

This was Sr Mary Eulalie at the Timaru Convent of Mercy who took Michael through the Trinity College grade examinations up to the LTCL which Michael completed with Maurice Till. With Till Michael began his life as a touring pianist which he continues to this day. Along the way he has developed an extensive repertoire including the 32 sonatas of Beethoven played in 7-concert cycles, the 48 Preludes and Fugues of J.S.Bach, and more than 30 concertos.



Sister Mary

“I am a repertoire pianist”, says Michael, “I love a lot of different music and I like to always have something new on the go. I used to play everything from memory but gradually came to see that I could do more repertoire if I took out the extra repetition that the consolidation of memory demands. Now I play from an iPad and I do appreciate the reduction in stress that this allows.”



Maurice Till

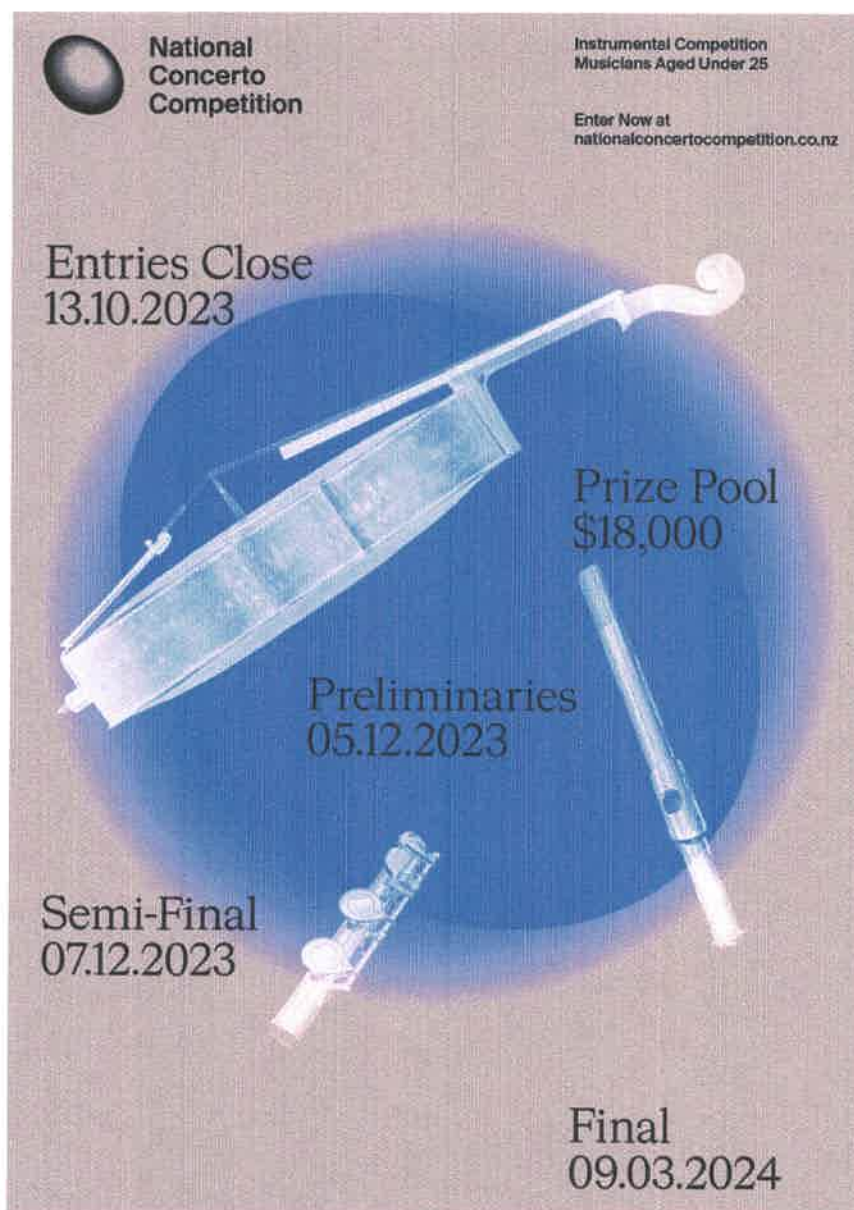
Stress indeed may have been a factor in Michael developing focal hand dystonia around 2000, a neurological condition producing a painless dysfunction of the right hand. He had to stop performing and with Ben Speedy, Simon Loudon, Glenn Williams and Rae De Lisle (respectively, sports doctor, physiotherapist, osteopath and piano teacher) find a way to restore proper function. This took almost five years. “It was supposed to be incurable”, says Michael, “but they hadn’t counted on the fact that I was unprepared and unqualified to do anything else! I simply had to fix myself.”

Michael says, “It is an honour to be invited as Patron of the **National Concerto Competition Trust** and I plan to be a hands-on Patron. I would like to see the competition continue to flourish and boost young musicians as it boosted me.”

~ ~ ~



Coming



Latest news is the appointment of the first of three adjudicators, namely **Josephine Vains**. Cellist at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

Ben Northey will conduct the CSO which will accompany finalists in the Douglas Lilburn Auditorium at the Christchurch Town Hall on 9 March 2024.

Further information and entry forms are on the National Concert Competition website: keep visiting to read updates.

<https://nationalconcertocompetition.co.nz/>

2023 Winners



Saturday night, 18 March 2023, was a landmark in the life of CCMC & especially our compatriot, the *National Concerto Competition Trust*.

Here we are back in the Douglas Lilburn Auditorium with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra (CSO) and the three 2023 competition finalists shining brightly as they shared with an enthralled audience their outstanding talents for the 55th year of the contest, *the year of the piano* [in alternate years other instruments have their turn. – Ed.]

It is recalled that the Christchurch Civic Music Council (CCMC) was inspired by Professor John Ritchie, University of Canterbury (UC), to set up the competition in 1967/68. [Recently the Council established a Trust to operate the contest: its on-going success confirms the wisdom of the management decision. – Ed.]

Without further ado, here are Saturday's results:

Yu Zhang Wu*

1st place winning \$10,000 (*sponsored by The Folly Trust*)

Rhapsody on a theme by Paganini

Sergei Rachmaninoff (Op 43)

* Yu Zhang also won the Junior Jury Prize (\$200)

Henry Meng

2nd place winning \$5,000

Piano Concerto No 3 in *d minor*

Sergei Rachmaninoff (Op 30)

Madeleine Xiao

3rd place winning \$2,500

Piano Concerto No. 1 in *e minor*

Frederic Chopin (Op 11)



(L – R 3rd to 1st) **Madelene Xiao, Henry Weng, Yuzhang Wu**

Teachers & Sponsor share Yuzhang Wu's Victory



*Sharing Yuzhang Wu's Victory moment
are (left to right) Jian Liu & Brian Sayer*



*Yuzhang with Jos Rossell
(The Folly Trust, which
sponsors the 1st prize)*

Finalists Share Thoughts About The Works They Chose

- Yuzhang Wu

“I was learning the Rachmaninoff Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, a gorgeous and captivating Concerto, I thought, “Why not put it in the National Competition?” One of the most prestigious competitions in New Zealand is the National Concerto Competition. The chance of performing one of my favourite concertos with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra was simply too tempting to resist. Before learning this piece, I was looking into solo piano works by Rachmaninoff, such as the Preludes and Etude Tableaux. By coincidence, I heard the renowned Variation 18, which captivated me right away. The more I listened, the more appealing it became.”

- Henry Meng

“Rachmaninoff is one of my favourite composers. His best output consistently contains vibrantly expressive artistry of a high emotional saturation; opulent, lush textures permeate his work, which brings a transcendent level of multifacetedness quintessentially representative of that precarious era in classical musical history where chromatic music reached its peak. Rachmaninoff writes such emotionally provocative musical lines, in expertly manipulating complex harmonies—as well as crafting extravagantly long melodies—to produce deeply touching moments as found in works such as this one, his second Piano Concerto, and the eighteenth variation of his Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, which will actually be played by a fellow pianist in this concert. This Concerto changed my life. It is notorious for being one of the most difficult works in the standard pianistic repertoire, but I play it chiefly because it is, above all else, beautiful. I have never been more emotionally affected by a work of music. Shortly after I became obsessed with it so many years ago, I promised myself I would play the entire thing with an orchestra—and now, having had the miraculous luck to clear both the preliminary and semi-final stages of this competition, I can finally realise my wish—with you.”

- Madeleine Xiao

“I have chosen to play this concerto as Chopin is a composer who speaks to me like no other and this concerto is just so captivating. As I play this piece I am able to set myself free and build a connection with the music. Since first hearing this work many years ago, it's always been something I wanted to play. Now, actually working on it, I've grown to appreciate it even more. I have loved exploring this piece and digging deep into the music, unravelling all the unique and intricate layers it has to offer.

I decided to enter this competition as it is an excellent opportunity to help me to grow and develop into a better musician. It will provide me with many new skills and experiences which can benefit my future music-making. This competition has already been a fantastic journey, and I am incredibly grateful to have this opportunity to work with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra performing this wonderful work.”

Adjudicators



Professor Terence Dennis
(Otago University)



Glen Riddle
Melbourne Conservatorium
of Music (Piano)

Finalists Praised by CSO Conductor



Benjamin Northey, conductor of the

[Christchurch Symphony Orchestra](#) (CSO)

on Saturday night, had high praise for all three finalists:

"Big congratulations to the three wonderful young pianists who performed with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra in the final of the New Zealand National Concerto Competition last night [18 March 2023]. Yuzhang Wu was awarded first prize after a thrilling Rachmaninov Paganini Variations.

Madeleine Xiao played a beautiful singing Chopin Concerto and Henry Meng a powerful and excellently shaped Rachmaninov 3.

I Was incredibly proud of the fine and sensitive playing by the CSO musicians in support of these three finalists."



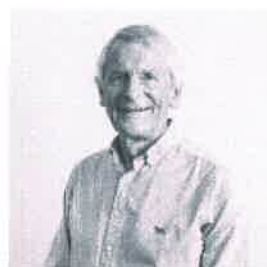
Trust Board Members



TIM ANDREWS
(CHAIR)



SUE BEALING



MICHAEL LAWRENCE



MARK HODGKINSON



VIVIENNE LEVY



CARMEL BROWN
SECRETARY

Blossoming Contestants Recognised

The Concerto Contest involves all concerned in a huge number of months of intense learning, preliminary regional performances, and semi-finals in the year before the actual March finals (hence the dates associated this time were 2022/23). Below are the Semi-finalist Prize Winners who were all sponsored by *The Chuang Foundation*.

[illegible]

Concern about RNZ Concert Programme still apparent

CCMC's Advocacy still needs to be on the alert

“Save Radio NZ” posts by concerned writers (recently focusing especially on Government threats to the Concert Programme) can be seen regularly on Facebook, Twitter, Messenger, and other social media platforms now burgeoning on the forum stages. Streams of such messages arose as a result of the Labour Government flip flops with proposals to unify into one entity (or not?) the administration and operations of Radio NZ and TVNZ and the threat that the Concert Programme would be axed.

The Radio NZ Act (1995) included a requirement for a Charter, which was subject to a 5-year cycle of reviews (this stemmed from 2016). The latest public version can be viewed using this link: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/about/charter>

Legislation about the matter was due to be ‘read’ in Parliament March 2021. But the life of the Charter has had a checkered career. Hearings, consultations, public submissions have a history of put-offs; OIA (Official Information Act) requests have had reluctant responses for supply of documents and those that are released contain quite a few redactions (i.e. phrases blacked out and censored).

Back a bit in February 2020 it was announced that Radio NZ planned to axe the Concert Programme and its presenters and turn it into an automated station on a new AM frequency so the actual Concert frequency could be taken over by a new youth-orientated music channel.

CCMC President Margaret Austin at the time wrote expressing to the Prime Minister on behalf of Affiliates and indeed all NZ listeners strong objection to the plan. Other leading entities and concerned citizens (nearly 30,000) signed a petition decrying the proposal. The Journal Editor likewise wrote on a personal basis to the Prime Minister, and Dr Jim Mather, Chair of the RNZ Board of Governors.



Dr. Jim Mather

A week later CEO Paul Thompson announced the assassination would not go ahead. Minister of Broadcasting (at the time Hon Kris Faafoi) and Prime Minister (then), Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern were applauded for their responsiveness.

Looking back further to the 'beginnings', the first Labour Party in 1936 decided that broadcasting would be taken over by the State. Michael Joseph Savage was the first Broadcasting Minister. Since then terms of office ranged from 4 days, David Lange, to the longest, just over 9 years, National's Maurice Williamson.

Currently (since June 2022), Hon Willie Jackson holds the role of Minister of Broadcasting and Media (it was redefined from Broadcasting, Communications and Digital Media 7 Sep 2018).



In May 2021 Radio New Zealand appointed Liisa McMillan as its new manager of the Concert Programme.

She is “ . . . a huge fan of music.” and “on a huge learning curve” about the classical repertoire. Her background as a ‘child of the 70’s & 80’s was rock and post-punk’ but tastes are “ . . . broadening as I grow older.” Liisa’s radio career took her from engineering towards production of music programmes which included documentaries about Split Enz, and Musical Chairs (an oral history of people working in the ‘music industry’). She indicates her aim is to do the “ . . . best we can with the current budget . . .” but ideas for future additional resources may be on the horizon.

A stute loyal listeners to Concert may now be detecting a surreptitious shift in the character of RNZ Concert. The *meanu* is sometimes bitsa this and bitsa that – i.e. 1st movement or 2nd or 3rd etc. instead of the whole work And there is an emerging number of items from the pop, light listening, Brass Band fraternity and ethnic arenas. A recent example was a brass band rendition of “Old McDonald Had a Farm” magnificently performed, of course. So the original plan is gradually being imposed regardless with a *meanu* getting more like what might have happened if the assassination had gone ahead. It behoves lovers of serious good music and the CCMC to continue using its alert listening ear.

Though the overall flavour of RNZ Concert is becoming noticeably different, Concert’s presenters are as peerless as ever. For example congratulations to Concert newcomer Bryan Crump, who interviewed the three finalists of the National Concerto Competition prior to their finals night (18 March 2023) in his late afternoon programme (3 to 7). Namely, Yuzhang Wu Wednesday, 4.00pm, Madeleine Xiau Thursday 4.00pm and Henry Meng Friday 4.00pm. The National Concerto Competition provides finalists the opportunity to perform their chosen work in a public concert, accompanied by a symphony orchestra (usually the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and on one occasion the National Orchestra).

It is a format that has been retained since the Competition's beginning in 1967 and has provided the launch pad for numerous young Kiwis to establish national and international careers in performance music. It did go into recess in 2021 owing to Covid. Refer to the Journal's lead story about NCC for information about this year's (2023) event.

Harking back to the big concern, the Charter review by Parliament was due shortly after Thursday 1 April 2021 with an expiry date for presentation to the House of Tuesday 14 September 2021. It didn't happen and to this day as far as can be detected, it remains on hold..

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage wrote to the then Speaker of the House, Rt Hon Trevor Mallard and RNZ board chairman, Dr. Jim Mather, advising them that the Minister did not consider it "practicable for a Parliamentary review of the RNZ Charter to proceed this year [2021]."

Currently, [about March 2023] the Government was bent on getting its Public Media Entity Bill through the House, so the Charter once again seems to be even further down the bucket list defying the legislation that it should have already been dealt with. IS IT a WIP (work in progress) or WIP (wait in perpetuity)? Meantime, Concert Programme is in a state of flux. Its character is now frequently trying to emulate the styles of the stations with intrusive genres that authorities would have scheduled if their attempt to overthrow Concert had been successful.

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The pandemic affected events for many Affiliates

A familiar announcement for a number of Affiliates, for example the National Concerto Competition.



Media release Wednesday, 3 March 2021 [Edited]

N Z's National Concerto Competition was postponed due to the then community outbreak of COVID-19 in Auckland & the subsequent increase to Alert Level 2 across the country.

The Grand Final, which was due to take place Saturday 6 March at Christchurch's James Hay Theatre, will now take place on Saturday 19 June 2021.

The three finalists and their concertos remain the same. They are: April Ju, Christchurch (violin) playing Sibelius; Hyein Kim, Auckland (cello) playing Prokofiev; Catherine Kwak, Auckland (cello) playing Dvorak.

Existing tickets will remain valid for the new date. For current ticket holders who are unable to attend the rescheduled date, refunds are also available.

Ticketholders wanting a refund should submit a request to online@ticketek.co.nz by 31 March 2021. For up-to-date information on the National Concerto Competition, please visit the web site [here](https://musiccanterbury.co.nz/2020-2021-national-concerto-competition/). <https://musiccanterbury.co.nz/2020-2021-national-concerto-competition/>

For more information, images and interviews, please contact Siobhan Waterhouse, Publicist, on siobhan.waterhouse@rnzb.org.nz or 022 126 4149

Saturday, 19 June 2021 at 7.30pm James Hay Theatre, Christchurch Tickets through Ticketek
here <https://premier.ticketek.co.nz/shows/show.aspx?sh=CONCERTO21>

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The Canterbury scene is outlined with a selection of events and stories that reflect CCMC Affiliates' vitality. Stories follow [in random order and dates] about matters of interest, events organised by Affiliates, with support and encouragement from CCMC, and the Council's own initiatives.

In 1941, the Christchurch Festival Committee had completed its work in connection with NZ's 1940 100th year of settlement celebration events.

This led to the birth of the Christchurch Civic Music Council to help keep going the momentum of these energies. And now **83** years on, Affiliates keep celebrating with today's numerous and vitally energised events as well as recalling highlights of the past.

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The following randomly selected and ordered and dated items present a picture of the vitality of CCMC Affiliates and Associates as they have enhanced recently, are exciting now, and plan to inspire the cultural life of our province in the future.

9 July 2023

2023 Ruby Hay Pianoforte Scholarship Winners Announced

The **40th Ruby Hay Pianoforte Competition** was held on a **Sunday 9th July 2023** at **St Andrew's College Chapel in Normans Road**. It was a very wintry, wet afternoon but well worth coming out to hear the five young pianists performing to such a high standard. **Cathy Martin** (*Adjudicator from IRMT*) made comment of this in her presentation speech and gave each contestant very constructive and valuable feedback. Well done to everyone and congratulations to the winners!"

The results are as follows:

First prize – Hannah Brand (*Ruby Hay prize of \$1,000.00*)

Second prize – Polly Lee (*Lois MacKintosh prize of \$200.00*)

Third prize – Richard Brown (*CCMC prize of \$100.00*)



Left to right: Richard Brown (Third prize), Cathy Martin (Adjudicator), Polly Lee (Second prize) and Hannah Brand (First prize).

13 August 2023



Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament


CBS Music
Cathedral of the
Blessed Sacrament Music
Don Whelan Musical Director
2 Carruthers St, Christchurch 8041, NZ.
phone 64 3 358 5873 mobile 027 458 5873
don.whelan@xtra.co.nz
www.cathedral.org.nz



Catholic Pro-Cathedral

2023 Christchurch Choral Festival

The Christchurch Choral Festival, lasting about one hour, will be held in the Catholic Pro-Cathedral, 373 Manchester Street, at 2 pm on Sunday, 13 August 2023. The Pro-Cathedral offers ample space at the front, suitable for large choral forces, and seating is available for an audience of at least 500, although the performers will use a proportion of that during the concert.

Christchurch has a wonderful tradition of co-operative singing at primary school level, in the annual Schools' Festival. The Big Sing encourages competitive choral activity among the better resourced secondary schools, and most adult choirs work towards their own choral targets. This festival is intended to bring choirs together with an annual opportunity to share repertoire on a larger scale.

As in past years, individual choirs will be grouped into convenient clusters, performing for up to 10 minutes, and choosing their own items, conductors and accompanists. Combined inner-city church choirs, directed by Paul Ellis, and co-ordinated by the Royal School of Church Music, will open the concert with an evocative **Hymn To The Trinity** by Tchaikovsky, followed by the beautiful Byrd **Ave Verum**, and concluding with the ever-popular **Jesu, Joy** by Bach. The Community Choirs of Christchurch will be co-ordinated by Henry Nicholson, singing two popular arrangements. Young singers will include the Christchurch Boys' Choir, directed by Robert Gaudin, and the Christchurch Girls' Choir, conducted by Shannon Hurley. This year's concert choir will be Cecilian Singers, directed by Jared Corbett, presenting **A Little Jazz Mass**, by Bob Chilcott. The "barbershop" tradition will be represented this year by both The Plainsmen and the widely travelled Christchurch City Chorus.

Admission will be free, and participants will pay nothing. There will be no interval, and the concert should last one hour. All performers should be in place by 1.30 pm on the day, to rehearse the concluding combined item, chosen to mark this coronation year: Handel's **Zadok The Priest** Scores and MP3's for shared musical items are available online at www.cathedral.org.nz/cbsfestivals.html

Please publicise this event as widely as possible.

Don Whelan 13/6/2023

March 2020 - Down memory lane :

Readers of the Journal (issue #4) may recall the story about Rex Arbuckle, a CCMC stalwart of yesteryear (as long ago as 1983). The Journal pictured his back as he was walking into his beloved garden shortly before he passed away (March 2020). Thanks to Lyn of the Tuariki (identity) Level 2 of Turanga (Christchurch Public Library) the Journal can now display a 'portrait' (as promised) to honour his remarkable contributions to the work of the Council.



MR ARBUCKLE

2 July 2023

Woolston Brass is a driving force of the Band scene and encourages youth performers (see the poster as an example).



27 July 2023

Christopher's Classics

Season XXVIII presents "Serenity, David & Kirsten" 7.30 p.m.

at The Piano, 156 Armagh Street, Christchurch

Serenity Thurlow (viola) CSO Principal Viola

David McGregor (clarinet) CSO Principal Clarinet

Kirsten Robertson (piano) Currently Wellington based

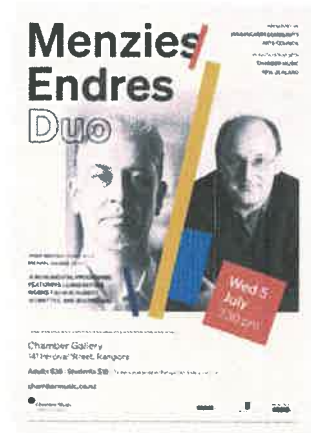
Doris Barnard, 020 424 0551

Admission \$15 - \$45

Email: treasurer.christophers.classics@gmail.com

5 July 2023

Waimakariri Community Arts Council presented at The Chamber Gallery Rangiora, Mark Menzies, Violin & Viola, with Michael Endres, Piano performing Schubert, Schnittke, & Beethoven.



December 2022 Changing of the Guard



For 22 glorious years, Sandra Norquay has been Musical Director of The Canterbury Singers, a highlight of a lifetime career of music leadership and teaching. In December 2022 she handed over her baton to Henry Nicholson, one of Canterbury's up and coming young entrepreneurs who also conducts the Risingholme Singers. Far from totally retiring Sandra now leads the Diana Isaac Village Choir.



Henry Nicholson



Risingholme Singers

13 August 2023

Treat for Timaru

Schola Cantorum is rehearsing currently for their tour to Timaru having completed a successful performance 27 May 2023 at Darfield.

The Schola Cantorum early music choir has a new conductor: Courtney Hickmott. Courtney recently completed her MMus with Distinction in Conducting at UC and also holds a BMus(Hons) in Performance Voice and a BA

in German and Linguistics from Otago. A talented soprano, she has featured as a soloist with the Nelson Symphony Orchestra, Opera Otago, Octagon Ensemble, Christchurch Opera Club, City Choir Dunedin, Christchurch Youth Orchestra, Jubilate Singers and Risingholme Orchestra. As well as Schola, Courtney directs the Christchurch Youth Choir, UC's Consortia, the Harmony Singers, and Cantus Columba (Columba College, Dunedin).



The Schola Cantorum was founded in 1987 by Harry Abbenhuis, to preserve and perform the rich tradition of Mediaeval and Renaissance Music. The choir performs in concerts and church services, sometimes a capella and sometimes accompanied by orchestras or mediaeval instruments.

Schola Cantorum will be performing in Timaru on August 13th. Following on from a highly acclaimed performance in Darfield on 27 May 2023.

Choir Practices are on Tuesdays, 7:30-9pm in the Maker Room, Christchurch Arts Centre. We are always looking for new members, and if you or someone you know would like to sing early music with us then please Email us at scholacan@gmail.com or visit our web page <https://scholacantorum.org.nz/> for updates and more information.

Applications Close 18 August 2023



Christchurch City Council & its supporters under its **Toi Otautahi Arts Strategy** programme are offering mentoring opportunities to aspirants seeking to build careers in the arts, culture and creativity.

Applications for the 2023 Incubator Programmes are due by Friday 18 August.

Industry Professionals are conducting sessions for those already working in the following areas or wishing to do so:

Film & Story Telling, Music & Composition, Performance & Acting, Street Arts

Enter the link below in your browser for more information and related events:

<https://mailchi.mp/ccc/toi-tautahi-creatively-christchurch10488189?e=a38a0b6617>

Now **scroll** for the links for more information about each incubator.

31 August 2023

NZ Trio Homeland #2

Somi Kim (Piano), Amalia Hall (Violin) and Ashley Brown (Violoncello) have been described as a “National Treasure” bringing to audiences nation-wide and overseas as the NZ Trio a fascinating



array of music covering most genre. They are renowned for their fostering of contemporary compositions, especially NZ works during the last 17 years since foundation. A mentorship outreach series through High Schools encourages young people seeking to turn musical passion into a professional career. Their Homeland

series, this time at The Piano, features the works of composers from Romania (Enescu), China (Chen Yi), Aotearoa (Victoria Kelly), & Dvorak's Czech Folk Music based *f minor piano trio*

6 August 2023

Beneath the Southern Cross

Two of NZ's oldest male choirs, Royal Dunedin Male Choir (1878) and Christchurch's Liedertafel Male Voice Choir (1885) join forces to present



Beneath the Southern Cross under the baton of Thomas Woodfield with Julia Cassels accompanying. John Buchanan MNZM is the RDMC conductor with Linda Folland the accompanist. The venue is St



Andrew's College Chapel Normans Road, Papanui. It is fitting that the programme includes “*My Home Beneath the Southern Cross*”

Friday 13 October 2023

National Concerto Competition –

The year of instruments [other than the piano which is conducted in alternative years i.e. 2024/2025].

Entries close 13 October 2023

(there are no late entries) for the 56th

2023/2024 Competition. The National

Concerto Competition provides finalists aged 25 years and under the opportunity to perform their chosen work in a public performance, accompanied by a symphony orchestra. It is a format that has been retained since the Competition's beginning in 1967 and has provided the launch pad for numerous young Kiwis to establish national and international careers in performance music.



October 2022

50th Anniversary



Wit & Wisdom was the title of an October 2022 concert at The Piano to celebrate 50 years of composition by current conductor of 'The Jubes', Philip Norman (see picture next page)

His annual report (January 2023) recorded the effects of Covid on the Choir's usual concert schedule.

(Affiliates' Journal: issue July 2023 cont'd)

Nevertheless they staged “. . . my choral compositions selected from five decades of writing.” The concert was held at The Piano in conjunction with a book launch of *A Complete Absence of Wit & Wisdom*, “. . . a collection of my articles, reviews, lyrics and talks from over five decades.”



5 August 2023

Dragons and Mermaids

Christchurch Youth Choir invites patrons to journey with them to new worlds and unique soundscapes. Travel through forests, navigate strange lakes to meet up with lounging mermaids and voracious dragons. Read the details on the poster alongside. This choir was established in March 2012, to provide an opportunity for young singers aged 16-26 to sing in an environment with others of a similar age at an exceptional level. Under the baton of Courtenay Hickmott with Christopher Eldridge accompanying, they have gone from strength to strength with support from their singing President Courtney Dyson



18 June 2023

Remembering 101-year-old Player

Risingholme Orchestra must be unique in the world when one considers that one of its playing members was still performing for them on his trumpet at the age of 100 years and more as well as serving as composer and arranger of works for the group. Members



gathered 18 June under the leadership of conductor Dr. Philip Norman to perform a tribute to Doug Kelly.

(Affiliates' Journal: issue July 2023 cont'd)

The Orchestra was the brain-child of Bernice ("Bunny") Thompson, who in 1991 saw the need for an amateur orchestra which rehearsed on weekday mornings. With the enthusiastic support of music teacher Mary Dew, they enquired about the availability of the Risingholme Theatre in Opawa and were welcomed by the Risingholme director who offered the facility.



Bunny and Mary publicised their idea through the Christchurch Star, The Press and Plains Radio and asked interested people to contact them. Robert (Bob) Field-Dodgson was invited to consider being the conductor. Bob had recently retired from conducting the Royal Christchurch Musical Society's choir and he agreed to conduct for as long as he felt able. Music was made available by the Orchestral Society and the Civic Music Council. Thursday morning was chosen as the most suitable rehearsal time for all and the first meeting was on the 28th May 1992. He served from 1992 -93 and was followed by Francis Dennis 1993 -2003.



Risingholme Orchestra

Music for Pleasure





Next in line was John Emeleus 2003 to 2007

Luke Di Somma served for the next year (2008) before his blossoming career saw him heading overseas.



Anthony Ferner, Flutist, took up the baton for the next 7 years (2008 – 2015).



Dr Philip Norman is the current conductor since 2016

Throughout the more than 30 years since its foundation, the orchestra has presented public concerts twice each year in a variety of venues from the Risingholme Theatre itself to halls at many Christchurch schools. New Zealand composers represented in the repertoire chosen for the concerts include: Eric Biddington, Malcolm Monteith, Ian Bolton, Alex van den Broek, Gillian Whitehead as well as Philip Norman, John Emeleus and Doug Kelly. In recent years most concerts have featured one or more items with soloists, frequently giving promising young musicians a chance to perform with a symphony orchestra. Through his university teaching, Tony Ferner encouraged many outstanding performers including Todd Gibson-Cornish (bassoon), Benedict Lim (violin), Naomi Deacon (cello), Han Sol Jeong (piano), Catherine Kwak (cello), Hugh Roberts and Justin Standring (flute), and Anna Maksymova (piano). In addition, professional musicians including Mark Walton (clarinet), Helen Webby (harp) and Juliet Reynolds-Midgley (soprano) have performed with the orchestra.

13 September 2023

The “All Blacks of Singing”

Christchurch City Chorus is Australasia’s premiere international award winning women’s a cappella chorus.

“Our goal is to be the best that we can be and continue to be Australasia’s highest achieving chorus.”



Because of their successes internationally as well as locally, they have been dubbed the "All Blacks of Singing"

The chorus is dedicated to enriching the lives of members and the community through friendship, education, performance and barbershop musical excellence.

Barbershop singing is four-part harmony a cappella music that is deliberately voiced and arranged with musical chords that lock and ring to produce overtones and a spine-chilling thrill for the singer and listener.

The Christchurch City Chorus was founded in 1985, and is directed by Master Director Virginia Humphrey-Taylor. The Chorus has over 150 members of varying ages, with singers from all over New Zealand, and some from as far afield as Australia too. Our out-of-town members are all excited to join and compete as part of the Christchurch City Chorus.



Friday 6 October 2023 ***Christchurch Civic Music Council*** ***AGM***

Affiliates and supporters are invited to the CCMC AGM being held at St Andrew's College Music Room Normans Road Papanui.



Join together for the pre- meeting socialising from 6.30pm and then the AGM starting at 7.00pm

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