

Paddington Trio I

Tuulia Hero violin

Patrick Moriarty cello

Stephanie Tang piano

Lotta Wennäkoski (b.1970)

Päärme (2015)

12'

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Piano Trio in B flat, Op.97 'Archduke' (1811)

40'

i. Allegro moderato

ii. Scherzo (Allegro)

iii. Andante cantabile, ma però con moto

iv. Allegro moderato

Paddington Trio is a Britten Pears Young Artist for 2025/26, here for a two-week residency on the Chamber Music in Residence course.

Paddington Trio is celebrated for its energetic communication, imaginative programming and highly refined ensemble playing. Much like the famous bear, Finnish violinist Tuulia Hero, Irish cellist Patrick Moriarty and American pianist Stephanie Tang came together at Paddington Station and made London their home.

From the start, the Trio's rise was swift, winning first prize at the 70th Royal Over-Seas League Competition, the 2024 Storioni Concours and the 2023 Parkhouse Award at Wigmore Hall.

In 2023, the Trio made its concerto debut in Beethoven's Triple Concerto with the Jyväskylä Symphony Orchestra in Finland conducted by Jan Söderblom.

Highlight engagements for the 2026/27 season include debuts at Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Lucerne Chamber Music Society, and the Helsinki Seriös, West Wicklow and Newbury Spring festivals.

Their debut album, *Freakshow*, will be released by Pentatone in 2027. Tuulia Hero performs on a 1740 Goffriller violin, generously on loan from the Beare's International Violin Society.

Lotta Wennäkoski: *Päärme*

Finnish composer Lotta Wennäkoski has described the art of writing music in terms of ‘craftsmanship’, which she calls a ‘professional virtue’. In the case of *Päärme*, she had a very particular kind of handicraft in mind – that of sewing. The title means ‘hem’ in Finnish and was inspired by the feel of different fabrics and the skill of sewing itself.

She describes the piece (her first piano trio) as having a ‘light, bright and pulsative character, built on little canons in many passages’, suggesting steady but erratically colourful stitching. ‘The hemming,’ she says, ‘is cheerfully brisk, though the result is not intended to be over-neat or regular’. The hand-made character of the resulting fabric is ‘also enriched with noise-sounds and non-conventional playing techniques’.

Beethoven: ‘Archduke’ Piano Trio, Op.97

When Beethoven looked back at his life’s work, he judged this – his final piano trio – as among his very finest creations: it is now widely considered to be one of the greatest piano trio ever written. It was dedicated to Archduke Rudolph, Beethoven’s most loyal patron, who had organised a substantial annuity for the composer in order – as he put it – ‘that the necessities of life shall not cause him embarrassment or clog his powerful genius’. In return, Beethoven inscribed the Archduke’s name on a number of his most significant works: others include the *Missa Solemnis*, the ‘Hammerklavier’ Sonata and the *Grosse Fuge*.

The Trio was written late in Beethoven’s so-called ‘middle period’ – the years following a personal crisis, as he struggled not only with his increasing deafness but also with rejection by a woman he had hoped to marry. In the 15 years since the publication of his first piano trio – his Op.1 – Beethoven had utterly transformed this hitherto domestic genre, and it now belonged firmly in the concert hall. The ‘Archduke’ Trio was to be the culmination of this process: an almost symphonic work, structured in four movements rather than the customary three and containing some of the most noble music he ever wrote.

The ‘nobility’ shines through the expansive opening movement as well as the sublime *Andante*, a set of variations on a solemn, hymn-like theme. In between, Beethoven writes a typically cheery scherzo, the instruments engaged in a light-hearted chat tempered

by the odd moment of more serious contemplation. And – perhaps in recognition of Archduke Rudolph’s performing skills – the finale becomes almost a concerto, the string parts only occasionally being allowed to shine while the piano goes all out to impress.

The Trio’s premiere was not an unqualified success. Despite being almost completely deaf, Beethoven insisted on taking the piano part himself, with the result that in the loud passages, according to the composer Louis Spohr, he ‘pounded on the keys until the strings jangled’, while in the quieter ones ‘he played so softly that whole groups of notes were omitted,’ rendering the music ‘unintelligible’.

Beethoven would never again perform in public but the work itself rose above its shaky start, and the Trio was almost immediately acknowledged to be one of his great masterpieces.

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