

*Classical*  
*Expressions 2026*

*Let Music*  
*Astound You*



# Welcome

**Whirinaki Whare Taonga –  
Upper Hutt’s house of highly prized treasures.**

Whirinaki Whare Taonga’s Classical Expressions series brings you the treasure of music in six concerts spread throughout the year. Some works are beloved, familiar treasures which have stood the test of time; others are intriguing new works which may well become treasures to future generations.

*All of them will astound you.*

It’s wonderful to be able to present these concerts locally in our friendly, intimate venue with its beautiful Steinway Grand piano. It’s a privilege to have such high-quality music so easily accessible and we thank our subscribers, funders and Chamber Music New Zealand for making this possible.

Join us to enjoy the treasure of music in this astounding series of concerts at Whirinaki Whare Taonga.

**Leanne Wickham**  
Director, Whirinaki Whare Taonga

**Sian Williamson**  
Music Advisor, Whirinaki Whare Taonga

*Proudly supported by Summerset at The Course*



Thursday 30 April  
7.30pm

# Aotango Quintet

'Ao', meaning 'world' in te reo Māori is at the epicentre of AOTANGO. Enjoy their seamless fusion of world music and tango, in an eclectic mix of styles presented by musicians who call Aotearoa their home.

Based in Tāmaki Makaurau, AOTANGO features violinist Andrew Beer (Auckland Philharmonia Concertmaster) Awarded Best Classical Artist at the 2020 NZ Music Awards, pianist Somi Kim (NZTrio), double bassist Gordon Hill (Auckland Philharmonia Principal Bass), jazz guitarist Sam Swindells and world champion accordionist Grayson Masefield.

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**Andrew Beer**, *Violin*

**Somi Kim**, *Piano*

**Gordon Hill**, *Double Bass*

**Sam Swindells**, *Guitar*

**Grayson Masefield**, *Accordion*



'A Century of Tango' takes audiences on a musical journey through the evolution of tango, from beloved classics like *El Choclo*, *Por una Cabeza*, and *La Cumparsita* to the revolutionary nuevo tango compositions of Argentinian maestro Ástor Piazzolla.

This concert features world-class musicians performing in Piazzolla's original quintet formation, blending classical and contemporary instruments to create a dynamic and immersive experience. Designed to be both engaging and accessible, the performance will captivate audiences of all ages and musical backgrounds. The concert will include selections from the repertoire below:

**Tangos:** *El Choclo* (Villodo), *En Pampa y la Vía* (Jaurena & Torres), *Por Una Cabeza* (Gardel), *A Evaristo Carriego* (Rovira), *La Cumparsita* (Rodríguez), *Milonga Triste* (Piana), *La Bordona* (Leopoldo Federico).

**Piazzolla Repertoire:** *Escualo*, *Kicho*, *Series del Ángel* (Milonga, Muerte & Resurrección), *Oblivion*, *Michelangelo 70*, *Soledad*, *Adios Nonino*, *Primavera (Spring) & Invierno (Winter) Porteño*, *Chiquilin de Bachin*.

**Waltzes:** *Que nadie sepa mi sufrir / La Foule* (Cabral), *Fou Rire* (Galliano).

**World Music:** *Balkan Dance* (Trad.), *Gnossienne No. 3* (Satie).

**90 minutes of music, plus interval**

Thursday 21 May  
7.30pm


# Michael Houstoun

Michael Houstoun is one of New Zealand's most acclaimed concert pianists, known for his exceptional interpretations of classical repertoire, particularly the works of Beethoven.

Born in Timaru in 1952, Houstoun studied in New Zealand and the United States, and gained international recognition after winning prizes at major competitions, including the Van Cliburn and Leeds International Piano Competitions. Over his distinguished career, he has performed extensively both at home and abroad, and is celebrated for his complete cycle of Beethoven's piano sonatas and his contributions to New Zealand's classical music scene. In 2012, he was appointed a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to music.

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Michael Houstoun, *Piano*

The background features a soft, abstract composition of warm colors. Large, blurred circles in shades of red, orange, and yellow are scattered across the frame. A thin, light-colored line or stem-like shape runs vertically through the right side, connecting some of the larger shapes. The overall effect is ethereal and artistic, with a focus on texture and color gradients.

A programme of masterpieces will include works by J.S. Bach (*French Overture in B minor*, a classic dance suite), Beethoven (*Sonata in E, Op.109*), Ravel (*Gaspard de la nuit*) and the Bach-Busoni '*Chaconne*'.

Thursday 18 June  
7.30pm

# Jian Liu

As an internationally celebrated concert pianist, Dr. Jian Liu has performed throughout Europe, Asia, and North America. His artistry has taken him to some of the world's most prestigious concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, and Steinway Hall in New York, Sprague Hall and Woolsey Hall of Yale University, and Paul Hall of Julliard School, and as a featured soloist with orchestras worldwide.

Jian Liu is currently the Deputy Head of School, Associate Professor, and Head of Piano Studies at New Zealand School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington, where he has established his reputation as an outstanding pedagogue and overseen the development of the performance curriculum.

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Jian Liu, *Piano*



This programme explores how composers from different times and cultures paint their worlds in sound.

The journey begins with landscapes - Douglas Lilburn's *From the Port Hills* and Huang Hu Wei's *Pictures from Bashu* evoke distant hills and valleys, while Tan Dun's *Eight Memories in Watercolour* and Salina Fisher's *Three Short Pieces* capture nature's fleeting beauty in shimmering sound. Gareth Farr's *Love Songs* and Zhang Zhao's *Three Songs from the Mountains of Southern Yunnan* give voice to love and longing, resonating with the poetry of life.

The second half turns to childhood and memory. Gillian Whitehead's *Lullaby for Matthew* and He Luting's *Lullaby* offer tender moments of repose, while Anthony Ritchie's *Caroline Bay Suite* and Ding Shande's *Children's Suite* dance with the laughter of children at play. Finally, David Farquhar's *Sonatina* and Wang Lisan's *Sonatina* bring the programme to a spirited close, brimming with energy and joy.

Douglas Lilburn *From the Port Hills*

Huang Hu Wei 黄虎威 *Pictures from Bashu* (selections) 巴蜀之画 (选曲)

Tan Dun 谭盾 *Eight Memories in Watercolour* (selections) 八幅水彩画的回忆 (选曲)

Salina Fisher *Three Short Pieces*

Gareth Farr *Love Songs*

Zhang Zhao 张朝 *Three Songs from the Mountains of Southern Yunnan* 滇南山谣三首

Gillian Whitehead *Lullaby for Matthew*

He Lu Ting 贺绿汀 *Lullaby* 摇篮曲

Anthony Ritchie *Caroline Bay Suite*

Ding Shan De 丁善德 *Children's Suite: Happy Holidays* (selections) 儿童组曲《快乐的节日》(选曲)

David Farquhar *Sonatina*

Wang Li San 汪立三 *Sonatina* 小奏鸣曲

**66 minutes of music,  
plus interval**

Thursday 16 July,  
7.30pm

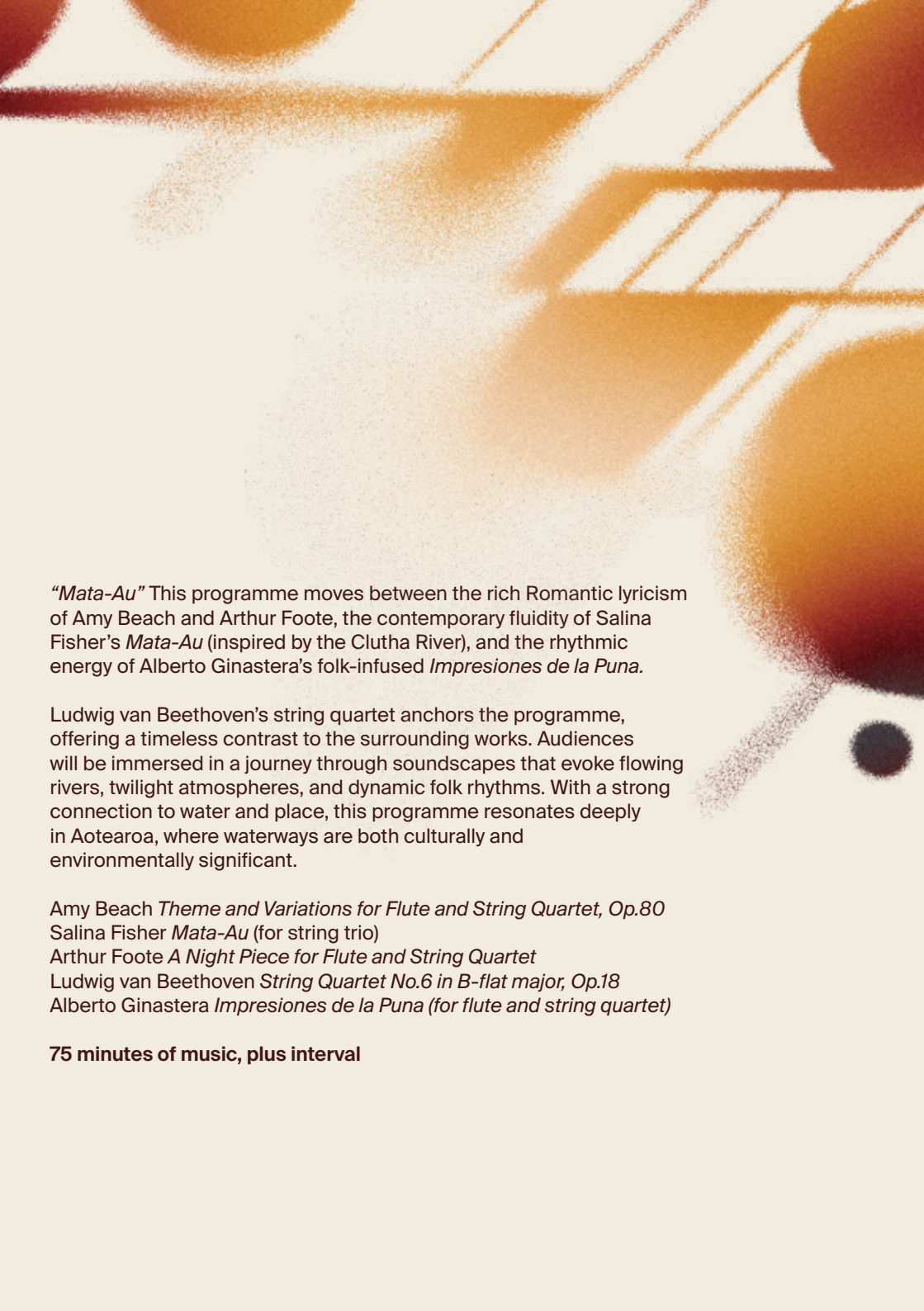
# The Elouan Quartet with Bridget Douglas

The Elouan Quartet is a newly formed string quartet comprised of NZSO players. The quartet's first tour was in May and June of 2024, representing the NZSO across New Zealand in the orchestra's annual Setting Up Camp tour.

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**Jessica Oddie, *Violin***  
**Anna van der Zee, *Violin***  
**Alexander McFarlane, *Viola***  
**Ken Ichinose, *Cello***  
**Bridget Douglas, *Flute***



*“Mata-Au”* This programme moves between the rich Romantic lyricism of Amy Beach and Arthur Foote, the contemporary fluidity of Salina Fisher’s *Mata-Au* (inspired by the Clutha River), and the rhythmic energy of Alberto Ginastera’s folk-infused *Impresiones de la Puna*.

Ludwig van Beethoven’s string quartet anchors the programme, offering a timeless contrast to the surrounding works. Audiences will be immersed in a journey through soundscapes that evoke flowing rivers, twilight atmospheres, and dynamic folk rhythms. With a strong connection to water and place, this programme resonates deeply in Aotearoa, where waterways are both culturally and environmentally significant.

Amy Beach *Theme and Variations for Flute and String Quartet, Op.80*

Salina Fisher *Mata-Au* (for string trio)

Arthur Foote *A Night Piece for Flute and String Quartet*

Ludwig van Beethoven *String Quartet No.6 in B-flat major, Op.18*

Alberto Ginastera *Impresiones de la Puna* (for flute and string quartet)

**75 minutes of music, plus interval**

Thursday 3 September  
7.30pm


# Dolfin-Lin Duo

A chance meeting in Italy in 2021 sparked a duo between Hungarian cellist Balázs Dolfin and Chinese-New Zealand pianist Tony Chen Lin. Trained in Hungary and Germany, they bring dynamic energy and deep rapport, drawing on global influences while still calling Budapest their enduring musical home.

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Balázs Dolfin, *Cello*  
Tony Chen Lin, *Piano*



Hungarian cellist Balázs Dolfin and Chinese-New Zealand pianist Tony Chen Lin share a deep musical rapport rooted in diverse cultural traditions.

Their recital opens with Anton Webern's evocative *Sonata for Cello and Piano*, followed by J.S. Bach's *Sonata for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord*, a lively, expressive dialogue. Zoltán Kodály's *Sonata, Op. 4* follows, drawing on Hungarian folk music, answered by Gao Ping's *Sonata No. 2 "Departure"*, a Chinese counterpart inspired by Su Dongpo. Belá Bartók's *Rhapsody No. 1* transforms peasant music into vivid concert form.

Nathanael Dejong's *Abandoned Voices* reflects on disconnection in the digital age. The concert closes with Johannes Brahms's *Sonata in E minor*, a work steeped in contrapuntal textures and homage to Bach, bridging Hungary and the deep roots of the cello-piano repertoire.

Anton Webern *Sonata for Cello and Piano*

Johann Sebastian Bach *Sonata for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord in Dmaj, BWV1028*

Zoltán Kodály *Sonata Op.4*

Gao Ping *Sonata No.2 "Departure" (2001)*

Belá Bartók *Rhapsody No.1*

Nathanael Dejong *Abandoned Voices*

Johannes Brahms *Sonata in E minor, Op.38*

**95 minutes of music, plus interval**

Thursday 8 October

7.30pm

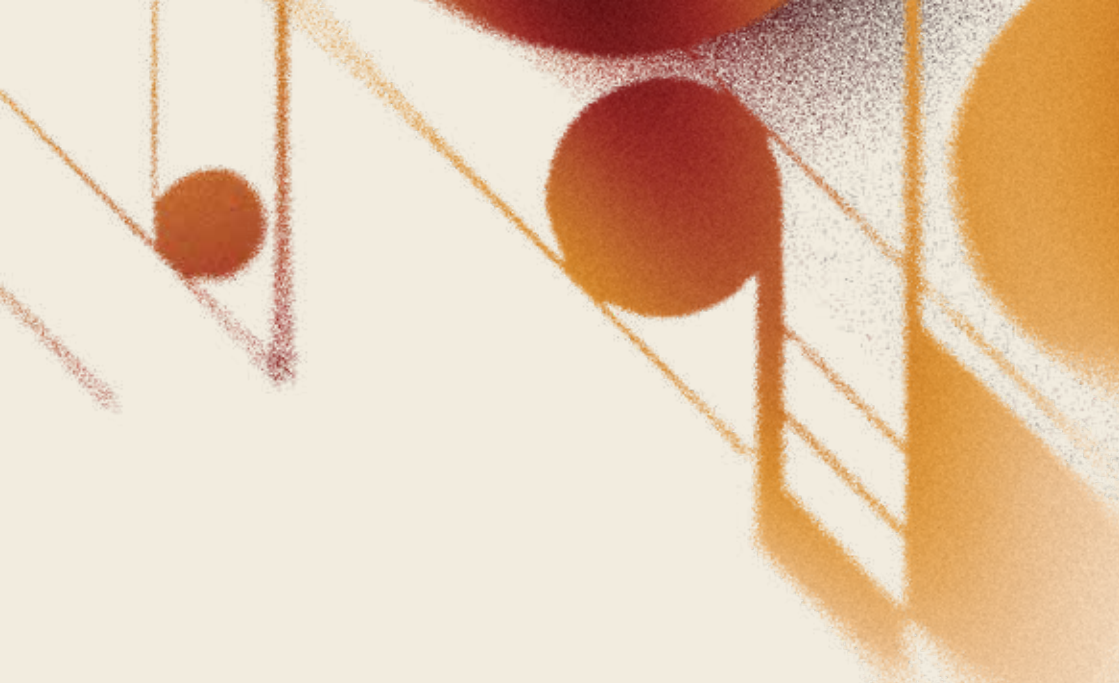
# Aroha String Quartet

Acclaimed as demonstrating “accomplished brilliance, soulfulness and sublime intensity in perfect balance and tonal unity” (The Dominion Post), the Aroha String Quartet is firmly established as one of New Zealand’s finest chamber music ensembles.

Founded in 2004, this versatile Wellington-based quartet is known for its passionate musicality, impressive technique, and multicultural innovation.

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**Haihong Liu, *Violin***  
**Konstanze Artmann, *Violin***  
**Zhongxian Jin, *Viola***  
**Robert Ibell, *Cello***



Around the World in 90 Minutes; buckle up and travel around the globe with the Aroha String Quartet with stopovers to sample the music of seven different countries on five continents - Europe, Asia, South America, North America and Zealandia.

The journey begins in Austria with a sunny, sparkling piece by the father of the string quartet, Josef Haydn. The programme then travels overland to Russia for Shostakovich's *Elegy & Polka* and backtrack to Spain for Turina's evocative *Bullfighter's Prayer* followed by New Zealand with the lovely *Toccatina* by Ross Carey. After interval the quartet takes us to China for an arrangement of the famous folk song *Er Quan Ying Yue* composed by blind erhu player A Bing. This music depicts the moon reflecting on the Er Quan spring. In Eastern Europe selections from *Miniatures* by Georgian composer Sulkhan Tsintsadze features with the world tour finishing in Argentina with *Tango Ballet* by tango-master Astor Piazzolla.

Haydn *String Quartet in E-flat Op 64 No 6*  
Shostakovich *Elegy & Polka*  
Turina *Bullfighter's Prayer*  
Ross Carey *Toccatina*  
A Bing *Er Quan Ying Yue (Reflections of the Moon on Er Quan)*  
Tsintsadze *Miniatures*  
Piazzolla *Tango Ballet*

**90 minutes of music, plus interval**

# Information

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## Astounding Subscriber Benefits: Six concerts for \$165

Subscribers receive huge discounts. A 30% discount on individual tickets across the series. That's just \$27.50 per ticket!

The best seats. Love your seats and keep them every year. We hold your seats for a month so that no one else can get them, year after year.

Pre-concert events. For subscribers we will offer a couple of free pre-concert talks. Our carefully selected speakers will enhance your enjoyment of each programme through their insight and knowledge of the composers and their music. Pre-concert talks commence 45 minutes before the start of two concerts (6.45pm) and last approximately 20 minutes.

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## The Gift that Astounds: Give the Gift of Music

Want to cherish music that astounds and share that with someone? How about purchasing a subscription or an individual ticket for someone else and give the gift of music?

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## Free Parking

There is heaps of free parking right around Whirinaki. Easy to park and close to walk.

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## Dough Bakery

Make a good night a great night by booking dinner at Dough Bakery at [www.doughbakery.co.nz](http://www.doughbakery.co.nz)

Every ticket to our classical series includes a \$3 hot drink. Just show your ticket to the people at Dough Bakery and get your classic drink.



# Tickets

Season Subscription tickets (6 tickets) | **\$165**  
(**\$27.50 per ticket**)

Individual Tickets | **\$38**

Friends of Whirinaki Discount | **\$35**

Under 16 years | **Free**

Groups of six or more | **\$30**

**Take advantage of fabulous discounts of over 20% for groups of six or more to one concert.**

## **How to book tickets**

Online: Head to [www.whirinakiarts.org.nz](http://www.whirinakiarts.org.nz) and follow the directions to book and pay for your tickets.

By Phone: Subscriptions and tickets can be taken over the phone. Just call us and the team will assist with your booking

In Person: Ticketing office opening hours are 10am – 4pm, everyday, **Whirinaki Whare Taonga, 836 Fergusson Drive, Upper Hutt**

# Summerset

Summerset at the Course in Trentham is proud to sponsor Whirinaki Whare Taonga and give back to the community we treasure.

Summerset Trentham is an established retirement village nestled at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac bordering the Trentham Racecourse. The village boasts stunning views of the Tararua Ranges and is the ideal retirement destination in Upper Hutt. We offer a relaxing, low-maintenance lifestyle within a welcoming community. Our residents enjoy various recreational facilities and activities, all within the safety of our fully gated community.

At Summerset, we put residents at the heart of everything we do, knowing that retirement is your time to thrive. We view retirement living as the next chapter, filled with possibilities and the freedom to live life to its fullest.

We invite you to visit our village, enjoy a bite to eat at our Divine café, and see for yourself why our residents love the Summerset life. Experience the warmth and hospitality that make Summerset Trentham a special place to call home.

For more information, visit Summerset at the Course, 20 Racecourse Road, Upper Hutt, or call Sales Manager Kay at 04 920 4376.



