

NEWS RELEASE – July 6, 2009

Victory for the Australian, New Zealand and Chinese ensembles at the Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition

All week twelve of the finest piano trio and string quartet ensembles in the region battled it out in Melbourne during the Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition. Yesterday, two piano trios and string quartet ensembles vied for first place. Nibbana Trio from China and Hamer Quartet from Australia were victorious at the end of this extraordinary concert series.

The final four ensembles competing selected by an esteemed jury to play off on Sunday at Elisabeth Murdoch Hall were the Tasman String Quartet, Hamer Quartet, Nibbana Trio and Yarra Trio, all vying for top prizes valued over \$60,000.00.

This chamber music competition only occurs every four years and only the best young musicians are invited under the age of 35 to participate. These musicians have come from all over Australia, Japan, China, South Korea and New Zealand; they performed two concerts each at the Melbourne Recital Centre and to Australians nationally (broadcast on the ABC classic FM). This competition has high stakes with musicians competing for cash, concert engagements and international recognition.

The twelve teams representing their country were:

Australia

Hamer Quartet – Melbourne
Lorelei Trio – Melbourne
The Yarra Trio – Melbourne
Orava String Quartet – Sydney
Streeton Trio – Sydney
Disco Vienna – Adelaide
Leonore String Quartet – Adelaide

Asia Pacific

Tasman String Quartet – New Zealand
Isolani Quartet – Japan
Shin-Oh-Lee – South Korea
Nibbana Trio – China
Dawn Quartet – China

Prizes and Engagements were award to the following ensembles:

Hamer Quartet from Melbourne won 1st Prize quartets - The Robert Salzer Foundation - \$16, 000. The Foundation established a trust for the support of the arts, notably the performing and visual arts.

Nibbana Trio from China won 1st Prize for trios - Unico Computer Systems – \$12, 000. Unico is proud to support Chamber Music Australia, they are an independent Australian company that creates, integrates and supports the core software systems of Australia's leading organisations.

Hamer Quartet from Australia – were presented with the Musica Viva Australia's Tony Berg Award for Most Outstanding Australian Ensemble - The Tony Berg Award was established by Musica Viva Australia to assist the career development of an outstanding young Australian chamber music group by providing financial support for further study and associated travel costs. Through Musica Viva's partnership with the Asia-Pacific Chamber Music Competition, the Award will be given to the highest-ranked Australian group in the 2009 Competition and is valued at \$30,000.

Tasman String Quartet from New Zealand won the Hamer – Tribe Trust Prize - \$ 5, 000.

This prize is awarded for the best interpretation and performance of the Round Two own-choice post-1989 work. From 1989–2000 Sir Rupert Hamer served Chamber Music Australia as chairman and under his leadership and vision, the organisation flourished. As Premier of Victoria from 1972–1981, he was an astute politician and a great humanitarian.

Kenneth Tribe is considered one of the pillars of Australia's classical music community. A respected businessman and lover of classical music he was chairman of Musica Viva Australia for many years. As chairman of our competition juries, he brought a combination of legal expertise and moral fortitude to the role.

The Peter Druce Audience Prizes:

\$2,000 for Piano Trio won by the Yarra Trio from Melbourne, Australia

\$2,000 for String Quartet won by Hamer Quartet Melbourne, Australia.

Peter Druce (1943–2007) was a Melbourne lawyer and CMA patron whose wide-ranging interests included music and opera. Peter valued excellence. These two prizes are supported by his family and friends.

Finalist's Recital Tour - One ensemble will be selected for the Finalist's Recital Tour will be announced later.

Artistic Director and founder of the competition, Marco Van Pagee said, "The Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition has exceeded my expectations. The musicians have interpreted the classics in their own unique way sometimes shocking the audience and the jurors, exhilarating them and pacifying them the last week. This competition has been significant in showcasing what's next in chamber music. These musicians are the next generation greats and we're sure that there is more excellence to come.

Members of the winning ensembles are listed below:

Tasman String Quartet from New Zealand – Anna van der Zee and Jennifer Banks (violin), Christian van der Zee (viola) and Miranda Wilson (cello)

Hamer Quartet from Australia – Rebecca Chan and Michael Brooks Reid (violin), Stefanie Farrands (viola) and Michael Dahlenburg (cello).

Nibbana Trio from China – Kaiyi Ma (violin), Mei Zhu (piano) and Yan Pan (cello).

The Yarra Trio from Australia – Stefan Cassomenos (piano), Jess Ipkendanz (violin) and Chris Howlett (cello)

Ends.

For interviews and photographs with the ensembles please contact: Nicola Archer, Nicola Archer Communications on 03 9534 1285 / 0419 002 769.