

POINSETT PIANO TRIO



DAVID GROSS, *PIANO*
DEIRDRE HUTTON, *VIOLIN*
CHRISTOPHER HUTTON, *VIOLONCELLO*



The Poinsett Piano Trio

After having performed together with great success for several years in other chamber combinations, David Gross, Deirdre Hutton, and Christopher Hutton founded the **Poinsett Piano Trio** in 2008. All three members of the trio live in Greenville, South Carolina and teach at Furman University, a Liberal Arts college with a strong performance-oriented music program. Together they have performed Beethoven's Triple Concerto with orchestras in Idaho and South Carolina, and recitals in AL, DC, FL, MD, NC, PA, VA, throughout South Carolina, and International tours to New Zealand in 2010 and 2013, and to Germany in 2012. They have twice performed at the Piccolo Spoleto festival, and have been a "pick of the week" of the Charleston City Paper.

The ensemble is named in honor of Joel Roberts Poinsett, a statesman, physician, and botanist from South Carolina. Like the members of the trio he had an international life and career: living in England as a child, training in medical school in Scotland, traveling extensively in Europe and South America, and later was elected to Congress before serving as Minister (ambassador) to Mexico. Poinsett is most remembered today as the discoverer of the Mexican Poinsettia plant, whose bright red flowers are popularly included in festive Christmas decorations throughout the world.

Visit the trio on the web at <http://www.poinsettpianotrio.com>, where you can hear audio samples.

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Artist Bios



Pianist **David Gross** was born in Berlin (F.R. Germany) and presented his first public performance at the age of seven. He earned prizes at the international piano competitions in Marsala (1988), and Bremen (1993). David has taught at Western Michigan University, Goshen College and the Hochschule "Hanns Eisler" in Berlin (State Conservatory), and is currently Associate Professor of Piano at Furman University. He was educated at the Hochschule Munich, Hochschule Hannover, Yale University, and the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, and his teachers include Ludwig Hoffmann, Arie Vardi, Daniel Pollack, Claude Frank, and John Wustman. An active performer throughout Europe and the U.S., David has made numerous solo recordings for German National Public Radio as well as CD releases on Signum (Edouard Lalo, Piano Concerto) and Centaur (Jan Václav Voříšek, piano works). Solo appearances include with the Berliner Symphoniker, Staatsorchester Frankfurt/Oder, Ensemble Oriol (Berlin), Rockford

Symphony (Illinois), Champaign-Urbana Symphony (Illinois), Greenville Symphony (South Carolina), Anderson Symphony (South Carolina), Macon Symphony (Georgia), Idaho State Civic Symphony, Merrimack Valley Philharmonic (Massachusetts), Brevard Philharmonic (North Carolina), and the Hendersonville Symphony (North Carolina).



Deirdre Hutton is the only member of the group to have been born in the United States, and holds dual American and Irish citizenship. She is an avid solo, chamber and orchestral performer having played at numerous music festivals throughout the United States including the National Repertory Orchestra, National Orchestral Institute, the Bowdoin Summer Music Festival, and the Eastern Music Festival. In addition, Deirdre has performed in numerous orchestras in the US and Europe including the New World Symphony (Miami, Florida), the Schlossfestspiele Chamber Orchestra (Heidelberg, Germany), the North Carolina Symphony, the Charleston Symphony (South Carolina), the Knoxville Symphony (Tennessee), and the Greenville Symphony (South Carolina). She was Assistant Concertmaster of the Roanoke Symphony (Virginia). Deirdre studied at the Eastman School of Music with Oleh Krysa and earned her Master's degree with Roland and Almita Vamos at Northwestern University. While at

Northwestern she was the Vamos's teaching assistant and taught violin lessons to undergraduate students. In addition, she studied in London under Itzhak Rashkovsky while a member of Haydn Chamber Symphony of London and as concertmaster of the Imperial Collegium Musicum Ensemble. She is currently Adjunct Professor of Violin at Furman University and also teaches a private studio of talented high-school students.



Cellist **Christopher Hutton** has performed in a broad range of settings, including duo recitals in his home country of New Zealand (most recently with pianists Paul Wyse, Sergey Schepkin, and Thomas Lausmann) and chamber music performances in New Zealand, the United States, and Europe. He has recorded for New Zealand's Concert FM, Germany's SWF Radio, and appears on a disc of contemporary music on Albany Classics. Christopher served as co-principal cellist in the New World Symphony Orchestra under music director Michael Tilson Thomas and has played in the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra as well as other orchestras in the United States. He has enjoyed collaborating with various composers, notably New Zealanders Helen Bowater and Christopher Marshall and Georgia composer Mitchell Turner. Christopher studied at Boston University with Leslie Parnas, and earned his Masters and Doctorate with Paul Katz and Steven Doane at the University of Rochester's Eastman School of Music. While

at Eastman he was teaching assistant to Steven Doane. He later taught at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, the University of Delaware, and the Eastern Music Festival before joining the faculty at Furman University in 2003 where he is Associate Professor of Violoncello and String Chamber Music.



Critical Acclaim

The Trio has been very well received by audiences. The next page features a review of a recent performance on the Music for a Great Space series in Greensboro, North Carolina. The following are comments excerpted from other reviews of the Trio's concerts:

“Pianist David Gross, violinist Deirdre Hutton and cellist Christopher Hutton displayed impeccable ensemble skills and it was obvious that all three were extremely experienced chamber musicians. They played the early Beethoven work with flair and passion, sensitively bringing out the composer's intentions and the musicality of each movement. The Brahms trio was no less impressive with the well-written work receiving the weight and attention it deserved. One of the best things about the trio playing was the space each instrument was given when it was their time to shine. It was an illuminating and well performed concert.”

– Val Sheriff, Tauranga

“An enchanting and emotional experience. A surreal and magical journey.”

– Ben Curran, the Marlborough Express

“The Poinsett Piano Trio is indeed what Robbie Deans would term a champion team, blending seamlessly together with no-one overshadowing the rest.”

– Patrick Shepherd, The Christchurch Press

“This is an impressive ensemble with the quality of polished playing, immediately evident from the first item, by Rachmaninoff. [In the Beethoven] the texture was exceptionally clear and well balanced with very effective dynamic contrasts – each player contributing beautifully shaped melodic lines throughout all movements. Twentieth century music style was communicated just as successfully in a very committed and convincing performance of the Shostakovich [in which] the many sometimes disparate ideas [were combined] into an integrated performance.”

– Peter Williams, The Central Hawkes Bay Mail

“The ensemble playing was impeccable, with complete rapport between the players. There was nothing between the audience and the composer's intentions. This is a very able Trio, and I hope they will tour again before too long.”

– Rosemary Collier, Middle C Concert Reviews

“If you get a chance to hear the Poinsett Trio for yourself, you should grab it with both hands.”

– Paul Serotsky, Seen and Heard International



Poinsett Piano Trio's Imaginative Program Opens MGS Season

Christ United Methodist Church , <http://www.musicforagreatspace.org/> -- 7:30 PM

By [William Thomas Walker](#)

September 5, 2014 - Greensboro, NC

The [Poinsett Piano Trio](#) brought an unhackneyed program to music lovers gathered in [Christ United Methodist Church](#) for the opening program for the 24th season of [Music for a Great Space](#). Many touring trios bring a pair of warhorses leavened with maybe a Haydn trio. The Poinsett musicians embellished this evening's warhorse, Brahms' Op. 8, with seldom-heard works by Beethoven and Fauré.

The trio is named for [Joel Roberts Poinsett](#), a statesman, physician, and botanist from South Carolina, best known for his discovery of the Mexican plant that bears his name (poinsettia). The ensemble consists of pianist David Gross, violinist Deirdre Hutton, and cellist Christopher Hutton. All are faculty members of [Furman University](#). Both the pianist and the cellist provided brief verbal program notes from the stage.

It was fascinating to hear the opening work, the Trio in E-flat, Op.70, No. 2. by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827). Its companion, Trio in D, Op. 70, No. 1 ("Ghost"), with its eerie central slow movement, is heard frequently on programs not dominated by the more famous "Archduke" Trio, Op. 97. Unlike the three movement "Ghost" Trio, Op. 70, No. 2, is in four movements with, as Gross commented, no really slow movement. Each instrument in turn – cello, violin, and piano – enters in the slow introduction to the opening Allegro. Two lovely allegrettos are sandwiched between the first movement and the vivacious final allegro. The second movement is a set of major/minor variations while the third has the gentle rhythms of a *Ländler*.

The virtues of the Poinsett Trio held throughout their performance of three trios. The balance between the Steinway and the strings was ideal with Gross flawlessly gauging his dynamics. The piano lid was fully raised. Both Huttons played with excellent string intonation and tone. Tempos were unrushed. The Trio's performance was like overhearing a relaxed conversation between friends, the perfect approach for this not heaven-storming Beethoven work.

This state is not a hot bed of performances of the French Repertoire. Debussy and Ravel make it with an occasional Franck or Saint-Saëns. Connoisseurs relish the works of Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924), so the chance to hear the composer's only Trio, Op. 120, was a signal event. This piano trio is the composer's penultimate work. It and his final work, the String Quartet, are acknowledged masterworks that mix a lot of formal freedom and graceful melodies with a distinctive personal idiom. The opening movement follows the contours of the sonata form with elusive and subtle variations. There is a barcarolle quality conjured by the rippling keyboard figuration paired with a swaying cello melody. Fauré was a master of the French art song, and gorgeous melodies abound in the central Andantino movement. A highlight is a duet sung by violin and cello above a hushed keyboard. The truly lively Allegro vivo dazzles with its color, energy, and contrasts. The composer explores exotic modalities and toys with two juxtaposed tempos.

The Poinsett Trio played the Fauré magnificently, with great sensitivity to color and tone and for clarity of articulation. Opus 120 is under represented in CD catalogs; perhaps the Poinsett Trio should consider it for a future recording.

There is nothing more central to a touring piano trios' repertoire than Trio in B, Op. 8, by Johannes Brahms (1833-97). There are two versions, the "true" original Op. 8, published in 1854, and a late, extensive revision of 1890, which is the one most often played. Beyond the long first movement, Brahms made extensive cuts and tweaks, shortening the original by about a third. The piece is full of superb melodies and the composer fully exploits the sonorities of all three instruments.

The cello is my favorite instrument, and Christopher Hutton brought out the rich, low register superbly, producing soaring melodies. Gross' playing of the keyboard part was breathtaking. Deidre Hutton matched her colleagues equally well. I look forward to further visits throughout the Old North State from these fine Furman University based musicians.



Sample Photos:

All pictures are taken by Renee Carolla: <http://www.reneecarolla.com>
High Resolution digital photos are available for press and promotional purposes.

