**Masters of Melody Review**

Holy Trinity Church was filled with melody on Sunday afternoon when the Bay of Plenty Symphonia presented a concert of wonderful music under the able direction of guest conductor, Euan Safey.

The programme started with a brisk performance of Mozart’s Magic Flute Overture and concluded with Mendelssohn’s rousing 5th Symphony. Sandwiched between these two Germanic masters were works by lesser known composers.

Andrew Beer, who is currently Concertmaster for the Auckland Philharmonia, was the soloist in Wieniawski’s 2nd Violin concerto. His excellent playing encompassed a wide range of mood, matched by a first class the accompaniment from the strings. The second lyrical movement was followed by a Rondo in Gypsy style which allowed us to hear Beer’s violin virtuosity. We were treated to a generous encore, Légende Op 17, by the same composer.

NZ composer Briar Prastiti was present to speak about this world first performance of Pegasus, a specially commissioned work. Its opening rhythms depicted her horse-riding as a young girl in Tauranga and the later soaring themes represented the constellation of Pegasus.

It was pleasing to see so many young players. The woodwind and brass sections performed well, and players have every reason to be proud of the orchestra’s overall balance. The good standard is testament to their hard work under Justus Rozemond over the last decade, and Euan Safey’s ability to raise the bar even further.

**Jeremy Whimster**