

Chamber Music  
New Zealand

Kaleidoscopes Concert Season 2011

# EGGNER TRIO



# Welcome

Chamber Music New Zealand is proud to open our 2011 season with an ensemble from Vienna, the spiritual home of chamber music.

It is a pleasure to welcome back the dynamic Eggner Trio for their third tour to New Zealand. These talented brothers - Christoph, Georg and Florian - have become firm favourites of audiences down-under for their engaging, joyful and committed music-making.

We acknowledge the generous support of Carolyn and Peter Diessl who have made this tour possible.

Welcome to another year of live chamber music. Without you, our audience, there would be no concert!



**Euan Murdoch**  
Chief Executive,  
Chamber Music New Zealand

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## Message from the Tour Supporters

We are very pleased to support the Eggner Trio again and to continue to foster cultural exchange between Austria and New Zealand.

Following the wonderful reception given to the NZSO late last year in Vienna, and the recent decision to re-open a NZ Embassy in that city, the future looks bright for cultural relations between our two nations.

Gute unterhaltung – Enjoy the concert!

**Carolyn and Peter Diessl**

*As Honorary Consul-General of Austria and a valued Board member of Chamber Music New Zealand and the NZSO, Peter Diessl combines his business expertise with political and diplomatic experience, and he and Carolyn are generous supporters of the Arts in New Zealand.*

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DUNEDIN 18 MARCH    SOUTHLAND 20 MARCH    MANAWATU 23 MARCH  
AUCKLAND 25 MARCH    NEW PLYMOUTH 30 MARCH

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CHRISTCHURCH 17 MARCH    NELSON 21 MARCH    WELLINGTON 24 MARCH  
HAMILTON 27 MARCH    HAWKES BAY 28 MARCH

*The Auckland and Wellington  
concerts will be recorded  
for later broadcast by*



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# Eggner Trio

CHRISTOPH EGGNER – PIANO | GEORG EGGNER – VIOLIN | FLORIAN EGGNER – CELLO



Founded in 1997, the Eggner Trio came to international attention by winning First Prize in the International Brahms Competition in Pörtlach in 1999, then First Prize in the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition in 2003. The Trio was selected for the European Concert Hall Organisation's 'Rising Stars' programme for the 2005-06 season, enabling it to perform at major concert halls around Europe and make its American debut in New York's Carnegie Hall. Highly-acclaimed tours of Australia in 2005 and 2008 and New Zealand in 2006 and 2008 have made the group a favourite of audiences in Australasia, and this year they are again working with young musicians in the 2011 Musica Viva Festival in Sydney.

In addition to its growing repertoire of CDs, the Eggner Trio has recorded for Austrian Radio, German Bavarian Radio, German South West Radio, Radio France, ABC Australia and Radio New Zealand, and made a TV recording for Austrian Television.

**Christoph Eggner** started piano lessons at the age of eight. He received a scholarship to the Bruckner Conservatory Linz, and gave his first solo piano recital at the age of sixteen. In Vienna he studied with Paul Badura-Skoda, Ludwig Hoffmann and Oleg Maisenberg and he has been Maisenberg's assistant since 2000. He has also studied with Brigitte Engerer and Michel Béroff in Paris. Christoph has given recitals in Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Great

Britain, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Luxembourg and Turkey and has been a prize winner in numerous competitions.

**Georg Eggner** started violin lessons at the age of seven, then studied with Boris Kuschnir in Linz and Guenter Pichler in Vienna. He has won first prizes in the national competitions Jugend Musiziert and Prima la Musica (Austria), as well as the international competition Concorso Internazionale di Musica per I Giovani, Stresa (Italy). Georg has given recitals in Austria, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain and Italy.

**Florian Eggner** began his cello studies at the age of seven. He studied with Wilfried Tachezi in Linz, then with Wolfgang Herzer and Stefan Kropfisch in Vienna, and with Clemens Hagen in Salzburg. He was first prize winner in the Austrian competition Prima la Musica in 1996, and has given concerts in the former Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Spain as well as Austria. He is a co-founder of the fusion ensemble 'Table 6' for which he also composes.

## Discography

### **Beethoven: 'Ghost' & 'Archduke' Trios**

Live Classics LCL806

### **Shostakovich & Eroed Trios**

Gramola 98837

### **Mendelssohn Trios Opus 49 & 66**

Live Classics LCL809

# Astor Piazzolla

BORN MAR DEL PLATA, 11 MARCH 1921

DIED BUENOS AIRES, 5 JULY 1992

## **The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires**

*Otoño Porteño: Allegro moderato*

*Invierno Porteño: Lento*

*Primavera Porteña: Allegro*

*Verano Porteño: Allegro moderato*

One of the most remarkable composers to emerge from South America, Astor Piazzolla began lessons with an Argentinian bandoneon player in New York at the age of eight, and made his first television appearance at the age of eleven. Although he was largely self-taught as a musician, he studied both piano and composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Popularly known as the 'King of Tango', Piazzolla regarded Stravinsky, Bartók and Stan Kenton as his idols. He was well-versed in the popular music of Argentina as a result of his many years as a band leader, and his compositions include music for the stage and screen, as well as both chamber and orchestral works.

The first of the 'seasons' to be written was *Verano Porteño*, which Piazzolla recorded in 1965 with his own bandoneon quartet.



The other pieces were composed in 1970, but he rarely performed them as a group. Piazzolla himself arranged them for a variety of instrumental combinations, and there are also versions by others for choir and for violin and orchestra. Tonight's version was arranged for Piano Trio by José Bragato.

The shape of the movements *Primavera* [Spring], *Verano* [Summer] and *Otoño* [Autumn] is similar. In each, two versions of an energetic theme surround a central, reflective section. The other season, *Invierno* [Winter] reverses this, with two expressive, melancholy themes divided by a lively dance, and ending with a reference to Vivaldi's famous orchestral work. For all these pieces, though, the music is quintessential Piazzolla: reflecting the life and soul of his native Buenos Aires.

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*Programme note from  
Chamber Music New Zealand files*

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# Ludwig van Beethoven

BAPTISED BONN, 17 DECEMBER 1770

DIED VIENNA, 26 MARCH 1827

## Piano Trio in B flat Opus 11 'Gassenhauer'

*Allegro con brio*

*Adagio*

*Tema: Pria ch'io l'impegno*  
(*Allegretto*) mit Variationen

The nickname for this work originates from the German word 'Gassenhauer', meaning popular song. The song in question forms the basis of the third movement, which came about when the clarinettist Josef Bähr asked Beethoven to write a set of variations based on the trio 'Pria ch'io l'impegno' ['Before I commit'] from the 1797 opera *L'amor marinaro* [Love among the Sailors] by Joseph Weigl. Beethoven added two more movements, and the work was published in 1798. Originally written for clarinet, cello and piano, it is also commonly performed as a standard piano trio, with some small differences between the violin and clarinet parts in terms of their ranges and chords for the violin. The first movement opens with all three instruments in unison, but a lyrical melody in the piano soon takes over. A wistful and delicate mood is conveyed by



using the string instruments to echo the piano's melodies.

The E flat major *Adagio* begins with a lyrical cello melody that is then taken up by the violin. Modified versions of this poised melody also feature in Beethoven's Piano Sonata Opus 49 No 2 and the Septet Opus 20.

The light and cheery *Allegretto* features the violin, again echoing the piano's statement of the opera tune. As the variations unfold, solo turns in the piano are balanced by teamwork from the violin and cello. Beethoven negotiates a number of mood changes, including brief minor key spells and amusing repetition of small motives in high and low registers. Not even a miniature cadenza or a foray into a foreign key and time signature can stop the piano from finding its way back to some familiar material, just in time for the spirited conclusion.

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Programme note by Jessica Lightfoot

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## Ian Munro

BORN 10 JUNE 1963



Primarily known in New Zealand as a concert pianist, Ian Munro also has an international reputation as a composer after being awarded the Premier Grand Prix at the 2003 Queen Elisabeth International Competition in Belgium for his piano concerto *Dreams*.

The inspiration for his return to composing was the birth of his first child in 1992, and he has written numerous works for children since then. As resident composer with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in 2005 he produced three works, of which *Blue Rags* was nominated for APRA Orchestral Work of the Year and subsequently recorded for ABC Classics. Munro has also been commissioned to write pieces for the Melbourne Chorale and University of New South Wales, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, singer Elizabeth Campbell, the Australia Ensemble and Australian Chamber Orchestra.

As the featured composer for Musica Viva Australia in 2011, his Piano Quintet and Clarinet Quintet will be given their premiere

performances, alongside his String Quartet No 1 'From an Exhibition of Australian Woodcuts' (2009). *Tales of Old Russia* was commissioned by Christchurch's Sunday Classics Incorporated for its 2008 season and is dedicated to Christopher Marshall.

“

I THINK THAT CHAMBER MUSIC AS A WHOLE IS A FASCINATING MEETING POINT BETWEEN THE INTIMACY OF THE SOLOIST AND THE CORPORATE POWER OF THE ORCHESTRA. THE ROLE OF EACH PLAYER IS INDIVIDUALISTIC YET COOPERATIVE, AND THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH THE PLAYERS MUST JOIN TO FORM A NEW INSTRUMENT WHILE RETAINING THEIR IDENTITY.

”

Ian Munro

## **Tales of Old Russia**

*Vassilisa and the Baba Yaga*

*The Snow Maiden*

*Death and the Soldier*

### **The composer writes:**

My piano trio, written for my friends Wilma Smith and David Berlin (as well as me!), is both inspired by and describes in music a selection of Russian folk tales, as collected by the great folklorist Alexander Afanasiev (1826-71) and retold by James Riordan. Russian music has played a big part in my own musical development, as it does for many pianists, and although the trio shows no particular Russian style overall, it does employ a few devices which were favourites of Shostakovich and Prokofiev, both of whom were influenced by folk tales at one stage or another.

The tales themselves are typical of Afanasiev's collection, which cost him his health and wealth after he was persecuted by the state for the often blasphemous (anti-clerical) and subversive (anti-Tsarist) nature of many of the tales. Many of the tales are ancient, like *Fair Vassilisa*, a princess character who reappears in countless stories, along with the baba yagas by whom she manages to avoid being eaten by good luck and good sense.

*The Snow Maiden* is a simple tale of an old childless couple who build themselves a daughter out of snow. She comes to life, delighting them for the winter before suddenly melting away during a fireside dance with her friends in spring. Rimsky-Korsakov based his opera of the same name on a greatly expanded version of the story by Ostrovsky. In *Death and the Soldier*, the versatile character of the common Russian soldier (very like Hasek's Good Soldier Svejk) with native cunning outwits the devils who inhabit a haunted house. In defeating death, the nearby village lives on in a state of perfect health and happiness, in which nobody dies. Like many of the stories, it bears little close scrutiny but has a captivating power in its sheer fantasy. In my piece, the state of grace is represented by a childlike waltz, which suddenly changes to an energetic coda marking the laughter and delight of the listeners as the story-teller wraps up his tales.

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*Biographical note by Jane Dawson*

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## Camille Saint-Saëns

BORN PARIS, 9 OCTOBER 1835

DIED ALGIERS, 16 DECEMBER 1921



Widely known and respected for his musical abilities during his early life, Saint-Saëns was considered an arch-conservative by the time of his death, having been outspoken in his criticism of the prevailing styles of late-Romanticism (as expressed by Wagner and Richard Strauss) and impressionism (particularly the music of Debussy). He was a remarkable student from an early age, and at ten gave his first public recital, at which he reportedly offered to play any of Beethoven's piano sonatas from memory as an encore!

Composition studies with Halevy at the Paris Conservatoire led to the publically-acclaimed performance of his second symphony when he was 18, and at 21 he was appointed to the prestigious position of organist at the church of La Madeleine. His abilities as an organist, and particularly his skill at improvisation, earned him the admiration of the Parisian public as well as Liszt, who became a firm friend.

In the early 1860s, Saint-Saëns taught at the École Niedermeyer in Paris, where he included the music of contemporary composers such as Schumann and Berlioz in the curriculum alongside the acceptable diet of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven. One of his students, Gabriel Fauré, became a strong friend and supporter, and succeeded Saint-Saëns as organist at La Madeleine.

In 1878 he lost both his children, and ten years later his mother, who had single-handedly brought him up, also died. To escape his sad memories, Saint-Saëns embarked on extensive travels through the world, writing several books about his experiences. He was also invited to San Francisco in 1915, to conduct at the celebrations for the completion of the Panama canal. His last few years were spent in Algeria, but the respect in which he was held by the French led to his body being brought back to Paris for a state funeral.

## Piano Trio No 2 in E minor Opus 92

*Allegro non troppo*

*Allegretto*

*Andante con moto*

*Grazioso, poco allegro*

*Allegro*

The Piano Trio in E minor bursts into action with an ardent theme stated by the strings, underpinned by a busy piano accompaniment. Although the movement is in sonata form, the similarity of the main thematic ideas gives the music a continuous, through-composed sound. The central development section is notable for its rhythmic variations and brilliant piano writing.

An unusual time signature of five beats per bar gives the second movement a quirky character that is matched by the off-beat key progression: beginning in E major in 5/8 time, the *Allegretto* becomes an *Allegro* in 5/4, moving to the keys of G sharp minor, followed by A minor.

The *Andante* is the Trio's only slow movement, and is also the shortest, containing only one main musical idea. It is followed by the dance-like *Grazioso*.

To balance the weight of the first movement, the last movement - another *Allegro non troppo* - is a masterpiece of polyphonic writing. Three main themes are gradually introduced and interwoven, ending up as an impressive triple fugue, and the Trio concludes with a triumphant unison statement.

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*Programme note by Jane Dawson*

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## Antonín Dvořák

BORN NELAHOZEVES, NEAR KRALUPY

8 SEPTEMBER 1841

DIED PRAGUE, 1 MAY 1904



By 1883, when the Trio in F minor was composed, Dvořák's compositions were becoming well-known outside the Czech nation, where his songs, chamber music and orchestral pieces had established his reputation. Johannes Brahms had introduced Dvořák to his own publisher Fritz Simrock, who rapidly published much of Dvořák's work, allowing performances to take place abroad.

Dvořák's friends thought it was time for him to leave 'provincial Prague' and move to the musical centre of Vienna. In June of 1882, the music critic Eduard Hanslick wrote to Dvořák: "After such great initial success, your art requires a wider horizon, a German environment, a bigger, non-Czech public." Dvořák was grateful for the offers of help, but felt that moving to Vienna would betray his Czech roots. Although his musical style followed the Austro-German tradition and he longed for international success as an opera composer, he was well aware of the way his people had suffered under

the Habsburgs, and of the continuing animosity of German-speaking people towards Czechs, so he reluctantly chose to remain in Prague. His personal turmoil was increased by the death of his mother in December 1882.

Work began on the Trio in F minor in February 1883 and it was finished on 31 March, though Dvořák substantially revised the music before publication. The work was given its first performance on 27 October 1883 with the composer himself playing the piano.

## Piano Trio in F minor Opus 65

*Allegro ma non troppo*

*Allegretto grazioso*

*Poco adagio*

*Finale: Allegro con brio*

The Trio in F minor is often credited with being Dvořák's best work in the chamber music genre, if not one of the best in his entire output, and his seriousness of purpose is apparent from the very opening theme played by the strings. This turbulent, passionate movement is rich with alternating questioning and answering phrases, and almost orchestral textures. Dvořák brings back the opening theme in the coda, in a particularly poignant rendition.

The *Allegretto grazioso* begins with the strings playing a staccato triplet accompaniment. The piano quickly joins with a charming 2/4 melody, producing a cross-rhythm effect. A more pensive central section features a syncopated accompaniment in the piano of the type that would be played by second and third violins in a lively Slovak dance.

Opening with an eloquent cello solo, the *Poco adagio* returns to the grand scale of

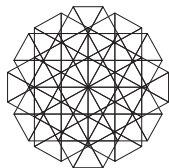
the first movement, now expressed through singing melodies in three-part form, clearly divided by key changes. It opens with a finely expressive cello melody with a bitter-sweet quality.

The Finale, *Allegro con brio*, uses the rhythm of a Czech folk dance, the furiant, with alternations between duple and triple time. The Piano Trio comes full circle as Dvořák introduces a version of the main theme from the first movement, before ending triumphantly.

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*Programme note from  
Chamber Music New Zealand files*

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## Chamber Music New Zealand

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Putaruru 19 March

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Warkworth 2 April

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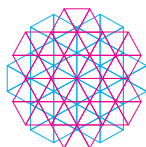
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