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**(l to r) Jonathan Lemalu, Martin Snell, Anna Leese, Madeline Pierard & Teddy Tahu Rhodes**

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## Lexus Song Quest

The Lexus Song Quest (formerly the Mobil Song Quest) is a biennial competition for young New Zealand singers. The first Song Quest in 1956 was a nationwide radio contest with each singer recording a ballad in English, which was then broadcast over 19 weeks of radio programmes. Over time the competition changed into the format we have today.

Now, over 50 years later, the Lexus Song Quest is a much more challenging competition. The entrants prepare a wide-ranging programme of classical music in three languages, and the competition has become far more focused as have the singers. They have been inspired by the achievements of those who have gone before them – not only by the impressive list of winners, who have had or are having international careers, but by the many finalists and place-getters who have laid the foundations of strong vocal teaching and performance within New Zealand and overseas.

On its journey to find the voices of tomorrow, the Lexus Song Quest is discovering the great singers of today. The list of past winners is headed by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Dame Malvina Major, and Choirs Aotearoa is rightly proud of the NZ Youth Choir Alumni who appear on this role of honour – Teddy Tahu Rhodes, Martin Snell, Jonathan Lemalu, Anna Leese and Madeleine Pierard – these Lexus Song Quest winners grace opera stages around the world.

Now, the next generation of singers is competing for the title and career-changing prizes at the 2012 Lexus Song Quest. The young finalists are Stephen Diaz, the first counter tenor to reach the Quest final, and tenor Amitai Pati (both NZYC Alumni), together with sopranos Grace Park and Bryony Williams, baritone Kawiti Waetford, and tenor Alex Wilson. These singers will be accompanied by the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, hosted by NBR New Zealand Opera's Aidan Laing and judged by international opera star, Dennis O'Neill, at the Grand Final Concert in the Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington on 30 August at 7.30pm.

In the beautiful surroundings of Parnell's Holy Trinity Cathedral in Auckland, the Winners' Recital on 1 September at 7.30pm will feature the 2012 Lexus Song Quest winner and place-getters accompanied by pianist Terence Dennis.

Book tickets for both events now at Ticketek: 0800 TICKETEK (0800 842 538) or at [www.ticketek.co.nz](http://www.ticketek.co.nz).

## Youth of Our Time

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For the first time in 14 years, New Zealand's two leading youth music organisations, the New Zealand Youth Choir and the NZSO National Youth Orchestra, come together for a week-long residential course and concert in Christchurch. For more information see the August 2012 edition of The Sharp Edge by clicking [here](#).

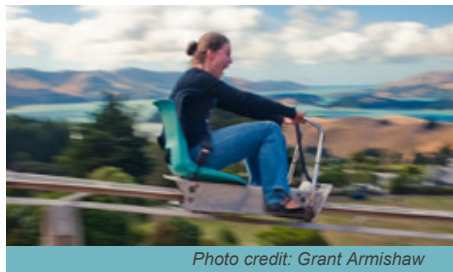


Photo credit: Grant Armishaw



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## Vienna Boys' Choir in NZ

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For its first tour of New Zealand since 2005, Vienna Boys' Choir returns in October for performances in Auckland, Hamilton and Wellington. Discounts are available to the choral fraternity through a special NZ Choral Federation offer - see the August 2012 edition of The Sharp Edge by clicking [here](#).

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