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Welcome

Welcome and thank you for joining us this evening for what promises to be one of the musical highlights of the year.

Pinchas Zukerman has been a musical phenomenon for four decades. We are delighted to be collaborating with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra to present maestro Zukerman, with his wife, cellist Amanda Forsyth and colleagues, as the Zukerman Chamber Players.

Tours such as this one do not happen without the generosity of supporters like Carolyn and Peter Diessl. Given their close association with both CMNZ and NZSO, it is very appropriate that they are supporting this tour.

Now sit back and enjoy!



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Euan Murdoch

Chief Executive, Chamber Music New Zealand

Message from the Tour Supporters

We are pleased to support this tour by the Zukerman Chamber Players. It is very exciting to have the legendary Pinchas Zukerman in our country and we congratulate Chamber Music New Zealand and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for working together to make this happen.

‘Gute Unterhaltung’

Carolyn and Peter Diessl

As Honorary Consul-General of Austria and a valued Board member of both 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 NZ.

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NEW PLYMOUTH* 10 AUGUST WELLINGTON 12 AUGUST CHRISTCHURCH 17 AUGUST

*In partnership with the 2009 Taranaki International Festival of the Arts

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AUCKLAND 15 AUGUST DUNEDIN 16 AUGUST NAPIER 18 AUGUST

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Taking photographs or sound and video recordings during the concert is strictly prohibited unless with the prior approval of Chamber Music New Zealand.

Zukerman Chamber Players

Pinchas Zukerman: violin

Jessica Linnebach: violin

Jethro Marks: viola

Ashan Pillai: viola

Amanda Forsyth: cello

The Zukerman Chamber Players was formed by Pinchas Zukerman in 2002, and has earned a stellar reputation for its performances in North America and Europe since then. The group has been featured at prestigious festivals in Ravinia, Tanglewood, Aspen, Verbier, Montreux, Schleswig-Holstein and Tivoli, and has appeared at the BBC Proms in London, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and toured South America and Eastern Europe.

During the 2008-09 season, the Zukerman Chamber Players performed in Israel, Istanbul, and China, and at the December Festival of Lights in Moscow. This is their first visit to New Zealand.

The Players are often joined by guest artists including Lynn Harrell, Benjamin Hochman and Yuja Wang. Two recordings, featuring string quintets by Mozart, Brahms and Dvorak, have been released on the Altara label, and the group has recently teamed up with pianist Yefim Bronfman to record Schubert's Trout Quintet.

“There is that ultimate feeling of satisfaction that passes through the performances from the Zukerman Chamber Players, their self-effacing musicianship never standing between the listener and composer.”

David Denton, Yorkshire Post, 8 August 2008

Virtuoso violinist **Pinchas Zukerman** has been recognised around the world as a phenomenal musician for over forty years. He was born in Tel Aviv, and moved to America in 1962 to study at the Juilliard School with the support of legendary violinist Isaac Stern. By the time he was 20, he had made his New York debut, won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions and was joint winner with Kyung-Wha Chung of the Leventritt Memorial Competition.

Having developed a parallel reputation for conducting, Zukerman was appointed Music Director of Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra in April 1998 and a year later established a training programme for young artists there. In October 2002, he became the first recipient of the Isaac Stern Award for Artistic Excellence at the National Arts Awards Gala in New York City. He also runs a Performance Program at the Manhattan School of Music.

Zukerman has been nominated for 21 Grammy Awards, and won two, including the 1981 award for Best Chamber Music Recording for his duos with Itzak Perlman. He plays the 'Dushkin' Guarnerius del Gesù violin of 1742.

Jessica Linnebach was born in Edmonton and made her solo debut at the age of seven. At the age of ten, she was one of the youngest students admitted to the



Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Aaron Rosand and Jaime Laredo. She subsequently studied with Pinchas Zukerman at the Manhattan School of Music.

Linnebach has twice won the Grand Prize at the Canadian Music Competition, and in 2000 won the Sylva M Gelber Music Foundation Award presented to the most gifted Canadian musician under the age of 30. As a soloist, she has performed with orchestras in Philadelphia, Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, and Vancouver, and she is a first violinist in Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra. Linnebach plays the 'Taft' Stradivarius of 1700, on loan from the Canada Council for the Arts.

Jethro Marks was born in Vancouver and made his solo debut on the violin at the age of 17 with the Loudoun Symphony, Virginia. Soon after he switched his focus to the viola, and studied with Atar Arad at the Indiana University, then Pinchas Zukerman at the Manhattan School of Music. In January 2007, Marks performed the world première of Steven Gellman's Viola Concerto with the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra. He is Associate Principal Violist of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa.

British violist **Ashan Pillai** was born in Sri Lanka and educated at the Royal Academy of Music in

London, the University of Southern California, and the Juilliard School. His principal teachers were John White, Donald McInnes and Karen Tuttle. He has performed as soloist under the batons of Christian Zacharias, Christopher Hogwood, Robert King, Lawrence Foster, and between 1997 and 1999 he made acclaimed debuts in London's Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, and New York's Carnegie Hall. Since 2000 he has been principal viola in the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra and he also teaches at the Barcelona Conservatoire.

Amanda Forsyth began playing the cello at the age of three, after her family moved from South Africa to Canada. She later studied with William Pleeth in London, Harvey Shapiro at the Juilliard School, and Lynn Harrell in Los Angeles. After two seasons with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra she became the youngest principal ever selected by the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, where she remained for six years. In 1999, she was appointed principal cello of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa.

Forsyth is recognised as an eminent recitalist, soloist and chamber musician, appearing with leading orchestras and at prestigious chamber music festivals worldwide. She performs on a 1699 cello by Carlo Giuseppe Testore.

Zoltán Kodály

Born Kecskemét, Hungary, 16 December 1882

Died Budapest, 6 March 1967

MODERNISING HUNGARIAN MUSIC

Today Kodály is celebrated equally as a composer, educationalist and musicologist, but is perhaps most remarkable for his part in developing the musical identity of Hungary. In 1910 he introduced Béla Bartók to the world of folk music, and together they collected and transcribed many thousands of songs and dances. Their intention was to lift Hungarian folk music to a central place in a new, modernist style of composition.

Having had a childhood steeped in both Western chamber music and Hungarian gypsy music, Kodály became proficient on a variety of instruments. Not surprisingly, many of his earliest compositions were for various chamber music combinations, but whereas vocal composition occupied him throughout his long career, all his chamber music was completed before he turned 40.

Composed in 1914 while Kodály was teaching alongside Bartók and Dohnányi at the Academy of Music in Budapest, the Duo for violin and cello was not publicly performed until 1918, when it was played at the first concert devoted solely to Kodály's music. The conservative Budapest musical community, which was immersed in late Romantic music, was not impressed: one critic described the music as "the eccentric, almost perverted, manifestation of a great and muscular, though misguided, talent", and every critic found some different aspect of it to deride.

Two years later, after the overthrow of the Hungarian Republic of Councils, Kodály was accused of leftist views and a lack of patriotism when rival colleagues attempted to oust him from his teaching post - an ironic situation when one considers his utter dedication to the cause of Hungarian music. As Arthur Bliss said in 1960, "the voice of Kodály in music is the voice of Hungary".

It is hard now to see how the critics could have missed the significance of this important and beautiful Duo. Firmly based on diatonic harmony, its divergence from conventional harmonic norms was not great. Perhaps it was Kodály's idea of a tune which offended - the work is rich in glorious melody. It cannot have been his handling of the instruments, which is so masterly it almost amounts to an orchestration, and the realisation of its rich texture calls for skill and virtuosity from the two performers.



Duo for violin and cello Opus 7

Allegro serio, non troppo

Adagio

Maestoso e largamente, ma non troppo lento - Presto

Duo for violin and cello Opus 7

Kodály's improvisational approach to melody is evident throughout the Duo, reminding the listener of his interest in vocal music. Though it is technically cast in sonata form, the first movement sounds like a passionate discourse between violin and cello, displaying a remarkable variety of harmonic tensions for a work employing only two instruments.

The *Adagio* is a rhapsodic fantasia, its mood of despairing melancholy occasionally relieved by the appearance of the fluid and beautiful opening theme.

After a slow introduction that recalls the music of the second movement, the finale links together several attractive Hungarian folk dance tunes with long rhapsodic connecting passages, the whole producing the variety of moods we have now come to expect. The wild excitement of the coda, which develops out of an ostinato figure in the central section, brings the work to an exhilarating conclusion.

Programme note from Chamber Music New Zealand files

Programme One and Two - New Plymouth, Wellington, Auckland, Dunedin, Christchurch, Napier

Ludwig van Beethoven

Baptised Bonn, 17 December 1770

Died Vienna, 26 March 1827

TURBULENT TIMES

Beethoven was well established in Vienna as a freelance musician when he presented a concert in the Burgtheater for his own benefit in 1800. The music included pieces by Mozart and Haydn, as well as two new works of his own: the Symphony No 1 and the Septet Opus 20 for strings and wind. Both works proved to be popular, and one consequence of this worldly fame was an increasing number of requests for new pieces, either from competing publishers or from individual patrons.

At the same time, he was facing a devastating personal loss. It is not known exactly when Beethoven himself started to become aware of a deterioration in his hearing, but it was in June 1801 that he first mentioned it to anyone else. Naturally this was a very delicate matter, especially for a man who depended on musical work to make a living. He confided his despair initially to the doctor Franz Wegeler, an old friend back in his home town of Bonn. In the same letter, though, Beethoven went on to say: "Hardly have I completed one composition when I have already begun another. At my present rate of composing, I often produce three or four works at the same time."

The String Quintet Opus 29 was written early in 1801, during this period of intense activity. Other pieces completed around the same time include the ballet music *Creatures of Prometheus*, two violin sonatas, and four piano sonatas, including the 'Moonlight' sonata. It is clear that he was beginning to challenge the norms of the Classical style at this time, and there is some evidence that he was deliberately setting out to be known for his originality.

The Opus 29 Quintet is dedicated to Count Moritz von Fries, who had probably commissioned it. Fries had sole rights to the work for six months, and during that time gave it to the publisher Artaria. However, Beethoven was unaware of this, and sold the publishing rights to Breitkopf & Härtel in 1802. A bitter dispute ensued, with Fries attempting to mediate a solution and Beethoven publicly denouncing the Artaria edition - for which he had received no payment. After losing a court case, Beethoven was supposed to issue a retraction and compose a new quintet for Fries and Artaria, but he did neither.

String Quintet in C Opus 29 'The Storm'

Allegro moderato

Adagio molto espressivo

Scherzo. Allegro - Trio

Presto - Andante con moto e scherzoso - Tempo 1

String Quintet in C Opus 29

The simple first theme that opens the String Quintet in C Opus 29 is separated from a gentle second theme by a triplet-based bridge passage, and it is not until the development section that the plainness of the material shows its worth, giving Beethoven huge scope to vary and build on both the opening theme and bridge passage music.

The second movement is also in sonata form, though it also has a spacious, song-like character. An extensive coda returns to ideas explored during the development section.

For a *Scherzo*, the third movement is very relaxed, with a skipping three-note figure appearing throughout both the main section and the more streamlined *Trio*.

After this beauty and elegance, the final movement is pure drama, and it is not surprising that its mercurial nature led to the Quintet acquiring the nickname 'The Storm' in Germanic countries. It is overtly virtuosic for the first violin, but also demands virtuoso ensemble playing from the rest of the musicians. The development section is noted for the introduction of a heavy-footed dotted-rhythm idea in the second viola - in 2/4, against the 6/8 of the other instruments. Shortly before the end of the development, the headlong rush is suspended while the performers are diverted by a waltz-like *Andante* in 3/4. This reappears briefly in the coda, before an exhilarating final flourish.

Programme note from Chamber Music New Zealand files

Programme One - New Plymouth, Wellington, Christchurch

Antonín Dvořák

Born Nelahozeves, 8 September 1841

Died Prague, 1 May 1904

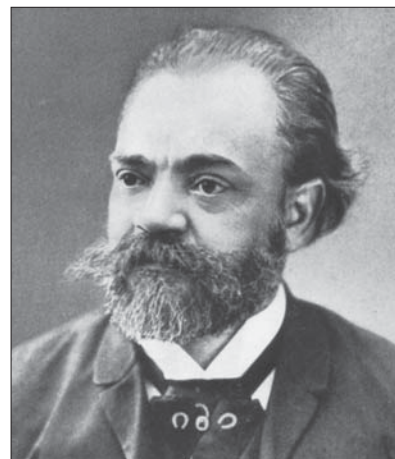
String Quintet in E flat Opus 97

Allegro non tanto

Allegro vivo

Larghetto

Finale: Allegro giusto



AMERICAN STYLE

In 1885 the wife of a well-to-do merchant in New York, Jeanette Thurber, founded the National Conservatory of Music in America which was open to all races and creeds. She was hoping to establish an American 'school' of composition and wanted Dvořák to be the Director because of his association with the development of a Czech musical identity. After much deliberation and an initial refusal, Dvořák responded to her pleas and arrived in New York in 1892. He had with him his family and his secretary, Joseph Kovařík. Before his arrival, Jeanette Thurber had asked him to compose a Te Deum, to be played as part of the celebrations that year for the 400th anniversary of Columbus's journey to America.

Dvořák found New York very difficult to get used to – at heart he was a country gentleman – and he avoided all social functions there if he could. Fortunately Kovařík's father was the schoolteacher at a rural Czech community in Spillville, Iowa, and it was here that Dvořák escaped to when the New York winter proved too much for him to bear.

The job provided him with a large salary and light duties as a composition teacher and conductor, and gave him time to explore the music of America. After listening to spirituals and plantation songs sung by African Americans, and the melodies and rhythms of Native American peoples, he identified musical elements such as pentatonicism (based on five-note scales containing no semitones), syncopation, plagal cadences and drone bass lines as features of an American style. The main works he composed while in America - including the 'New World' Symphony, the 'American' Quartet Opus 96, and the Quintet Opus 97 - all display these elements.

Composed in 1893 straight after he had finished the Quartet, the Quintet in E flat Opus 97 was written during a summer holiday Dvořák took in Spillville, and was first performed in New York in January 1894.

String Quintet in E flat Opus 97

After a solemn introduction, the *Allegro* first movement has a folk-like energy. The following movement is a light scherzo, and the repeated notes of the accompaniment are said to emulate drum beats that the composer heard in the music of the Iroquois nation.

The 400th anniversary celebrations inspired Dvořák to compose what he hoped might become an American national anthem, and although that didn't happen, he used the song as the basis for the *Larghetto*. The lovely double theme is followed by five variations. An energetic *rondo* concludes this sun-filled work.

Programme note from Chamber Music New Zealand files

Programme One - New Plymouth, Wellington, Christchurch

“Dr Dvořák has once again proclaimed his belief in the possibility of imparting an American character to music. His themes are redolent of the cotton fields and the river valleys of the South ... and in the finale of the quintet we are brought to realize that Dr Dvořák has heard some of our music hall ditties, and decided that they are of the people. Here, indeed, he approaches triviality; but it is the trifling of a genius that has found a new plaything. Whatever may be the general opinion as to the Americanism of these works, it can be safely said that Europe has given us nothing which resembles them in thematic material, and we may be thankful that Dr Dvořák came to America if he was able to find inspiration here for such lovely compositions.”

New York Times, 14 January 1894

Felix Mendelssohn

Born Hamburg, 3 February 1809

Died Leipzig, 4 November 1847



MULTI-TALENTED MUSICIAN

Schumann's description of his fellow composer and compatriot Mendelssohn as "the Mozart of the nineteenth century" is easy to understand: in fluency of utterance, Mendelssohn did indeed appear the most gifted of composers then living. His personal attributes – he was handsome, wealthy and charming – also stamped him as the darling of the gods, and it was only in the last years of his short life that ill-health and misfortune overtook him.

An outstanding keyboard virtuoso, Mendelssohn also played the violin and viola to a professional level, as testified to by Ferdinand Hiller, with whom he shared the viola parts in a Leipzig performance of one of Spohr's double quartets: "He never touched a string instrument the whole year round, but if he wanted he could do it – as he could do most other things".

By 1836, Mendelssohn was acclaimed throughout Europe as one of the most talented conductors and composers of his generation, and was newly appointed as Director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus. His first oratorio, *St Paul*, was performed that year in Düsseldorf, and was hailed as a revival of that genre. On his journey to Düsseldorf, he met the 19 year old Cécile Jeanrenaud, and during their courtship he began work on a second oratorio, *Elijah*.

The couple was married in Frankfurt on 28 March 1837, and for the first four years of married life the Mendelssohns lived in Leipzig, where Felix developed his interest in reviving the music of earlier composers, most notably JS Bach. But he was also increasingly in demand across Europe and in England, and travelled extensively during the last eight years of his life, conducting and composing music for festivals.

His String Quintet No 2 was written during Mendelssohn's summer holiday in 1845, a year before the successful première of *Elijah* in Birmingham. He was apparently unhappy with the structure of the Quintet's final movement, and set the work aside, presumably intending to return to it later. It was published posthumously in 1951.

String Quintet No 2 in B flat Opus 87

Allegro vivace

Andante scherzando

Adagio e lento

Allegro molto vivace

String Quintet No 2 in B flat Opus 87

Although Mendelssohn was only 36 when he wrote the Quintet in B flat, it is a mature work that amply demonstrates his skill for crafting large scale structures, and his talent for exploring texture as a shaping force.

The soloistic opening melody, with its intense semiquaver accompaniment, sets the tone for an impassioned first movement, with a calmer descending second theme providing a counter-balancing lyricism. The open texture of the elegant *Andante scherzando* is more measured than many of Mendelssohn's scherzo movements, but is no less exquisite for that.

In contrast, the substantial *Adagio* has a veiled, emotionally reserved quality. The composer's interest in contrapuntal techniques and music of the Baroque period are in evidence, alongside a return of the intensity from the opening of the first movement.

The final movement has a straightforward energy, interspersed with moments of conversational repose. Mendelssohn may not have been satisfied with its structure, but it provides an effective foil for the preceding emotional journey.

Programme note from Chamber Music New Zealand files

Programme Two - Auckland, Dunedin, Napier

Johannes Brahms

Born Hamburg, 7 May 1833

Died Vienna, 3 April 1897

String Quintet No 2 in G Opus 111

Allegro non troppo, ma con brio

Adagio

Un poco allegretto

Vivace ma non troppo presto

A SWANSONG

In December 1890, Brahms sent to his publisher, Fritz Simrock, an alteration to the finale of his String Quintet in G. The accompanying letter stated: "With this note you can take leave of my music, because it is high time to stop". Brahms was at the height of his powers and his fame, but felt that he had done all he wanted to do musically, and said all he wanted to say. Despite his note to the publisher, the Quintet in G was not to be Brahms's swansong. Far from taking on the hues of autumn, the work is as fresh and vigorous as anything Brahms ever composed, and was followed by other significant works including the Four Serious Songs, two clarinet sonatas, and numerous piano pieces.

The Quintet in G was composed during the summer of 1890 while Brahms was on holiday at his favourite spa town, Bad Ischl. Brahms had had the idea for some time of composing a companion piece to his Quintet in F Opus 88, and his friends, particularly Joseph Joachim, had been encouraging him. In August he wrote to Clara Schumann, "the first quintet is a really beautiful piece – for heaven's sake don't expect anything better or even equal to it".

Once he had completed the score, some of his friends were dismayed: the technical complexity of much of the writing made it difficult to perform, and there were questions of balance, particularly in the first movement. But Elisabeth von Herzogenberg, one of Brahms's most trusted advisors, was enthusiastic. She wrote: "The wonderful clarity and extreme pithiness are very telling. The formal elements stand out because they say exactly what is necessary; each fills a specific role and expresses it perfectly. Everyone could learn so much from the quintet if not overwhelmed by the pure pleasure of it. If I could only hear it soon."



String Quintet No 2 in G Opus 111

The first movement opens with the cello valiantly trying to assert itself against the clamouring higher strings. The wide-ranging cello line can scarcely be heard over the other strings (obstinately marked *forte*), yet it persists, and this heroic theme pervades the entire movement. The violas, followed by the violins, introduce an elegant Viennese theme, and it is the interplay between the heroic and agitated first theme and this elegant and relaxed second theme that provides the musical drama of the movement.

After the symphonic grandeur of the first movement, the *Adagio* second movement, in D minor, provides an extraordinary contrast. The theme is a melancholy song, which is varied three times with increasing passion before a final restatement of tragic resignation.

The G minor third movement, *Un poco allegretto*, has waltz-like elements, and seems at first to have been caught under the tragic spell of the second movement. The trio section, in G major, offers a welcome contrast as the sun comes out and the mood lifts. After the reappearance of the sombre opening material, the trio music returns once more to end the movement.

The finale is an Austro-Hungarian *tour de force*, an urbane cross-pollination of Viennese wit and elegance with gypsy-like melodies and dance rhythms. The first theme, a kind of *czardas*, contrasts with the melodic second theme, and the two combine for a joyful romp homeward in the closing bars.

Programme note by Roger Smith

Programme Two - Auckland, Dunedin, Napier

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