

WORLD PREMIERE

**Moon Mountain** by Phillippa Ulenberg

Gu-zheng, taonga puoro, cello and piano

Yao Chen Xi (gu-zheng), Gabrielle Peake (piano), Edward King (cello), Katie Johnson (percussion), Richard Nunns (taonga puoro)

Moon Mountain, for Chinese gu-zheng, cello, piano and taonga puoro, brings together the sounds of three musical traditions, Western, Chinese and Maori. This composition features the gu-zheng and uses traditional and modern techniques for the instrument – 'rolling', arpeggio figures, a variety of glissandi, percussive strikes and pitch bends with 'shakes'. While the instrument is tuned to a pentatonic scale, other notes can be played by pushing on the strings and the resulting pitch bends are most expressive. The piece also uses extended techniques for cello, such as bowing behind the bridge and strumming, and for the piano, such as plucking, striking, strumming and rolling glissandi on the strings.

Maori instruments heard are koauau (flute), pahu pounamu (gong) and putatara or pukaea (trumpets). The slower section of the piece is in free time to allow the gu-zheng performer the space to achieve the subtle pitch and shaking affects. The Chinese name for the part of the gu-zheng where the strings are held in position on the body is 'Moon Mountain', the title of the piece.

Phillippa Ulenberg is a masters student in music composition at the University of Waikato.

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**Nebula Pūoro** by Jeremy Mayall and Richard Nunns

Richard Nunns and Horomona Horo (taonga puoro), Jeremy Mayall (Theremin, samples, effects)

This piece takes inspiration from sci-fi films and seeks to combine the haunting sounds of the taonga puoro with that of the Theremin, creating a live sonic tapestry of an imagined alien land.

*All programme notes are by the composers*

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## SPECIAL THANKS TO

The New Zealand Chamber Soloists

Diantha Hillenbrand, Horomona Horo, Katie Johnson, Edward King,

Yao Chen Xi, Richard Nunns, Gabrielle Peake, Danny Peters

WEL Academy of Performing Arts

Hamilton Boys' High School

University of Waikato Music staff and students



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## MUSIC AT THE EDGE... IN SURROUND SOUND!

Friday 7th May 2010

7.30pm

Gallagher Concert Chamber

WEL Academy of Performing Arts

Arts & Social Sciences

Te Kura Kete Aronui



# PROGRAMME

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***Voces naturae: I. Locus iste*** by Martin Lodge

Taonga puoro (traditional Maori instruments) and Western classical instruments with live audio and video mixing, including electronic effects and surround sound.

Richard Nunns and Horomona Horo (taonga puoro); members of The New Zealand Chamber Soloists - Lara Hall (violin), Edward King (cello), Rachael Griffiths-Hughes (harpichord) and David Griffiths (voice); live audio mixing and effects by Jeremy Mayall; live video mixing by Elizabeth Dobson; directed by Martin Lodge.

*Locus iste* in Latin means 'this is the place'. The music may be thought of as a creative meditation on a specific time and place, namely here and now! Aspects of our time and place include the natural environment - the sounds heard around us all the time both natural and man-made, instruments from various musical traditions, and the transforming effects of electronic technology. All these elements are drawn together in *Locus iste*, which is the first in a planned series of related works collectively called *Voces naturae* (the voices of nature).

Martin Lodge is an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Waikato.

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***Waves of Light*** by Hannah Gilmour

Electroacoustic

It is easy to overlook things that seem insignificant in life and forget to stop and pay attention to details. We can miss the joy and importance of small things by being too busy in our own lives. In a three part work called *Ode to a Cricket*, I developed the single sample of a cricket chirping to symbolise the solitary voice of one overlooked by society. By drawing the audience's attention to this sound, I have attempted to portray how, even though it has a small role, there is something charming and captivating about the cricket's call and the great lessons that can be learnt from it.

I have explored this idea in three movements: a moderately slow melodic movement, a rhythmic second movement and a slower harmonic final movement called *Waves of Light*. In this last movement I imagined a boat at sea, on a calm but cloudy evening. This grows to a storm, which doesn't last long before the skies clear and everything is at peace again. There is emphasis on harmonic development and timbral colours. I used variants of reverb and spectral filters to create many of the samples.

*Chill Before Dawn*, the first movement of *Ode to a Cricket*, was included in the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, 25 - 27 March this year. It is also to be played at the International Computer Music Conference, New York and the Sound, Sight, Space and Play graduate symposium, Leicester, in June.

Hannah Gilmour has recently completed a Master of Music degree in composition

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***A new communication*** by Sonic Warp

Richard Nunns and Horomona Horo (taonga puoro), Daniel Peters (laptop and light table), Jeremy Mayall (iPhones and effects)

This piece takes three different methods of communication - one ancient and two modern, and uses them to create music. As technology advances, the tools of long-distance communication are becoming as musical as they were in ancient times.

Drums and trumpets were key in conveying information across distance, and were also utilised in music. Now laptops and cell phones are at the forefront of long distance communication - it is in this piece that they get to realise their other functions.

Richard Nunns is a leading exponent of taonga puoro performance. He recently was awarded an honorary doctorate for his musical work by Victoria University of Wellington. Nunns is a Research Associate in Music at the University of Waikato.

Daniel Peters is a graduate of the University of Waikato and currently teaches music at Hamilton Boys' High School.

Jeremy Mayall is a doctoral candidate in composition.

***Wrong Number*** by E.J. Dobson

for amplified soprano and live electronics

Diantha Hillenbrand (soprano), E.J. Dobson (laptop computer)

This piece grew out of a conceptual song cycle for soprano and computer. It is a setting of Janet Frame's poem *Wrong Number*, from her poetry collection *The Goose Bath*. The work makes use of real-time effects processing of both voice and pre-recorded audio samples that are manipulated to create a soundscape over which the soprano sings.

*Wrong Number* by Janet Frame

*It is not the right time to telephone me.*

*I have been emptying ashes*

*from two fires,*

*getting rid of old bodies of embers*

*with traces in my hair and eyes*

*stinging and*

*flames freshly bleeding where I struck the hot coals*

*meaning only to bring about*

*a deathbed*

*revival as I promised, setting my speech*

*to match the fires frail whispering,*

*I must be*

*Cruel (surely you have heard it!) to be kind.*

*But I am tired and it is not*

*the right time*

*to telephone me and ask in a strange voice*

*Hello is that the Mornington*

*Butchery.*

Elizabeth Dobson is a doctoral candidate in music composition

***Celebrating the Lantern Festival*** by Cao Dong Fu

Chen Xi Yao (gu-zheng)

This is the most representative piece composed by the Gu-zheng master, Cao Dong Fu. It depicts the festivities of the Lantern Festival, which is full of colours, songs and dances. The composition mimics the rhythms of traditional Chinese percussion instruments with chords played by both hands. The use of a rich variety of Gu-zheng fingering techniques, such as rubbing, pressing, sliding, vibrato and hitting the strings with the left hand, are all characteristic of the Cao School of Zheng Music in China. Chen Xi Yao is the grandson of Cao Dong Fu.