



Charity no 1067071

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 42 CHRISTMAS 2018



## Annual General Meeting

**Tuesday 22 January, 2.00pm Steinway Hall**

We will be holding our AGM in the refurbished Steinway Hall on Tuesday 22 January at 2.00pm. We do hope you will join us for this if you can, and if not please let us know if there are any important issues you would like us to discuss.

## Plans for 2019

Whilst educational matters are a high priority for our Society, we also encompass a wide range of interests and activities. Our educational event in 2019 will be our popular Piano Trio Day which will take place at Gloucestershire Academy of Music on Sunday 17 March. We are also in talks with an author about an interesting book on Sonata Form, explained through the medium of piano trios and we hope to feature an event centred around the composer Arthur Butterworth later in the year.

*This has been a very expensive year for the Society and our reserves are extremely low so we hope you will all renew your subscriptions promptly by 1 January. If you are able to make a donation or offer sponsorship towards an event to help us with our work that is much appreciated. In the meantime we wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.*

## Educational events featured in 2018

As we come to the end of another year we reflect on the three important educational events which have been promoted by our Society this year. The most recent of these has been Chamber Music for Early Learners of all ages which took place at Clarendon Muse, Watford on Sunday 21 October, where speakers were Nadia Lasserson and Heleen Verleur. This was an inspiring and informative day which included a delicious lunch - see below!

A review of the event can be found on page 4.



Earlier in the year we ventured into the realm of competitions for the first time with two Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competitions at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. Standards were extremely high for both Junior and Senior events, with enthusiasm expressed for repeating the events in two years' time.

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## Piano Trio Profile.....Myslek Piano Trio



### **Aleksandra Myslek - piano, Patrycja Mynarska - violin, Lydia Hillerudh - cello**

Cellist Lydia Hillerudh, violinist Patrycja Mynarska and pianist Aleksandra Myslek met in London, where they frequently crossed paths and performed together in different configurations before deciding to form a piano trio. Patrycja graduated from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, whereas both Lydia and Aleksandra studied at the Royal Academy of Music; their different student experiences allowed them to enrich their artistic relationship. The group has a unique dynamic and conviction in their interpretations brought by their experience as prize-winning soloists as well as their versatile non-soloist profiles. Lydia is a committed teacher and a member of the innovative Tritium clarinet trio, which is sought-after for its creativity and outstanding capability to play unusual repertoire, Patrycja cooperates with both the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Aleksandra specialises in duo work with violin while being constantly involved in research on performance, music history and social issues regarding the arts.

The trio members were inspired by many prominent figures including György Pauk, Robert Cohen, Hamish Milne, Leon Fleisher, Ferenc Rados, Mats Lidström, Rodney Friend, Andrés Keller, and Jerome Lowenthal- to name just a few that helped them shape their personalities. All members of the trio are actively involved in outreach work, whether it be teaching or performance for the less privileged, and they are eager to disseminate the great repertoire that they are passionate about by communicating with all kinds of audiences and providing the highest artistic standard.

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## News from members.....

We are pleased to welcome the following new student trio members:

**Myslek Piano Trio** - we were pleased to hear again from Aleksandra Myslek recently as she was formally a member of the Eagle Trio which performed at one of our Notting Hill events. However piano trios continue to feature in her busy life as you will see from the previous page.

**Mithras Piano Trio** - are students at GSMD and won in impressive 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition earlier in the year. Consisting of Ionel Manciu - violin, Leo Popplewell - cello and Dominic Degavino - piano, the trio has been chosen to perform at the Overseas Winter Masters Academy which is organised by Bobby Chen at the Yehudi Menuhin School on 17 December.

Winners of the Senior Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition **Trio Opal** will be performing for Gloucester Music Society on Sunday 17 February in the Ivor Gurney Hall at 3.00pm.

The **Fidelio Trio** ended a busy year with their own Winter Chamber Music Festival in Dublin which saw the Irish première of a new piano trio by Alexander Goehr and a programme of music by Philip Glass. This was followed by a performance at the Spitalfields Festival which was recorded by BBC Radio 3 for 'Hear and Now'.

Pianist **Anna le Hair** will be performing Mozart's Piano Concerto no 25 K503 with the Chiltern Sinfonietta on Saturday 16 February at the church of St Peter and St Paul, Tring. Anna is also pianist with the Icknield Piano Trio.

Composer **Adrian Williams** has been commissioned by Gloucester Music Society to write a piano piece for Maria Marchant who will be performing at their 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary season.

### News from our Corporate members

We are interested to hear from **BAPAM** that a brand new fund has been set up to support the careers of 20 independently-driven music creators by one of BAPAM's major funders Help Musicians UK. The *Do it Differently* fund is being called the most comprehensive support for this group of performers yet. Worth a total of £200,000, the UK wide initiative will be open to application from producers, composers, songwriters, musicians, DJs and others at any stage of their career. The fund is for solo artists, groups or ensembles of six members or less. It will assist with three aspects of their work, which includes their own wellbeing, but also business and creative development. Creatively, that could be songwriting, composition, recording, releasing and touring. *Do It Differently* will also provide the music makers with access to top business experts to advise on developing sustainable business plans. BAPAM are delighted to be Help Musicians UK's clinical partner, providing Do It Differently award recipients with expert guidance on healthy touring.

Over coming months **EPTA** will be holding preliminary rounds around the country to select participants in their Piano Competition. The final will take place on 6 April at the David Josefowitz Hall at the Royal Academy of Music with a Jury of Philip Fowke, Julian Jacobson and Deniz Gelenbe.

**You can contact us by emailing [info@pianotriosociety.org.uk](mailto:info@pianotriosociety.org.uk) or ring the Administrator/Editor on 01242 620736 with news, views and queries!**

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## Chamber Music with Piano for Early Learners of all ages



**Nadia Lasserson**

**and**

**Heleen Verleur**

Clarendon Muse, Watford proved to be an ideal venue for our autumn educational event on Sunday 21 October which was made possible by a grant from the Lawton Trust. This was a day exploring chamber music with piano suitable for early learners in which our two distinguished speakers offered advice on repertoire and gave coaching to the young trios taking part. Stephen Hussey, Director of Music at the school, and Chris Brammell ensured that all the technical arrangements were in place for the presentations.

After a welcome from our Chairman, Jane Faulkner, the morning session was taken by Nadia Lasserson who is well known as a pianist but who also believes that all her pupils should be exposed to ensemble playing from the very early stages. Over the years she has compiled a vast repertoire of music suitable for a variety of ensembles and this is available in her book *Piano Needn't be Lonely*. The day started with a performance by a trio of young performers from Solihull School playing the first movement of Klengel's Kindertrio Op 35 no 2. Pianist Yichen Pan was joined by Lauren Raybould on violin and Katharine Baker on cello and after a very polished performance they received advice on various aspects of their playing and were urged to sit closer to each other and the piano. Nadia went on to show recorded performances of no less than 28 pieces performed by numerous school ensembles which included a variety of instruments including brass, woodwind and the human voice and featured composers from Bach to Peter Martin. What was so notable was the fact that

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these ensembles had prepared the pieces themselves with only minimal help from Nadia and although standards varied, the enjoyment in playing together was very apparent.



**Nadia Lasserson coaching the trio from Solihull School**

This was a very concentrated day so lunchtime gave an opportunity to partake of a delicious lunch and also to chat to those attending before returning for the afternoon session. Heleen Verleur had come from Amsterdam and opened her session with an introduction about her work in Amsterdam as pianist, teacher and composer. As we heard from the extracts she showed, her compositions are wide ranging. They also include three books of piano trios for young learners. A young trio from Watford Grammar School for Boys had prepared two of these and in spite of only two rehearsals pianist Yueyang Han, violinist Izaak Boxall and cellist Ben Smith gave very convincing accounts of Weeping Whale and Djbouti Spring. Heleen was able to talk to the trio and make suggestions as to how she envisaged the works to be performed - see photo below.



The day concluded with an opportunity for questions and discussion after which Jane Faulkner thanked the speakers. Thanks were also extended to Chris Brammeld, who ensured that all the technology worked smoothly, to Stephen Hussey, Director of Music at the school for his help in setting up the event and to the Administrator, Christine Talbot-Cooper whilst Nadia also expressed thanks to Jane.

Review by Christine Talbot-Cooper

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## Piano Trio Day 2019

### Sunday 17 March, Gloucestershire Academy of Music Barbican House, Barbican Road, Gloucester GL1 2JF

Our popular Piano Trio Day will take place on Sunday 17 March 2019 when we will be hosted by Gloucestershire Academy of Music. Tutors will be Michael Bochmann MBE - violin, Nicholas Roberts - cello and John Thwaites - piano. Trios from all the conservatoires and music colleges will be invited to attend and will be offered a public masterclass as well as a private lesson.



**Michael Bochmann MBE** is no stranger to our Society as he has been a Tutor at a previous Piano Trio Day in 2011 as well as a member of the Jury at our Senior Piano Trio Competition earlier this year. He is renowned as a former leader of the English Symphony Orchestra, as a chamber musician and as a teacher, also giving private lessons, masterclasses and residential courses at his home in Gloucestershire.

**Nicholas Roberts** has been a popular tutor at several of our Piano Trio Days. His performing career encompasses orchestral work, commercial recording, solo work and chamber music which has played a large part in his career and has included recordings with the Bernard Roberts Trio and also with the Coull Quartet.

**John Thwaites** is currently Head of Piano Studies at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Course Director of the Cadenza International Summer Music School. He travels widely as soloist and conductor and is in demand as a chamber musician, touring regularly with both the Primrose Piano Quartet and with cellist Alexander Baillie.

**Gloucestershire Academy of Music (GAM)** is the result of the amalgamation in 2003 of Beauchamp Music Group (BMG) & Gloucester Academy of Music and the Performing Arts (GAMPA) and has gained an enviable reputation in the South West since its inception in 1982. The Academy is the only facility of its kind in the South West and the first junior conservatoire in the area. More recently, the Academy also took over the running of the International Holiday Music Courses founded by the Lumsden family at Beauchamp House, Churcham. These courses are now an integral part of the musical opportunities offered by GAM, taking place during the Easter and Summer school holidays. Gloucestershire Academy of Music is proud to be an affiliated institution of Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance. This association provides professional advice and support to the Academy as well as ensuring that the education provided by the Academy meets Trinity's exacting standards. Classes are held on Saturdays and weekday evenings during term time and students are also offered extensive opportunities to take part in performance and outreach projects with professional orchestras.

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## Piano Trio performances in London.....

Dr James Obelkevich has been looking at forthcoming performances of piano trios in London in the coming months and has produced a list of trios at two of the major venues. We would be very interested to hear of further performances around the country, especially those in which our members are performing. It is good to know the piano trio medium continues to thrive!

Wigmore Hall Box Office : [www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk)

Kings Place Box Office: [www.kingsplace.co.uk](http://www.kingsplace.co.uk)

### January

**12**, Saturday, 5.30 pm, Wigmore Hall - Nash Ensemble  
programme includes Fanny Mendelssohn,  
Piano Trio in D minor, op. 11

**26**, Wednesday, 1 pm, Wigmore Hall - Trio Vitruvi  
Shostakovich, Piano Trio no. 1 in C minor,  
op. 8  
Dvorak, Piano Trio in E minor, op. 90  
(‘Dumky’)

**27**, Sunday, 3 pm, Wigmore Hall - Trio Gaon  
(and Cosmos Quartet)  
programme includes Brahms, Piano Trio no. 1  
in B, op 8 (revised version)

### February

**11**, Monday, 7.30 pm, Wigmore Hall - Sergey Khachatryan, Alisa Weilerstein and Inon Barnatan  
programme includes Beethoven, Piano Trio in D, op. 70, no. 1 (‘Ghost’)  
Schoenberg, Verklärte Nacht, op. 4 (arranged by E. Steuermann for piano trio)

**13**, Wednesday, 1 pm, Wigmore Hall - Britten Sinfonia  
programme includes Martinu, Sonata for flute, violin and piano H254

**17**, Sunday, 11.30 am, Wigmore Hall - Trio Isimsiz  
Fauré. Piano Trio in D minor, op. 120  
Brahms, Piano Trio no. 1 in B, op. 8

### March

**10**, Sunday, 11.30 am, Wigmore Hall - Nash Ensemble  
programme includes Mendelssohn, Piano Trio no. 2 in C minor, op. 66

**14**, Thursday, 7.30 pm, Kings Place - Kungsbacka Trio  
(Robert Schumann, Six Canonic Studies, op 56)  
Clara Schumann, Piano Trio in G minor, op. 17  
Natalie Klouda, Fantasy Triptych (2014)  
R. Schumann, Piano Trio no. 2 in F, op. 80

**29**, Friday, 7.30 pm, Wigmore Hall - Kristof Barati, Istvan Vardai, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet  
Beethoven, Symphony no. 2 in D, op. 36,  
arranged for piano trio  
Rachmaninov, Trio élégiaque no. 1 in G minor, op. posth  
Ravel, Piano Trio in A minor

**31**, Sunday, 11.30 am, Wigmore Hall - Horszowski Trio  
Schumann, Piano Trio no. 1 in D minor,  
op. 63  
Shostakovich, Piano Trio no. 2 in E minor,  
op. 67

**31**, Sunday, 6.30 pm, Kings Place - Aquinas Piano Trio  
Haydn Piano Trio in E, Hob. XV:28  
Simon Rowland-Jones, Holkham Beach  
Schumann, Piano Trio no. 2 in F, op.80

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## Congratulations to our Vice President Howard Blake



We send our congratulations to the composer, pianist, conductor and Vice President of the Piano Trio Society, Howard Blake, who celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday on 28 October 2018. Christine Talbot-Cooper has been a friend of the composer for many years and here pays her own tribute.

I first knew Howard Blake as a composer of choral music when I sang in a performance of “Benedictus” in Worcester at the Three Choirs Festival in 1987. I was immediately struck by Howard’s melodic gifts, his beautiful choral writing and his skill at orchestration which made the piece a joy to sing, as was “The Song of St Francis” at the Hereford Three Choirs Festival in 1991. Several years later we met at the Manchester Cello Festival when his “Diversions for Cello and Piano” was performed by Robert Cohen with Howard on the piano. Little did I realise at the time that this work would become so significant! Robert subsequently recorded the orchestral version of the work with the Philharmonia in 1991, the same year the piece appeared in its version for cello and orchestra at the Hereford Three Choirs Festival with Steven Isserlis and the Royal Liverpool Orchestra under Vernon Handley. The definitive cello and piano version received its première at the British Music Information Centre in 2000 with the young Austrian cellist Martin Rummel, who joined my agency *Christine Talbot-Cooper - International Artists* around the same time. As it happened, many years later in 2010, the hugely talented young German cellist Benedict Kloeckner was receiving lessons with Martin Rummel and was looking for a contemporary piece to play when he entered the European Broadcasting Union Young Artists Competition. Suffice it to say that Benedict won the competition and has since developed a special bond with Howard. My own association with Howard continued when I sang in the première of his choral piece “Songs of Truth and Glory” at the Three Choirs Festival in 2005, which was commissioned by Donald Hunt on behalf of the Elgar Foundation.

Many conversations with Howard made me realise that although it was his writing for “The Snowman” for which he is generally best known, the large amount of his other work was not always appreciated. So it was that, in my role as Chairman of Gloucester Music Society, I arranged a complete programme of his chamber music to be performed, including the UK première of his piano trio *Elegia Stravagante*, and his moving Piano Quartet. This was followed by a weekend at Stapleford Granary in Cambridge for our Society which featured a children’s choir performing “The Snowman” and a concert of Howard’s chamber music before which I interviewed Howard about his work - see photo above. I urge all performers to explore the wide repertoire of this most talented composer - there is much more to it than just “walking in the air”! <https://www.howardblake.com>



Christine Talbot-Cooper