



**ORCHESTRA  
WELLINGTON**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**1 JULY – 31 DECEMBER 2015**



## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Although it has only been a short period since the last AGM, there have been significant matters in the Orchestra's development to report.

The first is the appointment of the new General Manager to the Board, Kirsten Mason. The Board were particularly pleased to have someone of Kirsten's knowledge and experience available to fill the GM's role, and she has already demonstrated her value to the Orchestra.

Secondly, the continued growth in the support of the community for the Orchestra's activities is particularly pleasing. The number of subscribers for the 2016 season has involved a 22% increase in subscriber numbers, the vast majority being for all six subscription concerts. We can all expect an exciting and well supported series of concerts later this year.

There are, however, financial challenges. Creative New Zealand's recent announcement that there is a shortfall in the funds available to it, which will likely result in a reduction in funding for all arts organisations is concerning, and will affect the Orchestra next year.

There was also an unexpected reduction in the Regional Amenities funding of the Orchestra for 2016 as a consequence of other unexpected demands on the fund. Sponsorship income was also not as high as budgeted. This means that the financial measure of our success is not as apparent as the other measures.

But despite these matters, there is no reason not to continue to be enthusiastic and optimistic about the place of the Orchestra in the life of Wellington, and what it is achieving. This is not only through its subscription concerts, but through the services it provides to other arts organisations, and through its community development programmes. The year ahead looks to be an exciting one.

**Francis Cooke QC**  
**Chair of the Board**



## Notes from the Podium

Orchestra Wellington's 2015 season will be seen as a watershed moment in our artistic history, as much as it was in terms of audience connection. The tightly themed season provided an attractive product upon which to sell subscription tickets. During the year, the orchestra and I were able to come to grips with another cycle of works by a single composer, in much the same manner that we have done with the Beethoven Piano concertos and Haydn "Paris" symphonies. Focusing on Tchaikovsky allowed the orchestra to explore a specific and important group of works. This cycle allowed the orchestra to arrive at my medium-term goal for the orchestra, which was to present six main subscription concerts per year.

Coupled with the larger-scaled nature of the orchestrations required, the success of the 2015 season gave Orchestra Wellington a significant visibility in the community, both in terms of regularity of performance and the undeniable and consistently excellent standard of artistry. The orchestra and I were also able to further deepen our musical relationship with Michael Houston. Orchestra Wellington believes that the musicians of New Zealand are of international calibre and we show and have shown a long-term commitment to our artists that is second to none, in the industry. It is especially gratifying to me that the orchestra shows that this commitment can go hand in hand with ever-increasing audiences and critical acclaim.

I am proud that Orchestra Wellington has the most comprehensive composer in residence programme in the country. One of the many reasons that make this programme so important, is the opportunity we provide our composers to be performed in main series concerts to full houses. Orchestra Wellington has never sounded better, it has never played to larger audiences and it is connecting to our community in a deep manner. Our programming and visionary leadership, with its ability to think laterally has shown that orchestral art music can and does enrich the lives of our community and demonstrates the vital role that Orchestra Wellington has in the capital.

I want to formally thank Adán Tijerina for his extraordinary work with Orchestra Wellington - his time with the orchestra showed a rare brilliance that has helped position the orchestra for ever greater artistic triumphs. Finally, I am excited to welcome Kirsten Mason in her role as General Manager with Orchestra Wellington. Already Kirsten is bringing new and exciting ideas to our orchestra that are sure to further develop our connection with our community.

**Marc Taddei**  
**Music Director**



## Notes from the GM

Despite financial challenges which are an ever-more present feature of the cultural landscape across New Zealand, there is much that we are celebrating at Orchestra Wellington.

As noted by our Chairman, we have seen an impressive 22% increase in the number of subscriptions this year, a very pleasing result. And when our season opens with 'Odes to Joy' at the Michael Fowler Centre in June, the vast majority of audience members will have paid only \$18 for their ticket. As we strive to be the most accessible orchestra in the country, low ticket prices remain a pillar of our commitment to that goal.

We are also delighted that our partnerships with the other flagship arts organisations in Wellington continue to go from strength to strength. We have performed already this year as part of the New Zealand Festival and Cuba Dupa, and will perform alongside the Orpheus Choir, NZ Opera and Royal New Zealand Ballet on numerous occasions across the year.

Much of what the orchestra is able to do – whether it is performing in the concert hall or in the streets of Wellington, or bringing music into low-decile classrooms across the region – is accomplished thanks to the generous support of our major funders, Creative New Zealand and the Wellington City Council. I would like to acknowledge them for their ongoing commitment to the vibrant and diverse cultural life we enjoy here in Wellington.

And finally, I would like to thank my predecessor, Adán Tijerina, who has been so instrumental in the Orchestra's success over the previous several years, our visionary Music Director Marc Taddei and the members of our Board, who are unfailingly supportive and committed.

**Kirsten Mason**  
**General Manager**