

Chamber Music  
New Zealand

# ~Theme~

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## Latitude 37



Latitude 37 (left to right) Julia Fredersdorff, Donald Nicolson, Laura Vaughan

Recently, I caught up with Donald Nicolson and Julia Fredersdorff from Latitude 37 to chat about how they first became interested in early music, which composers they would have liked to meet, and their upcoming residency at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

**What particularly attracted you to early music? Was there some sort of defining moment when you were younger?**

**Donald:** I myself started in the baroque, rather unusually, in that my father rescued the old Broadcasting House harpsichord when it was auctioned off following the demolition of the building in 1998. Prior to that, I had not foreseen any interest in the music - I was brand new at Victoria University, enrolled in a Composition degree but it certainly didn't take long to make the connection.

Laura was a very talented concert pianist, and finished her degree on the instrument in Melbourne - I seem to recall Schubert (and possibly Percy Grainger) was a favourite.

But Laura was seduced when she first heard the sound of Jordi Savall's viola da gamba in the soundtrack for the French masterpiece of film *Tout le matins du monde*, and she quickly finished up with the ivories and took to the gut.

**Julia:** A defining moment for me was hearing for the first time a CD of Enrico Gatti playing early Italian music. His beautiful sound and musical expression struck a chord with me straight away, and I decided at that point that my goal was to go and find him, and learn from him. The problem was that I knew nothing about him at all; where he lived, whether he taught - nothing!

I decided to go to Europe and search him out, and I eventually tracked him down. Fortunately, he started teaching at the Royal Conservatorium in The Hague the following year so I subsequently went to study with him there.

Interestingly enough, he decided to sell his violin recently, a beautiful Italian violin with the lovely velvety sound that I have always

adored and I was lucky enough to buy it just before leaving Paris to move back to Australia. It has transformed my professional life! I will be bringing this beautiful instrument with me to NZ.

**What composer would you most like to meet, and what would you ask them?**

**Julia:** I would have loved to meet some of the French Composers such as Lully, Charpentier and Couperin. In particular I would have loved to observe the 24 violins of the king, and to walk around 17th Century Versailles. It was such a rich hive of artistic activity.

The other composer I would like to meet is Monteverdi, so that I could ask him to write a few lovely Trio Sonatas for Violin, Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord!

**Donald:** I would definitely love to hear - of course - Mr JS Bach, and if I could Francois Couperin.

Article continued on page 2

## From the Chief Executive



The National Finals of the 2011 NZCT Chamber Music Contest will be held in Hamilton for the first time on 15 and 16 July. This event showcases the wealth of young musical talent that we have in our country. I thoroughly recommend that you make the effort to hear it broadcast or view it via Radio New Zealand's website, and if you are close-by, come and join us live.

Saguaro Trio, featuring John Chen, will be touring the country in July and August following their stint as adjudicators for the National Finals. It does not seem that long ago that John was winning this event himself. They will be performing a new work by Alwyn Westbrooke who John met as a fellow contestant a decade ago. The Trio was launched on to the international stage following their outstanding win in the inaugural Hamburg Chamber Music Competition in 2009. I am really looking forward to hearing them in concert for the first time.

Other musical highlights of this period include Alexa Still with Diedre Irons and Martin Riseley and Latitude 37. A number of these concerts are also part of local and regional festivals. We know that this helps us to attract new audiences to chamber music. The secret is to make them feel so welcome that they will want to return. That's where you can help us.

In July, I will be attending the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition. This event is only held every four years and past winners have included the Eggner and Kungsbacka piano trios and St Lawrence String Quartet. It will be a feast of chamber music and an opportunity for me to reconnect with colleagues from around the world including Igor Naidin (Borodin Quartet), Lesley Robertson (St Lawrence String Quartet) and pianist Piers Lane to name a few of the familiar faces on the jury.

Winter is the perfect time to head indoors and enjoy a musical feast, that's my plan!

**Euan Murdoch**  
Chief Executive

## Latitude 37 continued

I think Laura would take the chance to meet the gamba virtuosi of the French baroque, Messieurs Marin Marais and Antoine Forqueray.

I think the questions we'd ask would probably be universal: "How do you play this piece," and "can you explain what you mean when you write *this*." There are so many unanswered (and perhaps unanswerable) questions when we look at a page from the 18th century. Most frustratingly, the composers themselves never seemed to bother with leaving any information for posterity - Rameau was happy to declare, in one of his mammoth tomes on Harmonic Theory, that "if you disagree with any of the statements I have made, feel free to visit me that we may discuss this!" (or words to that effect.)



In July, the ensemble will be in residence at the early music winter school at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

The Conservatorium, in association with Latitude 37, will present a 3-day school that focuses on the performance practices of early-17th Century Italy - the turning point that created the baroque period.

Over three days participants will closely examine the repertoire, treatises and documentation of early-17th Century Italian music performance. Special attention in masterclasses and lectures will be given to the practice of improvising and interpretation of the score, focusing on the implementation of various techniques which are lacking on the printed score but can be recovered from the many extant sources of the period.

The members of Latitude 37 are recognised as exceptional performers of this repertoire and will be joined by two guest artists; bassoonist Simon Rickard, who will return to discuss the diverse and exotic wealth of instruments in use in the early 17th Century, and Melbourne Conservatorium Convenor of Voice, Stephen Grant, as vocal coach.

### Programme One

**Stylus Phantasticus:  
a soundtrack of the Baroque imagination**

Performed in Auckland, New Plymouth, Palmerston North, Christchurch, Dunedin

Programme One explores the richness of the 17th Century imagination brimming with fantasy and fireworks. Featuring works by Buxtehude, Biber and JS Bach.

**This tour is kindly supported by the Deane Endowment Trust.**

### Programme Two

**Stile Moderno:  
the genesis of the Baroque**

Performed in Hamilton, Napier, Wellington, Nelson, Invercargill

In Programme Two, Latitude 37 take you on a guided tour through the sumptuous world of 17th Century Italy. A hotbed of creativity, it was a century of contrasts as music and art took a dramatic turn after the rigorous limitations of the Renaissance. Including works by Caccini and Frescobaldi plus Latitude 37's own improvisations.

### Concert calendar

New Plymouth <sup>^</sup>	Sun 14 Aug	5pm	Programme One
Wellington	Mon 15 Aug	7.30pm <sup>†</sup>	Programme Two
Christchurch <sup>+</sup>	Thurs 18 Aug	6.30pm	Programme One
Invercargill	Sun 21 Aug	5pm	Programme Two
Dunedin	Mon 22 Aug	7.30pm	Programme One
Nelson	Wed 24 Aug	7.30pm	Programme Two
Auckland	Tues 30 Aug	6.30pm	Programme One
Hamilton	Wed 31 Aug	8pm	Programme Two
Palmerston North	Fri 2 Sept	7.30pm <sup>*</sup>	Programme One
Napier	Sat 3 Sept	8pm	Programme Two

<sup>‡</sup>Free pre-concert talk at 6.30pm

<sup>\*</sup>Free pre-concert talk at 6.45pm

<sup>+</sup>Presented in association with the Christchurch Arts Festival

<sup>^</sup>Presented in association with the Taranaki International Festival of the Arts

# Music in the regions

Czech violin virtuoso **Josef Špaček** (winner of the 2009 Michael Hill International Violin Competition) returns to New Zealand in August with the New York-based **MELER ensemble**. Špaček has just been appointed First Concertmaster of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, a position he takes up in September. New Zealand siblings Amanda (viola) and Aleisha Verner (cello), and US pianist Andrew Tyson make up the rest of the group. They will play in ten centres from Kaitaia to Blenheim, August 9-28.

Romantic works by Schubert and Brahms as well as a piece by New Zealander Eve de Castro-Robinson feature in the **New Zealand Chamber Soloists's** programme. Katherine Austin (piano), Lara Hall (violin) and James Tennant (cello) last performed for CMNZ in 2010. They will perform in Rotorua on 27 August and Tauranga on 28 August.

21-year-old pianist **Jun Bouterey-Ishido** "plays like he's been on this planet for 50 years", according to Australian composer and pianist Ian Munro. In 2008, Jun won top prize at the International Piano Competition in Kerikeri, competing with many others from around the world. He is currently studying piano under Péter Nagy in the Masters Programme at the Hochschule für Musik in Stuttgart, Germany. Jun will give 12 recitals around New Zealand in July and August.

Further details about all our regional artists, including dates of their performances, are on our website: [www.chambermusic.co.nz](http://www.chambermusic.co.nz)

## Hungarian Rhapsodies

Experience the melodies and rhythms of Hungary in a celebration of the bi-centenary of its best known composer, Franz Liszt!

The New Zealand String Quartet and international guest, Péter Nagy, one of the most remarkable pianists to have directly inherited the Liszt piano tradition, perform colourful programmes of Hungarian-inspired chamber music.

The imaginations of Liszt, Beethoven, and Brahms were fired by the passionate, improvisatory gypsy music they heard in the cafes of Budapest and Vienna. Later, Bartók went into the countryside and notated the authentic Hungarian folk tunes that underpin many of his compositions. Dohnányi felt the influence of his native folk traditions within a more European approach, and the innovative Ligeti leaned towards new sonic possibilities.

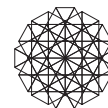
Further information about the tour is on [www.nzsq.co.nz](http://www.nzsq.co.nz)

**"A potent mix of compositional genius—a spicy stew with flavours from Hungary and beyond!"** Cellist Rolf Gjelsten.

## Contest Semis and Finals in Hamilton – coming up

Twelve groups from around New Zealand have been chosen for the National Semi-Finals, which will be held at the WEL Energy Trust Academy of Performing Arts, University of Waikato in Hamilton on Friday 15 July. The groups are The Arensky Trio (Hamilton), Blitz 5 (Auckland), Faultlines (Christchurch), Fuoco Trio (Auckland), Geist (Auckland), The Jones Trio (Christchurch), Menagerie Trio (Napier), Moldau Quartet (Auckland), Moszkowski Trio (Wellington), Mousikos (Dunedin), Zarebski Quintet (Christchurch), and Zingaro (Auckland). Six groups will then be chosen for the National Final on Saturday 16 July at 7pm (to be held at the same venue). The National Semi-Finals and National Final are free events for CMNZ subscribers: simply show your subscription Pass at the door. To order additional tickets, contact Ticketek ([www.ticketek.co.nz](http://www.ticketek.co.nz) or phone 0800 842 538).

A Semi-Finalist Showcase will be held on Saturday 16 July at 2pm at the Wallace Gallery in Morrinsville. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$2 for students. To reserve a ticket, phone 07 889 7791 or visit [www.morrinsvillegallery.org.nz](http://www.morrinsvillegallery.org.nz).



**Chamber Music**  
New Zealand

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# John Chen Returns to New Zealand with the Saguaro Trio



The Saguaro Trio (left to right) Peter Myers, John Chen, Luanne Homzy

The Saguaro Trio started playing together in 2007, when they were all students at the Colburn Conservatory in Los Angeles. They were drawn together by a shared passion for chamber music, even though they did not know if they wanted to build careers in chamber music at that point. But, “we very much enjoyed playing together and further opportunities soon arose”, pianist John Chen explains.

## Programme One

Performed in Dunedin, Nelson, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch

**Alwyn Westbrooke** CMNZ commission

**Ravel** Piano Trio in A minor

**Schubert** Piano Trio No 2 in E flat Opus 100 D929

## Programme Two

Performed in Invercargill, Palmerston North, Napier, Auckland, New Plymouth

**Hummel** Trio No 2 in F Opus 22

**Arensky** Trio No 1 in D minor Opus 32

**Alwyn Westbrooke** CMNZ commission

**Brahms** Trio No 2 in C Opus 87

Only two years after their formation, the Trio won first place at the Hamburg International Chamber Music Competition. John explains: “the Hamburg competition was a taxing experience, mostly because the repertoire was so demanding. We were required to prepare around four hours of repertoire, including six complete trios and three further movements, with only one day in between each of the three rounds. We had also spent the summer in different places, so we only had around three weeks together directly before the competition. But anyway, we rehearsed very hard, sometimes up to eight hours a day, and we miraculously managed to get everything ready.”

Their win in Hamburg afforded them many concert opportunities in Germany, which led to a decision to move to the country in 2010. They are currently studying at the Hamburg Hochschule für Musik und Theater under cellist Niklas Schmidt, who was a member of Trio Fontenay for about 20 years, one of Germany’s most respected chamber ensembles.

Their programme includes a new CMNZ commission by Alwyn Westbrooke. “Alwyn’s composition is extremely difficult, especially to put together!” John comments. “But I know the end effect will be wonderful. It looks to be very dramatic, and full of intense musical gestures.”

“What I love most about our trio is our enjoyment of playing together and our love of music”, John says. “Though we are sometimes very different musicians from each other, there are certain things that we share: a motivation to philosophise over our interpretation of a work, a respect for the composer’s intentions. We also all tend to gravitate towards simplicity, beauty and lyricism.”

## Concert Calendar

Invercargill	Mon 18 July	7.30pm	Programme Two
Dunedin	Wed 20 July	7.30pm	Programme One
Nelson	Sat 23 July	2pm	Programme One
Hamilton	Wed 27 July	8pm	Programme One
Palmerston North	Thurs 28 July	7.30pm*	Programme Two
Napier	Sat 30 July	8pm	Programme Two
Wellington	Wed 3 Aug	7.30pm**	Programme One
Auckland	Fri 5 Aug	8pm+	Programme Two
New Plymouth	Sun 7 Aug	5pm	Programme Two
Christchurch	Wed 10 Aug	6.30pm	Programme One

\*Free pre-concert talk at 6.45pm

\*\*Free pre-concert talk at 6.30pm

+Free pre-concert talk at 7pm

## Christchurch venues

The next three Christchurch concerts – Saguaro Trio, Latitude 37, and Ensemble Liaison – will all be held at the brand new Middleton Grange Performing Arts Centre, Arthur Street. The Centre opened on 31 May, and was the venue for the recent District Contest.