



St Matthew-in-the-City
Tuesday 2 June 2020
12:10 to 12:50pm

Auckland Fusion Quartet

The Breakout Concert

László Weiner Duo for violin and viola (1939)
Movements 1 & 3

László Weiner was a Hungarian composer, pianist and conductor who perished in the Holocaust. Weiner studied piano and conducting at the Budapest Music Academy and was a composition student of Zoltán Kodály from 1934 to 1940. Weiner was married in 1942 to singer Vera Rózsa. By February 1943, Weiner had been deported by the Nazis to the Lukov forced labor camp in Slovakia where he was later murdered.

Antonio Vivaldi RV 522 from *L'estro armonico* (1711)
Concerto No. 8 in A minor for two violins and strings RV 522:

- Allegro
- Larghetto e spiritoso
- Allegro

Antonio Vivaldi was a popular Italian Baroque composer, priest, and virtuoso violinist. He was nicknamed "The Red Priest" because of his red hair. His music and influence was widespread all over Europe. He is mainly known for composing instrumental concerts, sacred choral works, and more than 40 operas.

Edward Elgar *Salut d'Amour (Liebesgruß)*, Op. 12, (1888)

Edward Elgar was arguably the leading English composer of his generation and a significant figure among late-Romantic European musicians. Born in the west of England in 1857, the son of a piano tuner and owner of a music shop, he earned his earlier living as an organist, violinist and teacher in his own part of the country. After his marriage in 1889 he found himself able to move to London as a composer, but success only came later.

Johannes Brahms Hungarian Dance No.5 (1869)

For many years the sound of the Hungarian Gypsy travelling bands could be heard in the countryside and cities of Europe. Trailblazer Johannes Brahms was fascinated by the bands' whirling melodies and dramatic rhythms. He introduced this music to a whole new audience when he wrote Gypsy-inspired dances for the piano – and then began super-sizing.

Astor Piazzolla, Oblivion (1982)

In Piazzolla's hands, tango was no longer strictly a dance music; his compositions borrowed from jazz and classical forms, creating a whole new harmonic and rhythmic vocabulary made for the concert hall more than the ballroom (which was dubbed "nuevo tango").

Johann Strauss Jr. Tritsch Tratsch Polka Opus 214 (1858)

Johann Sr. was passionate about his music, but he was even more passionate in his opinions as to what his children should do with their lives. He wanted Johann Jr. to become a banker, not a musician. However, Johann Jr. had other ideas about his career, and, like his father, he loved music. His mother encouraged this interest and secretly arranged for her young son to study the violin while his father was away at concerts. Johann Strauss Jr. wrote his famous Tritsch Tratsch Polka during a trip to Russia in 1858.

Astor Piazzolla, Oblivion (1974)

Tango is not just about dancing. It is a music of deep undercurrents. Because of what Argentina went through as a country, tango has become the soul of Argentina. Music is always one way people can speak when they aren't allowed to express themselves otherwise. And Piazzolla's tangos have the great strength of true voice. Piazzolla's music is endlessly passionate—full of yearning—and at the same time tremendously contemporary.

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The players:

Russian-born violinist, **Elena Abramova**, holds Masters Degree from the State Conservatory of St. Petersburg, Russia and a Doctorate in Violin Performance from the University of Auckland. Elena has lived in Auckland since 2003 where she is a sought after freelance violinist, chamber musician and teacher. She has played with the NZSO, APO, ACO, NZ Trio and other professional orchestras and ensembles. Elena had been a Concertmaster of Waitakere Orchestra for 10 years, and has led a number of other orchestras, such as Aorangi Symphony, Opus Orchestra, Chinese Orchestra of NZ, NZ Concerto Orchestra, and St-Petersburg University Orchestra, having performed with some of these groups as a soloist. Elena's most recent special interest is in a fusion of a classical violin school with a non-classical virtuosic violin music, such as Gypsy, Irish and American fiddling.

Dianna Cochrane is the Principal Second Violin with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (APO). During her teens she won 2nd prize in both the Gisborne Solo Competition and the NZ Violin Competition, 3rd prize in the National Concerto Competition and was a finalist in both the NZ Young Achiever's Competition and the TVNZ Young Musicians Competition. Dianna has subsequently performed as both soloist and chamber musician in NZ, the UK, Europe, Japan and the USA. After gaining her BMus degree in performance from Auckland University she furthered her postgraduate studies and became teaching assistant to Eudice Shapiro, at the University of Southern California (USC). Further studies and master classes with the Amadeus Quartet, Kronos Quartet, Victor Liebermann and David Takeno, among others, followed. She has worked professionally both as a section and titled player in many orchestras throughout Europe and Australasia and was previously first violin in the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and Associate Concertmaster/Principal Second violin in the NZ Chamber Orchestra. Currently residing north of Auckland, Dianna balances the "down under" beach lifestyle here with regular snowy stints performing back in Scandinavia.

Gregory McGarity studied in Sydney and completed a Graduate Diploma in performance at NSW State Conservatorium of music. He furthered his viola studies in Germany with Christian Euler and performed in over 500 concerts in 1995-8, including radio and television broadcasts as Soloist, Chamber Musician and in Symphony Orchestras playing throughout Europe. He has been Principal Violist for Junge Philharmonie Cologne, Kammerensemble Cologne, Bangkok Symphony Orchestra, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and Auckland Chamber Orchestra. Greg has also played several seasons with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra in Sydney. Greg moved to Auckland in 2001 to take up his current position with the Auckland Philharmonia. Greg is also active in music education, composition and chamber music performance. With his St. Petersburg-trained violinist wife, Elena Abramova, he has co-founded the

Auckland Trio for which he enjoys arranging and playing a diverse range of repertoire and instruments, especially the viola.

Rachel Guan Ebbett was born in China, where she was accepted into the central conservatory in Bei Jing at Age 12. Upon graduation with Honours, she decided to pursue her music study abroad. She received a full scholarship to attend the Harid conservatory in Florida USA where she studied with Arthur Weisberg. Upon graduating with a Bachelor of Music, she was offered a teaching assistantship at the Louisiana State University where she received a Master of Music performance degree under the Guidance of William Ludwig. Rachel fell in love with the style of the Cleveland Orchestra after a summer of traveling to attend Major orchestra concerts. She moved to Cleveland the following fall and started her Artist diploma at the Cleveland institute of music under the major influence of the Principal bassoon John Clouser. Rachel attended many summer music festivals including the Sarasota, Chautauqua, and the Pacific music festival in Japan. She came to New Zealand upon winning the associate principal bassoon position in May 2005, and has enjoyed the lifestyle of this beautiful land. She enjoys the outdoors, tennis, cooking and being a mum to her two lovely kids. She is also active in teaching music in her community.



Tuesday 7 July 2020
Miran Park – Organ

As you leave please make a Koha towards the performers and the concert series – thank you for your support.

Please turn-off / mute mobile phones and no recording or photography during the performance.

Toilet facilities available downstairs (past organ console on left)
please tip toe!