

Guest Ensemble Concert:

2024-02-21 – Fidelio Trio



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School of Music



GUEST CHAMBER RECITAL

The Fidelio Trio

Darragh Morgan, *violin*

Tim Gill, *violoncello*

Mary Dullea, *piano*

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 7:30pm
Voxman Music Building Concert Hall

CENTER FOR NEW MUSIC
David Gompper, *director*
Season 58, Concert 7

Fidelio Trio

Darragh Morgan, *violin*
Tim Gill, *violoncello*
Mary Dullea, *piano*

PROGRAM

A Thousand Mornings (2020)

Anna CLYNE

Arrowhead (world premiere) (2023)

Piers HELLAWELL

Piano Trio (2010)

David GOMPPER

INTERMISSION

Trio for Piano, Violin & Violoncello (1914)

Maurice RAVEL

I. Modéré

II. Pantoum (Assez vif)

III. Passacaille (Très large)

IV. Final (Animé)

ABOUT THE ARTISTS



The ...virtuosic **Fidelio Trio**... (*Sunday Times*) are Darragh Morgan, violin, Tim Gill, cello and Mary Dullea, piano. Shortlisted for the 2016 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards, The Fidelio Trio broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3, RTÉ Lyric FM, WQXR, and have been featured on a Sky Arts documentary.

Since their debut at London's Southbank Centre, they have regularly appeared at the Wigmore Hall and Kings Place, at festivals including Spitalfields, Cheltenham, St. Magnus, and Huddersfield. In Ireland they regularly perform at National Concert Hall, Dublin, Kilkenny Festival and Belfast Festival as well as Shanghai Oriental Arts Centre, Beijing Modern Music Festival, Hong Kong Chamber Music Society, Singapore, Bangkok, Porto, Paris, Venice, Florence, Johannesburg, Harare, New York City, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Boston. Their 2023/24 season includes performances at Dark Music Days Iceland, an extensive USA tour including National Sawdust New York and Andy Warhol Museum Pittsburgh, Les Jardins Musicaux Neuchâtel and Hay Festival.

Their extensive discography includes a *Gramophone Magazine* Editor's Choice and Critics' Choice 2022 of Chamber Music by E J Moeran, a composer with whom they are closely associated and the release of premiere recordings on Mode Records of music by Gerald Barry. Forthcoming in 2024 is a portrait CD of Xiaogang Ye. Other significant releases include 2 French albums of Ravel and Saint-Saëns, Fauré, Chausson and Satie; Philip Glass *Head On & Pendulum* on Orange Mountain; Korngold and Schoenberg (*Verklärte Nacht* arr. Steuermann) for Naxos; the complete Michael Nyman Piano Trios for MN Records; multiple releases on NMC, Delphian Records including portrait CDs for composers such as Luke Bedford, Piers Hellawell and Michael Zev Gordon. Their previous release of French Piano Trios for Resonus was also a *Gramophone Magazine* Editor's Choice.

The Fidelio Trio have given masterclasses at Peabody Conservatory, Curtis Institute, NYU, Central Conservatory Beijing, and Stellenbosch Conservatorium South Africa. They have been artists-in-residence at St. Patrick's College Dublin City University, University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, the State University of New York, SUNY and Tufts University, Boston.

Composers that the Trio have premiered music by include Anna Clyne, Toshio Hosokawa, Charles Wuorinen, Johannes Maria Staud, Michael Nyman, Gerald Barry, Donnacha Dennehy, Micheál Ó Súilleabháin, Joe Cutler, Ann Cleare, Judith Weir, David Fennessy, Kevin Volans. Gavin Higgins, Linda Buckley, Tom Coult, John Harbison, Sam Perkin, Sebastian Adams, Claudia Molitor, Shirley Thompson, Richard Baker, Robert Saxton, Simon Bainbridge and Alexander Goehr.

Artists the Fidelio Trio have performed with include Nicholas Daniel (oboe), Michael Collins and Julian Bliss (clarinet), Richard Watkins (horn), Joan Rodgers and Patricia Rozario (soprano), Jane Atkins (viola), author Alexander McCall Smith, T.S. Eliot prizewinning poet Sinéad Morrissey and actor Adrian Dunbar. They have developed work in collaboration with Rambert Dance Company and feature in the film of Sir Kenneth MacMillan's Sea of Troubles with Yorke Dance Project.

They often perform Beethoven's Triple Concerto including recently with KZN Philharmonic Orchestra South Africa and National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland and are Artistic Directors of their annual Winter Chamber Music Festival at Belvedere House, Dublin City University.

This concert is made possible through the support of the Center for New Music and the UI String Quartet Residence Program (Elizabeth Oakes, director).



This tour was sponsored in part by Culture Ireland

PROGRAM NOTES AND COMPOSERS BIOGRAPHIES

Anna Clyne (b. 1980) “A Thousand Mornings” (2020)

Commissioned by Penny Wright & Andrew Neubauer, written for and premiered by The Fidelio Trio. Composed in the height of the COVID-19 Lockdown in 2020, *A Thousand Mornings* draws inspiration from a poem by Mary Oliver of the same title. The short but evocative poem is written as a stream of consciousness, a process that is mirrored in the music, which moves in twists and turns between different musical realms. In her poem, Oliver reminds us of the beauty and predictability of nature and that we will always get through difficult and dark times.

“A Thousand Mornings”
All night my heart makes its way
however, it can over the rough ground
of uncertainties, but only until night
meets and then is overwhelmed by
morning, the light deepening, the
wind easing and just waiting, as I
too wait (and when have I ever been
disappointed?) for redbird to sing”

Mary Oliver (1935-2019)

Described as a “composer of uncommon gifts and unusual methods” in a New York Times profile and as “fearless” by NPR, GRAMMY-nominated Anna Clyne is one of the most in-demand composers today, working with orchestras, choreographers, filmmakers, and visual artists around the world. Clyne was named by Bachtrack as one of the top ten most performed contemporary composers in the world and the most performed living female British composer in both 2022 and 2023.

Clyne has been commissioned and presented by the world’s most dynamic and revered arts institutions, including the Barbican, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Los Angeles Philharmonic, MoMA, Philharmonie de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, San Francisco Ballet, and the Sydney Opera House; and her music has opened such events as the Edinburgh International Festival, The Last Night of the Proms, and the New York Philharmonic’s season.

Piers Hellawell (b. 1956) - Arrowhead (world premiere) (2023)

This piano trio was written in spring of 2023 for the Fidelio Trio, and premiered by them at the The University of Iowa, on 21 February 2024.

Although I have worked extensively with Fidelio Trio for some years, I had never written for them a ‘pure’ trio: they have toured my 2008 Etruscan Games widely, and recorded it - but it was written for other musicians. Their 2016 commission *Up By The Roots*, meanwhile, is a collaboration with the Irish poet Sinéad Morrissey, a meditation on migration in which the

speaker's words gradually blend into the musical texture. Thus, I wanted to write a 'plain' piano trio specifically for these artists – not only because by now I know them so well, but because it is typically my practice to imagine musicians as I write.

The trio returns to a common formal preoccupation of mine, the production of a suite of movements that are closely related. Specifically, I have explored in a number of works the structure of three movements, in which each 'draws nearer' to the same material – like three views, taken from the distance, middle-ground and close up; I called this my 'Russian Doll' preoccupation. In that structure the detail intensifies, the pieces thus becoming longer by turns. For *Arrowhead* I explored the reverse: the title describes the intensification toward a point, when an extended first movement is progressively compressed in a second version, and further concentrated in movement three. In that way, the progressing events are the same, but they come upon the listener more briskly. However, the three movements are (whether expanding or contracting) essentially the same piece! It is a different kind of listening from that to a classical trio with its balanced moods, for each movement treats the same sequence and indeed materials; it is a triple hearing of the same music.

Each movement of *Arrowhead* is itself tripartite: first comes an alternation of two moods; a middle section profiles solo lines for one particular voice; a climax then heralds a coda that subsides into stillness. –*Piers Hellawell, 2024*

Piers Hellawell, born in England and studied at Oxford University, was appointed when 24 to a composition post at The Queen's University of Belfast, where, since 2002, he has been Professor of Composition. His family home is in Northern Scotland; his sixty or so published works owe their genesis to that working environment. Working away from England through his career has encouraged Hellawell's detached attitude to centralized musical fashions; in his teaching and writing about music, as in composition, he advocates traditional training as a platform for individuality, and expresses an aversion to obvious solutions. Further information is at www.piershellawell.com

David Gompper (b. 1954) – Piano Trio (2010)

Piano Trio (2010) is a work that reflects an idea that could be held in a "triplet state", meaning musical cells that have positive, negative, and neutral spins, much like a tennis ball that turns up, down, or sideways. Those ideas are placed in space (foreground, middle ground, background), and in different registers (high, middle, low). Pitch and rhythmic cells bind three contrasting elements into a single idea, and that are themselves extended to longer phrases in compound threes (3x5, 3x7, etc.), with movement over time that relies on counterpoint for drive and energy. The form, a double triplet (3 smaller sections within a larger tripartite structure), provides contrast throughout the 12' work. Post-tonal processes control intervals generating the pitch language, operations that help to keep the material in check and constantly evolving. But all of this is to say that I simply maintained control over the ideas, and composed the piece as I heard it, using a formal framework and a series of rules that helped me keep true to the opening motives. What is perceived is a sequence of dialogues between all three instruments, spinning in three different angles and trajectories. –*David Gompper, 2024*

David Gompper has lived and worked professionally as a pianist, conductor, and composer in New York, San Diego, London, Nigeria, Michigan, Texas, and Iowa. He studied at the Royal College of Music in London with composers Jeremy Dale Roberts and Humphrey Searle, and pianist Phyllis Sellick, and conductor Norman Del Mar. After teaching in Nigeria, he received his doctorate from the University of Michigan and taught at the University of Texas, Arlington. Since 1991, he has been professor of composition and director of the Center for New Music at the University of Iowa. In 2002-2003 Gompper was a Fulbright Scholar, teaching, performing, and conducting at the Moscow Conservatory. He received an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2009, a Fromm Commission in 2013, and a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2020. He has been appointed Director of Orchestral Studies for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Gompper's compositions have been performed at Carnegie Hall; Lincoln Center and Merkin Halls (New York); Wigmore Hall (London); Konzerthaus (Vienna); and the Bolshoi, Rachmaninoff, and Small Halls (Moscow Conservatory). For the Naxos label, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London recorded his Violin Concerto with Wolfgang David, in addition to two discs of works that include four concerti (Double, Clarinet, Cello, Double Bass) and two orchestral works (Sunburst and Moonburst). For the Albany label, he has produced 12 CDs of contemporary music since 2003.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) - Trio for Piano, Violin & Violoncello (1914)

Ravel's Trio dates from the Spring and Summer of 1914. The international situation at the time was worsening and Ravel was affected both spiritually and mentally by the impending catastrophe. He was accepted into the Army in 1915, and the first movement of the Trio probably reflects Ravel's anxiety. Its main theme is based on four repetitions of seven chords with a swaying rhythm. This is introduced by the piano, then joined by the strings, and by the end of the movement what remains of this theme is a tolling rhythm in the bottom register of the piano. By the time Ravel's brother and his friends were called up the streets were buzzing with what Ravel described as a "horrible enthusiasm". "I fear that I'm going to go mad, or give way to this obsession" remarked Ravel. The second movement of the Trio, entitled Pantomime, is overtly obsessive; an extraordinary movement that combines elements of scherzo, lied and rondo, full of sparkling wit and vigour. In the middle of the movement, under the rhythmic energy of the violin, a beautifully lyrical tune emerges from the piano, and the movement ends with huge statements of the initial material.

Then we are plunged into the Passacaille the theme which is introduced in the depths of the piano and taken over first by the cello and then the violin, which climbs ever higher and higher. The climax is reached chordally and when the theme is recapitulated it moves, in a diminuendo, in the opposite direction: violin, cello and finally piano, left hand taking over from right hand, leading the melody back to silence. The last movement explodes into life with surging arpeggios and pattering semiquavers. A fanfare of chords bursts out in F sharp major calling for victory and purging the effect of the sombre Passacaille.

A monumental work, this is a Trio conceived on a big scale with broad themes. The resources of the instruments are exploited to the fullest degree and we see the complete expression of Ravel's genius.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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FEBRUARY

23	7:30pm	Gold Combo Concert	Recital Hall
23	7:30pm	UI Symphony Orchestra 📶	Concert Hall
25	3:00pm	Key Change: Piano Revolutionaries Series, Concert #5 📶	Concert Hall
25	7:30pm	Center for New Music Ensemble III 📶	Concert Hall
28	7:30pm	University Choir 📶	Concert Hall
28	7:30pm	Hawk Combo	Recital Hall
29	7:30pm	Composers' Workshop Concert III 📶	Concert Hall

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