

MARSYAS TRIO

flute | cello | piano

*The persuasive assurance of these performers
is consistently of the highest calibre.*

Arnold Whittall (Gramophone May 2024)



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About Us

The Marsyas Trio is formed of graduates of the Royal Academy of Music in London - **flautist Helen Vidovich** (Australia), **cellist Val Welbanks** (Canada), and **pianist Olga Stezhko** (Belarus).

Since 2009, they have championed their instrumental combination which originated in the Classical era with **Haydn, Koželuch and Clementi**, and which continued to evolve in tandem with the

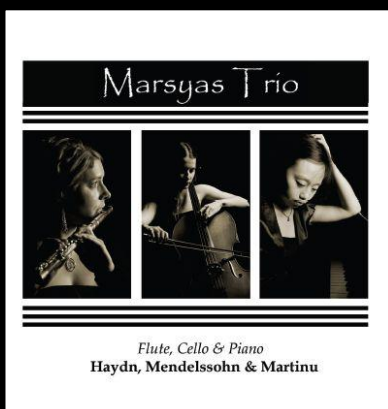
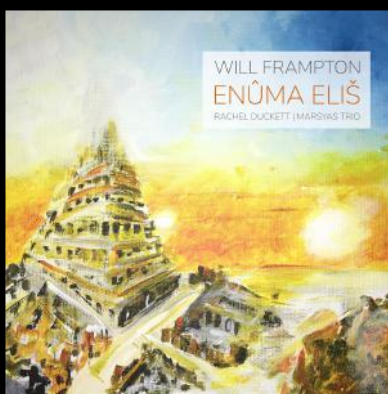
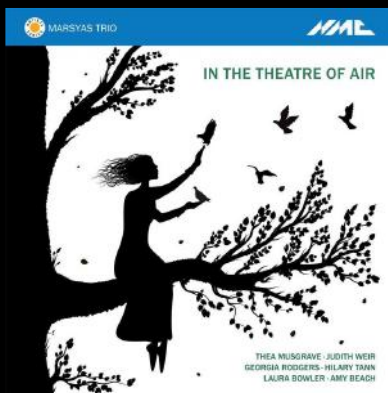
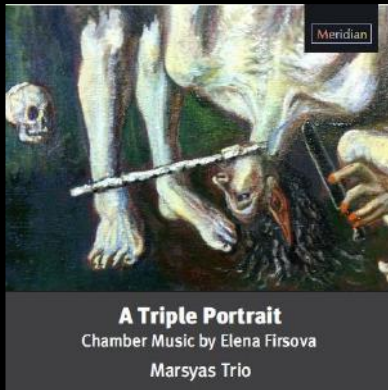
progress of instrument making, to the modern day where the musical possibilities have never been greater.

The Trio continues to develop this tradition through **commissioning**, and through their commitment to presenting a balanced range of works by historic and living composers, including close collaborations with Judith Weir and Michael Finnissy. Their programming offers audiences an interesting perspective on gender, societal and political themes.

Committed to **cross-arts** work, the Marsyas Trio has presented multimedia projects across the UK with video artist Julian Hand and puppeteers Smoking Apples. Keen educators, the Trio leads outreach projects at all levels, from primary to PhD, presenting their **family events** with public figures Janey Godley and Ed Balls. The Marsyas Trio were FUAM Ensemble in Residence at **Leeds University** (2024-25) and are currently Artist By-Fellows at Churchill College, **University of Cambridge**.



The Marsyas Trio takes its name from Greek mythology, inspired by the bold, spirited passion of the celebrated pipe-playing satyr who dared to compete with Apollo in a musical contest.



Discography

The trio's most recent CD release ***Alternative Readings*** (Métier, 2024) has been received with critical acclaim: "an unmissable disk (Music Fanfare July 2021) - a collaboration with award-winning **mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean**, it was awarded 5-stars in BBC Music Magazine, as Chamber Choice of the Month.

Chamber Choice of the Month ★★★★★
BBC Music Magazine (May 2024)

*... performed with devoted insight and sensitivity by
the Marsyas Trio...*

Julian Haylock (The Strad - January 2016)

... performed with sensitivity and refinement...

Angus McPherson (Limelight Magazine - June 2016)

...electrifyingly delicate performances
Max Erwin (Tempo - 2019)

... first class performance from this ensemble...

Bruce Reader (The Classical Reviewer - Sept. 2015)

*The Marsyas Trio and their guests... give superb
performances of often difficult music.*

Robert Hugill (Planet Hugill - Nov 2015)

Performances and recording are excellent throughout.

Gavin Dixon (Music Fanfare, issue 39:1 - 2015)

Out of the Shadows

Spotlight on lesser-known female talents

Louise Farrenc (1804-1875): Flute, Cello and Piano Trio in E minor, Op. 45

Mélanie Bonis (1858-1937): Scènes de la forêt, Op. 123

Interval

Hilary Tann (1947-2023): In the Theatre of Air (2017 Marsyas Trio commission)

Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel (1805-1847): Piano Trio in D minor, Op. 11

Imagine the richness of repertoire we would hold today if the prodigiously talented sisters and wives of the likes of Bach, Mozart and Mendelssohn had been encouraged or even permitted careers equal to those of their male contemporaries; who – had they been living today - may well have enjoyed glittering compositional careers. A letter from Abraham Mendelssohn to his daughter lays bare 19th-century social expectations: "Perhaps for Felix music will become a profession, while for you it will always remain but an ornament; never can and should it become the foundation of your existence." The concert features the title track from the Marsyas Trio's disc, *In the Theatre of Air* (NMC Recordings 2018), a celebration of the Suffrage centenary in Britain. Alongside are works by women who fought social and cultural conventions in order to compose and have a public musical life.

Alternate works

Amy Beach Pastorale & Caprice, Op. 90

Thea Musgrave Canta Canta

Marcelle de Manziarly Flute Trio

Undine Smith Moore Afro-American Suite



Gravity & Grace

Chamber music in Beethoven's sphere

Johann Wilhelm Wilms (1772-1847): Trio for flute, cello & piano

Friedrich Kuhlau (1786-1832): Trio in G minor, Op. 119

Interval

Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel (1805-1847): Overture in C (arr. M. Gotham)

Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826): Trio in G minor, Op. 63

This program explores the vibrant musical landscape that flourished during Beethoven's lifetime. Among his contemporaries was Kuhlau, a performer-composer who befriended Beethoven during a visit to Vienna in the 1820s. Wilms, born just two years after Beethoven, composed seven symphonies and also penned the Dutch national anthem. Weber's *Trio Op. 63* remains the most recognized work for the flute-cello-piano trio today; his complex and often enigmatic relationship with Beethoven continues to intrigue historians. Hensel's only symphonic work, arranged for the Marsyas Trio by musicologist Dr Mark Gotham, reflects the tradition of chamber 'translations' of symphonic music - a practice that held great significance in Beethoven's era.

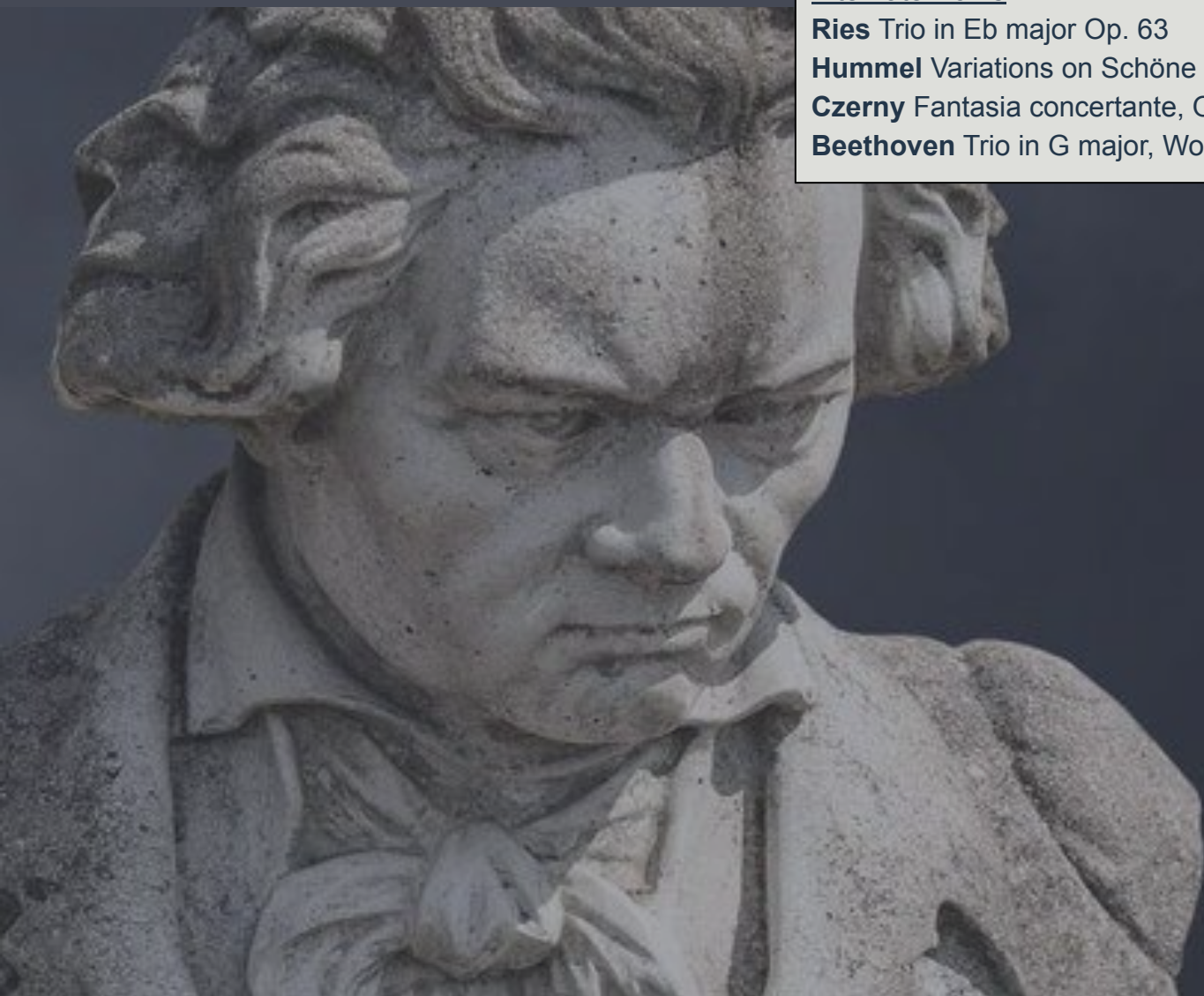
Alternate works

Ries Trio in Eb major Op. 63

Hummel Variations on Schöne Minka, Op. 78

Czerny Fantasia concertante, Op. 256

Beethoven Trio in G major, WoO 37





Chameleon

A contemporary programme looking in two directions: forward & back.

Lukas Ligeti: Passacaglia con Variazioni (2016)

Marilyn Bliss: Chameleon (1981)

Douglas Young: Three Debussy Reworkings (2023) [WP]

Interval

Robert Schumann / Tristan Murail: Relecture des Scènes d'enfants (2019)

Thierry Escaich: Scènes d'enfants au crépuscule (1993)

Judith Weir: Several Concertos (1980)

Chameleons are some of the strangest creatures on earth - best known for their ability to change colour quickly, they also have the uncanny ability to move both eyes independently, allowing them to look in two different directions. The Marsyas Trio, the UK's foremost flute, cello & piano ensemble, feels affinity with this unusual creature, changing colour as it pleases to be at once three soloists, a chamber ensemble and an orchestra. In this programme, the Marsyas Trio plays works which look both forwards and backwards in time.

Alternate works **Michael Finnissy** Alternative Readings (2002)

Kaija Saariaho Cendres (1998)

Chen Yi Night Thoughts (2004)

Rosalind Page Being and Time I: Lacrimae Rerum (2012)



Shadows of Time

Amplified programme for trio + live visual projections

Mario Lavista: Canto del alba (1979) for solo amplified flute

New Work: Commissioned piece 7-10min

George Crumb: Vox Balaenae (1971) for electric flute, electric cello, electric piano

Laura Bowler: Salutem (2014 Marsyas Trio commission)

Running Time – 1 hour

This collaboration between music and visual art challenges conventions by building a narrative generated from concert music. The musicians are joined on stage by film artist and visual projectionist [Julian Hand](#), who blends pre-constructed visuals with improvised imagery in response to the music, becoming an integral part of the narrative. This expands on the theatrical elements envisioned by Crumb in his iconic *Vox Balaenae*, to tell the story of humanity's common history and reflect on the minute portion the human race occupies in the grand scheme of the universe. [Bowler's Salutem](#) was commissioned as a partner piece, providing a continuation to *Vox Balaenae's* geological eras, projecting into the modern age; whilst Lavista's *Canto del Alba* begins the story by representing the Dawn of Earth.

Julian Hand is a recognised artist-filmmaker exploring liminal, often overlooked spaces through experimental moving images and sound. Blending cine-film, analogue, and digital video with striking light projections, he creates immersive works that reveal the visceral essence of a place. Through innovative film manipulation and sound design, he transforms forgotten realms into captivating, transcendent experiences.

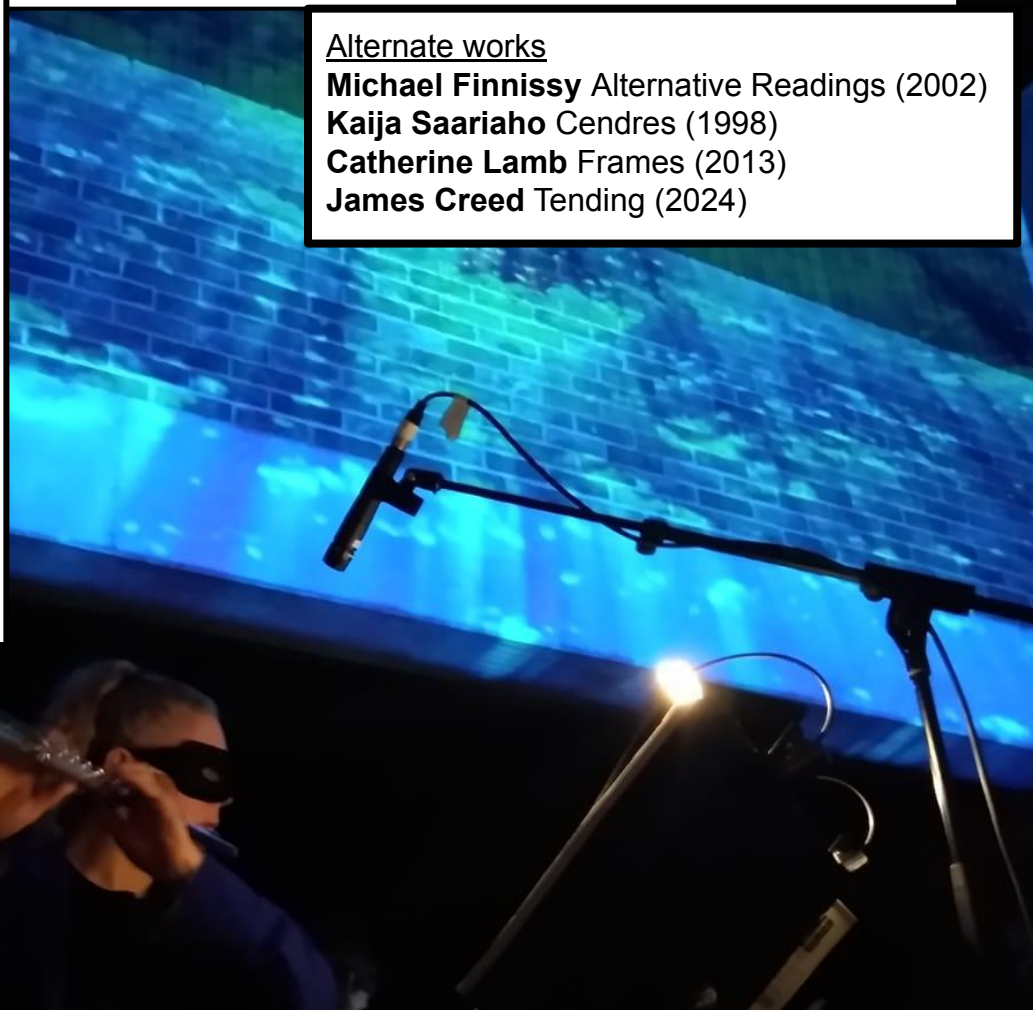
Alternate works

Michael Finnissy Alternative Readings (2002)

Kaija Saariaho Cendres (1998)

Catherine Lamb Frames (2013)

James Creed Tending (2024)





With guest violinist Christopher Jones, June 2024

Found in Translation

Historic chamber arrangements of symphonic works, joined by a guest violinist

Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel (1805-1847): Overture in C (arr. M.Gotham)

W. A. Mozart (1756-1791): Piano Concerto No.20 in D minor, K.466 (arr. Hummel)

Interval

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827): Symphony No.7, Op.92 (arr. Hummel)

By 1844, over 9,000 arrangements of orchestral works - including symphonies, concertos, overtures, and operas - were in circulation. Beethoven referred to these as 'translations': chamber versions of large-scale works, often created in consultation with the original composers. For those living outside major cities like Paris, Leipzig, London, or Vienna, these arrangements offered rare access to the music of the great composers. Performed in salons across Europe, they played a vital role in spreading symphonic music to regional audiences. Eminent musicians such as Hummel and Clementi were key figures in this practice, arranging most of Beethoven's symphonies and many works by Mozart and Haydn. Continuing this tradition, the Marsyas Trio presents a new arrangement of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's only symphonic work, commissioned during their fellowship at the University of Cambridge.

Alternate works

Hummel Variations on Schöne Minka, Op.78

Mozart Piano Concerto No.21 in C, K.467 (arr. Hummel)

Haydn Symphony No.104 in D major 'London' (arr. Clementi)

Clementi Sonata in C major, Op. 22, No. 3, 'The Hunt'

Echoes of a Distant Land

Marsyas Trio joins forces with mezzo-soprano **Lotte Betts-Dean** to present works of yearning for lands unknown.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921): Une flûte invisible

Judith Weir: Nuits d'Afrique (2015)

Michael Finnissy: Wisdom (2020)

Interval

Mélanie Bonis (1858-1937): Scènes de la forêt, Op. 123

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869): La captive, Op. 12

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937): Chansons madécasses



The programme is inspired by a rich array of literary sources that underpin each piece. Finnissy's *Wisdom* draws on a multitude of texts which take the listener around time and space, ranging from Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime myths to Shakespeare's poetry and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Weir's *Nuits d'Afrique*, commissioned by Wigmore Hall as a companion piece to Ravel's *Chansons madécasses*, sets texts by three female writers from Senegal, Ivory Coast and Congo-Brazzaville, with poems ranging from the tenderness to humour. Mel Bonis' *Scènes de la forêt* includes references to Greek mythology, alongside the beautiful short vocal pieces by Ravel, Berlioz and Saint-Saëns.

Alternate works

Anne Boyd Cycle of Love (1981)

Michael Finnissy Blessed be (1992 / 2025)

Per Nørgård Day & Night (1982)

Franghiz Ali-Zadeh From Japanese Poetry (1993)



World premiere of Finnissy's *Wisdom*, January 2025

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