

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

LES BONS VIVANTS: France meets the Antipodes

From the trio...

The inspiration for this programme came from an evening of eating 'raclette', a traditional melted cheese from France. We have chosen music that enhances our mood, aids our digestion, and takes our spirits on an imaginary journey that adds to the spice of life. Bon Voyage!

Trio Sonata in D Major, Op. 13, No. 2

Jean-Marie Leclair (1697- 1764)

Adagio

Allegro

Sarabanda Largo

Allegro Assai

The son of a skilled haberdasher and amateur musician, **Jean-Marie Leclair** was born in Lyon. His early career was as premier danseur and ballet master at the Theatre in Turin. After moving to Paris, he began to publish books of sonatas for violin and basso continuo, and is credited with founding the French violin school. Acclaimed as the 'Corelli de la France' due to the great musicality and technicality of his writing, he was the most travelled French musician of his day. The **Trio Sonata in D Major, op. 13, no. 2** is one of his later works, published in 1753.

Fantaisie pour violon et harpe, Op. 124

Saint-Saëns (1835 - 1921)

French composer **Camille Saint-Saëns** was one of the most precocious musicians ever, beginning piano lessons with his aunt at two-and-a-half and composing his first work at three. His concert debut was when he was 10, playing Mozart and Beethoven piano concerti. Study in organ and composition followed at the Paris Conservatoire, where he composed his first Symphony at the age of 16. Organist at the famous Madeleine Church in Paris, his fame grew internationally as a pianist and composer. Saint-Saëns delighted in polemic, the art of argument. He publicly defended the Romantics, 'demolished' his young modernist compatriots and dared to criticise Wagner for his teutonic influence on French music. The **Fantaisie op. 124 for violin and harp** was written in 1907, dedicated to and written for Marianne and Clara Eisler. It takes us in to the evocative internal world of Saint-Saëns.

feux follets for solo harp

Lissa Meridan (1972 -)

"Hélas ! n'étais-je pas un feu follet de femme destiné à s'éteindre après avoir brillé ?"
Honoré de Balzac, Mémoires de deux jeunes mariées

'A feu follet, with its pale, bluish fleeting flame, can be sometimes glimpsed floating across misty marshlands or dancing briefly around tombstones, hence its association with phantoms. The French describe them as feminine spectres, whose dancing lights confound travellers to follow them into swamps, through dense forests or even over precipices. The inspiration for *feux follets* came primarily from the life and work of *Henriette Renié*, a French harpist and composer who was not only a central figure in the development of the chromatic harp, but also an incredibly inspiring woman who was highly successful in an epoch where it was entirely unacceptable for women to gain this type of success.'

- Lissa Meridan 2017

Deux Interludes for flute, violin and harp**Jacques Ibert (1890 - 1962)***Andante espressivo**Allegro vivo*

French composer **Jacques Ibert** is known for his witty and humorous writing, that was particularly idiomatic for woodwind instruments. Born in Paris, he began his musical studies at the age of four taking lessons from his mother on violin and piano. He won the Prix de Rome in 1919 and later served as the Director of the French Academy in Rome. *Deux Interludes*, a short work based on the opera *Le Burlador*. Written in 1946 for flute, violin and harp, the harmonies and rhythms were inspired by the 1920's French fascination with Iberia.

INTERVAL**Five Folk Songs For Flute, Harp and Violin****Alex van den Broek**

1. *Het Daghet in Den Oosten (The Day Dawns in the East)*
2. *The Day Sets in the West*
3. *Raclette Night*
4. *Harvest Prayers*
5. *Ik Ging Op Ene Morgen (I Went One Morning)*

'The cosmopolitan make-up of 'Les Bons Vivants' inspired my use of Dutch folk melodies in this piece. The first movement features the harp whilst the violin and flute chirp away in the background. Movement 2 features the flute in its expressive low register with the accompanying instruments sounding rather plaintive and peaceful. *Raclette night* recalls a fun evening between musicians with everyone trying to get their word in. *Harvest Prayers* alternates between an expressive melody and short pious moods. The last movement features the violin singing over a hazy country scene.' Alex van den Broek, 2017

Rain Forest (for flute, alto flute and harp)**Jack Body (1944 - 2015)***Hunting Song**Returning from a Hunt**Lullaby**Lament**Children's Games*

The music of the African rainforest Pygmies is well-known to many people – from ethnomusicologists to 'world music fusion' enthusiasts. But the music's popularity is not a new phenomenon since it is said that the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt engaged Pygmy musicians in their courts, such was the esteem in which they were held as consummate musicians. These transcriptions, arrangements and adaptations by Body are based on Simkha Aron's recordings of music of the Aka and Be-Benzele Pygmies of the Central African Republic.

Après un Rêve**Gabriel Fauré (1845 - 1924)**

Fauré was one of the foremost French composers of his generation, as well as organist and director of the Paris Conservatoire. He craved the countryside in summer holidays, where he found inspiration to concentrate on composition. **Après un Rêve** was originally published in 1878 as a song, describing a dream of romantic flight with a lover, away from the earth and towards the light.

Suite for Flute, Violin and Harp, Op. 6

Eugène Goossens (1893-1962)

Impromptu

Sérénade

Divertissement

Born in London, **Sir Eugène Aynsley Goossens** was son and grandson of violinist/conductors from Belgium, both also called Eugène. His career as a conductor took off when Sir Thomas Beecham used him as his unofficial deputy. Also successful in America, his international career brought Goossens to the Antipodes in 1946, when he was invited to become the first permanent conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and director of the New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music. A man of immense colour and extravagant tastes, he accepted both posts, the two salaries giving him a combined income greater than that of the prime minister!

Programme notes by Helen Webby, 2017.

Amandine Guerin studied music in France and graduated from the Conservatoire National de Région of Montpellier with prizes in performance, chamber music, sight-reading and solfège. Together with her husband Amandine moved to Dunedin in 2004, where she played first violin and Acting Concertmaster of the Southern Sinfonia (DSO). In 2009 she moved to Christchurch, and joined the first violin section of Christchurch Symphony Orchestra.

Anthony Ferner is Principal Flute of the Christchurch Symphony and lecturer in flute at the University of Canterbury School of Music. Winner of the New Zealand National Concerto Competition in 1972 Anthony is a graduate from the University of Canterbury and studied flute, piano and conducting at the Guildhall in London. He taught and performed for two years in Milan, and in 1992 studied conducting at the St Petersburg Conservatory. For 17 years in Australia, he played in the Sydney Symphony and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra. His CD *Reverie* (MANU) with harpist Helen Webby is heard frequently on Radio NZ concert FM.

Helen Webby is Principal Harp with Christchurch Symphony and teaches harp at the University of Canterbury School of Music. Born in Whangarei, Helen studied at University of Auckland, the Koninklijk Conservatorium in The Netherlands, and in 1996 completed *Diplom Harfe* from the Hochschule for Music in Hamburg. During Christchurch's Quake year Helen commissioned nine NZ composers to write short works for harp and in 2012 released her solo harp CD *Pluck* (MANU), the first anthology of New Zealand harp music. Helen performs on a concert harp built of NZ Red Beech by her brother Kim Webby.