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NZ Youth Choir in the Naval Point Club, Lyttelton. Photo: Carol Kendall.

## Youth Choir Ahoy

It has become a tradition at NZ Youth Choir residencies to engage with the local community during the week one way or another. In Hastings last April the choir gave a 'flash mob' open-air concert in the centre of town and held masterclass sessions for Hawke's Bay young choristers and aspiring conductors. This was not so easy to arrange earlier this month with the course being in the fairly isolated Living Springs Camp at Governor's Bay. This time it had to be an organised concert in the nearby town of Lyttelton. But, as we discovered, Lyttelton had been very knocked about by the February 2011 earthquake and every church and large hall had been rendered unusable. The only assembly hall of any size was the Naval Point Club (the yacht club) and on Thursday afternoon, 6 September, Lyttelton and Christchurch choral enthusiasts were treated to a concert of *a cappella* music. It was a full house - at least 100 adults and children, and the 42 members of NZYC performed against a wall decorated with seafaring pictures and ships' pennants and hemmed in by a closed and shuttered bar. It wasn't Carnegie Hall but everyone really enjoyed the concert.



Choir warm-ups at camp. Photo: Wayne Williams.

## A Singer's Perspective

*Christchurch Residency September 2012*  
NZ Youth Choir and NZSO National Youth Orchestra combined project

The opportunity to sing with an orchestra is very rare indeed. Rarer still is the opportunity to sing with a very talented orchestra. The initial excitement I felt about New Zealand Youth Choir's collaboration with the NZSO National Youth Orchestra was amplified when we arrived at Living Springs camp, in Governor's Bay, near Lyttelton. From our rehearsal space (the communal dining room!) we could hear snippets of the orchestra from down the hall, but it was not until our first combined rehearsal that we were hit by the power and skill of the orchestra.

Conductor extraordinaire Wyn Davies had a masterful control of the NYO, at times pulling huge impressive swells out of the strings, at other times shaping perfectly delicate woodwind lines. It was a huge privilege to be conducted by Wyn, an extraordinary breed of orchestra conductor that is also able to control singers extremely well.

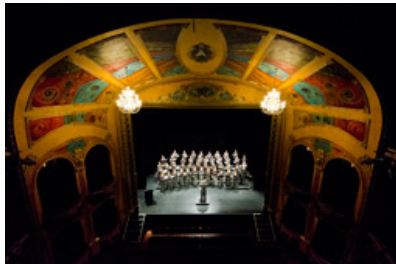
Outside of 'business hours', it was great to meet up with old and new friends from all over New Zealand, and in general there was a

great atmosphere around the camp, highlighted by the often-crige worthy talent show and the celebratory impromptu dance party on the last night.

It was a tremendous pleasure to sing Tippett's 'A Child if Our Time' as part of the NZYC/NYO collaboration, and I will value this experience as a highlight of my musical life.

As a choir, we cannot thank everyone involved enough, and we can't wait for the next collaboration between these two great national organisations.

**Sam Bennett**  
New Zealand Youth Choir Member 2012



*NZYC in Hawke's Bay Opera House, April 2012. Photo: Tony Speakman.*

## NZYC Auditions – Final Call

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 in November will be held in Wellington (17 & 18), Dunedin (24), Christchurch (25) and Auckland (28 & 29)

If you are interested in being part of NZ Youth Choir in 2013, email Emma Dowdle at [emma@choirsnz.co.nz](mailto:emma@choirsnz.co.nz) with your name, voice part and preferred audition city. For more information about the New Zealand Youth Choir see [www.choirsnz.co.nz/youth](http://www.choirsnz.co.nz/youth).

### Choirs Aotearoa NZ


PO Box 11046, Level 4, 26 Brandon St. Wellington 6142, New Zealand


**Tel:** +64 4 499 0692

**Email:** [choirs@choirsnz.co.nz](mailto:choirs@choirsnz.co.nz)

**Website:** [www.choirsnz.co.nz](http://www.choirsnz.co.nz)

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