

# A delightful afternoon treat

An ambitious programme of difficult music, all by local composers, provided a stimulating 90 minutes of good cheer on a winter's afternoon.

To get the bad stuff out of the way – St Michael's is an exquisite building, but an imperfect concert venue. And when will I learn “church” equals “bring cushion”?

But the music was unfailingly delightful. The Jubilates have commissioned several works, some performed here for the first time. Jeremy Woodside's *The Small Hours* and Anthony Ritchie's *Mountains and Rivers* were the pick of a vital and well-organised programme.

Set to the verse of Ursula Bethell and Denis Glover

## REVIEW

**Southern Landscapes, presented by the Jubilate Singers, conducted by Grant Hutchinson, at St Michael's Church, Sunday, August 14, at 2pm. Reviewed by Timothy Jones.**

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respectively, the sheer class of the text was matched in both cases by music of substance. Despite the difficult harmonic test posed by Woodside's piece, the Jubilates played their A game and carried the audience unerringly through the poem's darkening world.

Chris Archer's *Aroha*, to text by Karin O'Donnell, was equally triumphant. Choral

sampling of other songs about love provided an introduction, then five simply constructed but telling stanzas led to an effective conclusion.

Anonymous doggerel gave Philip Norman no problem. Patrick Shepherd's response to the earthquake, *Elegy for a Fallen City*, was brief but effective. More substantial was his *Timeless Land*, a view of the South Island's landscapes and meanings.

Sparkling miniatures by John Ritchie and Martin Setchell, and three comic folksong settings by Richard Oswin completed a star lineup of local composers.

The current hunger for music was richly satisfied by Grant Hutchinson and his singers.