

Airings and Hearings: the NZSO-SOUNZ Readings

The eleventh session of NZSO-SOUNZ Readings took place in Wellington in early November. The aim of the Readings, a collaborative project of SOUNZ and the NZSO with support from Concert FM, is to increase the performance of orchestral works by New Zealand composers. Of the 53 works by 37 New Zealand composers which have been played in previous Readings, 18 have gone on to receive public performances, broadcasts or to be recorded on CD. On this occasion pieces by Helen Bowater, Claire Cowan, Alison Grant, Julie Johnson, Stephan Prock, Michael Vinten and Anthony Young were played by the NZSO, conducted by Hamish McKeich.



Composers Stephan Prock, Ross Harris and Julie Johnson discuss the finer points of orchestral scoring in the November NZSO-SOUNZ Readings.

Awards and Winners – NZ Composers take centre stage

Along with Ross Harris' *Symphony No 2* winning the 2006 SOUNZ Contemporary Award, other award winners this year have included:

- Tabea Squire from Onslow College in Wellington who won both the SOUNZ-NZ Choral Federation Prize for Choral Composition and the SOUNZ Prize in the 2006 NZ Community Trust Chamber Music Competition hosted by Chamber Music NZ.
- Robin Toan, who following her APRA Professional Development Award in 2005, took first place in the Adam International Cello Festival Young Composer Competition, was awarded the 2006 SOUNZ Community Commission in partnership with the Manukau Symphony Orchestra, and has recently been announced as the 2006 recipient of the Edwin Carr Foundation Scholarship to further her education overseas.
- Lissa Meridan, who was awarded the 2006 Douglas Lilburn Prize for her orchestral piece *this present brightness*. The work was performed by the NZSO in five centres and Lissa received a \$12,000 prize inclusive of a further NZSO commission. The work was also awarded the Orchestra Players prize and Audience Prize of \$1,000 each. Chris Watson was awarded the Panel Prize of \$2500 for his work *Circuit Spiral*.
- Gareth Farr, who was appointed Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for services to music and entertainment as part of

this year's Queen's Birthday honours, will be the 2007 Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra's Composer in Residence.

The three CDs chosen as finalists for the Classical Recording of the Year category of the RIANZ NZ Music Awards had the outstanding distinction of being 100% 'Kiwi'! Often recordings in this genre include works and performers from overseas or other eras. This year the winning recording, *Spirit of the Land* from Tower Voices New Zealand, along with *Spark* from the New Zealand Trio and *Taurangi* recorded by Bridget Douglas (flute) and Rachel Thomson (piano) featured 30 works by 23 New Zealand composers between them.

SOUNZfine 6 - a Christmas bonus!

A double CD of New Zealand works will accompany the December edition of the *New Zealand Geographic* magazine which will feature an article on New Zealand composition. The recording funded by Creative NZ and NZ On Air features works by 28 New Zealand composers and will be the sixth CD in the SOUNZfine series. Over the last nine years more than 1200 of the SOUNZfine CD series have been distributed to broadcasters in 32 countries and used as a promotional resource for programmes of New Zealand music.

Trans-Tasman to-and-fro

Australian composer Colin Bright arrived in New Zealand in November to take up his residency as the 2006/2007 Trans-Tasman Composer. He will visit three times over the next 18 months to work with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. Not only will the APO premiere a new work which Colin will write especially for them, but in April 2007 they have programmed his orchestral suite *Oceania*, taken from his opera *The Sinking of the Rainbow Warrior*. The residency is a joint project of SOUNZ and the Australian Music Centre. Previous recipients have been Gareth Farr and The Song Company (Sydney), West Australian composer James Ledger and the Christchurch Symphony, and James Gardner working with Elision (Brisbane).

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Saxophonist Simon Brew performed two movements of Michael Vinten's Saxophone Concerto in the November NZSO-SOUNZ Readings.



Composer, Director of the Lilburn Electroacoustic Studio at VUW and the 2006 Douglas Lilburn Prize winner, Lissa Meridan.



Trans-Tasman composer Colin Bright (left) talks political music with NZ composer Jonathan Besser.



The December *New Zealand Geographic* features NZ composition and will incorporate a complimentary double CD of works by 28 composers.