

# NZSO NYO composer comes home

**Robin Toan** is cutting short her 'Big-OE', back-packing across the Mediterranean countries and coming back to New Zealand in August.

Being awarded the inaugural Composer-in-Residence position with the 2005 NZSO National Youth Orchestra has proven too good an opportunity to miss. Robin, currently in Greece, phoned to say, "I'm so delighted to have been selected! It was quite unexpected. I decided to enter it before I knew I'd be away for so long. Wow, this is such an opportunity!"

This award follows hard on the heels of other successes for the young composer. She was the recipient of the 2004 Philip Neill Prize as well as the University of Auckland Douglas Lilburn Composition Prize Concert in both the electronic and acoustic categories last year. Prior to that Robin had won the Auckland Philharmonia Young Composers Competition in 2000, was runner-up in the New Zealand Secondary Schools Choir Choral Composition Competition in 2003 and 2004, the KBB/175 East Composition Competition in 2000 and won a number of prizes from Auckland University. Her compositions already have been performed by the Auckland Philharmonia, Waikato Symphony Orchestra and 175 East and now the NZSO National Youth Orchestra will be added to her credits.

Robin was selected from 25 applicants, ranging in age between 17 and 24, from all over the country, who were asked to submit an orchestral piece of up to five minutes duration. The NZSO NYO Composer in Residence Award was granted to Robin based on her work *Tū-mata-uenga, God of War, Spirit of Man*. The piece will form part of the programme that the orchestra, after a week of rehearsals in August, will perform in Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland.

This is the first time a Composer-in-Residence has been associated with the orchestra. Pascale Parenteau, the orchestra's manager comments: "The NZSO NYO Composer-in-Residence is now a vital part of the project. It not only gives the young performers the opportunity to play the music of today and be part of a world premiere but also gives our young NZ composers the opportunity to work for and with a high calibre symphony orchestra for an intensive period."

In addition to performances of her work at each of the three NYO concerts, Robin will receive guidance from music professionals covering both practical and artistic considerations: NYO conductor Edwin Outwater, NZSO librarian Mable Wong and composer **John Psathas** who is mentor of the NZSO NYO Composer-in-Residence. Robin will also receive the most recent version of Sibelius music writing software from MusiTech Ltd, the principal sponsor of the NZSO NYO Composer-in-Residence Award 2005.



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