



nztrio

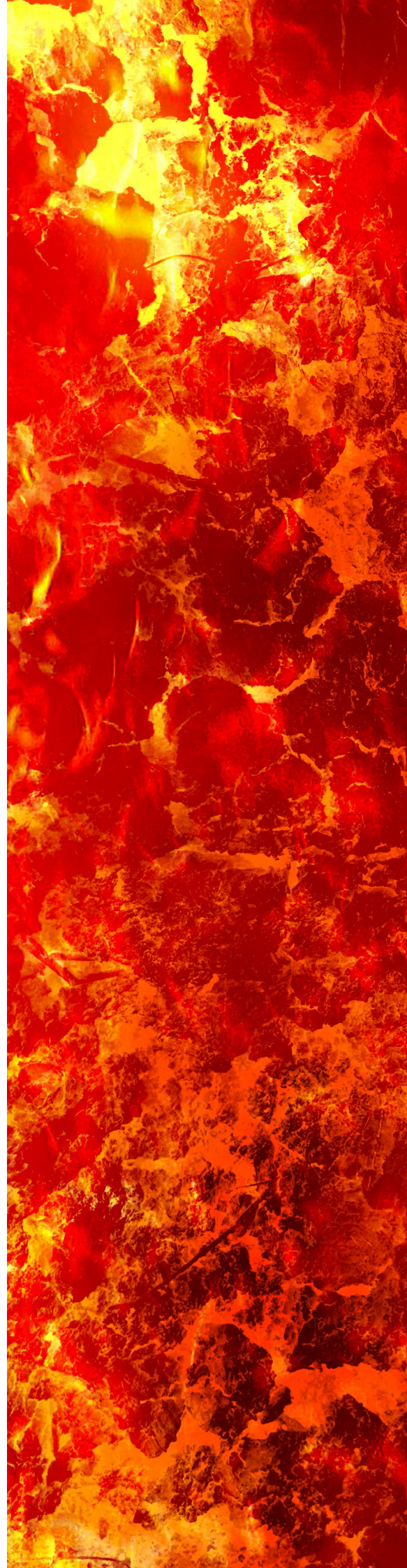
Tectonic  
Echoes I



## Tectonic Echoes I

Amalia Hall (violin), Ashley Brown (cello) & Somi Kim (piano).

Frank Bridge (UK) *Saltarello*  
Martin Lodge (NZ) *Ngā Whetu Hou*  
Frank Bridge (UK) *Intermezzo*  
Ross Harris (NZ) *Senryu*  
Rebecca Clarke (UK) *Piano Trio*



**Frank BRIDGE (UK; 1879 – 1941): 3 Miniatures for Piano Trio, Set 2**

iii. Saltarello

Frank Bridge's life falls into two periods: the composer of beautiful chamber music, much of it composed for himself to play on the viola (he was the violist of the fabulous Joachim Quartet) or for friends of his at the Royal College of Music; and later the staunch pacifist, musical radical, and beloved teacher to Benjamin Britten, who also became a popular conductor at the Proms. What happened in between was the First World War. These lovely miniatures – *Saltarello* and *Intermezzo* – come from the first part, composed the year after he'd won first prize for piano trio in the famous Cobbett competition. (*Intermezzo* will follow the next piece on the programme).

**Martin LODGE (NZ; 1954): Ngā Whetu Hou (NZTrio commission)**

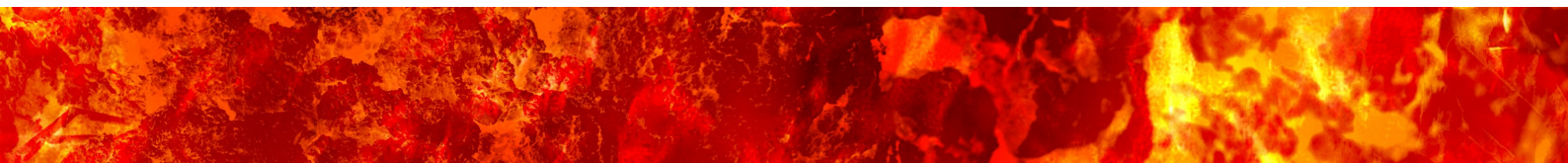
Martin writes “The title Ngā Whetu Hou, New Stars, reflects how the annual reappearance of the Matariki (Pleiades) constellation may be taken to signal new beginnings. But as we gaze upwards and outwards beyond ourselves, sometimes new stars are discovered, as well as familiar ones being welcomed back. We are living in a time when it is becoming imperative for us all to find new ways of living if the familiar world is to endure. It is time to re-evaluate familiar things.

Musically, *Ngā Whetu Hou* was created as a response to gestures on the pukaea (wooden trumpet) and putatara (conch trumpet) by my composer/performer colleague and friend Horomona Horo. Some key qualities signalled were vitality, challenge and optimism.”

*Ngā Whetu Hou* was commissioned by NZTrio in 2019. Support of the University of Waikato is gratefully acknowledged.

**Frank BRIDGE (UK; 1879 – 1941): 3 Miniatures for Piano Trio, Set 2**

ii. Intermezzo



**Ross HARRIS (NZ; b. 1945): *Senryu***

泥棒を dorobō o

捕えてみれば toraete mireba

我が子なり wagako nari

Catching him / you see the robber / is your son

That's senryu – named after its creator, the 18th century Edo period poet Senryū Karai - and similar to haiku in that it has no rhyme, and a set number of syllables running over three lines – but different in that where haiku is noble and atmospheric, usually about nature, senryu pokes fun at human foibles – as Ross puts it, “An inquiry into the nature of man.”

This is Ross's first work for NZTrio, written during his tenure as Composer in Residence with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, not long after he left his teaching position at Victoria University in Wellington. He describes it with characteristic concision: “This music concerns the regular balanced proportions of section lengths associated with a poetic form. This strict formal outline is articulated freely and intuitively.”

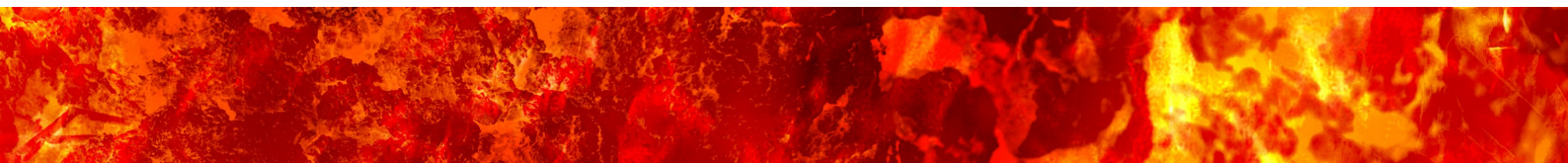
**Rebecca CLARKE (UK; 1886 – 1979): *Piano Trio in E flat minor***

i. *Moderato ma appassionato*

ii. *Andante molto semplice*

iii. *Allegro vigoroso*

One of the first great viola soloists, one of the first female students at the Royal College of Music, and for a while the “only lady” in Henry Wood's Queen's Hall Orchestra, Rebecca Clarke was much too busy to write very much: she was kicked out of home by her father for complaining about all his extra-marital affairs, and thereafter supported herself by playing viola just as it was emerging into the limelight, touring the world with her all-female chamber ensembles, and making many early recordings for the BBC. She also made her name across Europe: Artur Schnabel called her 'the glorious Rebecca Clarke'. Her best known works date from this period, most famously her viola sonata which is one of the great three of 1919 – Clarke, Hindemith, Bloch (Ernest Bloch was a good friend, as was Maurice Ravel). The great American philanthropist





Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge picked her up into her stable of patronage – the only woman there – and in fact she ended up emigrating to the USA, joining her brothers in New York City to escape the fighting during the second world war. But then, having been actually disowned by her father, she never managed to get a visa back home! No problem. Almost the first thing that happened to her, walking along one of the streets of Manhattan to get her bearings, was she ran into one of her pianist friends from the RCM, a long-lost love. They got married, both in their late 50s, encouraged each other in their work and lived happily ever after – a first marriage for both of them. Later she wrote a fascinating autobiography entitled *I Had a Father Too (or the Mustard Spoon)*.

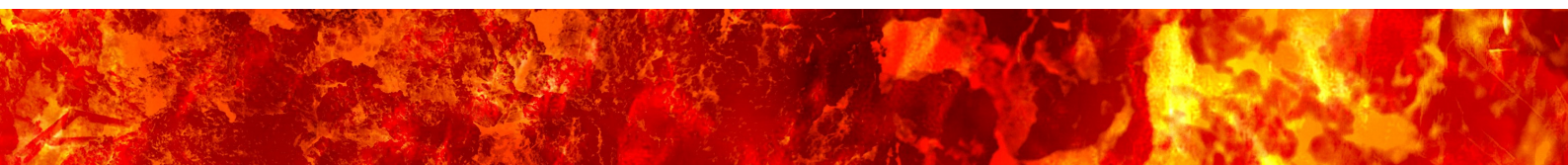
Her music is typical of that lush, novel, impressionistic 20th-century sound world. And this piano trio is one of the greats: three movements all sewn together by that insistent gesture on the piano that you hear at the beginning. The first movement, engaging as it is, is perfect classical sonata form. The slow movement is like a gentle violin ballad – she wrote dozens of songs – before it all winds up in a darker, defiant, energetic finale.

The first review said this:

How remarkable it is that our women composers are so much more virile in style than some of our young men. Miss Rebecca Clarke has a strong right arm (We speak figuratively, of course). She can lay down the foundation of a big chamber work like her piano trio heard last night, with all the emphasis of a Liszt, and carry on with the sturdiness of a Frank Bridge. Sturdy!

There's a wonderful interview with her on the internet if you can find it, recorded for WQXR New York for her 90th birthday, 1976.

(Programme notes by Charlotte Wilson)



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Photo credit: Garth Badger

Performed at Auckland Art Gallery and recorded by RNZ Concert & SOUNZ.

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