

# Peak Performances

For Immediate Release

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## PIANO CIRCUS MAKES PEAK PERFORMANCES DEBUT OCTOBER 1 AT 8PM

Piano Circus, a sextet of London-based pianists dedicated to new music, cannot avoid a challenge. For its Peak Performances's debut on October 1 at 8pm at the Alexander Kasser Theater, the band of music adventurers will present the witty and provocative "Trilogies."

The evening includes three pieces of music by Colin Riley, and three by Graham Fitkin, which employs six grand pianos and four keyboards. A new perspective on piano playing is created by an accompanied projection of the performers at work, their hands visible on a large screen. Piano Circus began life 22 years ago when the musicians joined together to play Steve Reich's "Six Pianos."

To listen to Piano Circus, please visit <http://www.youtube.com/user/pianocircus>.

### TICKET, TRANSPORTATION AND DINING INFORMATION

**Performance time:** October 1 at 8:00pm

All tickets are \$15 and are available at the Alexander Kasser Theater Box Office, by calling 973-655-5112 or online at <http://www.peakperfs.org>.

Charter bus service is provided from New York City's Port Authority Bus Terminal – arcade on 41<sup>st</sup> Street between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues – to the Alexander Kasser Theater (\$10 per person, roundtrip) for all Saturday and Sunday performances. Bus reservations may be made by calling 973-655-5112 or by visiting <http://www.peakperfs.org>.

For restaurants close to the Alexander Kasser Theater, visit <http://www.destinationmontclair.com>

**Montclair State University is located at 1 Normal Avenue, Montclair, New Jersey 07043.**

MORE

## **About the Artists**

### **COMPOSERS**

**Colin Riley** has continued to explore the interesting areas where different musical aesthetics collide. He takes fresh and original approaches with his work, which incorporates techniques from the avant-garde, jazz and popular music. He has remained outside of the perceived categories of new music during the last twenty years, and remained a vibrant and unexpected musical voice. [www.colinriley.co.uk](http://www.colinriley.co.uk)

**Graham Fitkin**, a UK composer, has worked with orchestras such as the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Halle, BBC Symphony, Tokyo Symphony and London Chamber Orchestra. He has composed for dance companies such as Shobana Jeyasingh, Wayne McGregor's Random Dance, New York City Ballet, San Francisco Ballet and Bi-Ma and has collaborated with ensembles such as Fibonacci, Smith Quartet, Piano Circus and Ensemble Bash. He has conducted orchestras in venues from Lincoln Center to South Bank to Aula Magna.

Performing has always been an important aspect of Graham's work. He collaborated with his partner Ruth Wall on two recent projects: KAPLAN, for keyboards and live visuals and STILL WARM, for electronically manipulated harps and sampler.

He has also recently collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma, Powerplant, Kathryn Stott, Will Gregory, visual artist John Keys and Royal Ballet choreographer Jonathan Watkins. Graham's work has been released on CD by Decca's Argo label, Factory, Sanctuary's Black Box as well as many others. His album, Circuit, was recently released by BIS Records.

In 2010, Graham created a new production for the Royal Ballet, a concerto for MIDI-harp, an orchestra for harpist Sioned Williams and the BBC Symphony Orchestra and a new work for 10:10. [www.fitkin.com](http://www.fitkin.com)

### **MUSICIANS**

**David Appleton** is Piano Circus' longest serving member! It should be noted that not only is he the ensemble's Company Secretary, but also its Librarian - a role which compliments his personality marvelously! David has also arranged several works for Piano Circus, most notably Conlon Nancarrow's Study No. 5 and Study No. 26. David works regularly with the pianist Kate Ryder, recently broadcasting a program "The Comfort of Angels" for BBC Radio Three, presenting "Three Little Scandals" at the Barbican and touring Stockhausen's two piano epic "Mantra." David is currently collaborating with several composers on a project for solo piano, "Bartok: Subject and Reflection," which premiered in Spring 2009.

**Paul Cassidy** studied at the Royal College of Music with Irina Zaritzkaya and Andrew Ball, graduating in 2001 as recipient of the Hopkinson Silver Medal. Since graduation Paul has been active as a freelance pianist and contemporary music specialist. He has twice reached the semi-finals of British Contemporary Piano Competition, and has given numerous premieres of new works, including the world premiere of Kevin Malone's "Count Me In" for piano and electronics at the University of Manchester. In 2007, Paul performed in the PLG Young Artists Concert Series at the Purcell Room, London, and later that same year he participated alongside Michael Nyman and Gavin Bryars in a complete performance of Erik Satie's epic "Vexations" at the Tate Modern, London.

**MORE**

**Kate Halsall** trained at the Royal College of Music, studying with Kendall Taylor and Yonty Solomon. As well as her work with Piano Circus, she performs with duoDorT and Andrew Poppy's Sustaining Ensemble. duoDorT released their first album, "Triple Point," of UK commissions earlier this year, on the Squeaky Kate Label. She is producer for Music Orbit, which runs a live series for developing artists at the start of their careers alongside leading players in contemporary and experimental music. Kate has been Projects Officer at spnm and is a partner of Third Ear, a new production agency for touring experimental work.

After studying at Chetham's School of Music, **Dawn Hardwick** graduated from the Royal College of Music in 2006 with a Masters degree in Advanced Performance studying under Julian Jacobson. She has performed widely as an orchestral pianist with orchestras such as the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Ulster Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Southbank Sinfonia plus many large-scale student performances including works such as Andriessen's "De Staat" and Stravinsky's "Petrouchka." Her solo performances include concerti with the Orchestra of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, the LPO Future Firsts Ensemble, the RWCMD Symphony Orchestra, RWCMD Wind Orchestra, and she is a regular soloist with Cardiff Philharmonic Orchestra. Dawn mixes her performance work with private piano tuition in West London.

**Semra Kurutaç** studied piano with Russell Brandon at the University of Wales, Cardiff and in July 2002 graduated with a Masters in Performance Studies. Semra has worked as a Repetiteur for the Welsh National Youth Opera and alongside Cardiff based composer Charlie Barber. Her concerto appearances have included those with the Cardiff University Orchestra, the Aldworth Philharmonic (Reading) and the Manchester Symphonia with whom, in July 1997, she made her concerto debut at The Bridgewater Hall. Semra and fellow Piano Circus member Kate Halsall also perform together regularly together as the piano duo, duoDorT. Semra is currently Acting Head of Keyboards at Millfield Senior School in Street, Somerset.

**James Young** studied piano and composition at the RCM with Yonty Solomon, John Barstow, Edwin Roxburgh and Kenneth Hesketh. He is half of the Eaton-Young piano duo who, as PLG Young Artists, have performed at the Purcell Room, NCH Dublin, St. Martin-in-the-fields, Wigmore Hall and live on BBC R3. He also works as an actor-musician and MD in theatre and opera, at Grimeborn and Tete-a-Tete festivals and for Charles Court Opera's acclaimed yearly pantomime. He is founder-curator of the Rosemary Branch Festival, manager of the Warehouse Ensemble, a member of the London Breakbeat Orchestra and his music has been performed by the Galliard, Amphion and Warehouse Ensembles, at all the London conservatories, Buxton Opera House and the Purcell Room. His newest commission, from the Phoenix Piano Trio, will be performed in 2011.

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