

Ahi

Katherine Austin - piano, Lara Hall - violin, James Tennant - cello

Gareth Farr

Ahi was commissioned by the James Wallace Charitable Trust for the Ogen Trio. Its title is the Maori word for "fire". Ahi receive its debut performance in Auckland in March 1998 in the presence of the composer. The style of the music varies from movements to movement: the flavour of a French lullaby predominates in the first; an intense, unrelenting second movement entitled Scherzo seems as if it might contain overtones of a Russian military factory; and a Balinese-inspired fourth movement finale clearly refers to the gamelan. The brief third movement is a quiet interlude, with melodic reference to the first movement.

Note by the composer

Wellington-born Gareth Farr is recognised as one of New Zealand's most important composers. At 25, Gareth became Chamber Music New Zealand's youngest composer-in-residence. Since then, his works have been performed by the NZSO, the Auckland Philharmonia, the Wellington Sinfonia, the New Zealand String Quartet and a variety of other professional musicians.

Acknowledgments

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New Zealand Chamber Soloists

Academy of Performing Arts staff



Patron: Dame Gillian Whitehead DNZM, MNZM, Arts Laureate 2000

Artistic Directors: Martin Lodge and Michael Williams

Okta is the specialist contemporary music ensemble of the University of Waikato Music Programme. It was founded in 2001 by composers Martin Lodge and Michael Williams, with the inaugural concert taking place in May 2002. Okta's home is the Gallagher Concert Chamber in the WEL Academy of Performing Arts. Okta takes its name from an old transliteration of the Greek word for eight. In traditional numerology, the number seven signifies completeness, including the four elements plus the three spiritual essences. Number eight – Okta - consequently signifies a new beginning but also an embracing of the past. Okta presents a wide spectrum of artistic styles and approaches in its concert events and its programming deliberately encompasses divergent aesthetic positions. Repertoire performed ranges from established twentieth century classics to very recent work, with a special emphasis on the inclusion of multimedia pieces and work involving computer technology.

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7.30PM FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER 2011
DR JOHN GALLAGHER CONCERT CHAMBER
GALLAGHER ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS

Arts & Social Sciences
Te Kura Kete Aronui



Programme

Piano Sonata No. 4 in F Sharp Major, Op. 30

Alexander Scriabin (1872-1915)

Andrew Leathwick – Piano

i. Andante – ii. Prestissimo Volando

Of Scriabin's ten sonatas, this sonata is the shortest, lasting only eight minutes. Its two movements are linked by an attacca, the first flowing straight into the second. The rest of Scriabin's sonatas written after this work all consist of just a single movement. The first movement of this sonata is expressive and erotic, while the second is ecstatic and climactic, emotions and feelings whose expression was made possible by Scriabin's developing harmonic language. Not only is progress in his condensation of the sonata revealed in this work, but also hints of his developing harmonic language are betrayed. While this sonata is tonal, the development of his harmonic language would lead him to forsake the key signature from the next sonata onwards. **Note by the performer**

37 nights in Scotsman Valley.

Kotaro Nishishita

Kotaro Nishishita - guitar

i. Full moon night - ii. Prayer - iii. March

The piece *37 nights in Scotsman Valley* is the experience of one human being expressed in sound. The piece is inspired by the atmosphere of a full moon night, conjuring dark and mysterious, yet beautiful feelings. I tried to combine within this composition an element of the natural world along with human will and emotion. *Full moon night* evokes the tranquility of the valley, the shadows of trees cast by the moonlight, the sound of wind and crickets and the sense of awe nature can inspire. *Prayer* reflects the process of accepting feelings that one did not want to accept. In *March* I intended to put both feelings inspired by nature and human emotions around battling with ones' own will into the piece. **Note by the composer**

Nga ha o nehera

Gillian Whitehead

Ben Hoadley - bassoon

Nga ha o nehera, which translates from the Maori language as 'a breath from the past', was commissioned by and written for Ben Hoadley, with financial assistance from the Becroft Trust. Ben Hoadley gave the piece its first performance at the International Double Reed Convention in Melbourne in 2004. *Nga ha o nehera* is a five-movement suite, written after a taonga puoro wananga at Ohinemutu on the shores of Lake Rotorua. The first movement is 'Nga ha o nehera', meaning a breath from the past, the second, 'puna wera', describes the continual welling up of hot water from a spring at the edge of the lake, and the third, 'Mokoia', suggests the soundscape of Mokoia Island, which, as well as a major historical site, is also a bird sanctuary. The fourth movement He purakau, recounts a folk-story – not a specific tale, but suggesting the elements of all strong stories, and the last movement, 'Ohinemutu', locates the piece in place, and suggests something of the story of Hinetekakara, the ancestress of the Te Arawa people, whose untimely death gave the place its name. **Note by the performer**

Dame Gillian Whitehead DNZM, MNZM, is one of New Zealand's most respected senior composers. Born in Hamilton, she is the patron of Okta, and we are pleased offer this performance as contribution to her 70th birthday celebrations this year.

The Story of Avril

Mark Austin

Heidi Lovatt - clarinet, Lara Hall - violin, James Tennant - cello, Katherine Austin - piano

The Story of Avril is a musical narrative about the absurd life of a cow with no neck, which, when the composer's wife was a girl, was grazed on the hillsides near her family's farmhouse in the King Country. Avril, the family pet and milk-cow, could only feed on a slope and enjoyed having her lower back scratched with a yard broom (because she couldn't reach it with her tongue like other cattle). As often happens with farm pets in New Zealand, she was eventually sent to the freezing works. *The Story of Avril* follows her ironic and euphoric journey from birth all the way to an imagined afterlife celebrating the bovine joy we can hope Avril's spirit may have experienced once free of her imperfect body!

Note by the composer

Mark Austin is driven by a passionate appreciation of honesty and directness and a quest to find meaning and resonance in the outwardly humble acts of everyday life. Mark celebrates individuality and original thought and cherishes the humour in all things. He was in several original bands in the early 1980s and was particularly well known in Wellington as leader of alternative new wave group *The Tin Syndrome*. Since then he has written music for film, dance, and theatre (often taking the role of Musical Director), and composed for over 250 soundtracks, employing a wide variety of instrumentations.

Strictly No Admittance WORLD PREMIERE

Phillippa Ulenberg

Ben Hoadley - bassoon

Rotorua: an exquisitely beautiful sunset of golden, orange, red, deep purple shadows, a warm geothermal lake in which to soak, ancient silence, an unsurpassed natural setting shared with a few good friends . . . the location is also strictly out-of-bounds and patrolled by security guards . . . Trespassing in the officially closed area, thanks to the privilege of local knowledge that made it possible, inspired the idea of transgressing the normal concert qualities and techniques expected of the bassoon for *Strictly No Admittance*. Two sound effects are produced by blowing and articulating through the crook with the reed removed.

A range of multiphonics is used, some are high and ethereal while others are loud and raucous. Subtle effects are achieved by alternating different fingerings for the same note, which produces shades of pitch, both light and dark.

The musical narrative moves through mist and hissing steam, mud bubbling and spitting, an otherworldly experience that transcends time, and inevitably, being caught out. In spite of this, it is the quality of the peace and beauty of the experience that remains etched in memory. **Note by the composer**

Phillippa Ulenberg has recently completed an MMus degree in composition at Waikato University and is now a PhD candidate. *Strictly No Admittance* was written especially for Ben Hoadley.