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New Zealand Youth Choir in concert, Hawke's Bay Opera House April 2012
Photo: Tony Speakman.

The BIG SING Finale

Roger Lloyd experiences his first BIG SING

A major event in the New Zealand choral community is the annual Secondary Schools' Choral Festivals otherwise known as the BIG SING competition run by the NZ Choral Federation. The Festival began in 1988 as a development of the vocal section of the Westpac Schools' Chamber Music Contest. Each year the competition starts with regional festivals in 11 country-wide centres from Whangarei to Invercargill. After 23 years this annual event has developed to involve more than 7,500 young people in the regional festivals and the numbers continue to grow each year.

This year's National Finale took place in Wellington from 16 to 18 August with 18 choirs winning through to this final stage of the competition. The Gala Concert I attended was the last of nine judging sessions in which each of the choirs had to present three items. For the concert some choirs saw this as a chance to let their hair down and others 'played it straight'. This produced a wonderfully eclectic mix of repertoire ranging from Mendelssohn's *Drei Volkslieder* to Fred Ebb and John Kander's 'Don't Tell Mama' from *Cabaret*.

The audience included large troupes of schools parties cheering on their favourites, justly proud parents and grandparents, choral aficionados and last, but certainly not least, the Hon Christopher Finlayson, Minister of Arts, Culture and Heritage who greatly enjoyed the concert and gave out prizes at the end. The carnival atmosphere, complete with Mexican waves and (perhaps) spontaneous choruses from the schools attending were in stark contrast to the professional presentation of the performances. This was choral singing of a very high standard.



Bel Canto - Platinum Award Winners 2012.
Photo: NZ Choral Federation.

Congratulations to all the winning choirs and their conductors, many being NZ Youth Choir members or Alumni and/or Voices NZ members or Alumni who are shown in brackets:

Platinum Award: *Bel Canto*, Burnside High School (Sue Densem)

Gold Awards: *Choralation*, Westlake Boys' & Girls' Schools (Rowan Johnson); *Euphony*, Kristin School (David Squire), *Maclean College Choir*, Maclean College; *Senior Chorale*, Burnside High School (Sue Densem);

Silver Awards: *Voicemale*, Westlake Boy's High School (David Squire); *Wellington College Chorale*, Wellington College (Katie

MacFarlane); SOS, Rangitoto College; *Mandate*, Otago Boys' High School; *Cantata*, Wellington East Girls' College; *Seraphim Choir*, Chilton St James School; *All the King's Men*, King's College (Nick Forbes), *Con Brio*, Villa Maria College; *Saints Alive*, St Cuthbert's College (Megan Flint); *Bella Voce*, Marlborough Girls College; *Twilight Tones*, Tawa College (Isaac Stone); *Fundamentals*, Rangitoto College (Jonathan Palmer);

Guest Choir Awards: *Viva Camerata*, Rathkeale/St Matthew's Collegiate; *Marist Stellar*, Marist College; *Menasing*, St Kentigern College (Lachlan Craig); *Nga Manu tioriori O Kapiti*, Kapiti College.

Special Awards: Hutt City Trophy (best performance of a NZ composition) *Choralation*; Auahi Kore Performance Award (best performance of a Te Reo item); *Moto Puketutu*; Youth Ambassadors Award (to the school that demonstrates outstanding engagement with all the elements of the Finale) *Cantata*, Wellington East Girl's College.

For more information go to <http://thebigsing.wordpress.com/>.

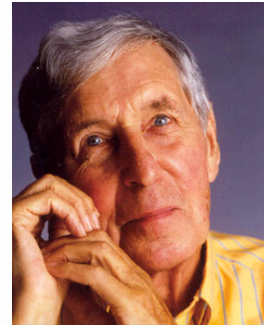
Child of Our Time in Christchurch

New Zealand's two leading youth music organisations, the New Zealand Youth Choir and the NZSO National Youth Orchestra, will perform Michael Tippett's 'A Child of Our Time' on 8 September in the CBS Canterbury Arena, Christchurch. The soloists are Morag Atchison *soprano*, Kate Spence *alto*, Thomas Atkins *tenor* and Moses Mackay *bass* who will join conductor Wyn Davies.

Tickets for the CBS Canterbury Arena concert will be available from Ticketek: 0800 TICKETEK (0800 842 538) or online at Ticketek.

Tickets range from \$15 to \$25 (service fee will apply).

[BUY TICKETS ONLINE](#)



Sir Michael Tippett.
Photo supplied.



Members of NZYC in HB Opera House, April 2012.
Photo: Tony Speakman.

NZYC Auditions

The New Zealand Youth Choir is auditioning for 2013 with places available in each voice part (SATB). Singers need to be between 18 and 25 years old at the time of audition and will be asked to sing a piece of their own choice and perform ear and sight-reading tests. Auditions will be held in November and early December in Wellington, Dunedin, Christchurch and Auckland.

If you are interested in being part of NZ Youth Choir in 2013, email Emma Dowdle at emma@choirsnz.co.nz with your name, voice part and audition city.

For more information about the New Zealand Youth Choir see www.choirsnz.co.nz/youth.

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