



Nocturne: Trio mit Klavier, Geige und Cello
Simon Glücklich

A Trio of Trios

Music for Piano, Violin and Cello

The Wealden Trio

RACHEL FIRMAGER cello

JONATHAN TRUSCOTT violin

WILLIAM HANCOX piano

21 June 2025

St. Andrew's, Alfriston



musicboxwealden.co.uk
Classical music on your doorstep

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Your incredible response has shown us there's a real need for live, local classical music in our community, and we're so glad to be helping to fulfil it.

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To keep bringing you these performances, we need your help. We receive no funding from public or charitable sources, and rely entirely on ticket sales, our Membership scheme, and private donations.

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We're extremely grateful for any support you can offer to help us continue sharing the joy of classical music.



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PROGRAMME

Piano Trio No. 43 in C major, JOSEPH HAYDN
Hob XV:27
Allegro
Andante
Finale: Presto

Piano Trio REBECCA CLARKE
Moderato ma appassionato
Andante molto semplice
Allegro vigoroso

INTERVAL

Piano Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8 JOHANNES BRAHMS
Allegro con brio
Scherzo
Adagio
Finale: Allegro

PROGRAMME NOTES

JOSEPH HAYDN

Piano Trio No. 43 in C major, Hob XV:27

Allegro

Andante

Finale: Presto

Written in London in 1797, Haydn's C major Piano Trio is the first of three trios dedicated to the virtuoso pianist Therese Jansen Bartolozzi, a pupil of Clementi, whose career flourished around the end of the eighteenth century. That no doubt accounts for its demanding piano part – at a time when the piano trio was chiefly aimed at amateur performance, this was a work for professionals.

The first movement is in sonata form, full of classical elegance but with contrapuntal elements in the development which sound almost baroque.

The second movement has a lovely siciliano melody, and a dramatic central section in which the cello takes a more prominent role than was common at the time.

The sonata-rondo finale, with its constant conversations between piano and violin foreshadows the future of the piano trio as not merely an accompanied piano sonata, but a form in which the relationships between the instruments are far more equal.

The whole work sparkles with wit – pianist and musicologist Charles Rosen described its finale as the most humorous of all Haydn's works.

REBECCA CLARKE

Piano Trio

Moderato ma appassionato

Andante molto semplice

Allegro vigoroso

Born in 1886 Rebecca Clarke was one of the most gifted English composers of the 20th century. She attended the Royal Academy of Music from which she was withdrawn when at the age of 19 she received a proposal of marriage from one of her professors. Going on to work on composition with Stanford at the Royal College of Music, like so many of her generation, she also studied viola with Lionel Tertis and became one of the leading international violists of her time, as well as being one of the first women to work as an orchestral musician.

Her life as a composer was blighted by widespread prejudice against female composers and a lack of recognition and encouragement. As a result, only 20 of her 100 or so works were published during her lifetime and she gave up composition almost entirely for the last 35 years of her long life. The Piano Trio is a work of striking skill, passion and originality which won 2nd prize in the Berkshire chamber music competition in the USA in 1921, sponsored by the musical philanthropist Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge - but it was submitted under the male pseudonym 'Anthony Trent', and the jury were incredulous when it became known that a work of such power and beauty had been written by a woman. In more recent years there has been a widespread revival of her work led by the Rebecca Clarke Society.

The Piano Trio is in three movements, constructed around the motto which appears fiercely at the opening of the work, and reoccurs in various guises throughout it. There are references to French impressionism, folk music and modernism and many critics have seen its combination of violence, sorrow and renewed hope as a reflection of the cataclysm of the First World War.

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Piano Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8

Allegro con brio

Scherzo

Adagio

Finale: Allegro

Brahms' trio in B major has been described as both the first and last of his piano trios.

Written at the age of 21, he substantially revised and shortened it 36 years later to provide the version which we are performing today. It's fascinating to see which of his youthful material he kept and which he rejected or modified – what's extraordinary is the seamless logic of the piece as it now stands.

This is a substantial four movement work with a huge emotional range. The sonata form first movement is characterised by an expansive and passionate lyricism which stands in contrast to the delicacy of the *Scherzo*.

The profoundly moving, chorale-like slow movement is followed by a turbulent, agitated *finale* which some have speculated was influenced by the suicide attempt of Robert Schumann in 1854 and his subsequent confinement in an asylum.

THE WEALDEN TRIO

RACHEL FIRMAGER cello

Rachel Firmager grew up in Sussex and learnt the cello with Ian Gill before furthering her studies at Durham University and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Love of chamber music led her to postgraduate study with Jane Salmon and the Schubert Ensemble, and later with Adrian Shepherd.

Projects over the years have included work with the contemporary One Voice, Tacet Ensemble, New Music Brighton, Bergersen Quartet and Hyperion Ensemble. She has given many recitals in venues such as Fairfield Halls, Croydon and Chapel Royal, Brighton.

Work with the chamber ensemble for London Festival Opera took her on many occasions to Seville and as cellist of the Hilser Trio, her trips took her north, even to Svalbard!

More recent collaborations have been with guitarist, Paul Gregory and pianist, William Hancox throughout Sussex, and with harpist, Elizabeth Jane Baldry.

She teaches Alexander Technique and cello privately in Hastings and at Brighton College

JONATHAN TRUSCOTT

violin

Jonathan Truscott was born in London and studied violin with Itzhak Rashkovsky and Eszter Boda Katona, furthering his studies in Transylvania with Ferdinand Kozak.

After a couple of years performing with the Targu-Mures State Philharmonic Orchestra of Romania he returned to the UK to pursue his interest in contemporary chamber music.

Jonathan is the leader of Modulus String Quartet, which specialises in the performance and recording of music by contemporary composers and has broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 -In Tune and many international radio stations.

His career has taken him to concert halls around the world with numerous television appearances and recordings for major labels and films.

WILLIAM HANCOX

piano

After a degree at Cambridge, William studied with Hungarian pianist Joseph Weingarten, a student of Dohnanyi, Bartok and Kodaly. He has performed as a soloist, chamber musician and accompanist throughout the UK and internationally, broadcast for Classic FM and the BBC and made a number of recordings. He has held staff pianist positions at the Guildhall, Trinity College of Music and the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh.

William has performed throughout Europe and made several trips to China, giving masterclasses, recitals and concerts in the Forbidden City Concert Hall in Beijing.

He has also worked extensively as a vocal coach, with many students now pursuing successful singing careers.

William lives nearby and is deeply involved in local music making. For many years he was pianist and artistic director of *Music at Lime*, a chamber music series in Herstmonceux, and he accompanies for Hailsham Choral Society and Laughton Village Choir.

His latest project is Music Box Wealden, an innovative scheme with ambitious plans to bring more quality classical music into the heart of the community.

NEXT CONCERTS

27 July 2025, 5pm

A Feast of English Song

at The Church of St Peter and St Paul
Hellingly, Hailsham BN27 4HA

17 August 2025, 5pm

Picnic at Pevensey

at Pevensey Castle BN24 5LE

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