

# THE SHARP EDGE

Registered Charitable Trust No CC21921

July 2012



Mevagh Sanson of NZYC on the Living Springs Monorail April, 2010

PHOTO: GRANT ARMISHAW

## Youth of our time

Positioned at Governors Bay, a few kilometres from Lyttelton and up into the hills, is the Living Springs Camp. At the beginning of September, the hills will be alive with the sound of music in this location as, for the first time in 14 years, New Zealand's two leading youth music organisations come together for a week-long residential course.

The combination of the New Zealand Youth Choir and the NZSO National Youth Orchestra will add up to a total of 135 young musicians plus tutors and staff and will take up all the available accommodation. The Youth Choir used this facility previously, in April 2010, as can be seen from the photo above.

The climax of the week will be a performance of Michael Tippett's 'A Child of Our Time' on 8 September in the CBS Canterbury Arena, Christchurch. This secular oratorio composed between 1939 and 1941 was first performed in London on 19 March 1944. Tippett, a pacifist and conscientious objector, was inspired to write it as a reaction to the vicious pogrom against the Jewish population throughout Germany and parts of Austria on the so-called *Kristallnacht* – Night of Broken Glass, 9-10 November 1938.

Tippett began writing his oratorio, which deals with the experiences of oppressed people, on the day Britain declared war on Germany, 3 September 1939. He uses American spirituals, which he

referred to as songs of oppression, including 'Steal Away', 'Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord', 'Go down, Moses', 'O, by and by' and 'Deep River'.

Soloists Morag Atchison *soprano*, Kate Spence *alto*, Thomas Atkins *tenor* and Moses McKay *bass* join conductor Wyn Davies.

The concert opens with a world premiere of a work by NYO Composer-in-Residence, Alex Taylor.

Finding a venue for the choir to give a community concert mid-week, a tradition of NZ Youth Choir courses, proved difficult. All the major buildings in Lyttelton, including its churches, were unavailable due to earthquake damage. The Naval Point Club (the yacht club) have come to the rescue and a short concert will be given in its Function Room on Thursday, 6 September at 3.30pm. Admission is free.

Tickets for the CBS Canterbury Arena concert will be available from Ticketek: 0800 TICKETEK (0800 842 538) or online at <http://premier.ticketek.co.nz/shows/show.aspx?sh=YOUTHORC12#.UBB3yaAbR8E> Tickets range from \$15 to \$25 (service fee will apply).

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### Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Trust Board

Trevor Kempton (Chair), David Caygill, Diana Cable, Les Foy, Lindsey Lawton, Warwick Mitchell, Richard Sorrenson

PO Box 11 046, Wellington 6142, New Zealand  
Tel +64 4 499 0692, Fax +64 4 499 0694

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

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



# INFRATIL

## PRINCIPAL SPONSOR OF NZ YOUTH CHOIR



At the end of June Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Trust announced that Infratil was to become Principal Sponsor of the New Zealand Youth Choir.

The sponsorship, which is for an initial three-year period, will provide a minimum of \$100,000 per year. This will fund an increase in the size of the choir to around 60 and more activity in the years ahead.

Infratil, an investment company, founded in 1994 by Lloyd Morrison of H.R.L. Morrison & Co, provides crucial infrastructural in New Zealand and Australia through its ownership of TrustPower, Z Energy, Wellington Airport, NZ Bus and Lumo Energy.

Marko Bogoevski, Infratil's CEO said "We are delighted to be able to help. Infratil is owned by 31,000 New Zealanders and its success is based on being a welcome member of its communities. Singing in a choir is New Zealand's most popular form of participatory music, thousands of people sing with school, church and social choirs and other groups. As with so many endeavours, participation works best when there is also excellence, both as a goal and to ensure there are skilled teachers and leaders. By providing sponsorship of Choirs Aotearoa we hope we can assist with the development of excellence for the good of both those singing now and in years to come."

The NZ Youth Choirs' relationship with the company goes back to 1999 with the 'Choir of the World' CD issued on Trust Records. NZYC and Voices New Zealand have made a total of five recordings for Trust, a company established by the H.R.L. Morrison Music Trust in 1995.

### Tim Brown

As widely publicised, Tim Brown, a senior executive of H.R.L. Morrison & Co and Infratil was involved in a serious accident in Wellington CBD on 19 July. Tim, who has a personal interest in choral music, was the Infratil manager we dealt with for the setting-up of its sponsorship of the NZ Youth Choir.

Trustees, staff and choir members at Choirs Aotearoa send their best wishes to Tim and his family and hope for his full and speedy recovery.

## Vienna Boys' Choir in NZ

The world famous Vienna Boys' Choir returns to New Zealand for a national tour in October, performing Mozart's *Laudate Dominum* and other choral favourites including works by Schubert and Schumann.

The Vienna Boys' Choir (Wiener Sängerknaben) has been an icon of European culture for more than 500 years. It performs music by Haydn, Bruckner, and Schubert (who was himself a chorister) and many other recognised composers, and has worked with eminent conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Leonard Bernstein, Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Sir George Solti.

The choir is one of the world's most active musical ensembles and performs over 300 concerts a year. While providing the music for the Sunday Mass in Vienna's Imperial Chapel – which it has done since 1498 – sections of the choir tour internationally, performing each year in some of

the world's finest concert halls.

In its first tour of New Zealand since 2005, the Vienna Boys' Choir will feature 24 carefully chosen choristers between the ages of 10 to 14 years. A highlight of the tour will be the premiere of a new work by composer Elena Kats-Chernin. Based on the much-loved Australian poem 'My Country' by Dorothea Mackellar, the piece has been specially commissioned for the choir for this visit. Thanks to the tour promoters, AMcK Fine Entertainment, the choral fraternity, through a special NZ Choral Federation offer, can purchase full-priced adult tickets at \$10 discount, and youth group tickets for \$49. This offer is open for

### Concert Diary:

Auckland Town Hall  
Saturday 6 October, 8pm  
[www.buytickets.co.nz](http://www.buytickets.co.nz)

Founders Theatre Hamilton  
Sunday 7 October, 1pm  
[www.ticketek.co.nz](http://www.ticketek.co.nz)

Wellington Town Hall  
Wednesday 10 October, 8pm  
[www.ticketek.co.nz](http://www.ticketek.co.nz)

## Morag Atchison



Members of the NZ Youth Choir know Morag Atchison as their vocal coach, and Voices New Zealand know her as a fellow choir member, but her solo career has hit many high notes.

Morag is a graduate of the University of Auckland and the Royal Academy of Music, London. She was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Competition and a prize winner in the Royal Over-Seas League Competition. Her career has included concerts in the UK, Europe, the USA and Africa, working with conductors Sir David Willcocks and Sir Colin Davis and in famous concert halls such as the Wigmore Hall and the Royal Albert Hall.

Her range of operatic roles includes Lady-in-waiting in *Macbeth*, First Lady in *The Magic Flute* (NBR NZ Opera), Fourth Maid in Strauss *Elektra* (APO), Blumenmädchen in *Parsifal* (NZSO) and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*. Since returning to New Zealand, Morag has sung with choral societies and orchestras throughout the country and is regularly heard on Radio NZ Concert. She teaches voice at the University of Auckland and is a vocal tutor for the Auckland Chamber Choir.

Last month Morag was soprano soloist in Choirs Aotearoa's presentation of the Mozart Requiem in Wellington Cathedral, and this month she sings Helmwig in *Die Walküre* for the NZSO. She will also sing the solo soprano role in Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* with the NZ Youth Choir and the NZSO National Youth Orchestra in Christchurch on 8 September.



PHOTO: LUCAS BECK

the Wellington & Hamilton concerts until Friday 21 September and in Auckland until the day of the concert, Saturday 6 October. To claim your discount use the promo code NZCFVBC for Auckland bookings or go to <http://premier.ticketek.co.nz/ppredirect.aspx?pp=QSPEC&sh=viennabo12>

for bookings in Hamilton and Wellington.

As an added bonus, those who purchase tickets on the NZFC offer to the Auckland performance can also attend an exclusive open rehearsal with the Vienna Boys Choir. Simply request your rehearsal ticket by calling 09 357 33 54 after making your booking online. Auckland Town Hall, Saturday 6 October. Doors open at 5.45pm for rehearsal 6pm-7pm,

# WINTER SONGS

Message from the Chief Executive, Roger Lloyd

The mainly miserable New Zealand winter contrasts with the glorious feast of singing experiences throughout the country. And, yet again, all these vocal delights have a strong association with Choirs Aotearoa. Take, for example, the recent NZSO presentations of *Die Walküre* in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch. Among this star cast were former NZYC members – Simon O'Neill (NZYC1991-92) as Siegmund, Jonathan Lemalu as Hunding (1997-98) and the Valkyries included Anna Pierard (1994-99) and Sarah Castle (1987-88) plus NZYC vocal coach Morag Atchison. John Button commented in the Dominion Post "At the end the performance was greeted by a standing ovation of an intensity unprecedented in my experience."



Simon O'Neill

Soprano Madeleine Pierard (2000-03) is joined by her sister Anna and pianist Terence Dennis for a Chamber Music NZ 10-concert national tour from 4 to 23 August, with a programme that features Canteloube's *Songs of the Auvergne*. To view the tour guide go to <http://www.chambermusic.co.nz/artists/47-madeleine-pierard-and-terence-dennis-with-anna-pierard/>

In the NZ Choral Federation's the BIG SING Finale from 16 to 18 August in Wellington Town Hall, there are 18 choirs competing and appearing in the Gala Concert. Nine of the choirs are conducted by alumni or current members of the NZ Youth Choir and Voices. David Squire (1985-91), Music Director of NZYC, is conducting three of the Auckland choirs who have made it to the Finale. For performance and ticket information go to: <http://premier.ticketek.co.nz/> and <http://thebigsing.wordpress.com/> to make online donations.

The Lexus Song Quest (formerly the Mobil Song Quest) is a biennial competition for young New Zealand singers and the list of past winners is headed by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Dame Malvina Major. NZYC Alumni who appear on this role of honour include Teddy Tahu Rhodes (1984-88), Martin Snell (1979-88), Jonathan Lemalu, Anna Leese (2000-01) and Madeleine Pierard.

The next generation of singers is competing for the Lexus title, and the six finalists include Stephen Diaz (2008-09), the first counter-tenor to reach the Quest final, and tenor Amitai Pati (2008-10). They will be accompanied by the NZSO 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. The prize-winners will perform in the Winners' Recital in Parnell's Holy Trinity Cathedral in Auckland on 1 September at 7.30pm. Tickets for both events are available from Ticketek: 0800 TICKETEK (0800 842 538) or at [www.ticketek.co.nz](http://www.ticketek.co.nz)

Roger Lloyd

# ANDREW BALDWIN JOINS THE HOLST SINGERS

Former New Zealand Youth Choir tenor, Andrew Baldwin, recently auditioned successfully for the renowned Holst Singers.



PHOTO: GRANT ARMISHAW

A graduate of the New Zealand School of Music, Andrew has just completed the first of a two-year Masters course in composition at the Royal College of Music, London. He writes "The RCM is a fantastic place to be studying and the teachers here are incredible and passionate about what they do. The other students are also very inspiring, both for their talent and determination."

Since arriving in London, Andrew has had a composition work-shopped by members of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and a piano piece performed at St Martin in the Fields. He has been commissioned to write for the choir of St Paul's Church, Covent Garden, and the boys' choir at St Paul's School, Colet Court. Followers of the NZ Youth Choir will know that Andrew has written a number of works for the them including 'Haec dies', 'Jubilatio Deo', and his 'Magnificat' which was performed in the Hawke's Bay Opera House concert last April.

The Holst Singers are one of Britain's foremost choirs, described by the BBC as "a leading chorus on the international stage". The choir is named indirectly after the English composer Gustav Holst, taking its name from the Holst Room at St Paul's Girls' School, the venue for rehearsals during the choir's early years. Based in London, in addition to their busy concert diary they frequently broadcast on Classic FM and BBC Radio 3, and regularly record for leading classical labels.

Andrew tells us that his first concert with the Holst Singers is an Evensong at Westminster Abbey on Friday, 17 August and, for the information of our London-based readers, this will be at 5:00pm.

## Meet our sponsors

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MOZART REQUIEM		SECTION SPONSORSHIP	
			BASS 

# Mozart Requiem *by candlelight*

## Post Mortem

For a small arts organisation, piecing together the resources to present a choir and orchestra concert is a major undertaking. While basking in the warmth of a favourable review and the many emails of congratulations for the Mozart Requiem performance at Wellington Cathedral on 6 June, there comes a time when the financial reckoning has to be done. The public support of a sold out performance, despite the atrocious weather, helped a lot as did the contributions from the Community Trust of Wellington, the Pelorus Trust, The Southern Trust and the main concert sponsor, the Turnovsky Endowment Trust.

The Turnovsky Endowment Trust is named after Fred Turnovsky who, escaping from Nazi tyranny in Czechoslovakia, arrived with his wife, Lotte, in Wellington in 1940. Fred, a successful businessman and lover of music, was instrumental in bringing quality performances to New Zealand, and in 1984 he set up the Turnovsky Endowment Trust to recognise and encourage outstanding achievement in the arts. Since his death in 1994, this work has been carried on by the Trust's Board.

While by no means a 'cash cow' the Mozart Requiem came in well under budget so, together with the help of our performance partner, the Vector Wellington Orchestra, we are confident that Choirs Aotearoa will undertake more presentations of this kind in the future.

*"A performance of enormous polish, skill and insight; a moving experience"*

— John Button, Dominion Post



## NZYC AUDITIONS

The New Zealand Youth Choir is extending the current choir cycle to a third year (until the end of 2013). We are enlarging the choir for 2013 so there are places available in each voice part (SATB) for this final year. In 2013 the choir will give major concerts in Auckland and Wellington, and a commercial recording and international tour is being planned for this period. 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 Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin in late November/early December 2012. If you are interested in being part of New Zealand Youth Choir in 2013, please email Emma Dowdle (Operations Manager) 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)



I want to support the New Zealand Youth Choir and Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir

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Please use your surname and initial as the reference  
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Date paid .....

I require a tax deduction receipt

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Please contact Roger Lloyd, Chief Executive  
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Please mail this form to: Choirs Aotearoa NZ Trust,  
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Thank you for your support!

