



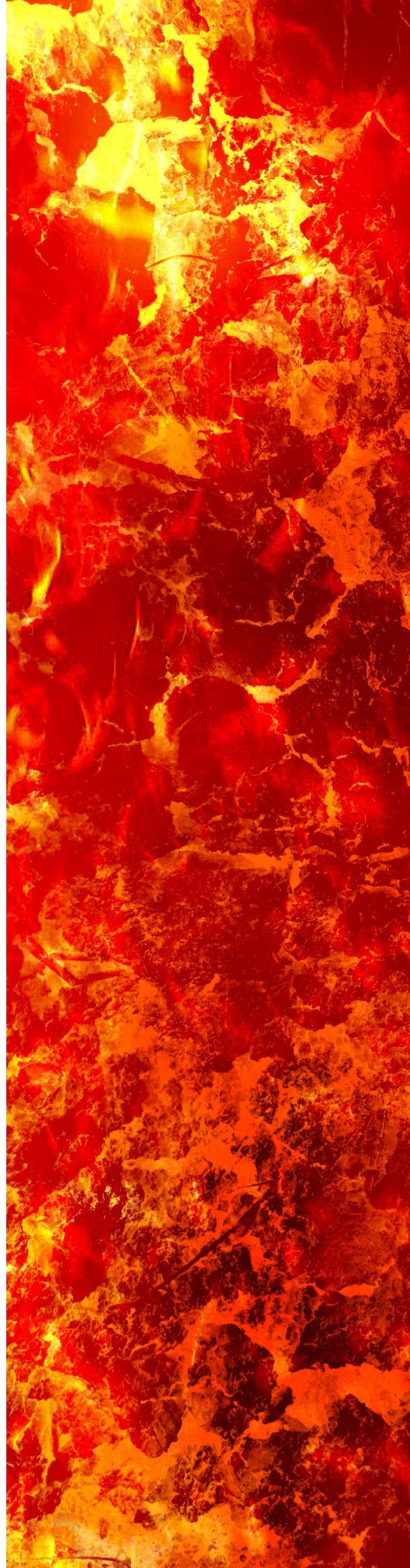
nztrio

Tectonic  
Echoes II

## Tectonic Echoes II

Amalia Hall (violin), Ashley Brown (cello),  
Somi Kim (piano) with Horomona Horo  
(taonga pūoro).

Horomona Horo (NZ) *Taonga Pūoro Call*  
Gillian Whitehead (NZ) *Te Waka o te Rangi*  
Alfred Schnittke (USSR) *Trio*  
Jeremy Mayall (NZ) *Ahakoā he iti he pounamu*  
Daniel Schnyder (USA) *Piano Trio*



**Horomona HORO (NZ; b. 1978): *Taonga Pūoro Call*;**  
**Dame Gillian KARAWE WHITEHEAD (Ngāi Te Rangi) (NZ; b. 1941):**  
***Te Waka o te Rangi* (NZTrio commission)**

(NZTrio with Horomona Horo at Christchurch Arts Festival 2019. This performance was part of Toru Whā, Ka Rewa a Matariki, for the Chamber Music New Zealand Matariki Series.)

Dame Gillian writes “Te waka o te rangi is a waka in the sky, whose prow is the constellation Matariki, and whose stern is Tautoru, the belt of Orion. Every night the captain, the star Taramainuku, trawls with his net to collect the souls of the people who had died that day, and, when Matariki sets in May, takes them to the underworld. When Matariki rises again, the souls are released to the heavens as stars.

This is one of the stories that was in my mind when I was writing this piece, but there are others. For instance, Tawhirimatea, the god of winds, was so upset by the separation of his parents, Ranginui and Papatuanuku, that he tore out his eyes and threw them into the sky where they became the constellation Matariki, while Tawhirimatea thrashed blindly round the sky, unable to see.

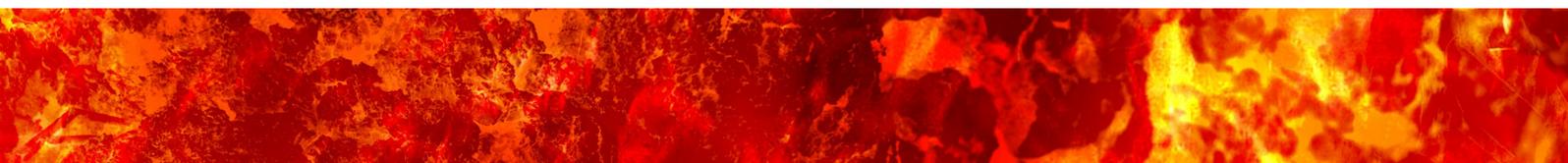
The clarity or otherwise of the nine stars of Matariki predicts the quality of the forthcoming harvest. My piece responds to Horomona Horo’s waiata, for koauau ponga iho (gourd nose flute) which precedes it, and I have also quoted the refrain of a piece for solo voice (Matariki) which I wrote some time ago. The text roughly translates as ‘People gather to prepare the land, preparing mounds for kumara planting. It’s winter, the rainy season, pools lie everywhere. The small eyes of Matariki’.”

**Alfred SCHNITTKE (RUS; 1934 – 1998): *Trio***

- i. *Moderato*
- ii. *Adagio*

“Holding up a defiant, even joyous, two fingers to the denizens of stylistic purity” – The Guardian

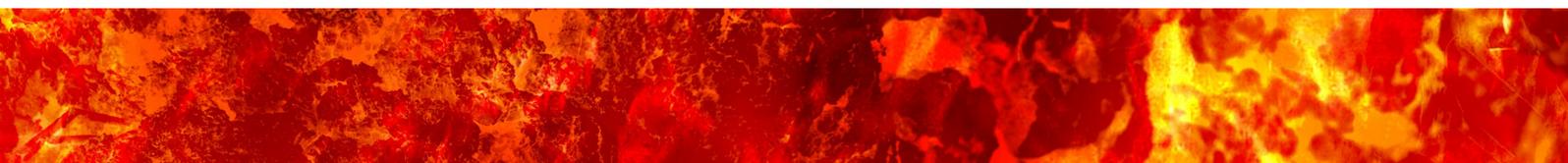
Schnittke came from a long line of linguists. Originally from Germany, his family had been one of those to follow Catherine the Great to Russia, speaking German fluently and living in that curious German Soviet community that Lenin created on the banks of the Volga. His father was a



journalist and translator, and the defining moment in his life came when the family was posted to Vienna for two years when he was 12 – the world of *The Third Man*, in the immediate aftermath of the second world war. And it's there that he fell in love with music and found his vocation. Later writing: "I felt every moment there to be a link of the historical chain: all was multi-dimensional; the past represented a world of ever-present ghosts, and I was not a barbarian without any connections, but the conscious bearer of the task in my life."

And Vienna repaid the compliment. Although he only began his musical training in Moscow, later becoming a professor there, Schnittke turned throughout his life to the Viennese composers Mozart, Schubert, Mahler, rejecting Tchaikovsky and the other romantic Russians. He used to talk of "that certain Mozart-Schubert sound that I've carried with me for decades" and it's a sound that shines on much of his music, "never too blatant", and always through that inordinately modern, individual, historical Schnittke prism. But what he loved most was the Second Viennese School, and specifically the composer Alban Berg, and in 1985 he was delighted to accept a commission from the Alban Berg society of Vienna, for a string trio for Berg's centenary – the trio that would eventually become this trio for piano, somehow lighter than the original and more classical and refined.

It begins with something that could be straight out of a Schubert piano sonata, or a Mahler symphony – a figure which we'll be hearing in every possible permutation through this first movement, starting and stopping, fast and slow, insistent and intimate, tonal and atonal in turn (this is thrilling), going through a wonderful period of Mahler cantilena, then something that almost sounds like minimalism, and ending in an exhausted four-part minuet. The second movement is like all that, but sadder. It's not only Berg's centenary, it's the 50th anniversary of his totally precocious death, and this is where you can hear Schnittke's choral training coming to the fore. Russian dirge-like chorales follow late-Romantic lyricism; long string lines and crystalline piano writing all leading to a furious moment of catharsis and then sublimating into thin air. This is where Arvo Pärt comes from! Schnittke did it first – so beautifully.\*



**Jeremy MAYALL (NZ; b. 1983): *Ahakoā he iti he pounamu*  
(NZTrio commission)**

(NZTrio with Horomona Horo at Christchurch Arts Festival 2019. This performance was part of Toru Whā, Ka Rewa a Matariki, for the Chamber Music New Zealand Matariki Series.)

Ahakoā he iti he pounamu - Although it is small, it is greenstone. This whakataukī refers to the gift of something small, but precious. Something given from the heart. This little piece is exploring the relationship between the western musical traditions and the world of taonga pūoro. This combination of sound worlds is a gift to me, and it is a space where it is an honour and privilege to create work that contributes to this growing legacy. Particularly in collaboration with Horomona. In this piece, the trio echoes some of the sounds of the taonga pūoro - mainly that of the tumutumu and the pukaea. The title is also a reference to the use of the pahu pounamu - a treasure with a beautiful sound that rings twice throughout the piece.

**Daniel SCHNYDER (USA; b. 1961): Piano Trio**

*i.*

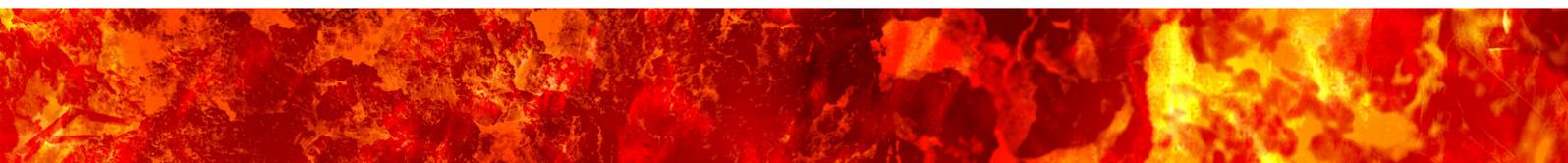
*ii.*

*iii. Scherzo*

*iv. Very fast; Tempo di funk"*

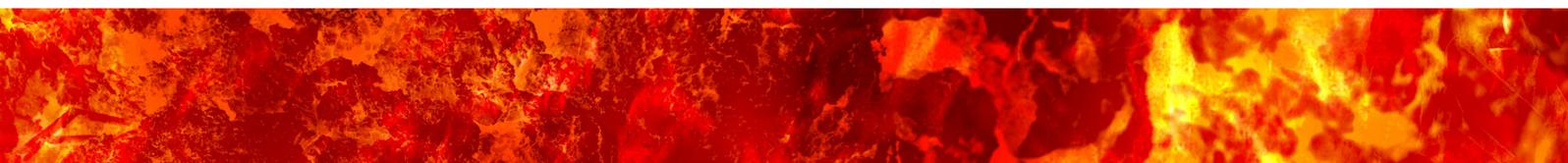
Daniel Schnyder got the jazz bug off the radio when he was 12. Stan Getz inspired him to swap cello for saxophone: Gil Evans inspired him to form his own chamber ensemble and start to compose: and within only a few years he was being commissioned by the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the finest orchestra in Switzerland. Add to that his middle eastern interest, his father was an archeologist and amateur musician who travelled there frequently on digs, and then his strangely reverse path to classical music studying flute and the music of the 14th and 15th centuries, and you get a musician who everybody agreed was a prodigy and yet completely failed to fit in.

All that changed when he was 30 and moved to New York. He fell in with bass trombonist David Taylor and the New York brass scene, just as the big jazz orchestras were giving some way to more intimate ensembles: he began incorporating the African and middle eastern rhythms he'd grown up with; and immediately began making his name not only as a horn player and jazz arranger but also as a classical composer, with four symphonies so far, his first residency at the Milwaukee Symphony, and his first Grammy nomination for his trio, *Worlds Beyond*.



This trio shows all his signature effects – swinging jazz, legato tunes, shifting harmonies, figured bass – all leading towards the fabulous last movement where this asymmetric rhythm comes and goes against backbeats and counterpoint – and then wraps up in a tease before you know it. One of the most endearing qualities of Schnyder’s music is that it never overstays its welcome. As he says: “I am a musical farmer, who is simply tilling the soil and people who are hungry, come and take something. Once in a while they even pay for it!”\*

\*Programme notes by Charlotte Wilson



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Photo credit: Garth Badger

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