

# MORTON TRIO



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Johannes Brahms  
Horn Trio in Eb major, Op. 40

1. Andante	29:00
2. Scherzo: Allegro	7:39
3. Adagio mesto	7:41
4. Allegro con Brio	7:00
	6:40

Arna Morton  
5. Summer for Violin, Horn, and Piano

08:20

Johannes Brahms  
Piano Trio No. 1 in B major, Op. 8,  
arranged for horn trio by Arna Morton

6. Allegro con brio	37:44
7. Scherzo: Allegro molto	15:27
8. Adagio	7:04
9. Finale: Allegro	8:16
	6:52

Photography: Erica McQueen & Arna Morton  
Producer: Wayne Laird  
Engineer: Björn Arntsen  
Creative Design: Arna Morton  
Graphic Design: Andrew Aguilar

Arna Morton *violin*  
Alex Morton *horn*  
Liam Wooding *piano*

  
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## Morton Trio

Composed of husband and wife duo, Alex and Arna Morton, and pianist Liam Wooding, Ōtautahi Christchurch-based Morton Trio has been delighting and engaging audiences with charismatic performances throughout Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad since 2017.

Following several successful tours with Chamber Music New Zealand and the UK-Based Pettman/Royal Overseas League, Morton Trio has firmly established a reputation as one of Aotearoa's most innovative classical music ensembles.

## A Debut

When the opportunity arose to record our first album together, we asked ourselves this: how do we — a horn trio at the bottom of the world — curate a programme that both resonates with our values as performers whilst simultaneously making a distinctive contribution to our local community and the world at large?



Through pairing works that acknowledge our beginnings, our maturation, and our objectives for the future, this album is a milestone in our journey thus far and celebrates all that we represent as an ensemble basking in the early summer of our lives and careers. Blending past and present, we hope to offer both a fresh perspective on existing works whilst further expanding the horn trio repertoire. We are therefore delighted to offer you something old, something new, and something borrowed for our debut.

## Summer

After a decade away from the manuscript, Arna Morton's Summer metaphorically acknowledges not only the dawn of her new compositional era but also that of ourselves as individuals, as performers, and as a group entering what feels like a period of abundance, productivity, and opportunity that simultaneously carries the weight of responsibility, expectations, and vulnerability.

While not intending to be programmatic, the work is certainly symbolic of this dichotomy, and aims to invite the listener into a meditation that explores this notion of adulthood.

## A Brahms Double Bill

Undoubtedly the most beloved and well-known work for violin, horn, and piano, Brahms' Horn Trio in Eb Major op. 40 has been an integral part of our performing lives as an ensemble.

It is the music that first brought us together, enabling us to perform around the world, and is the cornerstone of our repertoire. By capturing our rendition of this truly iconic work today, we aim to establish ourselves as an ensemble that is both rooted in, and connected to, the foundations of our area of practice.

Written shortly after the death of his mother – with the third movement embodying a lament – Brahms' Horn Trio op. 40





was originally published in 1865, interestingly along with an alternative cello part that, when performed in lieu of the horn, presents the more traditional trio instrumentation of violin, cello, and piano akin to his Piano Trio No. 1 in B Major op. 8.

This precedent, along with Arna's instinct for the french horn being a well-suited cello substitution for this work, ultimately led to her transcribing Brahms' B Major Piano Trio, and to the premiere of this intriguing adaptation in July 2022. And while the cello and french horn behave differently, this in fact affords us unique interpretive possibilities that may not be possible in its original form.

We offer our version of Brahms' op. 8 as a provocation to reconsider an alternative timbral palette, and have confidence Brahms would not only enjoy and appreciate our transcription, but ultimately approve of it.

## Arna Morton

One of Aotearoa's most versatile violinists, Cantabrian Dr. Arna Morton is a deeply passionate performer, composer, and music educator, comfortable on practically any stage as a soloist, chamber & orchestral musician, improviser, and commercial event performer.

Following the completion of her Master of Musical Arts degree at the New Zealand School of Music with Associate Professor and NZSQ violinist Helene Pohl, Arna completed her PhD in Violin Performance at the University of Melbourne supervised by Dr. Curt Thompson, before winning her current position of Principal 2nd Violin with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra in 2021.

Arna performs on a 1900 Joseph Hel violin, generously on loan from the CSO Foundation.







## Alex Morton

After growing up in Christchurch, a passionately musical kid, Alex moved to Melbourne in 2014 to study at the Australian National Academy of Music where he cut his teeth professionally in the wonderfully vibrant music scene that Melbourne has to offer.

Moving back to Christchurch in 2020, Alex delved headfirst into the fulfilling world of music and performance education. After 10-years of elite-level study with world leading performers and pedagogues and his own professional experience, Alex is grateful for the opportunity to bring his experience back to share with his students.

“The thing I love most about my industry is the huge variety of experiences it gives to you. I have been fortunate enough to travel around the world with my music, from London to Tokyo, performing with orchestras on stage and in the pit, with chamber groups, as a soloist, and even in music festivals for crowds of 25,000 people!”

## Liam Wooding

Born in Whanganui, Liam's love of the piano was fostered at an early age and developed through piano lessons and an array of musical experiences. He studied piano in Auckland and Hamilton under Rae de Lisle and subsequently Katherine Austin, graduating with a Master's degree in music. He furthered his studies overseas, first in Melbourne, then in San Diego as a Fulbright scholar. A versatile musician, Liam is equally at home as a soloist and collaborative pianist.

In addition to this release, Liam appears on three albums: *Cabaret Songs* (Rattle, 2023); *Chamber Music Volume II* by Lachlan Skipworth (Cygnus Arioso, 2022); and *Play Pen* (Atoll, 2019).





