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NEWSLETTER

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Senior Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition

We have received an excellent response from trios at musical establishments around the country wishing to compete in our second Senior Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition. This will take place at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester on Sunday 22 March from 10.00am to 5.30pm and will include a repertoire of works by Mendelssohn, Brahms, Dvorak, Debussy, Shostakovich, Rebecca Clarke, Frank Bridge and Takemitsu. The distinguished Jury will consist of Susie Mészáros, Nicholas Trygstad and John Thwaites. Further details can be found on page 4.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will take place at Steinway Hall, 44 Marylebone Lane, London on Thursday 20 February at 2.00pm. This is an event which gives our members an opportunity to catch up on news, to make suggestions about forthcoming events and to elect Trustees for the year. If you have suggestions to make but are not able to join us on the day please contact the administrator. The present Trustees are prepared to stand for re-election but we would welcome further applications, whether from performing musicians, teachers or keen amateurs, especially anyone able to offer practical help at events.

Please contact the Administrator for further details at info@pianotriosociety.org.uk, via the website or by telephoning +44(0)1242 620736

Focus on Health



For many years the Piano Trio Society has focused much of its work on "Health and the Musician". This began in our early days, 25 years ago, when we were privileged to have the support of the late Dr Christopher Wynn Parry MBE (pictured above) who gave many talks to students on the subject at our educational events, long before the topic was generally addressed. Thankfully the importance of the subject has now been recognised so we are pleased to feature articles in this issue which draw attention to the subject and, more importantly, suggest where help may be obtained. We have long worked with our Corporate member, the British Association of Performing Arts Medicine, so we are pleased to include an article by Senior Manager Dan Hayhurst. This can be found on page 2.

We will also be featuring welcome news to our pianist members about a new book by Penelope Roskell. Entitled "The Complete Pianist: from healthy technique to natural artistry" it will be published by Peters on 20 February. The book sums up the many years Penelope has dedicated to research and further details are on page 6.

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Musicians' Health Update Clinicians, educators and a multidisciplinary approach

BAPAM (the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine) help musicians and others working and studying in the performing arts enjoy healthy, sustainable careers, and we believe that better health and excellent artistic practice are mutually reinforcing. Our work is possible due to the passion for improving health shared by many in the wider music and arts community. In the coming months we, and friends throughout the arts, plan to initiate a UK-wide conversation about what healthy arts practice looks like and celebrate change makers in our community.

BAPAM provide free specialist clinical consultations, train clinicians in Performing Arts Medicine, and publish a Directory of performance health specialists. In 2019 we helped with over 2000 clinical enquiries. But improving health in the arts isn't just about fixing things when they go wrong. We want to empower musicians to avoid preventable health problems.

Our factsheets include advice on physical health, keeping mentally well and safe technique (including healthy piano playing), and we've developed health and wellbeing guidance for the sector covering key areas such as mental health services and hearing conservation. In 2019 we trained more than 800 people in practical skills for healthy performance careers, and we are increasingly working with educators, both to deliver these sessions, and in collaborative settings with clinicians.



At our November 2019 training day for clinicians and educators, we were pleased to host a presentation by Mr Mark Phillips, Hand and Upper Limb Orthopaedic Surgeon (and trumpet player), seen left, and Penelope Roskell, Professor of Piano, on pioneering work they are piloting in a joint clinic for pianists at BAPAM.

Multidisciplinary clinics are useful because clinicians tend to specialise. In the NHS, orthopaedic surgeons meet with radiologists, physiotherapists and other carers. Voice Clinics might include a laryngologist, speech therapist, physiotherapist or osteopath, psychotherapist and a specialist vocal coach. In sports medicine, athletes are supported by a team of specialists.

The joint pianists' clinic was set up to help pianists with problems that would benefit from a combined medical and technical approach. For Mark, who provides the clinical assessment and diagnosis, working with an expert on the interface between the instrument and the body can be key to solving some complex problems.

Attendees are existing patients or students of either Mark or Penelope. They are people operating at higher than normal levels with their hands. Reach, power, sensitivity and speed are greater. They spot things going wrong with their hands before anything obvious would show as abnormal on scans and tests. Pianists may come to the clinic with playing-related injuries relating to technique. They may have had an injury or operation. Or they may need help managing a long-term condition such as arthritis.

Penelope told us, "I speak their language". She can 'translate' between musician and doctor. Musicians can be worried they won't understand medical advice or that the clinician will push for a scary medical intervention. As a piano teacher, she examines posture, looks for imbalances, the application of excessive

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force in playing, tension not just in the wrist but in the shoulders and elbows. What is occurring in particularly problematic passages? With the player, she considers technical workarounds, for instance to avoid big stretches.

It is important to gain patients' trust. Musicians can be as wary of modifying their technique as they are of medical interventions, something Penelope partly attributes to the rigidity of teaching methods, but she has found that flexibility is encouraged by the transdisciplinary approach in the clinic. In being open-minded, it is easier to build on strengths already possessed to overcome problems. Working with a patient is not the same as working as with a student and different professional standards apply, so it is essential that both clinicians and educators identify and work to the boundaries of their practice and knowledge. BAPAM's code of practice for educators working in clinical settings provides guidance.



In a Performing Arts Medicine clinic, we look at the whole picture; not just the pianist's hand, but the whole body, the interaction with their instrument, lifestyle, practise habits and technique. Medics might traditionally focus on symptoms, but widening the focus, how have physical, social, emotional, psychological, technical and creative elements interacted to bring this person into the clinic on this day? Ongoing work in musicians' health seeks to identify the optimal points at which we can encourage best practice and reduce risk. Let's continue making connections and improving our health and creativity.



For more about BAPAM's factsheets, publications, training sessions, Directory and clinics, visit www.bapam.org.uk

Dan Hayhurst
Senior Manager: Special Projects. BAPAM

We have received news from **Benslow** of a course entitled '**Leading from Behind: A Course for Chamber Music Groups with Piano**' which will take place from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th October 2020. The tutors are Nigel Clayton and Imma Setiadi. This course invites chamber music groups with piano (from duo to quintet) to study their repertoire and gain musical insights with the guidance of experienced collaborative pianist tutors, who have spent their lives alongside instrumental players. This will give the opportunity to focus more on the musical interpretation rather than the mechanics of the instruments. Applications are invited from pre-formed groups with piano (individuals welcome if we can match you with others) and participants are required to send their chosen repertoire prior to the course. Further details can be found at <https://benslowmusic.org/index.asp?PageID=2801> and booking has now opened. We hope to provide further information about this course in our next Newsletter.

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Senior Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition

Sunday 22 March 2020, Chetham's School of Music, 10.00 - 17.30

Following the success of our first competition in 2018, we are pleased to announce that our second competition will feature eight trios from around the country and is kindly sponsored by our Vice President, Howard Blake, who will be presenting the prizes including a presentation copy of one of his trios to the winner. The trios will perform their chosen pieces from our repertoire list and in addition are required to play a set piece written by Christopher Brammeld.

The performance will take place in the Carol Nash Hall at Chetham's School of Music. Admission is free although we will make a retiring collection.

The Jury consists of three distinguished musicians:



Susie Mészáros is a professor at the Royal College of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music, teaching violin, viola and chamber music. She has enjoyed an extensive performing career as a member of the Chilingirian String Quartet, as guest leader of many major orchestras and as soloist and chamber musician. Susie has also been invited onto the jury of a number of competitions both in UK and abroad and has performed on Radio 3 on both violin and viola.

Nicholas Trygstad is Principal Cello in the Hallé Orchestra and has been in demand as guest principal at numerous other orchestras. A native of Minnesota he studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he is presently a Tutor in Cello. He is a keen chamber musician and combines this with recital and concerto work, as well as giving masterclasses and coaching youth orchestras across UK and Europe. Nicholas was a tutor at our Piano Trio Day at RNCM in 2014.



John Thwaites is currently Head of Keyboard Studies at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. As a performer he has worked with numerous distinguished musicians and ensembles, including working with cellist Alexander Baillie for over 30 years. He has recorded a wide repertoire including a number of discs with the Primrose Piano Quartet and has broadcast frequently on BBC Radio 3. He is course director at the Cadenza International Summer Music School which is held at the Purcell School, and was formerly Head of Piano at Christ's Hospital. John was a tutor at our Piano Trio Day in Gloucester in 2019.

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Timetable for the day

10.00 Chetham's Piano Trio - Chetham's School of Music
Rose McLachlan (piano), Giulia Dainese (violin), Jaume Ferrer Moreno (cello)
Shostakovich Piano Trio no 2, Op 67 - 3rd movement
Mendelssohn Piano Trio in D minor, Op 49 - complete

10.45 Laraiisa Piano Trio - Royal Northern College of Music
Jasmin Allpress (piano), Eliette Harris (violin), Rosie Spinks (cello)
Brahms Piano Trio in B major, Op 8 - 1st and 4th movements
Debussy Piano Trio in G major 2nd and 3rd movements

10 minute break

11.35 Gaskin Piano Trio - Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
Elisabeth Haughan (piano), Alicja Humeniuk (violin), Gen Li (cello)
Frank Bridge Fantasy Trio
Brahms Piano Trio in B major, Op 8 - 1st movement

12.15 Eumelia Trio - Royal College of Music
Mikaela Livadiotis (piano), Auguste Janonyte (violin), Abigail Lorimier (cello)
Rebecca Clarke Piano Trio
Takemitsu "Between Tides"

LUNCH 13.00 - 13.45

13.45 Bernstein Trio - Royal Academy of Music
Ignas Maknickas (piano), María Espino Codes (violin), Jakub Wycislik (cello)
Debussy Trio in G major - 1st and 2nd movements
Brahms Piano Trio in B major, Op 8 - 1st movement

14.25 Undercroft Piano Trio - Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Tom Knowles (piano), Tom Crofton-Green (violin), Maddy Hamilton (cello)
Shostakovich Piano Trio no 1, Op 8
Dvorak Piano Trio no 2 in G minor, Op 26 - 1st and 2nd movements

10 minute break

15.15 Zelius Piano Trio - Guildhall School of Music and Drama
Kerry Waller (piano), Tanja Roos (violin), Ben Tarlton (cello)
Brahms Piano Trio in B major, Op 8 - 1st movement
Shostakovich Piano Trio no 2, Op 67 - 3rd and 4th movements

15.55 Concordia Piano Trio - Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
Deva Rossi (piano), José Matias - violin, Tabitha Selley (cello)
Dvorak Piano Trio no 3 in F minor, Op 65 - 1st movement
Shostakovich Piano Trio no 2, Op 67 - 4th movement

Adjudication, Prizes and Comments 17.00 - 17.30

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The Complete Pianist: from healthy technique to natural artistry

A new book by Penelope Roskell, published by Edition Peters

The Complete Pianist covers all aspects of piano technique including posture, finger touch and tone production, chords, octaves, rotation, lateral movements. Also included are sections on mental preparation, effective practice, sight reading, memorizing; phrasing, rhythm, articulation, sound, pedalling, injury prevention and performance anxiety.

The book is suitable for pianists of all levels, from beginner-intermediate to professional performers and teachers. The book will be available initially as a print version with online videos demonstrating the techniques discussed.

Containing more than 500 pages of text, 300 videos performed by Penelope herself, and 250 newly-devised exercises, this is the most comprehensive book ever written on piano playing.

Penelope Roskell reveals “Why I wrote this book”

“The Complete Pianist grew out of my own experiences as a pianist and piano teacher. In it I describe my approach to piano playing, which is based not only on forty years’ experience of professional playing and teaching, but also on many years of research into anatomy, yoga and other techniques.

As a young pianist, I had a natural talent and passion for playing and performing. My first teacher was a former Matthay student who gave me a strong foundation in healthy playing. However, when I became a full-time music student, I developed back ache, forearm tension and severe thumb pain (De Quervain’s tenosynovitis) after practising Liszt’s second piano concerto with a faulty octave technique. The tension I experienced also adversely affected my sound and restricted my natural ease of expression. I sought advice from teachers, and read most of the available books, but couldn’t find the practical step-by-step guidance I needed to resolve my particular problems. I had to stop playing for several months and, for some years afterwards, had to choose repertoire carefully.

My injury, however, triggered a life-long mission to uncover a healthier approach to playing the piano, which balances and coordinates the body to achieve the fullest musical expression with the minimum of effort.

I knew from my own experience that it wasn’t enough just to tell students to practise more: I needed to be able to explain to them precisely how to play each passage and also why. I devised exercises for my students and, if an exercise proved useful for a number of them, I continued to refine it until I felt it demonstrated the point clearly and effectively.

To develop my understanding further, I studied the anatomy of the hand and arm and worked closely with medical professionals from the British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, who frequently refer injured pianists to me. Much of my research and much of the material in this book, is completely new and, I hope, ground-breaking.

I have been writing this book for over fifteen years, in it, I share the results of a lifetime of original research in the hope that my knowledge and experience will benefit and inspire others and help them to realise their full potential at the piano.”

The book will be published on 20 February 2020. <https://peneloperoskell.co.uk/>

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News from Members

We are delighted to welcome the distinguished Australian pianist and composer **John Carmichael OAM** as a member. John studied in Melbourne before moving to Paris to study with Marcel Ciampi, also studying with Arthur Benjamin and Anthony Milner. In addition to his performances as pianist, John was a pioneer in music therapy, working at Stoke Mandervile and Netherden Mental Hospitals. As a composer, his work has been widely recorded including his Flute Concerto (James Galway) and Trumpet Concerto (John Wallace and the BBC Scottish Symphony Overture) and several recordings of his piano music. His Piano Concerto no 2 received its UK première on January 17 2020 by the St Paul's Sinfonia, with Antony Gray, the dedicatee, as soloist. His recently written Piano Trio will receive its first performance at the Deal Festival 2021 by the Primavera Ensemble. In the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2011, John was awarded the OAM (Medal of the Order of Australia) *'for services to the arts as concert pianist and composer.'* We will be featuring John and his work in a future Newsletter.

We are pleased to welcome back **Penelope Roskell** whose new book is featured on page 6. Penelope has had a varied career as solo pianist, and as a member of her own piano trio, also as Artistic Director of Sutton House Music Society since 1990. However she is widely recognised for the work she has done as a teacher and for her expertise in advising on injury prevention and holistic performance. Indeed her London workshops on healthy piano playing are attended by pianists from around the world.



January was a busy month for the **Gould Piano Trio** which included a tour of USA with clarinettist Robert Plane and with a further tour planned in March. All the members have many other musical commitments so we were interested to learn that pianist Benjamin Frith along with his long-time duo partner Peter Hill have marked the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth with a survey of his complete output for piano four hands recorded on the Delphian label.

Pianist **Angela Brownridge** continues her valuable work with Corporate member **BPSE** when she takes part in a Gala concert on February 18th to mark the start of Beethoven's 250th anniversary in which 35 pianists play 35 Sonatas throughout the year. She will also be taking part in a recital on February 19th at St Mary's Perivale at 7.30pm to honour the 90th birthday of Malcolm Troup, BPSE's one-time President, when she will be performing Debussy's Suite 'Pour le Piano.' In addition to many recitals, lectures and masterclasses in UK, Angela will also be visiting New York and Toronto in April when she will be performing music by Chopin, Liszt and Scriabin.

Brief news from three of our composer members! Please check out their websites for more details.

After extensive work last year on a long sonata for two guitars and his third White Book, the works by **Dr Graham Lynch** will be premièred in US and Finland, whilst a new sax quartet will be premièred in Chile.

Adrian Williams continues his association with the English Symphony Orchestra which will be performing his "Dies Irae for Orchestra" in Worcester Cathedral on 30 May alongside other music by Elgar as part of the Elgar Festival and "Migrations" will start a programme entitled "English Masterpieces" in Malvern Priory on Wednesday 29 April.

Irish composer **Ian Wilson** has a number of premières coming up over the next few months, including **The Seventh Seal**, a double concerto for cello, double bass and string orchestra which will receive its première on 22 April prior to a tour of Ireland.

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Piano Trio Society Vice President - Howard Blake OBE



Portrait by Clive Barda

As a Vice President of our Society since 2016, Howard Blake has supported a number of our events including a weekend in Cambridge which featured his music in 2014 and we are delighted that he has agreed to sponsor our Senior Intercollegiate Piano Trio Competition on 22 March and to present the prizes at the end of the event. He will also present a copy of one of his piano trios to the winning trio.

Although best known to the general public as the composer of music for “The Snowman”, discerning musicians are also well aware of the huge range of music he has composed, including three piano trios and a particularly fine piano quartet. He has written music for a variety of ensembles and a great deal of music for solo instruments, most recently for the cellist Benedict Kloeckner plus much music for solo piano. There are many orchestral works including five symphonies, numerous orchestral suites and many instrumental concerti as well as ballet music. His choral music has proved very popular with choirs, whether unaccompanied or with orchestral or organ accompaniment. Howard has also been a popular composer of music for film and the theatre. His score for the feature film “A month in the country” won the British Film Anthony Asquith Award for Musical Excellence, while the score for “Flash Gordon”, written in collaboration with Queen, received a British Academy Award nomination, and the score for “The Duellists” received a Special Jury Prize at the Cannes Festival 1977 as well as the Ivor Novello Best Score Nomination the same year. In spite of his huge output as a composer, Howard still finds time to perform as both pianist and conductor.

For members who are unaware of the wealth of music available from this talented composer, pianist and conductor, we urge you to explore his website www.howardblake.com