 - 2011)**

Miki composed this piece with a strong feeling for the starvation in Africa at that time. The first slow section is a static requiem for its victims, and the second fast section is a lively resurrection.

Originally the piece was written for marimba and three percussion players. The composer left the performers the freedom to choose the percussion instruments, merely asking for "metal instruments" for the beginning, then "wooden", followed by "skin instruments" for 'resurrection'.

In this arrangement, one player is taking the role of 3 percussionists. Also, some sections of the marimba are played an octave lower on the extended range of the marimba used today.

Jeremy Fitzsimons is principal percussionist for Orchestra Wellington, has played regularly with the NZSO since 1993 and was a founding member of Strike Percussion. Recent projects include being a guest soloist at a marimba festival in Portugal, ensemble soloist with the APO and percussionist with the Pink Floyd Experience. A 1996 Fulbright Scholar, Jeremy has a Bachelor of Music with first class honours from Victoria University of Wellington as well as a Masters and an Advanced Performance Certificate from North-western University in Chicago where he studied with Michael Burritt and James Ross. He is a graduate of the Leigh Howard Stevens International Marimba Seminar in New Jersey and the Music Academy of the West in California.

Yoshiko Tsuruta graduated from the New Zealand School of Music in Wellington in 2010. In the same year, she moved to Austria and has completed her Master's Degree (1st Class) at the Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität in Linz. There she studied marimba with Bogdan Bacanu and percussion with Leonhard Schmidinger. As a concerto soloist, Yoshiko has performed with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, St Matthew's Chamber Orchestra and Bay of Plenty Symphonia. She was the principal Percussion in the 2008 NZSO National Youth Orchestra and is currently the timpanist for Opus Orchestra. Yoshiko has many accolades to her name, these include: 1st prize, New Zealand National Concerto Competition (2008); Brass/Percussion Prize and Tiromoana Recital Prize, Gisborne International Music Competition (2009) and Semi-finalist, International Marimba Competition in Salzburg (2012).