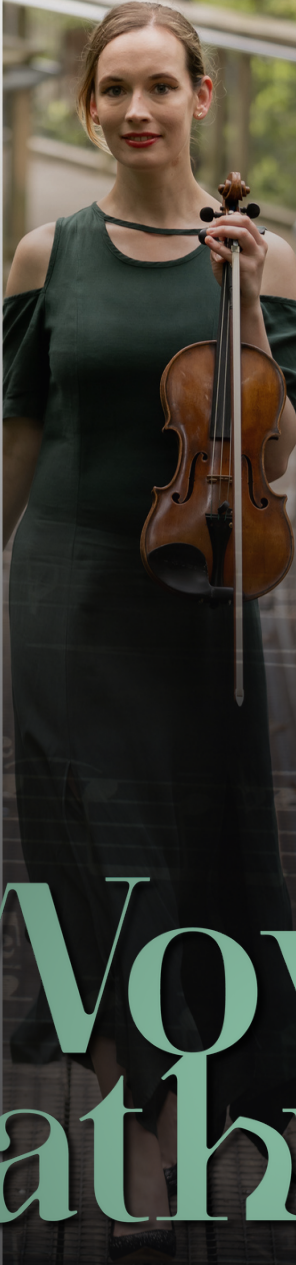




NEW ZEALAND
STRING QUARTET
TE RŌPŪ TŪRŪ O AOTEAROA



Woven Pathways



**A MESSAGE FROM OUR
NATIONAL TOUR PRINCIPAL SPONSOR
THE TURNOVSKY ENDOWMENT TRUST**

Welcome to the New Zealand String Quartet's National Tour, Woven Pathways, which marks 22 years of our support of the NZSQ's flagship annual event.

Fred Turnovsky, founder of the Turnovsky Endowment Trust, was an early advocate for the formation of a national string quartet and enjoyed a close relationship with the ensemble from its earliest days in 1987. Fred wrote in his autobiography:

“

And then there appeared the young string quartet of exceptional quality... whose playing captivated me from first hearing... every time I hear them I preen myself for having done something useful in my fifty years of living in New Zealand.

Fred's vision was to bring the music of great European composers to audiences here in his adopted country and the NZSQ has continued that legacy, while also championing New Zealand works.

Woven Pathways cleverly juxtaposes fresh and familiar works through its four carefully curated programmes. I know Fred would have been particularly delighted to hear the NZSQ perform the music of his fellow countryman Bedřich Smetana; the composer's autobiographical work 'From my Life' pays homage to his Czech roots, and in many ways exemplifies the theme of this tour. I hope you enjoy the concert.

Helen Philpott - Trustee, Turnovsky Endowment Trust

DATES & LOCATIONS

AUCKLAND

Fri 18 Aug 7.30pm	MT EDEN VILLAGE CENTRE	PROGRAMME ONE
Sat 19 Aug 7.30pm	JUBILEE HALL PARNELL	PROGRAMME TWO
Sun 20 Aug 4.00pm	ST GEORGE'S TAKAPUNA	PROGRAMME THREE

TAURANGA

Mon 21 Aug 7.30pm	BAYCOURT X SPACE	PROGRAMME ONE
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NELSON

Fri 25 Aug 7.30pm	NELSON CENTRE OF MUSICAL ARTS	PROGRAMME THREE
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BLenheim

Sat 26 Aug 6.00pm & 8:30pm	WITHER HILLS WINERY	PROGRAMMES TWO & THREE
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CHRISTCHURCH

Sun 27 Aug 4.00pm	ROSE HISTORIC CHAPEL	PROGRAMME ONE
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NAPIER

Thu 31 Aug 7.30pm	CHURCH ROAD WINERY	PROGRAMME TWO
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ROTORUA

Fri 1 Sep 7.00pm	SIR HOWARD MORRISON CENTRE	PROGRAMME FOUR
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HAMILTON

Sat 2 Sep 7.30pm	GALLAGHER ACADEMY OF PERFORMING ARTS	PROGRAMME FOUR
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WELLINGTON

Fri 8 Sep 7.30pm	WEBB'S AUCTION HOUSE	PROGRAMME ONE
Wed 13 Sep 7.30pm	ST PETER'S ON WILLIS	PROGRAMME TWO
Sun 17 Sep 4.00pm	PUBLIC TRUST HALL	PROGRAMME THREE

NEW PLYMOUTH

Sun 10 Sep 4.00pm	TSB SHOWPLACE	PROGRAMME TWO
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Woven Pathways

EMBARK ON A TRANSFORMATIVE MUSICAL ODYSSEY...

...as the New Zealand String Quartet presents **Woven Pathways**, a captivating national tour that traverses a tapestry of emotions, cultural influences, and profound artistic expressions. Through four carefully curated programmes, each a unique exploration of human experience, the quartet weaves a compelling narrative, guiding audiences along an enchanting path of introspection, celebration, devotion, and connection.

From timeless classical masterpieces to thrilling contemporary compositions, there's something for all levels of chamber music enthusiast - whether you're a seasoned explorer or just beginning on your chamber music journey.

DEVOTION

PROGRAMME ONE

The profound influences that shape our lives

GILLIAN WHITEHEAD

Poroporoaki

RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER

String Quartet 1931

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

String Quartet No.5 in B flat major, Op. 92

JOSEPH HAYDN

String Quartet in C major, Op. 76 No. 3 'Emperor'

INTROSPECTION PROGRAMME TWO

Painting musical portraits of the human experience

TABEA SQUIRE

I Danced, Unseen

BÉLA BARTÓK

String Quartet No.6

FRANZ SCHUBERT

String Quartet in A Minor D804 'Rosamunde'

CELEBRATION

PROGRAMME THREE

A joyous tribute to life and artistic expression

SERGEY PROKOFIEV

String Quartet No. 1 in B minor, Op.50

ROSS HARRIS

String Quartet No. 9

BEDŘICH SMETANA

String Quartet No. 1 in E minor, Op.16 'Z
Mého Života' ('From my Life')

CONNECTION

PROGRAMME FOUR

Spirited conversations between string quartet and taonga pūoro

OPENING IMPROVISATION

PHIL BROWNLEE & ARIANA TIKAO *Manaaki*

FRANZ SCHUBERT

String Quartet in A minor, D804, 'Rosamunde'

GILLIAN WHITEHEAD

Hine-pū-te-hue



Gillian Ansell
(viola)

Helene Pohl
(violin I)

Monique Lapins
(violin II)

Rolf Gjelsten
(cello)

OUR VISION

To reimagine what a string quartet can be for all New Zealanders in the 21st century.

OUR VALUES

Excellence
Diversity
Innovation
Collaboration
Identity
Āko/360° learning

2022 RECAP



68 concerts



...in 22 towns and cities
across Aotearoa



25 international
performances in
Australia, Germany & the
Netherlands

In 2023, Helene, Monique,
Gillian, and Rolf surpassed

100 years of
collective service
to music in New Zealand.





THE NEW ZEALAND STRING QUARTET TE RŌPU TŪRŪ O AOTEAROA

Founded in 1987, the New Zealand String Quartet - Te Rōpu Tūrū O Aotearoa - exists to provide transformational chamber music experiences for all New Zealanders. Over the past 36 years the Quartet has established an international reputation for its insightful interpretations, compelling communication, and dynamic performing style.

The NZSQ provides **dynamic and high-quality musical experiences for all New Zealanders**, embracing the fresh and familiar. The Quartet's rich repertoire includes a wide variety of New Zealand music, composers' cycles from Beethoven to Bartok, Mozart to Berg, and theatrical presentations encompassing spoken word and dance, from Haydn's Seven Last Words to Schoenberg's Transfigured Night. As cultural ambassadors, the NZSQ **proudly champions New Zealand and Māori music at home and abroad**. Since its inception, the Quartet has premiered over 150 New Zealand works, and now works closely with its Mātanga Ngā Toi Māori, taonga pūoro player Horomona Horo, with whom the Quartet is delighted to share the stage during this 2023 National Tour, Woven Pathways.

The NZSQ takes a **leadership and advocacy role in advancing music education**. Devoted teachers and mentors, all members of the Quartet teach at the New Zealand School of Music – Te Kōkī where the NZSQ has been Quartet-in-Residence since 1991, as well as running the Adam Chamber Music School in Nelson. The NZSQ runs the NZSM Chamber Music Intensive Weekend in Wellington for up-and-coming chamber musicians, and regularly mentors students from Sistema programmes across the country.



Helene Pohl MNZM (violin I)

Helene Pohl studied at the Musikhochschule in Cologne, with members of the Cleveland Quartet at the Eastman School of Music and at Indiana University with Josef Gingold. She was first violinist of the prize-winning San Francisco-based Fidelio String Quartet before joining the NZSQ in 1994. In 2001 she became Artistic Director, with Gillian Ansell, of the Adam Chamber Music Festival.

Helene plays a 1730 violin made by Pietro Guarneri in Venice.



Monique Lapins (violin II)

Monique studied at the Australian National Academy of Music and at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music in Singapore. She has twice been a finalist in the Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition and has participated in chamber music programmes and festivals in Europe, Asia and Australia.

Monique plays a 1784 Lorenzo Storioni violin kindly on loan from David Duncan Craig and the Lily Duncan Trust.



Horomona Horo (Taonga Pūoro)

Composer, musical artist, and collaborator, Horomona Horo has fused the traditional instruments of the Māori, taonga pūoro, within a diverse range of cultural, musical and educational forms, continuing the vision of his mentors Dr Hirini Melbourne and Dr Richard Nunns. His experience spans over 25 years; highlights include artist residencies at Government House (NZ) and Brandeis University (USA), performances at WOMAD, The Rainforest Festival (Borneo), WOMEX, Rugby & Cricket World Cups, Olympic and Commonwealth Games. He is a recent recipient of the Pūmanawa APRA Silver Scroll Award.



Gillian Ansell MNZM (viola)

Following studies at the Royal College of Music in London and at the Musikhochschule in Cologne, Gillian worked as a professional player in London before becoming a founder member of the New Zealand String Quartet in 1987. She was second violinist for two years before taking up the position of violist with the group. In 2001 she became Artistic Director, with Helene Pohl, of the Adam Chamber Music Festival.

Gillian plays the 1619 Nicolò Amati viola kindly loaned by The Adam Foundation.



Rolf Gjelsten MNZM (cello)

Rolf studied cello in North America with James Hunter and Janos Starker, as well as chamber music with the LaSalle, Hungarian, Vermeer, Cleveland and Emerson string quartets. He played professionally with the Berlin Symphony, the Laurentian Quartet and New York Trio before coming to New Zealand. He has a doctorate from Rutgers University and has played with the New Zealand String Quartet from 1994.

Rolf plays a 1705 Francesco Gofiller cello made in Venice.

TAONGA PŪORO

Taonga Pūoro, meaning 'singing treasures', are the musical instruments of the Māori people. There are many different types of taonga pūoro, from shell trumpets, to unique types of flutes, spun instruments and bird callers. All instruments are seen as individuals and have their own unique voice and decoration.

They are grouped into families according to how they were created in the ancestral past. These stories are shared through the sounds of the taonga and the carvings on them. There are many different uses for taonga pūoro, from open entertainment to sacred ritual use. In either context, when played, they transmit an appreciation for the spiritual dimensions from which they come.

For more information about taonga pūoro, visit haumanucollective.com

DEVOTION PROGRAMME ONE

GILLIAN WHITEHEAD (1941-)

Poroporoaki

Gillian Whitehead dedicated 'Poroporoaki' to Richard Nunns (1945–2021) in recognition of his contribution to bringing back to life the playing of taonga pūoro. Nunns, alongside Hirini Melbourne and Brian Flintoff were, in Whitehead's words, 'the nucleus of a group of makers and players' who travelled the country to 'take the voices of the instruments back to the people...picking up fragments of information from the memories of kaumātua.' Whitehead began to consider compositions that could bring together western classical instruments and taonga pūoro in such a way that taonga pūoro 'were not colonised or regimented' by western music. A stunning example is 'Hineraukatauri' (1999) for flute/alto flute/piccolo and pūtōrino, composed for Nunns and Alexa Still.

In the case of 'Poroporoaki' (2015) Whitehead has transcribed the sounds of taonga pūoro, searching for ways to make the instruments of the string quartet evoke the sounds of the pūtātara (shell trumpet), karanga manu (bird caller), pūtōrino, poi awhiowhio (a whirled gourd, another form of bird caller), tumutumu (percussive instruments), and nguru (flute). The composer's feeling that the instruments of the string quartet are made from materials that come from nature and can be played in diverse ways – bowed, plucked, tapped – creates links between their origins and those of taonga pūoro. Through these means, and as a tribute to the artistry of Richard Nunns, 'Poroporoaki' exemplifies the idea of devotion that shapes today's concert.



RUTH CRAWFORD SEEGER (1901 - 1953)

String Quartet 1931

I. Rubato Assai

III. Andante

II. Leggiero

IV. Allegro possibile

Ruth Crawford Seeger, a student of Adolf Weidig and Charles Seeger, was immersed in ultramodern musical circles in Chicago and New York in the late 1920s, adept with serialism and atonality, and wary of allowing post-Romantic sentimentality to creep into her work. The first woman to receive a Guggenheim Fellowship for music composition, in 1930, Crawford Seeger travelled to Berlin to write a symphony. Confident in her creative powers, Crawford Seeger immersed herself in the fervid creative atmosphere of Berlin. Still, she struggled with her symphony, discovering, after six months of 'almost complete silence' her work was turning into a string quartet. The genesis of the Quartet between February and June 1931 was laborious, but resulted in a work that combines deep feeling with structural complexity, manipulating the textures and timbral differences of four instruments to create distinct independent lines that interact in mesmeric counterpoint.

Crawford Seeger's Quartet is still regarded as one of the most significant pieces of modern chamber music by an American composer; the invention, complexity, and craft of the Quartet made it a model for younger composers in the 1960s, and their interest – after the death of the composer, who had become better known for her work on American folk music – caused Crawford Seeger's children to view her early life differently. Her daughter Peggy wrote:



“

I don't understand how the woman that I knew as a mother created something like the 1931 string quartet. It is like someone crying; it is like someone beating on the walls...and I don't want to think about this as regarding my mother because my mother always seemed to me to have it all together, to have gotten a life that pleased her.

DEVOTION PROGRAMME ONE

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906 - 1975)

String Quartet No. 5 in B-flat Major, Op. 92

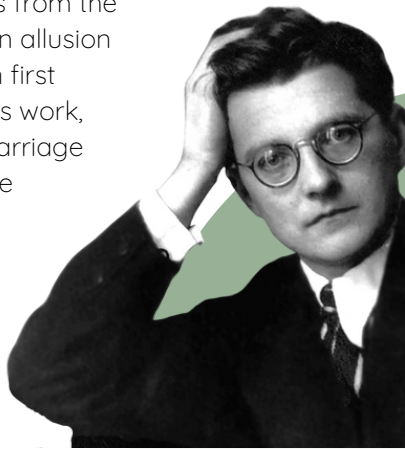
I. Allegro non troppo

III. Moderato - Allegretto - Andante

II. Andante - Andantino

Shostakovich completed his String Quartet No. 5 on 1 November 1952. The Quartet is a work that illustrates acutely the self-imposed wall Shostakovich had, by necessity, erected between his 'public' and 'private' musical personas. Shortly after Shostakovich completed the Quartet, another new work, the festival cantata 'The Sun Shines Over Our Motherland' was performed in a concert at the Moscow Conservatory's Bolshoi Hall as part of the celebrations of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Revolution. Perceptive listeners understood the cantata for what it was: an appropriately uplifting official expression of pro-Soviet festivity, devoid, in the words of composer Ivan Dzerzhinsky, 'of sincere feeling and inspiration.' The Quartet in B-flat major – which would not be heard publicly for another year, on 13 November 1953, several months after the death of Joseph Stalin – was its complete opposite: an acutely personal statement of deep feeling, which like many 'private' works by Shostakovich, offered a defiant statement of his own musical integrity in the face of demoralising and often terrifying adversity.

A central unifying motif in Shostakovich's Quartet is the five-note sequence C–D–E ♭ –B–C♯, the last four of these notes spelling out a cypher of the composer's name, D-S-C-H. This motif recurs throughout the piece, restating the composer's identity, and occurring alongside quotations from the 1949 Clarinet Trio by Galina Ustvol'skya's Clarinet Trio. An allusion to Ustvol'skya's Piano Sonata No. 1 also appears early in first movement. Shostakovich had long admired Ustvol'skya's work, praising her as a 'phenomenon' and twice proposing marriage to her, after the death of his first wife and again after the divorce from his second wife. The depth of feeling between them, and the significance of Shostakovich expressing these feelings in a work as personal as the fifth Quartet, are profound.



JOSEPH HAYDN (1732 - 1809)

String Quartet in C major, Op.76 No.3 'Emperor'

I. Allegro

III. Menuetto

II. Poco adagio, cantabile

IV. Presto

When he spoke on the idea of the string quartet as a genre, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said: 'You listen to four reasonable persons conversing, you profit from their discourse, and you get to know the peculiar properties of their several instruments.' His definition is entirely apt for the 'Emperor' Quartet, in which the equality of the protagonists is clear from the very outset of the confidently eloquent Allegro. Haydn's renowned wit subverts the reasonable discourse with a vigorous Hungarian dance, complete with 'bagpipe' drones. Following this, Haydn presents us with a Poco adagio second movement in which the sublime is made manifest. The music evolves rhapsodically from the grave devotional simplicity of Haydn's 'Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser,' a hymn of praise for Emperor Franz of Austria that Haydn had been sought to compose in 1797, and which would become Austria's first national anthem. The Menuetto which follows is down-to-earth with whimsical twists, but still seems overshadowed by the devotional aura of the hymn. Many performers and commentators have noted that the Quartet in C major has an almost symphonic character, and this is apparent in the Presto, where cascading triplet figurations, and dramatic chords contribute to the virtuosity intensity of the finale.



INTROSPECTION PROGRAMME TWO

TABEA SQUIRE (1989-)

I Danced, Unseen

Tabea Squire's 'I Danced, Unseen' was originally a collaboration between the composer, New Zealand String Quartet, Ballet Collective Aotearoa, and choreographer Loughlan Prior. The premiere took place in early 2020, and Squire writes of the piece that:



From childhood through young adulthood I would sometimes shut myself in the living room – no-one else was allowed in – and put on music to dance to. It was a very private experience, and a sort of cathartic process, which was somehow being evoked in my mind by the material I was writing for the piece, years later.

The development of 'I Danced, Unseen' involved the composer, choreographer, and Quartet members in equal part, a true example of a twenty-first-century 'Gesamtkunstwerk'. However, 'I Danced, Unseen' also functions perfectly as an independent work. Opening with a questioning solo viola line, 'I Danced, Unseen' captures a sense of discovery and contentment found in being alone to find a space for expression without scrutiny, as the music grows and envelopes us.



BÉLA BARTÓK (1881 - 1945)

String Quartet No. 6

I. Mesto - Piu mosso, pesante - vivace

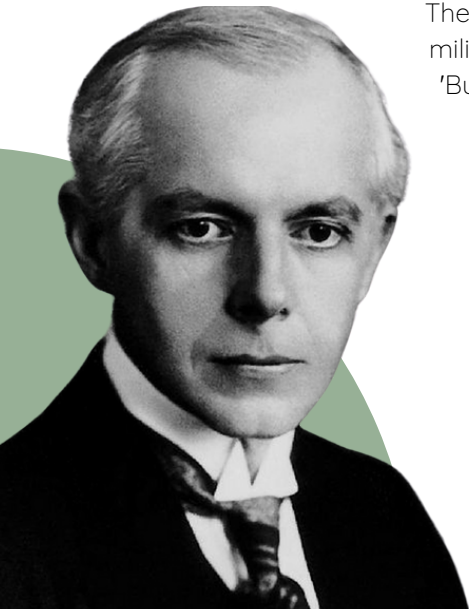
III Mesto - Burletta - Moderato

II. Mesto - Marcia

IV. Mesto

Eighty years earlier, Bartók began work on his sixth and final String Quartet in August 1939 in Switzerland. Following the outbreak of World War II, he returned to Budapest: his mother Paula was ill, and after she died in December 1939 Bartók reassessed his options. As Hungary moved towards joining the Axis powers, effectively becoming a puppet state of Germany, and having witnessed the Nazi's denunciation of what they called 'degenerate art' (into which category his music would fit), Bartók foresaw no future in Hungary. In 1940, an opportunity to travel to the USA emerged, when Columbia University invited Bartók to participate in an ethnomusicological project. He left Hungary relieved at the prospect of safety and interesting work, but deeply saddened, later writing: 'We must voice our conviction that the Hungarian people . . . stand on the side of those who are struggling for a free, decent and democratic world.'

Each movement of the Quartet begins with a Mesto (meaning melancholy or mournful) section, built around a desolate chromatic figure. The second movement's Marcia is a biting satire on militarism. Subsequently, the lurching rhythm of the 'Burletta' alludes to the dances of 'Old' Europe, but harshly rather than nostalgically. To conclude, Bartók brings back the 'Mesto' as a long diminuendo, descending into darkness.



INTROSPECTION PROGRAMME TWO

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797 - 1828)

String Quartet in A Minor D804 'Rosamunde'

I. Allegro non troppo

III. Menuetto: Allegretto - Trio

II. Andante

IV. Allegro moderato

In 1824, Schubert embarked upon a planned set of three quartets. In fact, he wrote only two, but they retain a special place in the repertory. Of these two works, the D minor Quartet 'Death and the Maiden' is more famous, but the Quartet in A minor is a worthy companion, inhabiting a similar realm of eerie suggestion and savage drama. Like the D minor Quartet, Schubert's 'Rosamunde' Quartet is also closely linked with his lieder, filled with musical revenants and the ephemeral presence of wordless song. The quartet's first movement recalls 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' (D. 118), the contours of the first violin's melody and the hypnotic accompanying obligato remind us of Gretchen's pain in Goethe's poem:

Meine Ruh' is hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr

My Peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
I will find it never,
And nevermore



Painting musical portraits of the human experience

Moving to C major, the second movement offers an extended rhapsodic exploration of a theme from Schubert's *Entr'acte* No. 3 for Helmina von Chézy's play 'Rosamunde', 'Fürstin von Zypern' (Rosamunde, Princess of Cyprus). Then, disquiet pervades the tonally ambiguous Menuetto, where another Schubert song makes an appearance, this time his setting of Schiller's 'Die Götter Greichenlands', a poem of loss and disillusionment:

Schöne Welt, wo bist du?
Kehre wieder,
Holdes Blütenalter der Natur!
Ach, nur in dem Feenland der Lieder
Lebt noch deine fabelhafte Spur.
Ausgestorben trauert das Gefilde,
Keine Gottheit zeigt sich meinem Blick
Ach, von jenem lebenwarmen Bilde
Blieb der Schatten nur zurück.

Fair world, where are you?
Turn back again,
Sweet blossom-age of nature!
Alas, only in the fairyland of song
Lives still your fabulous trace.
Deserted mourn the fields,
No god appears before my eyes.
Ah, oh that life-warm image
Only its shadow remains.

The images of Schiller's text seem at odds with the typical character of a menuetto, which often in a quartet offers some respite from the hectic emotions of its surrounding movements. Then, by opening the fourth movement in A major, Schubert suggests a positive resolution to his quartet, but the musical sunshine is short-lived: the theme which initially seems optimistic quickly assumes a nervous mood, and this alternation of optimistic and anxious statements forms a complex finale to a work both introspective and retrospective.

CELEBRATION PROGRAMME THREE

SERGEY PROKOFIEV (1891 - 1953)

String Quartet No. 1 in B minor, Op. 50

I. Allegro

III. Andante

II. Andante molto

After completing his studies at the St Petersburg Conservatory, Sergey Prokofiev left revolutionary Russia in May 1918. He departed not as an émigré, fleeing the new regime, but rather with the blessing of the People's Commissar for Education, Anatoly Lunacharsky, who said 'You are a revolutionary in music, we are revolutionaries in life. We ought to work together. But if you want to go to America, I shall not stand in your way.' Prokofiev toured extensively in the USA, then in Europe, settling eventually in Paris. In addition to a busy concert schedule, he composed prolifically: the decade 1920–1930 saw performances of his Violin Concerto No. 1, Piano Concerto No. 2, the 'Scythian Suite', ballet scores, and the opera 'The Gambler' among other works.

Prokofiev's music found success in Europe and in the USA, although some ultra-modernists criticised elements of his work as 'Bolshevist' or old-fashioned. Both charges were unreasonable and can scarcely be applied to String Quartet No. 1 (1930) a work commissioned by the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation at the Library of Congress in Washington DC, which at that time wished to increase its collection of manuscripts by significant composers. To prepare for the composition of his Quartet, Prokofiev studied Beethoven's string quartets in depth, with the result that his own work is a piece of impeccable craft, and rich imagination. Its structure is neoclassical, and despite the drama that infuses the work, its moments of heart-tearing delicacy and restraint are also characteristic of Prokofiev's approach to neoclassicism. Following premieres of String Quartet No. 1 in Washington DC with the Brosa Quartet on 25 April 1931, and with the Roth Quartet in Moscow on 9 October 1931, the work established itself as a twentieth-century masterpiece.



ROSS HARRIS (1945-)

String Quartet No. 9

Ross Harris's String Quartet No. 9 (2021) celebrates the artistry of the New Zealand String Quartet, recognising the unique character of the ensemble, and his long association with them. String Quartet No. 9, lasting less than eight minutes in duration, is condensed and cohesive. The piece begins in the manner of a choral, resonant and hymn-like, enriched by the musicians' own humming. Mellifluous ascending figurations emerge from the chorales, growing in complexity with each iteration, but still retaining their essential finesse and tenderness.



CELEBRATION PROGRAMME THREE

BEDŘICH SMETANA (1824 - 1884)

String Quartet No. 1 in E minor, Op. 16 'Z mého života' ('From My Life')

I. Allegro vivo appassionato

III. Largo sostenuto

II. Allegro moderato a la Polka

IV. Vivace

Juxtapositions of tenderness and drama, celebration and despair, characterise Smetana's Quartet in E minor, 'From my Life' – a work that like much of Smetana's music connects art and life and place. One apt example is 'Má vlast', the cycle of six symphonic poems that celebrate Czech history, literature, and the beauties of the Bohemian landscape. This cycle also represents Smetana's efforts to establish a recognisably 'Czech' style of music and contribute to Czech national identity. Personal pain and joy often prompted Smetana's compositions too. In 1845, he lost his daughter Gabriela to tuberculosis; in 1855, his eldest daughter, Bedřiška, succumbed to scarlet fever at the age of four. Smetana wrote his Trio in G minor in her memory, only to be hit by a further blow when the baby of the family, Kateřina died in 1856. Smetana also continued to struggle to find acceptance and status as a composer in Prague, where his music was often received critically.

Nearly two decades later, Smetana had managed to find ways to flourish professionally and artistically, but his health failed. Deaf and frail, he retired to the countryside, where he composed 'From my Life' (1876). This programmatic work represents different chapters in Smetana's life, beginning with his yearning to be an artist of tones; this Romantic idyll is interrupted by a jagged motif, a long note and a large leap, symbolising the deafness that would later devastate him. The second movement is built around a polka, to recall Smetana's youth as a 'passionate dancer'. The third chapter recollects Smetana's love for his first wife, Kateřina; this movement expresses tenderness and rapture, but alludes to the struggles and pain of their marriage, including the loss of three children.



A joyous tribute to life and artistic expression

The finale, as Smetana himself wrote, takes an equivocal view of his life:

“ The fourth movement describes the discovery that I could treat national elements in music and my joy in following this path until it was checked by the catastrophe of the onset of my deafness, the outlook into the sad future, the tiny rays of hope of recovery, but remembering all the promise of my early career, a feeling of painful regret.

Smetana's tempering of celebration with pain exemplifies why 'From My Life' remains such a human work, elegiac yet also unflinching.



CONNECTION PROGRAMME FOUR

PHIL BROWNLEE (1971 -) & ARIANA TIKAO (1971 -)

Manaaki

'Connection' expresses itself throughout this programme as a woven pathway of musicians, and composers from different times and places. Phil Brownlee and Ariana Tikao's 'Manaaki' (2022) was composed in collaboration with the New Zealand String Quartet, Horomona Horo, and Bob Bickerton. The piece embodies different forms of connection. Tikao and Brownlee have spoken of the collaborative genesis of 'Manaaki' in which the taonga pūoro part is improvised and the Quartet's part is scored, making it important to create ways to 'draw the players into each other's worlds' while also discovering which taonga pūoro worked best in the original performing space. Bickerton even made a new pūtōrino especially for this reason. The title 'Manaaki' also refers to connection: within te ao Māori, manaaki is about supporting and taking care of others, offering hospitality, and showing respect and generosity. The composers were inspired by the pōwhiri ritual on a marae, welcoming visitors in ways that 'uphold the mana of the home people' while recognising 'the mana of the people entering' as connection develops. The composers use different combinations of instruments and taonga pūoro to symbolise the stages of the pōwhiri.



FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797 - 1828)

String Quartet in A Minor D804 'Rosamunde'

I. Allegro ma non troppo

III. Menuetto: Allegretto - Trio

II. Andante

IV. Allegro moderato

'Connection' also characterises Schubert's Quartet in A minor; dating from 1824, it is one of two string quartets Schubert completed that year, the other being the Quartet in D minor, 'Death and the Maiden'. Both pieces are self-referential, alluding to Schubert's earlier work. The presence of these revenants forms connections between Schubert's work in different genres, recasting the familiar in enigmatic ways. The first movement of the A minor Quartet alludes subtly to the song 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' through the affecting contours of the first violin's melody and the hypnotic accompanying obligato, invoking Goethe's poem:

Meine Ruh' is hin,
Mein Herz ist schwer,
Ich finde sie nimmer
Und nimmermehr

My Peace is gone,
My heart is sore,
I will find it never,
And nevermore



CONNECTION PROGRAMME FOUR

Schubert used the music of his Entr'acte No. 3, composed for Helmina von Chézy's play Rosamunde, Fürstin von Zypern as the theme for miraculous variations in the Quartet's second movement. He returned to song in the ambiguous Menuetto, this time his setting of Schiller's Die Götter Griechenlands that opens with the despairing question:

Schöne Welt, wo bist du?
Kehre wieder,
Holdes Blütenalter der Natur!
Ach, nur in dem Feenland der Lieder
Lebt noch deine fabelhafte Spur.
Ausgestorben trauert das Gefilde,
Keine Gottheit zeigt sich meinem Blick
Ach, von jenem lebenwarmen Bilde
Blieb der Schatten nur zurück.

Fair world, where are you?
Turn back again,
Sweet blossom-age of nature!
Alas, only in the fairyland of song
Lives still your fabulous trace.
Deserted mourn the fields,
No god appears before my eyes.
Ah, oh that life-warm image
Only its shadow remains.

The finale begins in a positive A major, but its rustic mood becomes unsettled, teetering on the cusp of despair. It can be specious to read autobiographical significance into musical works, but it's equally difficult not to associate the disquietude of the Quartet and its allusions to songs of loss and despair, with Schubert's diagnosis of syphilis in early 1824, then an incurable, painful, and alienating disease. The Quartet's completion coincided with Schubert's letter of 31 March 1824 to his friend Kupelweiser:

“

I feel myself to be the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world. Imagine a man whose health will never be right again, a man whose most brilliant hopes have perished, to whom love and friendship have nothing to offer but pain.

GILLIAN WHITEHEAD (1941-)

Hine-pū-te-hue

The unease inherent in Schubert's Quartet can also be found in Gillian Whitehead's 'Hine-pū-te-hue.' The 2002 New Zealand Festival of the Arts commissioned Whitehead to compose a piece for the NZSQ and Richard Nunns; she was in the midst of the work at the time of the September 11 attacks and their aftermath as G. W. Bush announced the 'war on terror.' Conflict and peace run through 'Hine-pū-te-hue': the literal translation of the title is 'woman of the sound of the gourd' and refers to the atua or goddess of peace, whose attribute is a gourd. At a time of turmoil – the fighting between Tāwhirimātea and Tūmatauenga, the atua of winds and war, and the storm caused by the separation of their parents Ranginui (sky) and Pāpātūanku (earth) – Hine-pū-te-hue faced the chaos and breathed it deep into her body. When she exhaled, the sound brought calm. Similarly, taonga pūoro made from gourds (hue) can instil peace, and Whitehead's 'Hine-pū-te-hue' includes many of these, from the poi awhiowhio that we hear at the start of the piece, to the kōauau ponga ihu (nose flute) at its conclusion. The music is sometimes fraught, sometimes soothing, suggesting the presence and strength of Hine-pū-te-hue as she faced the chaos before her, but also, as Whitehead felt, the fragility of the peace she created.



THE ADAM SUMMER SCHOOL FOR CHAMBER MUSIC

Next year, the NZSQ will celebrate **30 years** of the Adam Summer School for Chamber music.

Generously supported by the Adam Foundation, the NZSQ presents the school in Nelson each February. The 8-day residential school has an **impressive alumni list** of **over 370** phenomenal musicians and provides the opportunity for up to 30 talented young string players and pianists to:

- Benefit from world class coaching from New Zealand's best chamber musicians
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- Participate in daily masterclasses
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There was always a holistic approach to the music – technical, theoretical, historical, musical, intuitive – which would be hard to replicate anywhere else... I'm sure I would not have been so confident in writing for [chamber music] ensembles if I had not had the experience from the Adam Summer School.

Tabea Squire - Composer and Adam Summer School Alumna

The NZSQ is delighted to perform Squire's 'I Danced, Unseen' in Programme Two: Introspection.



MUSIC EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

The NZSQ works closely with Sistema programmes throughout the country, providing free performances, workshops, and mentoring for young people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. We are proud to partner with Orchestras Central in developing musical leadership within the Youth Orchestra Waikato, and to work with various schools across Aotearoa.

NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL OF MUSIC - TE KŌKĪ

As Quartet-in-Residence at the New Zealand School of Music-Te Kōkī, the NZSQ teaches the next generation of New Zealand musicians. As part of our partnership with Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington, the NZSQ also performs free lunchtime concerts, workshops new student compositions, and runs a multi-day course for secondary school ensembles at the NZSM. Many of the NZSQ's former students are highly sought after teachers across the country, and perform in orchestras and ensembles in Aotearoa and abroad.



MUSIC IN THE COMMUNITY

The NZSQ exists to provide transformational chamber music experiences for all New Zealanders. To this end, the Quartet performs accessible whānau concerts in a variety of venues including community centres, libraries, and museums.

JOIN THE NZSQ WHĀNAU



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Leaving a gift in your will to the New Zealand String Quartet Foundation will create a legacy that endures for generations of music lovers to come.

For more information, or a confidential discussion about making a bequest, please get in touch directly with NZSQ's General Manager, Aislinn Ryan:

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HOW YOUR DONATION SUPPORTS OUR WORK

Give the gift of music, and nurture the positive benefits of music in New Zealand society. Your donation will enable us to present world-class performances to audiences across the country, promote New Zealand music at home and abroad, and mentor the next generation of talented and aspiring musicians.



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“As one involved in the founding of the NZSQ, for over 35 years I've admired the enormous artistic growth achieved. Whatever they touch from acknowledged jewels of the repertoire to newly commissioned works, their warmth, commitment and dynamism continues to grow. I'd urge anyone moved by their performances to become a supporter - get involved in whatever way you can.

Miles Rogers - Silver Patron, NZSQ

A SINCERE THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR FRIENDS & PATRONS



A MESSAGE FROM THE QUARTET

We are so appreciative of your generosity; your loyalty means so much to us. It allows us to keep developing artistically and create programmes such as these, so we can share the great wealth of string quartet repertoire with audiences all over.

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