Merz Trio

Biography Option 1

Hailed as "artists in the deepest sense of the word" (CutCommon), Merz Trio, winners of the Naumburg, Concert Artists Guild, Fischoff, and Chesapeake Competitions, have been lauded for their "stunning virtuosity... fresh and surprising interpretations" (Reading Eagle), and "perfection of intonation and ensemble" (Hudson Review). Merz Trio are passionately committed to reshaping the narrative of classical music through vibrantly dynamic programming and wide-ranging interdisciplinary collaboration. Their narrative programming style juxtaposes classical standards, new music, and their own arrangements of familiar and forgotten works, fluidly interwoven and guided with speaking from the Trio's members. Their interdisciplinary collaborations include ongoing projects with dancer Caroline Copeland, Sandglass Puppet Theater, chef David Bouley, and videographer Chris Kitchen.

The Trio are equally known for their more immersive integrations of music and text in performance, ranging from their recital-theater piece built around Shakespeare's Macbeth ("Those Secret Eyes"), to their debut album interweaving Ravel's Trio with short pieces, poems, and diaries of the era ("Ink," August, 2021), to be presented in a live concert format ("Ink Spills") for the 2021-2022 season. Finally, in their prolific arranging, the Trio are committed to uplifting overlooked voices from history, ranging from Hildegard von Bingen to Lili and Nadia Boulanger, from Joséphine Baker to Irish folk melodies.

In the coming few seasons, Merz Trio look forward to debuts at Merkin Hall in NYC, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, and the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, among other notable performance. Merz Trio have been encouraged in their explorations by numerous institutional homes around the world: New England Conservatory, Yellow Barn, Snape Maltings, Avaloch Farm Institute, the Naumburg Foundation, the Lake Champlain, Olympic, and Chesapeake Music Festivals, and the Fischoff Competition, as well as many other venues and hosts around the US, Australia and the UK. They are currently represented by Concert Artists Guild and make their home in Boston.

October 2021
Biography Option 2

Hailing from opposite corners of the globe, Merz Trio’s members can only agree on two things: (1) how to pronounce the word ‘Merz’ in a faux German accent, and (2) that shopping for concert clothes should be classified as a form of torture. The Trio met in the middle of a snow storm in NYC in December 2016; hilariously - and gloriously - we now spend the majority of our lives together, rehearsing, traveling and arguing: usually over music and whether Australian English is better than American English. Together, we’ve walked onto stages around the world and are humbled to have been recognized as Winners of the Naumburg, Concert Artists Guild, Fischoff, and Chesapeake Competitions.

But whether concerts or competitions, large or small, the most thrilling thing about these experiences is the energetic communities that have emerged from them. Merz Trio love to be in community with others. We love talking and getting carried away - in the rehearsal room, on stage, after the concert. We understand what we do as a conversation between ourselves, the composer, our audience, and the changing world we step into each day. Our name, Merz, speaks to this: It’s the term coined by German artist and polymath Kurt Schwitters, who once floor-to-ceiling decorated his parents’ house in Hanover with found objects and insisted that art only occurred in shared spaces. So Merz refers to connection, to sharing, to possibility. And yes, we’re very glad Schwitters didn’t live with us.

Our rehearsal room is a noisy fusion of our interests: Music of all varieties, literature, theatre, cooking, dance, running, unnecessarily snobbish ideas about beverages. We love this messiness. We play in living rooms and large halls; galleries and schools; black box theaters and crypts. There are very few places we don’t feel at home.

And we love investigating other people’s messiness. Alongside our ‘traditional’ recitals, we create original inter-disciplinary projects, sometimes just with ourselves and our extra-musical interests, more often with inspiring and generous artists. So far, we’ve brought our music into conversation with dancers, directors, chefs, sommeliers, puppeteers, and graphic designers, and each time we collaborate, we understand the music that we play differently.

We’ve been encouraged in our explorations by the New England Conservatory in Boston and its visionary faculty. We’re grateful too, for other homes around the world: Yellow Barn, Snape Maltings, Avaloch Farm Institute, the Lake Champlain, Olympic, and Chesapeake Music Festivals, and the Fischoff Competition. Not to mention hundreds of welcoming venues and hosts around the US, Australia and the UK. We’re with Schwitters on this one: Art happens where people are. We hope you’ll come along for the ride.

October 2021
Short Biography

Hailed as "artists in the deepest sense of the word" (CutCommon), the Merz Trio, winners of the Naumburg, Fischoff, Concert Artists Guild, and Chesapeake Competitions, have been lauded for their "stunning virtuosity... fresh and surprising interpretations" (Reading Eagle), and "perfection of intonation and ensemble" (Hudson Review). Seamlessly tacking between traditional repertoire and the music of our time, the Trio are known for their vibrantly dynamic programming, wide-ranging interdisciplinary collaboration, and prolific new arrangements of works for piano trio.

Upcoming performances include their debuts at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Merkin Hall in NYC, and the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. Ongoing interdisciplinary collaborations include projects with dancer Caroline Copeland, Sandglass Theater (puppetry), chef David Bouley, director Jon Levin, and mime Emma Jaster.

The Trio is known for their fluid and imaginative integration of music and text in their programming, ranging from their recital-theater piece built around Shakespeare’s Macbeth ("Those Secret Eyes"), to their recent debut album interweaving Ravel’s Trio with short pieces, poems, and diaries of the era ("Ink," August, 2021).

Merz Trio are represented by Concert Artists Guild and make their home in Boston.

October 2021