

Competition Final: Tuesday 27 April, 7.30pm

## **Thank you Iceland: Finalists Defy 'Act of God' and progress to St Martin's Chamber Music Competition Final**

The Piatti String Quartet, Greenwich Trio and Elixir Trio will perform in their bid to become the first ever winners of St Martin's Chamber Music Competition in partnership with Making Music. After making it through the preliminary and semi-final rounds, the three groups will compete for the coveted prize.

Piatti String Quartet, stranded in France by the cloud of volcanic ash which wreaked havoc for travellers across Europe last week, drove through the night to a ferry from Dunkirk in order to make their scheduled semi-final last Tuesday 20 April.

While those stranded were cursing Iceland's volcanic activity, The Greenwich Trio are newly converted fans of the volcano. As the reserve ensemble for the semi-final of the competition, they were called on Monday 19 April when it became clear that unfortunately, not all semi-finalists would make it back to London to perform, and were offered a place in the semi-final the next day. Their performance of excerpts from Beethoven's Archduke Piano Trio and Ravel Piano Trio in A minor impressed the panel with its vivacity, passion and technical brilliance.

Paris based Elixir Trio according to one semi-final panellist, gave the "most extraordinarily moving and engaging" performance of the slow movement from Francaix's Piano Trio to secure their place in Tuesday's final. "We gave them extra points for the violinist's blue hair" joked another panellist, then hastening to add that actually, it was the group's musical performance which saw them succeed.

The final promises to be an impressive event with excellent programmes on offer from each of these exceptional young talents. The evening will also feature a performance by the Choral Scholars of St Martin-in-the-Fields of works by panel chair, John Rutter together with music by Vaughan Williams and Holst

The Panel:

Dr John Rutter OBE (composer and musician)

Oliver Macfarlane: (Editor of Classical Music TV for the BBC)

Robin Osterley: (CEO of competition partners Making Music)

Dr Andrew Earis: (Director of Music for St Martin-in-the-Fields)

Full programme:

Piatti Quartet:

Beethoven – Quartet in E flat, op 74 "The Harp" – Allegro

Smetana – Quartet in E minor No 1 – Largo Sostenuto

Bartok – Quartet No 2, op 17 – Allegro molto capriccioso

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The Greenwich Trio:

Beethoven – Piano Trio No 7 op 97 in B flat major "Archduke" – Allegro moderato

Shostakovich – Piano Trio No 2 op 67 in E minor – Largo and Allegretto

Elixir Trio:

Beethoven – Serenade op 8 in D major – Marcia, Andante–Scherzo and Polka

Jean Cras – Trio a cordes – moderato and Tres Anime

#### NOTES:

Finalists in the 2009 Royal Overseas League competition and winners of the Tunnell Trust Award 2010/2011, the Piatti String Quartet are fast emerging as one of the UK's leading young string quartets. Since being chosen for the Park Lane Group young artist series, the Piatti Quartet had their Purcell Room debut in October 2009 as part of the Peter Maxwell Davis Naxos quartet series. They returned to the Purcell room in January 2010.

Highlights for 2010 include launching the Belfast Music Society's International Chamber Music Festival, collaboration with renowned cellist Raphael Wallfisch and a return to Farnham castle for the Tilford Bach Society concert series. In June 2010, the Quartet is launching the Piatti Chamber Music Festival at Kingsand, Cornwall, following an extremely enthusiastic response at the 2009 pre-festival concert.

The Quartet has played at various festivals and venues in the UK including the Royal Festival Hall, the Purcell Room, St Martin-in-the-Fields, St James Piccadilly and the National Gallery. The Quartet members are all past and current award-winning students from the Royal College of Music and Royal Academy of Music and have studied with members of the Amadeus Quartet, Chilingirian Quartet, Alban Berg Quartet, Keller Quartet, Maggini Quartet, Vellinger Quartet, Brodsky Quartet, Artis Quartet and with violinist Walter Levine and Violist Jon Thorne.

In 2009 they received the MBF Ensemble Award to attend the International Sommerakademie Prague/Vienna/Budapest where they performed throughout Austria in venues including Brahms House and the Schloss Rothschild castle.

The Piatti Quartet is extremely grateful for the generosity and support of the Nicholas Boas Charitable Trust, the Musicians Benevolent Fund, the Concordia Foundation and Ian Ellis.

Never have I heard piano and stringed instruments meld together so seamlessly – Bachtrack.

The Number One Trio in the world!

Bernard Greenhouse

&they are right there, in the moment, living the composer's joy, pain, humour or ecstasy and seemingly with a burning desire to share it with their audiences. It's not surprising that they have already built up a big following&

Julian Jacobson

"3 superb musicians who have formed a superb The Greenwich Trio!!"

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Stephen Kovacevich

The Greenwich Trio, described by legendary cellist Bernard Greenhouse as the "New Beaux Arts Trio", is formed by pianist Yoko Misumi, Beethoven Society of Europe Top Prize–winner; Lana Trotovek, a talent unveiled by Ruggiero Ricci at Salzburg's Mozarteum; and cellist Stjepan Hauser, last student of Rostropovich and winner of 21 first prizes all over the world.

These three phenomenal talents joined forces in August 2006. Their breathtaking chamber music making gains the approval of audiences and critics. The trio won number of first prizes in the international chamber music competitions in UK, Belgium and Italy.

The Greenwich Trio now received coaching from Bernard Greenhouse and Stephen Kovacevich, and has had masterclasses with Ivry Gitlis, Alban Berg Quartet, the Beaux Arts Trio, Wihan Quartet, The Schubert Ensemble of London, Israel Piano Trio, Deniz Gelenbe, David Kenedy, Martino Tirimo, Rivka Golani and Julian Jacobson. They are regular guests of the most prestigious International European Festivals such as Sanatander Festival, Rheingau Music Festival, Festival Ljubljana and many others. Festivals in the UK include Rye, Chipping Campden, Cheltenham and Bath. They gave series of concerts in Royal Palaces in Spain under the organization of Patrimonio Nacional led by Her Majesty the Queen. In September 2008 they performed in the opening festival at King's Place, London's newest prestigious concert hall. The Greenwich Trio have collaborated with conductor Barry Wordsworth and international viola soloist Rivka Golani.

Barely three years after its formation, the ensemble aspires to be the most energetic, passionate and refined trio of the music world, and has given performances that have taken audiences by storm.

Three French musicians with a passion for chamber music formed the Elixir Trio in 2007. After studying for two years with the Chilingirian Quartet at the Royal College of Music, they are now completing their training with the Ysaye Quartet at the Paris Conservatoire where they have benefited from masterclasses with Gordan Nikolitch, Peter Cropper, Philip Dukes and Lewis Kaplan.

The trio has performed in venues and festivals in France and England, Wales, Germany and Holland. Elixir performed for the Prince of Wales in 2008 at St James Palace and played live for France Musique Radio. The trio won prizes at the 2008 Maurice Ravel International music Academy in St Jean de Luz and at the Musiques d'Ensemble FNAPEC Competition in April 2009 in Paris. The trio was supported by the Concordia Foundation in London in 2007–2008 and by the Young Musician Musical artists Association in France in 2008–2009.

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