

# Piano & Poetry

## Colin Decio & Ingrid Prosser

**Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts** *providing lunchtime music in the heart of the city since 1974*

*St Andrew's on The Terrace WELLINGTON*



### Welcome

It is wonderful that you have come. Thank you. We want your experience today to be the best that it can be and would appreciate you taking a moment to read the following before the concert commences.

**Keep safe** by locating the exit nearest to your seat. In the event of an earthquake, our recommendation is to **Drop, Cover and Hold**.

**Bon appetit!** You are welcome to have your lunch during the performance. Switching your cell phone to **silent** is important to the performers and other members of the audience. Your support by way of a **donation** and telling others about the concerts would be fantastic and very much appreciated. It does make a difference.

If you wish to photograph or video today's concert, please ask for permission from the performer(s) before the concert begins. This is important.

We invite you now to sit back, relax and **enjoy** the concert.

**Our Mission** is to create a lively, open Christian faith community, to act for a just and peaceful world, and to be catalysts for discovery, compassion and celebration in the capital.

These lunchtime concerts are **advertised** through Radio New Zealand Concert's Live Diary at around 8.10 am on the day of the concert, and listed on St Andrew's website.

To be placed on the email **circulation list** for concert information, please email Marjan on [marjan@marjan.co.nz](mailto:marjan@marjan.co.nz). Also join our Facebook group Friends of St Andrew's on The Terrace Lunchtime Concerts, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/315497448862287/>.

Check out the noticeboards in the foyer each time you come.

# Programme:

**Debussy – *La Cathédral engloutie*  
(*The Sunken Cathedral*) 1<sup>st</sup> book of Preludes, no. 10  
(1910)**

***The Lady of Shalott* – Alfred, Lord Tennyson  
(1<sup>st</sup> Baron Tennyson)**

**Rakhmaninov –  
*Preludes* – Op. 23 no 4 in D Major (1903)  
Op. 23 no 5 in G minor (1901)**

***Jehanne la Pucelle* – Ingrid Prosser**

**Ravel – *Alborada del Gracioso* Suite *Miroirs*, no. 4  
(1904-1905)**

# Programme notes:

## **Debussy - La Cathédral engloutie**

Debussy was inspired in the writing of this prelude by an ancient Breton legend.

## ***The Lady of Shalott* – Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)**

*The Lady of Shalott* is loosely based on Arthurian legend – Tennyson was directly inspired by a 14th century Italian novella which told ‘How the Damsel of Scalot died for love of Lancelot de Lac’. Tennyson was all his life fascinated by King Arthur and his Court at Camelot, writing much other poetry on the subject, also. The poem was first published in 1832, in 20 verses. It was revised, and re-published in 1842, in the 19 verse form with which we are familiar today.

Tennyson was the son of a clergyman, and came from a large family. In 1850, he was appointed Poet Laureate, after the death of the previous incumbent, William Wordsworth. He was created Baron Tennyson of Aldworth and Freshwater in 1884, for his services to writing and poetry – the first time in British history that a writer had been so enobled.

## **Rachmaninoff – *Preludes* Op. 23 no's 4 & 5**

In all, Rachmaninoff composed 24 preludes, one in each key. Opus 23 contains ten preludes – they are dedicated to his 1st cousin, the Russian-Ukrainian pianist Alexander Siloti, who taught Rachmaninoff at the Moscow Conservatory. (Siloti also had works dedicated to him by other composers such as Liszt, Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky). Rachmaninoff never played all the Preludes in one sitting, choosing rather to select a few for each performance.

## ***Jehanne la Pucelle* – Ingrid Prosser**

Three and a half years ago, while living in the UK, Colin and I went on holiday to the town of St Valery, on the estuary of the River Somme in France. The estuary widens out into the Baie de Somme, an ecologically important site in France, with migrating birds, harbour seals, salt-marsh sheep and wild horses. When the tide is low, one can walk from St Valery across to Le Crotoy, the town on the other side of the bay. Among many other historical resonances, we were very interested to discover Joan of Arc's connections with both Le Crotoy and St Valery – and with the Baie de Somme, over which she was marched on her way to her trial in Rouen. I was inspired to write this poem about Joan, who was known in her own time as Joan the Maid or The Maid of Orleans (Jehanne la Pucelle or La Pucelle d'Orleans). The appellation 'Arc' came later.

Joan was known for wearing men's clothing – this was a sensible undertaking for the protection of her virtue. At times when she was in prison in Rouen during her lengthy trial, she wore women's clothing – and was subject to abuse. A theme throughout my poem relates to the protection given her by male nether garments.

## ***Ravel – Alborada del gracioso***

The title translates as *Dawn Song of a Jester* (or Harlequin). Dawn songs, or Albas, have a long history in Spain. In medieval times, they described lovers who met in the secrecy of the night. The man would always have a friend who kept watch (in case the woman's husband came along), and when the dawn came, the friend would sing, loudly, to warn the lovers that the day had arrived, and they should part. Here, Ravel has been inspired by Spanish flamenco music, composing pianistic effects which mimic the sound and rhythms of the flamenco guitar. The work is dedicated to M.D. Calvocoressi, a critic and musical scholar who was a great supporter of Ravel and his music.

# Biographies

**Colin Decio** was born in Birmingham, England to an English mother and a Ukrainian father – hence the surname! From 1982 to 1986 he studied Piano and Composition at the Birmingham School of Music, UK (now Royal Birmingham Conservatoire), graduating with five diplomas - including a distinction in composition.

Colin was awarded the *Burke Trophy for Advanced Piano*, The Birmingham Midland Institute Composition Prize, the John Ireland Chamber Music Prize, and was winner of the piano section of the Ludlow Philharmonic Concerto Competition with Rachmaninov's 2<sup>nd</sup> Piano Concerto, which he then went on to perform several times with orchestra as well as performing the Beethoven 'Emperor' Concerto.

Colin Decio the composer: 2005 saw the premiere of his 2nd Symphony (*The Cheltenham Symphony*); followed in 2008 by the premiere of his 1st Symphony (*The Gloucester Symphony*) in Gloucester Cathedral; and then his 1st Piano Concerto 'in memoriam John Ogdon' in 2015. (Colin's 2nd Piano Concerto 'In the Flowers of the Sun' awaits its premiere in New Zealand!)

Colin Decio the pianist: Colin has performed many solo piano recitals throughout the UK, and toured New Zealand in 2005. During his years living in Cheltenham Spa in Gloucestershire (centre of the Cotswolds) Colin organised many chamber music concerts and concert series for the performance of his own works and those of other composers. In these concerts Colin performed as piano soloist and also as accompanist, working with both established musicians and young musicians newly graduated from music conservatoire.

In 2012 Colin toured the UK with *Souvenir d'Anne Frank*, as pianist in the Decio Piano Trio. (*Souvenir d'Anne Frank* is a theatre work, the development of which took as it's starting point Colin's Piano Trio for Anne Frank 'Het Achterhuis'. In Brechtian style the piano trio is onstage throughout. *Souvenir d'Anne Frank* was highly praised by Anne's cousin Buddy Elias).

Since arriving in New Zealand in late 2016, Colin has continued his solo performing career playing classical piano in combination with poetry presented by his wife Ingrid Prosser. Colin's composition 'Lord have mercy'

specially written for Palliser Viols, was premiered in Wellington on October 14th 2018 at the National War Memorial's Hall of Memories.

In July 2018 Colin was awarded both the First Prize and the Audience Award in the New Zealand Double Reed Society Chamber Music Composition Competition for his composition *Chorale for Three Bassoons*. Later that year his composition, *Snatch!* (for solo clarinet) reached the final of the Auckland Clarinet Competition.

(for further information please visit - [www.colindacio.com](http://www.colindacio.com))

**Ingrid Prosser** has been a professional performer since 1994. She is a singer specialising in medieval music, and a performance poet. Having made a serious commitment to writing poetry in her early 30's, she has since created a sizeable body of work, including a self-published volume of poems entitled '*Love on a Hey Day*'. A second volume of poetry is in preparation.

Ingrid is a New Zealander of Danish and Welsh/English extraction, and has spent more than half her adult life living in the United Kingdom – including 2 years spent studying at Birmingham University's *Centre for Early Music Performance and Research*.

Words have always been very important to Ingrid. As a medieval singer, she adores working with such 12th-14th century languages as Gallego-Portuguese, Catalan, Occitan and old English. She has also composed a number of vocal musical works setting her own words (in modern English!)

For a singer, performing the spoken word is just one step away from singing the word. Ingrid's performance style is theatrical. She is a 3rd generation performer. Her Welsh grandfather was a singer and her father was an actor and broadcaster.

Ingrid has been a singing teacher since 1996, and has NZ and UK qualifications. She teaches holistically, working mostly with adults.

In the UK, Ingrid formed and directed the ensemble *Trio Mellion* – one soprano and two mezzos (including herself) – performing medieval, renaissance and contemporary music, both accompanied and unaccompanied. She has performed in various parts of the UK, and throughout NZ.

Ingrid returned to NZ in 2016, and she and her husband Colin Decio now live in Wellington. Ingrid and Colin perform together in programmes of classical piano music and poetry. They also perform programmes which include details about the lives of the composers whose music Colin plays; which Ingrid researches and writes. As well as concerts in the Wellington region, 2018 included a concert for the Taihape Music Group. On National Poetry Day (Friday 24th August 2018), Ingrid performed a solo poetry recital (A Celebration of Poetry through the Ages) at the Eastbourne Library in Wellington.

[www.ingridprosser.weebly.com](http://www.ingridprosser.weebly.com)

### **Upcoming concerts:**

Sun 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019 at 2pm

Concert for the Wanganui Music Society

Fri 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 12.45pm

Lunchtime concert at Wellington Cathedral

Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 at 12.15pm

Lunchtime concert at St Mark's, Lower Hutt

Ingrid & Colin also enjoy performing in the more intimate setting of house concerts – all that is required is a good piano (either grand or good upright), enthusiastic hosts and an audience! Please contact Ingrid through her website if you would like to host such a concert.





# Contact us



e | [wednesday@standrews.org.nz](mailto:wednesday@standrews.org.nz)

p | 04-472-9211

w | [www.standrews.org.nz](http://www.standrews.org.nz)

## Coming Up

### April

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Duo Enharmonics –

Nicole Chao and Beth Chen – Piano music for 4 hands  
Sonata in C Major, K.521 - Mozart  
Rite of Spring, Stravinsky  
A New Account of the Blue Danube Waltzes,  
Strauss/Anderson

#### 10<sup>th</sup> Paul Rosoman –

Organ recital

#### 11<sup>th</sup> Thursday - Woodwind students of the New Zealand School of Music

#### 17<sup>th</sup> Maria Mo – piano

Beethoven: Waldstein sonata Albeniz: Iberia, book 1.

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The only place you'll find reviews of these concerts (and almost all other classical music  
in Greater Wellington) is at [www.middle-c.org](http://www.middle-c.org)

Use it to find out what's coming up in classical music performance through the website's  
**Coming Events listings**