

The image shows the interior of a Gothic cathedral, focusing on a central column and the intricate ribbed vaulting of the ceiling. The architecture is highly detailed, with pointed arches and decorative tracery. A large, semi-transparent circular graphic is overlaid on the image, consisting of several concentric arcs that create a sense of depth and focus on the central column. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the stone and the structural elements of the vaulting.

MAGNIFICAT

The University of Auckland Chamber Choir

International Tour May-June 2011

Recorded live, 11 June 2011, Saint Jude-on-the-Hill, Central Square,
Hampstead Garden Suburb, London, United Kingdom.

Producer: Associate Professor Karen Grylls, School of Music, The University of Auckland

Recording engineer | editing: Mark Sproson, London, United Kingdom

Mastering | editing: David Rylands, School of Music, The University of Auckland

Vocal consultant: Catrin Johnsson, London, United Kingdom

Booklet photographs: Grant Armishaw Photography, New Zealand

Thanks to tour venue liaisons Valerie Koh and Patrick Sum (Anglo-Chinese Junior College, Singapore), Andra Patterson (Curator - Music Collections, British Library, London), Catrin Johnsson and Rachel Fuller (St Paul's School, London), Professor Colin Lawson (Director, Royal College of Music, London) and Dr Julie Maxton (Executive Director, Royal Society, London).

Thanks to The University of Auckland Chamber Choir: teachers, support staff, members and their families. The University of Auckland's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor John Morrow, Dean of the National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries (NICAI), Professor Jenny Dixon, Head of the School of Music, Professor Robert Constable, Director of External Relations, John Taylor, Alumni Relations Manager, Amanda Lyne. The University of Auckland's External Relations, NICAI Marketing and School of Music Public Programmes teams.

Special thanks to all who donated to the 2011 tour for their kind contributions, without which the tour would not have been possible.

Tour venues: Esplanade Concert Hall, Singapore | Royal College of Music, London, UK
St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, UK | St. James's Church, Piccadilly, UK
St Paul's Cathedral, London, UK | Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, UK

MAGNIFICAT

A disparate selection of works?

by Jeremy Reid

New Zealand musicians who embark on international tours are often faced with a problem. There is an expectation, tacit or explicit, that the group will perform music unique to its country, which reflects the heritage and tradition of its people. But we have no canon; we have no ancient academies; we have no busts of great figures from the past leering at us in lecture halls imploring us to be faithful. New Zealand is comparatively young – Beethoven had been dead for thirteen years before the Treaty of Waitangi was signed – and we find ourselves not with a single musical tradition, but with a multiplicity of musical traditions. For some singers who come to The University of Auckland, Latin is more familiar than Māori, for others, Samoan more than German. A normal week might include reggae, Anglican hymns, Monteverdi, Kapa Haka and Webern. This is our musical culture. What, then, is our music?

On first glance, the pieces here seem a disparate bunch. They were composed by both students and professionals, span six languages, draw texts from liturgies and lullabies, juxtapose intense pathos with carefree fun. But each of the pieces reflects an aspect of New Zealand musical culture. I once read that monks find the practice of chanting through the psalms to be most valuable for growing their sense of community and empathy; often the emotional terrain of the day's psalm does not resonate at all, they reported, but it always resonates with someone, and that makes the exercise worthwhile. New Zealand musicians are like monks – we come together bearing traditions older than ourselves, make them our own, and share them with others. Our music is what resonates with us, wherever we find it.

Such musical traditions blur freely in *Si manu la'ititi*: though it is a Samoan nursery rhyme, the original musical material probably derives from Edwardian parlour songs taken to the Pacific Islands by early European traders and seafarers. It has been arranged here by choir tenor Steven Rapana, whose quirky ear for harmonies perfectly captures the playful mood of the text. *Si manu la'ititi* also incorporates elements of dance – a conjunction that is integral to much of the music of the Pacific Islands.

This vivacious joy is followed by the deeply profound *Te Mea Nui*, a piece which has especial significance for the choir. Composed by choir soprano Katherine Bell, the text derives from the memorial inscribed in the Christchurch cathedral, which she was drawn to during her father's funeral. The Māori proverb affirms the message that community is of ultimate value. Barely a week after the funeral, the cathedral was severely damaged in a series of horrific earthquakes. With the roof collapsed and the spire toppled around the memorial, the words have a fresh poignancy. *Te Mea Nui* begins with a waiata-like rhythm in 6/8, juxtaposed against the second text in 3/4. Finally, high in the soprano line, comes the reminder to stand together as the piece settles into 3/4 around the word aroha – love – the central impulse that both resonates and unifies.

The incipient hope in *Te Mea Nui* blossoms in the sixteenth century Ronsard poem *Ce Beau Printemps*, exquisitely set by contemporary Canadian composer Mark Sirett. The text celebrates the first day of summer and the beautiful rejuvenation that comes with the change of seasons. Subtlety of balance and texture is then made sublime by the choir in Grete Pedersen's *Jesus gjør meg stille*, the piece that so captured the ears of the St Paul's Cathedral musical staff. Based on a Norwegian folk song but transformed according to modern sensibilities, the extreme democratisation of parts creates a complex musical tapestry that explores concepts of musical foreground and background in a simple yet highly effective way.

Pedersen's introspective reverence is continued in David Childs' *O Magnum Mysterium*. The original Latin, changing time signatures, frequent caesurae, and central plainchant in this piece all hearken back to older Catholic musical traditions. Fellow New Zealand

composer and University of Auckland lecturer Dr Leonie Holmes combines Māori and English texts in her haunting *Through Coiled Stillness*, which evokes images of the dark forests that constitute such a major part of our national landscape. The striking contrast between these two pieces is testament to the diverse musical culture in New Zealand.

This recording features three songs based on Negro spirituals from Tippett's poignant "A Child of Our Time". He began composing this work two days after the beginning of World War Two, in an attempt to communicate a message of pacifism and universal tolerance. Tippett, in some ways, is a fellow monk; he adds his own character to borrowed materials, using what he has found and what he knows to speak to others about what is valuable to him. These pieces were chosen as a koha to offer to the choir's English hosts.

The reverence of the earlier pieces remains but is refracted anew in choir tenor and composer Andrew Baldwin's expansive *Magnificat*, the opening of his "Evening Service in A" – written especially for the tour and the acoustic of the St. Paul's Cathedral choir stalls. This ancient liturgical text, here translated, is based on a passage from the Gospel of Luke depicting the Virgin Mary's joy after the immaculate conception of Christ. The frequent use of fourths and fifths in the outer voices creates a sense of space and grandeur fitting for such a text performed in such a hallowed place.

To finish, Tuirina Wehi and Tuwhiti Happy's *Aio* fittingly brings the sound of classically trained voices into traditional Māori waiata. The relatively stable harmonic structure of the piece allows for complex-added note harmonies that blur the line between consonance and dissonance, creating a lush texture and unique colour palette. The chant-like repeated rhythms give the music a subtle intensity and yet another species of reverence, offering a final insight into the diverse spiritualities and cultures that enrich the choir and our nation's music. – JEREMY REID

At the time of writing Jeremy Reid is a student at The University of Auckland working towards completing a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Philosophy, a Bachelor of Music in Musicology, and a Diploma in Languages in Ancient Greek and Latin.



The University of Auckland Chamber Choir, 2011

Sopranos: Morag Atchison (staff member and soloist), Bernice Austin, Kate Bell, Laurelle Clarke, Wendy Huang, Grace Neale, Ella Smith, Fiona Tibbles and Maria Winder.

Altos: Laura Caygill, Rhianna Clarke, Sarah Hogg, Jasmine Lee, Tianyi Lu, Luana Prictor and Dean Sky-Lucas (staff member and soloist).

Tenors: Lachlan Craig, Amitai Pati, Pene Pati, Steven Rapana and Benson Wilson.

Basses: Grant Armishaw, Andrew Baldwin, Jeffrey Chang, Taunoa Filimoehala, Laurence Hughes, Warren Kilham, Kalauni Pouvalu and Paul Tarling.

The University of Auckland Chamber Choir

The University of Auckland Chamber Choir was formed in 2006 as an ensemble to give young singers at the University an opportunity to sing in a quality a cappella chamber ensemble. The unique structure of the choir sees both students and professional-level artist practitioners who are alumni of the School of Music performing and working alongside each other.

The choir made its debut in 2006 with a programme of French, New Zealand and Latin American repertoire conducted by visiting Venezuelan artist Maria Guinand. 2007 combined a new commission (*Time*) by former University of Auckland student, Sarah McCallum, with a programme of virtuosic a cappella choral favourites. In September that year the School of Music hosted eminent Norwegian choral conductor, Grete Pedersen, who worked with both student conductors and the choir in a week of activities culminating in a concert. The choir ended 2007 by performing Vivaldi and Bach with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra in the "Splendour of the Baroque" series at the Auckland Town Hall under English conductor, Roy Goodman. In 2008 the choir instituted the "Accent on..." concert series with their first programme "Accent on the Americas" presented by guest conductor, Robert Wiremu and in 2009 their second programme "Accent on the Baltics" conducted by Associate Professor Karen Grylls. In 2010, the choir presented "Prism" as a part of the School of Music's Arvo Pärt Festival, and in October that year performed Bach's *Matthäus-Passion* at the Auckland Town Hall, again with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and conductor Roy Goodman. This performance received two awards: Winner, Best Classical Concert (St Matthew Passion) - *Metro Magazine* Best of Auckland 2010, and Winner, Bach As It Should Be Gold Cup (St Matthew Passion) - *NZ Listener*, December 2010.



Sir Bob Chilcott and Associate Professor Karen Grylls



Saint Jude-on-the-Hill



Esplanade Concert Hall



Steven Rapana with the Anglo-Chinese Junior College Choir



Conductor's note

There is unquestionably everything to be gained from a tour, particularly an international tour and the performances that are a part of it. Thanks to the vision of Head of the School of Music, Professor Robert Constable, and the many contacts we have established over the years, the venues we performed in were some of the finest in the United Kingdom: St Paul's Cathedral, London, St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and St. James's Church, Piccadilly. In Singapore, at the invitation of Valerie Koh from the Anglo-Chinese Junior College and Alumni choirs, we were lucky to perform at the Esplanade Concert Hall, one of five concert halls in the world with state of the art acoustics.

In the thirty-eight years of choral life at the University's School of Music, this was the third international choir tour. In the context of university life, it was not only the singing, but also the opportunity to participate in University alumni events, which was significant. There were two such events; one hosted in Singapore at the Esplanade Concert Hall by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor John Morrow, and the other at the London Royal Society, Marble Room, hosted by Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon. The choir contributed to these events both through their singing and their conversation with the alumni who attended.

No one will forget waiting for the procession to begin for evensong in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. We sang New Zealand music for the service, Baldwin's *Evening Service in A* as well as Sutcliffe's *Preces and Responses* and we challenged the acoustic with Grete Pedersen's *Jesus gjør meg stille* which we sang as the Anthem. The interest in this piece, shown by the St. Paul's musical staff after the service, proved that the choice was indeed a triumph. Many New Zealanders and professional musicians attended the service: David Harper, Keith Lewis, our Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon, and Dean of the National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries, Professor Jenny Dixon, to name a few. There were people from around the world, some in tears at the sheer beauty of the singing and the experience.

As well as the concerts and alumni events, the singers enjoyed visits to the Royal College of Music and the British Library (where, thanks to New Zealander, Andra Patterson, Curator of Music Collections, we saw autographed manuscripts by Tippett and Mendelssohn). The students were given the opportunity to attend a rehearsal of Peter Grimes at Covent Garden. There were also visits to concerts, theatres, galleries and museums.

Those who went on the tour were able to commit to the preparations and personal cost. In addition to University-level and Faculty support, there was much work and energy into preparation by the artistic team (Morag Atchison and Dean Sky-Lucas) and the inimitable Jenny Jamieson, our tour manager. I wish to acknowledge our extraordinary vocal consultant and assistant conductor, Robert Wiremu – whose preparatory work for the tour was critical to its success – I thank him sincerely. Thanks also to James Tibbles who put us through our paces in Holy Trinity Cathedral, Auckland, to prepare us for St. Paul's. This tour was a most memorable and enjoyable one. It did much for the singers, the composers, the School and University at large.

- ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KAREN GRYLLES

Tour staff

Professor Robert Constable – Head, School of Music

Associate Professor Karen Grylls – artistic director and conductor

Dean Sky-Lucas – countertenor, accompanist and choir member

Morag Atchison – soprano, vocal consultant and choir member

Jenny Jamieson – tour manager

Choir Staff

Robert Wiremu – assistant conductor and vocal consultant

Jeffrey Chang – choir administrator

Dr Karen Grylls

artistic director and conductor

Dr Karen Grylls, ONZM, is Associate Professor in Conducting and Head of Choral Studies at The University of Auckland's School of Music. She directed the Auckland Dorian Choir from 1985 to 1998, founded the Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir (formerly known as TOWER Voices New Zealand) in 1998 and assumed the position of Musical Director of the New Zealand Youth Choir in 1989. Karen is artistic director and conductor of The University of Auckland Chamber Choir.

A graduate of both the University of Otago and The University of Auckland, Karen also studied postgraduate conducting and music theory at the University of Washington in Seattle, USA, for four years with Professors' John Rahn, Abraham Kaplan and Joan Catoni-Conlon. In 1985 she returned to New Zealand to teach at The University of Auckland's School of Music and to take up the director's post of the Auckland Dorian Choir.

As a result of Karen's musical directorship, the New Zealand Youth Choir has enjoyed notable international success: in 1992 the choir received the Silver Rose Bowl in the European Broadcasting Union's 'Let the Peoples Sing' competition, and in 1999 the titles of 'Choir of the World' at the International Music Eisteddfod in Llangollen, Wales, and 'Grand Prix Slovakia'. The Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir has also had its share of success, winning first and second place in the mixed choir section at the 1998 Tolosa International Choral Competition in Spain. More recently, Karen has achieved further accolades with these two choirs at competitions in Italy (2004), Germany (2005), Wales (2007) and Spain (2007). The TOWER Voices New Zealand album "Spirit of the Land" was awarded the Tui for "Best Classical Album" at the 2006 New Zealand Music Awards. In August 2011, the Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir was chosen to represent New Zealand and Australasia at the ninth World Symposium on Choral Music in Puerto Madryn, Argentina.

Dr Karen Grylls is in high demand as a choral clinician and also has many CD recordings to her credit. Invitations to adjudicate have taken her to Australia, Singapore, Spain, Hong Kong, Italy and China. In 1996 she received a Distinguished Teaching Award in Music from The University of Auckland, and in the New Zealand New Year Honours 1999, she was awarded Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) for her services to choral music. In 2005 Karen received an Artistic Leadership Scholarship Award from Creative New Zealand to attend the Seventh World Symposium on Choral Music in Japan. In 2006 Karen received the KBB Citation for Services to New Zealand Music from the Composers Association of New Zealand (CANZ), and the Lilburn Trust Citation award.

Morag Atchison

soprano, soloist, vocal consultant and choir member

Morag Atchison is artist-teacher in voice at The University of Auckland's School of Music. She is a sought after tutor in both soloist voice and choral ensemble; and works as vocal consultant for the New Zealand Youth Choir, the New Zealand Secondary Students' Choir and The University of Auckland Chamber Choir. Morag is currently a doctoral student at the University's School of Music focussing on "The Soloist as an Ensemble Singer". She is a graduate of The University of Auckland and the Royal Academy of Music, London, UK, having received an international postgraduate scholarship from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM).

An award-winning vocalist, Morag has received a Madeline Finden Memorial Award, was a Samling Scholar in 2001, finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier Competition, prize-winner in the Royal Over-Seas League's international music competition and a recipient of a Creative New Zealand funding grant. Morag's professional performance engagements have included operatic and concert recitals throughout Australasia, the USA, UK and Europe.

Dr Leonie Holmes

composer – *Through Coiled Stillness*

Dr Leonie Holmes is lecturer in composition and music studies at The University of Auckland's School of Music. Stemming from her work as Composer-in-Schools in the 1990s, she has a particular interest in the teaching of musicianship skills, composition and creative music. Leonie was Composer in Residence with the Nelson School of Music in 1986, Composer-in-Schools in 1989, Composer in Residence with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra in 1997 and Composer in Residence with the Manukau City Symphony Orchestra in 2005.

Dr Holmes has written orchestral, chamber, vocal and solo instrument works, and receives frequent commissions from both professional and community groups. Her piece *Through Coiled Stillness* for choir, countertenor, soprano and percussion, was commissioned by The University of Auckland Chamber Choir for their 2011 tour and features on this CD recording.

Dean Sky-Lucas

countertenor, soloist, accompanist and choir member

Dean Sky-Lucas is head of collaborative piano and lectures in accompaniment and voice at The University of Auckland's School of Music. He has worked as accompanist to the wind and opera departments of the University of Melbourne's Victorian College of the Arts and as associate artist with the Australian National Academy of Music, Melbourne, Australia. Dean studied speech pathology at La Trobe University, Australia, and following this was invited to complete a cross-section of a 90 year old larynx with Victorian College of the Arts' head of voice, Anna Connolly, for the School of Biomedical Sciences. This work has placed Dean at the forefront of vocal performance from a biomedical perspective, and he has also lectured in psychology and physiology

for musicians at the former Melba Memorial Conservatorium of Music, Melbourne, Australia. Dean has been vocal coach to some of Australia's most acclaimed opera singers, and, as a soloist and chamber musician in voice, piano and keyboards, he has toured and performed throughout Australasia and the USA. Dean is also a concert reviewer for Radio New Zealand Concert FM.

The University of Auckland's School of Music

The University of Auckland's School of Music at the National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries (NICAI) is a hive of activity providing a dynamic environment for study and investigation of a wide range of musical subjects, including classical performance, composition, musicology, popular music, jazz performance, electroacoustic music and sound recording and design. Graduates of the School are respected throughout the country and the globe as high-calibre performers, composers, scholars and music educators. The University's School of Music offers a full range of academic programmes from the Bachelor of Music, with a choice of majors, through to postgraduate diploma, masters and a suite of doctoral programmes.

To find out more about The University of Auckland's School of Music and the study programmes available:

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1. Introduction: Associate Professor Karen Grylls – artistic director and conductor (1:32)
 2. Steven Rapana: *Si manu la'ititi* (2011)* (2:50)
 3. Katherine Bell: *Te Mea Nui* (2010) *† (4:24)
 4. Mark Sirett: *Ce Beau Printemps* (2008) (2:27)
 5. Grete Pedersen: *Jesus, gjør meg stille* (2005) (4:49)
 6. David Childs: *O Magnum Mysterium* (1997) (2:54)
 7. Dr Leonie Holmes: *Through Coiled Stillness* (2011)* (5:09)
 8. Michael Tippett: *Go down, Moses* (1939/41) (2:49)
 9. Andrew Baldwin: *Magnificat from Evening Service in A* (2011)* (4:40)
 10. Michael Tippett: *Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord* (1939/41) (1:10)
 11. Michael Tippett: *Steal away* (1939/41) (2:47)
 12. Tuirina Wehi and Tuwhiti Happy: *Aio* (2010/11) *† (3:50)

* Commissioned for the tour

† Received international premiere performance

Total duration 36:41

Soloists and Accompanists

Morag Atchison - soprano (7, 8, 10, 11) | Andrew Baldwin – bells (7)

Jeffrey Chang - baritone (5, 8) | Sarah Hogg – alto (5, 12) | Laurence Hughes – bells (7)

Tianyi Lu - rainstick (7) | Amitai Pati – tenor (12)

Pene Pati – tenor (10, 11) bells (7) guitar (12) | Dean Sky-Lucas – countertenor (7)

Benson Wilson– mihi (12) | Maria Winder – bells (7)