



Registered Charity no 1067071

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 43 SPRING 2019

## Piano Trio Day, Sunday 17 March

We aim to hold our Piano Trio Days at a variety of venues around the country and this year we are pleased that it will take place at Gloucestershire Academy of Music - see picture below.



**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. We hope to welcome students from the Academy to Piano Trio Day. Tutors will be Michael Bochmann MBE, Nicholas Roberts and John Thwaites. Further details about the day can be found on page 8.

## Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competitions 2020

Following the success of our Piano Trio Competitions in 2018 we are pleased to announce that we will be holding two further competitions in 2020. Both competitions will be held at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester.

Sunday 16 February - Junior Competition

Sunday 22 March - Senior Competition

Further details will be available later but we hope you will put the dates in your diary.

## St Peter's Church, Notting Hill

For many years we have been welcomed at this wonderful venue which has hosted many piano trio lunchtime concerts and even a piano trio festival, so we are delighted that we have been offered three dates in September to feature piano trios:

### **Monday 16 September - Mithras Trio**

Brahms - Trio no 3 in C minor Op 101  
Beethoven - Trio in D major, Op 70 no 1 "Ghost"

### **Monday 23 September - Myslek Piano Trio**

Rachmaninov - Trio élégiaque no 1 in G minor,  
Beethoven - Trio in B flat Op 97 "Archduke"

### **Monday 30 September - Icknield Trio**

Schubert Trio in E flat D929  
Bridge - Miniatures (selection)



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## Piano Trio Profile.....**Mithras Trio**



**Dominic Degavino (piano) - Ionel Manciu (violin) - Leo Popplewell (cello)**

Formed of current postgraduate students at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the Mithras Trio came together in 2017 under the guidance of Matthew Jones, Carole Presland and Ursula Smith. As well as benefitting from tuition with members of the Endellion Quartet, they have also received regular coaching from András Keller and Rolf Hind, and were selected to perform in masterclasses with Ralf Gothóni, Levon Chilingirian, the Takács, Danish and Emerson Quartets, and Alasdair Tait.

Ionel, Leo and Dominic, all Scholarship holders at GSMD, are experienced collaborators, having appeared in the Barbican Hall, City of London Festival, Harmos Festival Portugal, and Orpheus and Bacchus Festival among others. They have also worked in side-by-side performances with eminent musicians including Donald and Vivian Weilerstein, Krysia Osostowicz, Andrew Marriner, Janine Jansen, Wihan and Chilingirian Quartets, and Ben Frith. Individually they have had successes in a number of international competitions, including the Concours International de Piano d'Epinal in France, the Imola International Piano Awards, the Orpheus Musician of the Year Competition, the Brant International Piano Competition and Bromsgrove International Musicians' Competition. Dominic was also the keyboard section winner of both the Tunbridge Wells International Young Concert Artists Competition and the 2017 Royal Over-Seas League Arts Competition.

In April 2018, the Mithras Trio won second prize at the inaugural Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, performing Brahms' Trio No. 3 in C minor, Op. 101 and Shostakovich's Trio No. 2, Op. 67. They have made festival appearances at Lake District Summer Music Festival, Guildhall Chamber Music Festival and most recently Highgate International Chamber Music Festival.

They are passionate exponents of contemporary music, having performed works by Helen Grime and Christopher Brammell last season, and recently giving the world première of a new piece by Péter Tornyai at the Solti Hall in Budapest, who dedicated the work to the Mithras Trio after working with them. They look forward to two concerts in the Lake District next year, in addition to appearances at the Leeds International Concert Season, Milton Court Concert Hall and the Yehudi Menuhin School.

**Stop Press! Congratulations to the Trio which has just won the Royal Overseas League Ensemble Prize.**

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## Trio Opal - a review.....

The Piano Trio Society aims to encourage its student member trios by offering performing opportunities when possible, and often at prestigious venues. After winning the first of our Senior Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competitions, Trio Opal was invited to perform for Gloucester Music Society's 89<sup>th</sup> season. The concert took place in the Ivor Gurney Hall on Sunday 17 February to an appreciative audience and attracted the following review.



Pianist Yi-Shing Cheng, violinist Eriko Nagayama and cellist Joel Siepmann are three extraordinarily talented musicians in their own right. Individually, they have already garnered many accolades; and as Trio Opal, they are emerging as a prize-winning piano trio of their generation.

Today's concert opened with Schubert's Adagio in E flat "Notturno". The piece opens rather pensively, transforms through a vigorous middle section with rippling piano arpeggios and emphatic strings, and weaves its way effortlessly between keys before gently coming to rest with a dreamy coda.

Brahms' Piano Trio in C minor, in contrast, blasts its way in with a dramatic opening full of portent from which emerges a wide romantic string melody with a hefty piano accompaniment. The second movement has a more evasive quality thanks to its muted and

pizzicato strings. The third movement has contrapuntal strings answered by a complementary piano melody which then rushes into an agitated finale that concludes with an abrupt flourish. After the interval came Rachmaninov's Trio Elegiaque. This mini-epic began ethereally with cello and violin tremolandi, and a melancholic piano melody full of pathos. This undergoes a series of elaborate expositions to the first of several impassioned climaxes. The piece has all the grandiloquent hallmarks that are given full rein in the composer's Piano Concerti, and when the central theme returns in the closing funeral march it is a poignant reminder of the piece's central purpose.

The final work in today's concert was Beethoven's Piano Trio in E flat major. From a lugubrious slow introduction, melodic fragments and thematic ideas are tossed around the instruments with abandon and Beethoven's natural ebullience shows through.

Beethoven toys with our expectations in second movement. He obsessively 'worries' small rhythmic cells and mocks melodic mannerisms in a way that late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century audiences must have found quite unsettling.

One of Beethoven's favourite compositional tricks is to leave notes hanging while the harmonies shift and change beneath, and this technique is fully exploited throughout the work, especially in the cello writing. The graceful tunes in the third movement are supported by startling discords, while in the boisterous finale, flamboyant violin heroics beckon both cello and piano to follow suit, making for a fiery conclusion to this stirring concert.

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## Piano Trio Society people.....

**The Gould Piano Trio** was joined by a new cellist in September. Richard Lester is a Leading chamber-musician, solo-cellist, orchestral principal and renowned teacher. He was a member of the award-winning Florestan Trio, a founder-member of the ensemble Domus and has been a member of Hausmusik and the London Haydn Quartet. Equally at home on both period instruments and 'modern', he was for many years principal with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. He has been principal cello with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe since 1989. Together with violinist Anthony Marwood, Richard Lester is co-director of the highly successful annual Peasmash Chamber Music Festival in East Sussex. The trio has a busy schedule which includes performing at a lunchtime concert at the Wigmore Hall on Monday 13 May. July sees them recording works by John Casken as well as hosting their own Corbridge Chamber Music Festival from 26 July and a date at the Queen's Hall on 19 August as part of the Edinburgh Festival.



**The Barbican Piano Trio** - seen here with Noah Max, will be giving the world premiere of Noah Max's Vignette at the Frinton Festival on Sunday 26th May 2019 at 2.15pm in a concert which will also include Beethoven op.1 no.3 and Dvorak's Dumky trio. The festival will have a gentle focus on music by Beethoven, Dvorak and Faure with the Barbican Trio playing piano quintets with Maria Włoszczowska and Adam Newman. Robert Max will be playing 6 Bach cello suites on the Friday evening, James Kirby is giving a piano recital on Saturday morning and the London Chamber Orchestra will give a special family concert including Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf, Beethoven 7 and a new piece involving local young musicians on Monday.

[www.frintonfestival.com](http://www.frintonfestival.com)

The **Icknield Trio** (Arwen Newband, violin, Sarah Boxall, cello, and Anna Le Hair, piano) gave a successful concert at St Leonards' Church in Hythe in October 2018, performing Mendelssohn's D minor trio, Ireland's Phantasy trio and Rebecca Clarke's wonderful trio, and are looking forward to returning there in late 2019, when their programme will include Tchaikovsky's trio. They also have recitals lined up in London and St Albans during this year, and will be performing Beethoven's triple concerto in Tring in 2020. The Icknield Trio will be representing our Society at a series of concerts in September at St Peter's Church, Notting Hill.

Congratulations to the **Mithras Trio** which auditioned successfully for the Kirckman Concert Society as a result of which the trio will be offered a concert at a major London venue next season. The Trio also performed in December at the OMWPA festival at the Menuhin School by invitation of our Trustee Bobby Chen and were well received at their recent concert in Ambleside as part of the Patrons of Lake District Summer Music series. Future dates include a day giving coaching and a performance at the Perse School, Cambridge on 14 May and representing our Society on 16 September at St Peter's Church, Notting Hill.

We have been pleased to catch up with the **Albany Trio** again. The trio - Philippa Harrison - piano, Gemma Sharples - violin, Verity Evanson - cello -won the Gwyneth George Award some years ago and continue with their diverse and innovative repertoire which focuses on works by female composers - both current and historic - alongside the traditional canon of piano trio music. The trio regularly collaborates with composers and recently commissioned their fourth Trio, a new work entitled *The Orchid and its Hunters* by Judith Bingham, which was premiered live on BBC Radio 3. They have previously premiered works by Charlotte Bray, Judith Weir, and Josephine Stephenson, with more commissions planned for the future. On March 8<sup>th</sup> the trio performed at Stoller Hall in Manchester with a programme which included trios by Clara Schumann, Sadie Koninsky, Nicola LeFanu and the première of "The Art of Precious Scars" by Emma-Ruth Richards. The previous day Philippa Harrison was part of the panel discussion joining Nicola LeFanu, Dr Anastasia Bellina and arts leader Debra King as part of an evening of talks entitled '*Women and Composition: Fifty years of progress?*' also at Stoller Hall.



Composer member and Trustee **Chris Brammell** reports that his new piece, In Memoriam, for soprano, flute, clarinet, violin and cello, was premiered at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, by the University of Cambridge New Music Ensemble, conducted by Patrick Bailey. The soprano was Mimi Doulton, a graduate of Guildhall School of Music and Drama, who gave a compelling performance. The concert was held to mark the 75th birthday of composer Robin Holloway, whose Autumn Music also received its première. Works by Tim Watts and Kate Whitley were also performed. (See photo left.)

On 18th March a revised version of Chris's "Two Folksongs from Ireland" will be premiered at Drapers' Hall in the City of London, by the choir of Bancroft's School, conducted by Julia Whitbread. The two songs, arranged for SAB choir and piano, are Cockles and Mussels and Danny Boy.

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## News from our Corporate members.....

We are pleased to hear that **BAPAM** is now holding free Performing Arts Medicine clinics in London, Glasgow, Birmingham, Cardiff and Leeds. So if you make a proportion of your living from, or study in the performing arts, and have a health problem related to your work, BAPAM can help you.



"Our clinicians are experienced at dealing with the problems performing arts workers frequently face, and can help with an accurate diagnosis and advice including identifying efficient care pathways, both in the NHS and from other specialist individuals and services. The BAPAM team can also advise about the availability of financial support for people experiencing health problems affecting their ability to work or study."



In addition to the musculoskeletal clinic led by BAPAM physio **Louise Curley on 8th and 22nd March in Birmingham**, March also marks the return of GP led clinics. BAPAM GP **Dr Diana Newson** (seen left) will be leading the clinic on **20th March**. She has many years' experience as a GP and enjoys the opportunity of working with performers. Dr Newson is a Grade 8 singer, pianist and violinist and currently sings with Birmingham Bach Choir. The Birmingham clinics take place at the **Royal Birmingham Conservatoire**, 200 Jennens Rd, Birmingham B4 7XR

To make an appointment call 020 7404 8444 [www.bapam.org.uk](http://www.bapam.org.uk)

### Wednesday 27th March - Royal Society of Medicine - London

The majority of workers in the performing arts are freelancers and all are likely to, at some point in their career, experience an injury or have other health problems as a result of their work. The particular needs of those in this industry translate to other areas of the national workforce where, with the expansion of the 'gig-economy', traditional occupational health provision increasingly may not reach. The Occupational Medicine Section of the Royal Society of Medicine and the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine have therefore come together to run a one day educational meeting that will be of interest to a wide range of people with an interest in health and work. Talks and panels feature leading arts industry and occupational health experts, academics and clinicians, and include consideration of the economic case for investing in health, health promotion, injury prevention and rehabilitation for self-employed workers, key and emerging occupational health issues in the arts sector.

**EPTA** will be continuing with its ABRSM EPTA Development Days over the coming months. All the events take place in Manchester between 10.00am and 17.30pm:

Sunday 2 June - Day Four - "Towards a more personal approach"

Sunday 30 June - Day Five - "The Flexible, Empathetic Teacher"

Sunday July 21 - Day Six - "The Dynamic, Motivational Teacher"

**BPSE** have announced the winners of the 2019 Junior Competition which took place on Sunday 24 February in which seven young pianists nominated by UK music conservatoires and specialist music schools participated. Each competitor performed a complete Beethoven piano sonata of their choice and compulsory Bagatelle in C, Op.33 No.2.

1<sup>st</sup> prize went to Rose McLachlan (Chethams School of Music)

2<sup>nd</sup> prize winner was Ellis Thomas (RNCM)

3<sup>rd</sup> prize winner was Sebastian Flore (Centre for Young Musicians)

## Overseas Masters Winter Piano Academy

We were pleased to hear of the success of the latest Overseas Masters Winter Piano Academy in December which is run by pianist Bobby Chen, who is also one of our Trustees. This is a week-long residential course for young pianists from across South East Asia which has been supported by ABRSM since 2014. The Piano Trio Society was invited to offer a trio to perform at the event and we had no hesitation in recommending the Mithras Trio - seen in the photo below with Bobby Chen and some of the participants. They performed Beethoven Op 1 no 3 in C minor, Three Whistler Miniatures by Helen Grime and Smetana G minor, Op 15. James Welburn, ABRSM Regional Development Executive, wrote the following review.



Bobby Chen in 2010, who was a full-time boarder at the Menuhin School and later studied at the Royal Academy of Music. Bobby reflected: "I never forgot my roots in the hope that some doors would be opened for the wonderful young talents in South East Asia. I have been really encouraged by the amazing support from all the teachers and parents!" Bobby invited me to attend a day of classes this year and it was a fantastic experience. There were lessons dedicated to technique, keyboard harmony and composition, each bespoke to different age groups.

Malaysian student Alyssa praised OMWPA as having "elevated my musical knowledge to a more holistic appreciation of the world of music". Singapore student Nicole said: "The professors were all very helpful and I found my playing has improved. More importantly, I have learnt not only to master my instrument better but I have also learnt that music is a lot more than playing my piano pieces well."

Malcolm Singer returned to the school to work with the OMWPA students and commented: "What a joy it was to work with such enthusiastic young musicians from South East Asia at the Yehudi Menuhin School in December. Their eagerness and enthusiasm were an inspiration and we all had a most stimulating time, delving into the wonders of keyboard harmony. It was a delight to have James Welburn from ABRSM observing some of this work." OMWPA is also a brilliant opportunity for pianists to develop their performance skills. They're invited to perform at the gala concert at the end of the course in front of parents, teachers and fellow students, on a full-size grand piano in the Menuhin Hall. Performance opportunities for pianists are so important and yet are often harder to come by than for other instruments, and so it's a real strength of OMWPA's course and one that we support at ABRSM.

The course, at the Yehudi Menuhin School in Surrey, offers participants a programme of individual piano lessons, group classes and lectures, as well as a 'London' experience with visits to famous museums and music shops, and tickets for concerts at the Royal Albert Hall and the Royal Festival Hall.

OMWPA was founded by Malaysian pianist and former ABRSM scholar

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## Piano Trio Day, Sunday 17 March 2019

Piano Trio Day continues to be a popular event and this year we are pleased to welcome five trios from around the country to Gloucestershire Academy of Music, Barbican House, Barbican Road, Gloucester GL1 2JF. They are offering a variety of repertoire and will receive both a public Masterclass as well as a private Masterclass with one of the Tutors. Our tutors this year are Michael Bochmann MBE, renowned violinist, teacher and chamber musician, Nicholas Roberts cellist of the Bernard Roberts Piano Trio and the Coull Quartet and in demand as a tutor, and John Thwaites, versatile pianist, conductor and chamber musician and Head of Keyboard Studies at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.



**Michael Bochmann**



**Nicholas Roberts**



**John Thwaites**

The timetable for the day is as follows.

10.30 - 11.15	Welcome and registration	
11.15 - 12.00	Trio Aphelion - Royal College of Music Mozart K548	Michael Bochmann
12.00 - 12.45	Trio Lyra - Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Beethoven Op 1 No 3	Michael Bochmann
12.45 - 13.30	Lunch break	
13.30 - 14.15	Concordia Piano Trio - Royal Welsh College Schumann Op 110 no 3	John Thwaites
14.15 - 15.00	Eumelia Trio - Royal College of Music Rebecca Clarke Trio	John Thwaites
15.00 - 15.45	Lingling Trio - Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Brahms Op 101	Nicholas Roberts
15.45 - 16.00	Break	
16.00 - 17.00	Final Concert with all participants	

We offer a warm welcome to anyone wishing to join us for this event. There is no charge for admission!

**Christine Talbot-Cooper, Administrator/Editor 01242 620736 info@pianotriosociety.org**

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