

# Minerva Piano Trio

## PRESS RELEASE

### The Minerva Piano Trio have been appointed as 2016/17 Young Artists by St. John's Smith Square

The Minerva Piano Trio – pianist Annie Yim, violinist Michal Ćwizewicz, and cellist Richard Birchall – will take up their artist residency at St. John's Smith Square during the 2016/17 concert season. The Trio have been invited to present three concerts at the much-loved concert hall in Westminster, Central London, as well as designing their own programme of public events throughout the season.

*"We are thrilled to be selected as Young Artists at St John's Smith Square. We are delighted to have been given the platform to launch a series of concerts that highlight the three key artistic components of the Minerva Piano Trio: collaborations with the exciting new generation of composers; cross-cultural partnerships with the worlds of dance and art; and innovation through historical research. Being part of the Young Artists residency will take our artistic endeavours to the next level."* – Minerva Piano Trio

The three concert dates at St. John's Smith Square are:

Sun 23 October 2016 3.00pm | Thu 9 March 2017 7.30pm | Thu 1 June 2017 1.05pm

### St John's Smith Square Young Artists' Series 2016/17 – Concert Programmes\*

Sunday 23 October 2016 3.00pm

#### ***The Genesis of Minerva: Schumann and the Young Brahms***

After Robert Schumann declared the young Brahms as a composer 'fully formed like Minerva', Brahms responded with the original version of his Piano Trio in B major, Op. 8 in 1854, aged 20. The Trio's revival of this rarely performed work reflects long-term research through a new interpretation. Cellist and composer Richard Birchall's *Contours* is his first work for the Trio.

**Schumann** Piano Trio in D minor Op. 63

**Richard Birchall** *Contours*

**Brahms** Piano Trio in B major Op. 8a (original version)

Thursday 9 March 2017 7.30pm

#### ***Dance and Poetic Fantasy***

Inspired by dance and poetic fantasy, the Minerva Piano Trio reimagine Ravel's ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* – the legendary Ballets Russes commission – for the concert stage, transcribed for piano trio by composer Charlotte Bray, plus new dance choreography commissioned in association with MusicArt London. Programme includes works by Schumann, Ravel, and Cheryl Frances-Hoad, with the choreographer and dancers to be announced.

**Schumann** Fantasiestücke Op. 88

**Ravel transcr. Charlotte Bray** Scenes from Daphnis and Chloe, transcribed for piano trio with dance choreography (World Premiere)

**Cheryl Frances-Hoad** My Fleeting Angel

**Ravel** Piano Trio in A minor

Thursday 1 June 2017 1.05pm

***Haunting Visions***

From the foreboding sounds of Shostakovich's early piano trio to Gavin Higgins' *The Ruins of Detroit* inspired by the powerful photography of the eponymous artwork, this concert invites the listener to enter a visual world. The slow movement of Beethoven's 'Ghost' Trio suggests Hamlet's ghost, an enduringly haunting vision.

**Shostakovich** Piano Trio in C minor Op. 8

**Gavin Higgins** *The Ruins of Detroit*

**Beethoven** Piano Trio in D major Op. 70 No. 1 'Ghost'

\*Tickets for the St John's Smith Square's 2016/17 concert season will be on sale to the general public from Monday 11 July 2016. Please visit [sjss.org.uk](http://sjss.org.uk) for more.

**ENDS**

**Notes to Editors:**

**BIOGRAPHY**

Selected by St John's Smith Square as Young Artists 2016/17, the Minerva Piano Trio will present an innovative series of concerts, joining forces with a new generation of composers and collaborating with different art forms, including dance. As part of their ongoing project, the Trio will perform their revival of Brahms' radically different original version of his first trio. Each concert explores the Trio's passions for new music, historical research, and creative collaborations.

Following their London debut at the Southbank Centre's Purcell Room in 2014 as Park Lane Group Young Artists, the Minerva Piano Trio have established themselves as one of the UK's most exciting young trios. Their performances have been described as 'the most beautiful sounds' (The Times) and 'splendid renditions' (Classical Source). They have worked closely with leading British composers including Mark-Anthony Turnage and Roxanna Panufnik. Recent highlights include the premiere of a work written by the Minerva Piano Trio's cellist and composer Richard Birchall. The Trio have received coaching from Gordon Back, members of the former Florestan Trio, and Gábor Takács-Nagy. They are grateful for the support of ChamberStudio, Richard Carne Trust, and Concordia Foundation.

Violinist Michal Ćwizewicz directs the Ognisko Chamber Ensemble and is the concertmaster of the Górecki Chamber Orchestra. He studied with Itzhak Rashkovsky, Krzysztof Smietana and members of the Ysaÿe and Alban Berg Quartets. He has been teaching at the Royal College of Music since 2012. Cellist Richard Birchall read Music at Cambridge University before studying at the Guildhall School of Music under Louise Hopkins. He has been a member of the Philharmonia Orchestra since 2011. He also directs Cellophony cello octet and works as a composer and arranger. Pianist Annie Yim completed her doctorate in performance and musicology at the Guildhall School of Music with Joan Havill and City University London with Christopher Wiley. She is founder of MusicArt London, a performing arts initiative established in the UK.

**For press enquiries about the Minerva Piano Trio, please contact Annie Yim:**

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