



NEWSLETTER 7 – September 2023

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**ARGYLE TRIO
SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER at 2:30pm**

**RAUMATI CHURCH, KAPITI UNITING PARISH: 10 WEKA ROAD, RAUMATI
PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE**

Because this is a smaller venue, we may have only a limited number of tickets at the concert door. Members are urged to buy tickets in advance.



From left: Laurence Matheson (piano), Wilma Smith (violin), Matthias Balzat (cello).

In February 2020, just before the world changed with the Covid pandemic, Wilma Smith arranged a few trio concerts, mainly to keep brilliant Kiwi cellist, Matthias Balzat, busy in Australia for a few weeks. She had brought him all the way from Düsseldorf, where he was studying, to play for her Wilma & Friends series and she wanted the long and expensive journey to be worth his while. So, enter Laurence Matheson, a frequent collaborator with Wilma and many of Australia's eminent and emerging chamber musicians. Matthias and Laurence hit it off and the trio chemistry was pure gold so they decided to do more playing together.

In New Zealand, their planned concert for our 2020 Season was disrupted by Covid related travel restrictions and Michael Houstoun very kindly agreed to step in and save the group's New Zealand tour. This year we have the pleasure of presenting the original Argyle line up with an outstanding programme of Beethoven, Smetana and Dvořák music.

[This concert is generously supported by the Deane Endowment Trust]

THE PERFORMERS

Wilma Smith. Following a long and celebrated career as Concertmaster of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Wilma now focuses on chamber music and guest-performing opportunities with Australian and New Zealand orchestras. She plays regularly with the Australian World Orchestra, where she works with distinguished conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle and Zubin Mehta. Born in Fiji and raised in New Zealand, Wilma studied at the New England Conservatory in Boston and worked regularly with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. She is Co-Artistic Director of the annual Martinborough Music Festival and is on the Board of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

Laurence Matheson. One of Australia's most exciting young musicians, Laurence is in demand across the country as a soloist, chamber musician and collaborative pianist. He studied at the Australian National Academy of Music as one of their youngest ever students and became a Fellow of the Academy in 2016 after winning the Directors' Prize. Laurence has a particular passion for chamber music and has performed with many Australian chamber groups as well as being a mentor and pianist for many of Australia's promising young violinists. Aside from piano, Laurence has also play-directed multiple concerto projects from the keyboard, and is an accomplished harpsichordist.

Matthias Balzat. Although New Zealand remains the place of birth and childhood to him, Matthias is a well travelled cellist. He graduated at the University of Waikato with his Bachelor degree at the age of seventeen and continues his studies at the Robert Schumann Hochschule für Musik in Düsseldorf. Matthias can be found on stage throughout Europe, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, and more, and is a seasoned performer as both a soloist and chamber musician, performing a large repertoire including several contemporary works commissioned for him. A nine family member musical group have played and toured the globe, entertaining audiences of Folk, Celtic and beyond.

PROGRAMME

Beethoven	Piano Trio in C minor, Opus 1 No 3
Smetana	Piano Trio in G minor, Opus 15
Dvořák	Piano Trio in E minor, Opus 87

The programme opens with one of Beethoven's earliest chamber works, written when he first moved to Vienna hoping to make an impression on the city's musical elite. The C minor trio is the most powerful of the three works in his Opus 1, influenced by the stormy style of earlier decades.

The trio by Smetana was written for a very different reason. Following the death of his infant daughter in 1855, Smetana immediately began writing this piano trio, dedicating it "in memory of our eldest child Bedřiška whose rare musical talent gave us such delight".

In contrast, Dvořák's "Dumky" Trio has a constant mix of emotions in its six movements. "Dumky" means "a fleeting thought" and the music constantly fluctuates between brooding melancholy and sharply contrasting interludes of lively dance-like exuberance.

ĀKARANA QUARTET



The August concert was the first in our temporary alternative venue of the Raumati Kapiti Uniting Church. The wonderful Ākarana Quartet, together for the first time during this year, was received by a full hall with great acclaim. During practice (pictured above) they proclaimed the hall acoustics as being very good and the audience obviously felt the same. The programme was very much enjoyed, Mozart and Bridge followed by an interesting new piece by New Zealand composer Janet Jennings. The highlight of the programme was the magnificent Dvořák Quartet No 2 played brilliantly by the group. In his introduction cellist Chen Cao described how playing this work during the Covid lock down period in 2020 kept him "sane", and forewarned the audience that they might expect tears during the exquisite second movement, where the cello plays such a poignant role. He was right. Altogether this was a most memorable afternoon shown by prolonged and enthusiastic applause.

BELLA HRISTOVA AND MICHAEL HOUSTOUN

A slightly smaller but no less enthusiastic audience enjoyed our special, extra concert a week after Ākarana. Bella comes to New Zealand with an international reputation for her passionate, powerful performances and beautiful sound, to record a programme of Poulenc, Ravel and Fauré sonatas, accompanied by Michael Houston. They played the same programme for our concert in August, that so delighted our audience. It is planned to release a CD of this music in due course. In the meantime Bella and Michael earlier recorded the complete (three, Opus 78, 100 and 108) violin sonatas of Brahms and this CD will be released soon.

CONCERT NOTES: OUR OWN MUSIC PROGRAMME on COAST ACCESS RADIO 104.7FM

The August programme will feature the Argyle Trio and the music of Beethoven, Smetana, Dvořák and other Czech composers.

Programme broadcast on Tuesday 29 August at 6pm and Thursday 31 August at 11.30am. To replay this programme, go to our website <https://www.waikanaemusic.org.nz> and click on the Concert Notes link on the front page. If you have music you would like to hear on Concert Notes, email concertmanager@waikanaemusic.org.nz

CONCERT ARRANGEMENTS

Tickets cost \$40 for non-members, \$30 for members, and \$5 for students aged up to 25. Buy in advance from New World (Waikanae) or Moby Dickens (Paraparaumu Beach) for cash; by direct credit to 02 0591 0018930 00 (use your name and phone number as the reference) or phone 022 345 5316 (credit card).

The doors open at 1:45pm. The concert starts at 2:30pm. Latecomers may not be admitted until a suitable break in the performance.

Photography and sound recording of our concerts are strictly forbidden.

Large print programmes are available. Please ask at the concert door.

Mobile Phones must be switched to mute or turned off entirely before the concert begins.

RAUMATI CHURCH HALL CONCERTS: TRANSPORT AND PARKING

Should Waikanae concertgoers need transport to the Raumati venue please ring Don Mathieson on 04 904 1260 who will coordinate transport arrangements.

There is ample parking outside the church but none inside the church grounds. Vehicle access to the hall door for disability drop offs will be available but vehicles will have to park outside.

NEW TELEPHONE NUMBER

The Society now has a new telephone number. For information about us and our activities please ring (022) 345 5316.

OCTOBER CONCERT: NEW ZEALAND STRING QUARTET WITH DIEDRE IRONS

Celebrating its 36th season the New Zealand String Quartet has established an international reputation for its insightful interpretations, compelling communication and dynamic performing style. The Quartet is known for its imaginative programming and for its powerful connection with audiences of all kinds. As well as performing they teach at the New Zealand School of Music where they have been Quartet in Residence since 1991.

Their wide-ranging programme opens with Haydn's famous "Emperor Quartet" followed in total contrast by Shostakovich's frequently dark and dramatic 5th Quartet. Members of the Quartet enjoy collaborating with other musicians, one of whom is popular pianist Diedre Irons. Together they will perform a piano quintet by Amy Beach, a composer and pianist born in 1867 and considered to be one of the finest American composers of her time. Composed in 1907 this very attractive quintet is in the late Romantic style.

Please note this concert is scheduled to be performed in the Waikanae Memorial Hall.