

Media Release:



## **NZTrio Perform Inaugural Concert Series at Auckland Museum**

An inaugural concert series by NZTrio at Auckland Museum will celebrate the best in contemporary New Zealand composition and the genius of Schumann on the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birthday.

NZTrio comprises violinist Justine Cormack, cellist Ashley Brown and pianist Sarah Watkins. The musicians thrive on pushing the boundaries of orchestral music, and their renditions of classical masterworks and contemporary pieces have thrilled audiences throughout New Zealand and the world.

At the first of the three concert series held in Auckland Museum's Auditorium, on Saturday 20 March, NZTrio perform Schumann's 1<sup>st</sup> Piano Trio, Beethoven's 'Ghost', Stuart Greenbaum's Book of Departures and Shifting States, a commission from New Zealand composer Rachel Clement.

The second concert on Saturday 12 June features guest violist Rob Ashworth, who joins NZTrio in performances of Mozart's Piano Quartet in G Minor, and Schumann's Piano Quartet.

The third concert of the series, on Saturday 28 August, includes works by Schumann, Tchaikovsky's Piano Trio in A Minor, and the Auckland premiere of David Downes' Kingdom.

The final concert on Saturday 30 October welcomes special guest Richard Nunns, renowned for his mastery of taonga puoro (Maori instruments). Together Nunns and NZTrio perform Nga Kete e Toru for Piano Trio and Taonga Puoro – a joint composition by Nunns and Gareth Farr – as well as Schumann's Third Piano Trio and Beethoven's 'Archduke' Piano Trio.



**Concert 1: Saturday 20 March**

Schumann's 1<sup>st</sup> Piano Trio, Beethoven's Ghost, Stuart Greenbaum's Book of Departures, Rachel Clement's Shifting States.

**Concert 2: Saturday 12 June**

Mozart's Piano Quartet in G Minor, Schumann's Piano Quartet, quartets by Schnittke and Mike Nock. Featuring special guest Robert Ashworth.

**Concert 3: Saturday 28 August**

Schumann, Tchaikovsky's Piano Trio in A Minor, and the Auckland premiere of David Downes' Kingdom.

**Concert 4: Saturday 30 October**

Nga Kete e Toru for Piano Trio and Taonga Puoro, Schumann's Third Piano Trio and Beethoven's 'Archduke' Piano Trio. Featuring special guest Richard Nunns.

About NZTrio:

NZTrio thrives on pushing the boundaries of classical music. Their exhilarating interpretations of the masterworks, committed performances of fascinating new pieces and genre-crossing collaborations continue to impress audiences around NZ and the world.

Violinist Justine Cormack, cellist Ashley Brown and pianist Sarah Watkins first joined forces in 2002 and were Ensemble in Residence at The University of Auckland from 2004–2009. From the outset, their artistry, intensity, and approachability have captivated music lovers throughout New Zealand, Brazil, the US and UK, China, Korea and Indonesia.

Actively commissioning works by leading New Zealand composers, as well as more recently composers from both China and Australia, NZTrio seeks out collaborations with musicians of diverse musical genres and styles. Highlights in 2010 include an exciting collaborative performance with Finnish bass/accordion duo Lepisto & Lehti at the WOMAD festival in New Plymouth, the premiere of a joint composition by Gareth Farr and Richard Nunns for piano trio and taonga puoro (traditional Maori instruments), a new commission by composer and filmmaker David Downes at the New Zealand International Arts Festival, and a series of performances representing New Zealand at the Shanghai World Expo in July.