

Trio Farben II

Imogen Davey flute

Georgia Russell viola

Heather Brooks harp

Théodore Dubois (1837–1924)

Terzettino (1905)

7'

Trio Farben is a Britten Pears Young Artist for 2024/25, here for a two-week residency on the Chamber Music in Residence course.

Darius Paymai (b.1998)

trio (2025; world premiere)

15'

Formed at the Guildhall School in 2019, the versatile, dynamic and captivating London-based trio celebrates both the individuality and compatibility of this unique ensemble of instruments, working with composers on new works and rediscovering forgotten gems.

Tōru Takemitsu (1930–1996)

And then I knew 'twas Wind (1992)

13'

In addition to playing the well-known core works for this musical combination, such as Bax's 'Elegaic' Trio and Debussy's Sonata, the Trio has a keen interest in contemporary music, playing works by Tōru Takemitsu, Imogen Davey and Callum Murray.

William Mathias (1934–1992)

Zodiac Trio, Op.70 (1976)

16'

Trio Farben is equally comfortable playing in large concert halls and in intimate house recitals. The Trio has performed in prestigious venues such as Bridgewater Hall, Cadogan Hall and Milton Court Concert Hall, in addition to giving recitals in churches, stately homes, clubs and galleries across the UK.

Trio Farben is the grateful recipient of the H. Steven and P.E. Wood Bursary.

- i. Pisces (Allegro vivo)
- ii. Aries (Andante)
- iii. Taurus (Allegro alla danza)

Théodore Dubois: Terzettino

Although it is widely believed that Debussy pioneered the combination of flute, viola and harp with his 1915 Sonata, this little gem by Dubois predates it by a decade: it is, in fact, the earliest known composition for this specific ensemble.

Dubois, whose reputation rests primarily on his prowess in the organ loft, was in his late 60s when he wrote the Terzettino. The work was dedicated to a colleague and two of his students at the Paris Conservatoire, who likely gave the first performance at the end-of-semester concert that marked the conclusion of Dubois' tenure as the Conservatoire's director.

Darius Paymai: trio

This new piece by the Iranian-American composer Darius Paymai was commissioned by Trio Farben especially for today's performance. Paymai's work has been described as having a clarity of approach and an economy of material: often fragile, static, cyclical, found and reused in new contexts.

As he explains, *trio* was developed, in collaboration with the performers, over the last few months, and traces the history of this period through what he calls a kind of collage. 'I became interested' he says, 'in multiplicity and the layering of individual parts and – after much time spent finding and collecting sounds – the process of completing the piece became one of the removal of material.'

He goes on to record his gratitude to the members of Trio Farben, both for asking him to write *trio* for them and, he says 'for all their help along the way'.

Tōru Takemitsu: And then I knew 'twas Wind

Takemitsu began composing as a teenager after World War II and later said that in music, he had found his 'raison d'être as a man'. Not, however, in the music of his native Japan, which brought back bitter memories of the war. Instead, Takemitsu turned to Europe and found himself attracted particularly to the music of Debussy and Messiaen. Their influences are clear from his very earliest works and this Trio, written not long before he died, was devised as a companion piece to Debussy's 1915 Sonata for the same instruments.

The title is loosely based on a poem by Emily Dickenson: 'Like Rain it sounded till it curved'. In his pastoral, slightly eerie music, Takemitsu set out to reflect the myriad ways in which the wind behaves. The aim was to show the parallels between – as he put it – 'the signs of the wind in the natural world and of the soul, or unconscious mind (we could even call it "dream")', which continues to blow, like the wind, invisibly, through human consciousness.'

William Mathias: Zodiac Trio, Op.70

William Mathias conceived this unusual trio as a journey between three star-signs, each given a distinct character and separated by interludes of 'travelling music'. The work was commissioned by the Vale of Glamorgan Festival in 1976; Mathias dedicated it to three personal friends, all members of the Robles Trio and each born under a different sign of the Zodiac.

The original flautist was Christopher Hyde-Smith, whose birthday on 11 March marked him down as a 'Pisces'. Mathias depicts this watery sign with suitably rippling music and a sparkling flute line to brighten its otherwise murky depths. 'Aries' reflected viola player Frederick Riddle, born under the sign of the ram. Here, the music is perhaps less passionate than a fire sign might suggest but the star is the viola, which takes centre stage in a lyrical, yearning Andante. And finally, 'Taurus', written for the Spanish harpist Marisa Robles, whose instrument leads the way in a dance-like Allegro that becomes increasingly dramatic, before bringing the work to a suitably 'bullish' close.

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