

The Piano Presents

Christopher's Classics

30th Anniversary Season | 2025



Nau mai, Haere mai

Welcome

It gives us great pleasure to share with you our special 30th Anniversary Season, celebrating the brilliance and intimacy of chamber music here at The Piano.

Christopher Marshall took great pride in showcasing world-class New Zealand artists, and our 2025 Season is no different, presenting a fabulous variety of music from the fresh to the familiar. We honour Christopher's immense contribution to the musical life of Ōtautahi Christchurch and New Zealand in our 30th Season, proudly presented by The Piano from 2025 onwards. We look forward to sharing this with you all.

Marcus Norman
Director The Piano

Doris Barnard & Mark Hickman
Organisers Christopher's Classics

2025 Concert Dates

Amici Ensemble
Friday 28 March

Aurum Trio
Tuesday 29 April

New Zealand String Quartet
Thursday 15 May

**Flinders Quartet
with Michael Houstoun**
Saturday 28 June

Levansa Trio
Thursday 14 August

Argyle Trio
Thursday 25 September

Duo Enharmonics
Thursday 30 October

NZTrio
Saturday 29 November

Season Subscriptions

With eight beautiful concerts to choose from, our season subscription offers considerable savings. Book now to secure your premium seats, or why not gift a subscription to a chamber music lover in your life?

8 Concerts	\$260	<i>save \$60</i>
7 Concerts	\$230	<i>save \$50</i>
6 Concerts	\$200	<i>save \$40</i>
5 Concerts	\$170	<i>save \$30</i>
4 Concerts	\$140	<i>save \$20</i>
3 Concerts	\$110	<i>save \$10</i>

Season subscriptions are available until **28 February 2025** either online at www.thepiano.nz/christophers-classics or in person at The Piano.

All concerts are proudly presented in the Philip Carter Family Concert Hall.

Ticket Information

All tickets are available online at www.thepiano.nz/christophers-classics (Eventfinda charges may apply.)

Door sales are subject to availability. We take Eftpos only, add \$5 for all door sales.

Full Price	\$40
Student (ID)	\$10
School age	Free

Start Times

7.30pm for all concerts in March-April & September-November

7.00pm for all concerts in May-August

Doors open approximately 30 minutes before the concert commences.

Ngā mihi nui, thank you to our supporters

We thank the Elizabeth Ball Charitable Trust, Gloria Streat and private donors, whose patronage and sponsorship grants make these concerts possible.

We warmly welcome donations with your subscription or ticket purchase to enable the beautiful music to continue.

Contact Details

For all enquiries, please contact the friendly team at The Piano.

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Amici Ensemble

Friday 28 March, 7.30pm



Donald Armstrong *violin*
Alexander McFarlane *viola*
Andrew Joyce *cello*
Jian Liu *piano*

Comprising principal players from the NZSO and leading chamber musicians in the New Zealand music scene, Amici Ensemble bring a rich history of exciting and dynamic performances. Amici have premiered many New Zealand works, including music by Kenneth Young and Anthony Ritchie and record regularly for RNZ Concert.

Showing their artistry and flair, Amici Ensemble bring us a programme of romantic French and German chamber gems, with a touch of Parisian whimsy.

**“Splendid playing of a winning programme
by Amici Ensemble.” – Dominion Post**

Jean Francaix Trio à cordes
Gabriel Fauré Piano Quartet No. 2
in G minor, Op. 45
Johannes Brahms Piano Quartet
No. 3 in C minor, Op. 60

Aurum Trio

Tuesday 29 April, 7.30pm



Barbara Hill *flute*
Robert Ibell *cello*
Michelle Melvin *harp*

Expect a kaleidoscope of European and South American sounds in this delightful programme for flute, cello and harp painting a vivid picture of 19th and 20th Century chamber music.

New Zealand-born flautist Barbara Hill has spent most of her life in Berlin, pursuing an extensive career as an orchestral and chamber musician. Cellist Robert Ibell is well known to Christopher's Classics audiences as a member of the Aroha Quartet, and a former member of the NZSO. Harpist Michelle Melvin enjoys a diverse career as a performer, educator and collaborator - recently releasing her debut album *Feather Spines* with Ruby Solly.

Maurice Ravel Sonatine en Trio
Ernst von Dohnanyi Ruralia Hungarica
Marc Berthomieu Cinq Nuances
Jacques Ibert Deux Interludes
Claude Debussy Rêverie
Heitor Villa-Lobos The Jet Whistle
Georges Bizet Entr'acte from *Carmen*
Emil Kronke Suite Italienne Op. 186

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New Zealand String Quartet

Thursday 15 May, 7.00pm



Helene Pohl *violin*
Peter Clark *violin*
Gillian Ansell *viola*
Rolf Gjelsten *cello*

The New Zealand String Quartet has been enchanting audiences across Aotearoa New Zealand for over 35 years, and has earned an international reputation for its insightful interpretations, compelling communication, and dynamic performing style.

Dedicated educators, and champions of New Zealand music, we're delighted to welcome back the New Zealand String Quartet to present a programme rich in Aotearoan and European storytelling.

“This performance had everything: passion, virtuosity, energy, a wonderful heart-warming sense of communication between the players.”
– Jo St Leon, Limelight Magazine

Salina Fisher Tōrino – echoes on pūtōrino improvisations by Rob Thorne
Dmitri Shostakovich String Quartet No.3 in F major, Op. 73
Edvard Grieg String Quartet in G minor, Op. 27

Flinders Quartet with Michael Houstoun

Saturday 28 June, 7.00pm



Elizabeth Sellars *violin*
Wilma Smith *violin*
Helen Ireland *viola*
Zoe Knighton *cello*
Michael Houstoun *piano*

Two powerhouses of the Australian and New Zealand chamber music worlds unite for this very special concert.

Wilma Smith, joined Flinders Quartet in 2020 and writes: "I'm thrilled that Flinders Quartet's first ever tour to New Zealand includes a collaboration with my long-time friend and musical partner, Michael Houstoun. We'll be bringing you a programme of beloved masterpieces and the NZ premiere of a work by eminent Aboriginal composer/singer, Deborah Cheetham Frailton, especially written for Flinders Quartet."

Ludwig van Beethoven String Quartet
No. 11 in F minor, Op. 95

Deborah Cheetham Frailton Bungaree
(*NZ premiere*)

Antonín Dvořák Piano Quintet No. 2
in A major, Op. 81

Levansa Trio

Thursday 14 August, 7.00pm



Andrew Beer *violin*
Lev Sivkov *cello*
Sarah Watkins *piano*

Levansa Trio make their welcome return to Christopher's Classics in a beautiful programme of Contemporary and Romantic repertoire.

Violinist Andrew Beer is the Concertmaster of Auckland Philharmonia, and was named Best Classical Artist in the NZ Music Awards for 2020. Pianist Sarah Watkins is one of New Zealand's foremost collaborative pianists, and a founding member of NZTrio. Cellist Lev Sivkov is in demand as an international soloist and chamber musician, and has held Principal Cello positions with the Royal Danish Opera and Opernhaus Zürich, Switzerland.

Rebecca Clarke Piano Trio (1921)
Salina Fisher Kintsugi
Bohuslav Martinů Piano Trio No. 1 H.193
Camille Saint-Saëns Piano Trio No. 2
in E minor, Op. 92

Argyle Trio

Thursday 25 September, 7.30pm



Wilma Smith *violin*
Matthias Balzat *cello*
Laurence Matheson *piano*

We also welcome back the Argyle Trio presenting classics of the Piano Trio repertoire.

Violinist Wilma Smith was the concertmaster of the NZSO as well as a founding member of the NZSQ. Cellist Matthias Balzat completed his New Zealand studies under James Tennant, and took first place in the strings section of the Annual ROSL Music Competition in 2021 and is now based in Germany. Joining them is one of Australia's most exciting young musicians, pianist Laurence Matheson, who's in demand across the country as a soloist, chamber musician and collaborative pianist.

“...the Argyle Trio achieved such perfect playing and superb musicianship the likes of which is rarely heard.” – Tauranga Musica

Joseph Haydn Piano Trio in C major, Hob. XV:27

Felix Mendelssohn Piano Trio No. 2 in C minor, Op. 66

Johannes Brahms Piano Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8 (revised)

Duo Enharmonics

Thursday 30 October, 7.30pm



Beth Chen *piano*
Nicole Chao *piano*

Described by reviewers as an “exhilarating piano duet delight” with “pianistic thrills” we know you’ll be dazzled by Duo Enharmonics.

From their first gesture, preparing the sonic moment of a piece, until the closing flourish, Beth and Nicole commit to living fully in their shared musical world. Don’t miss this fabulous piano duo, performing an eclectic mix of music that’s sure to capture your imagination.

“A cornucopia of musical delights and pianistic thrills.” – Middle C

Sergei Rachmaninoff Suite No. 2
for Two Pianos, Op. 17

Camille Saint-Saëns *arr. Debussy*
Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso
for Two Pianos Op. 28

W. A. Mozart Sonata for Two Pianos
in D major, K.448

Georges Bizet *arr. Anderson & Roe*
Carmen Fantasy for Two Pianos

NZTrio

Saturday 29 November, 7.30pm



Amalia Hall *violin*
Ashley Brown *cello*
Somi Kim *piano*

The NZTrio is recognised as a “national treasure” and “New Zealand’s most indispensable ensemble” (NZ Herald). Genre-busting in identity, the NZTrio present a diverse array of works that challenge expectations of traditional chamber music.

Lyell Cresswell’s virtuosic *Moto Perpetuo* opens, ahead of percussive and electronic influences in *Le Boeuf’s* jazz-adjacent *Obliquely Wrecked*. *Fauré’s* *Piano Trio in D minor* exhibits lyrical elegance, with lush harmonic textures, and Australian composer *Elena Kats-Chernin* pays homage to Haydn, blending classical and contemporary styles in *Calliope Dreaming*. *Schönberg’s* immersive finale *Verklärte Nacht* closes - a Romantic work structured around the five stanzas of a poem; deeply transcendent and utterly beautiful.

Lyell Cresswell *Moto perpetuo*
Pascal Le Boeuf *Obliquely Wrecked*
Gabriel Fauré *Piano Trio in D minor*,
Op. 120
Elena Kats-Chernin *Calliope Dreaming*
Arnold Schönberg *Verklärte Nacht* arr. for
piano trio



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*All information is correct at the time
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programmes and dates*