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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Twenty-six talented violin students from throughout New Zealand and overseas spent 12 days in Queenstown for the eighth annual Queenstown Violin Summer School (QVSS). The Summer School in association with the Southern Strings Charitable Trust took place as part of the inaugural *QVSS Festival of Chamber Music* from 11 - 23 January 2010.

Through its association with Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, QVSS offers a competition for a solo performance opportunity for a QVSS student. The performance with CSO will take place in the ASB Classical Sparks outdoor concert to be held on 5 February in Hagley Park, Christchurch. The concert will be conducted by Ken Young.

This year's competition winner, awarded by QVSS 2010 Artistic Staff, is Kana Ohashi, a 16-year-old violinist from Melbourne. Kana will perform the third movement from Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op.35.

Kana Ohashi was born in Scotland and moved to Australia, where she started Suzuki violin at the age of 4, studying first with Dominique Gallery and then with Kim Bishop. Since 2007 she has been studying with Wilma Smith, the concertmaster of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. She is now 16 years old and is in her final year at St Michael's Grammar School, where she holds a full music scholarship.

Kana was the winner of 25yrs & under Concerto Section at the Dandenong Festival, the Preston Symphony Youth Concerto Competition (in 2005) and the National Youth Concerto Competition (in 2006). She was invited to give her Debut Recital at Melba Hall, with acclaimed concert pianist, Elyane Laussade in 2007, as well as a recital with Amir Farid at the Melba Festival in 2008, followed by another recital with Elyane at Monsalvat Barn Gallery in Young Performer Series. Also in 2009, Kana was a soloist with Orchestra Victoria, performing the Glazunov Concerto in Hamer Hall. She was a 'Young Academy' member of the Australian National Academy of Music on a scholarship. She has been broadcasted on ABC Classic FM and 3MBS on several occasions. Kana loves to play in the Australian Youth Orchestra and has attended camps a number of times. Kana attended QVSS for the first time in 2010.

The Summer School, run in association with the Southern Strings Charitable Trust, was founded in 2003 by Artistic Director and Violinist Kevin A. Lefohn. Held every January, the School is a fully residential programme - providing a unique study opportunity solely focused on solo performance for career-oriented advanced violin students. QVSS is a challenging and

supportive learning environment where students work intensively with international professional musicians. In addition to providing advanced music tuition, QVSS helps students understand that motivation, focus and strength of character are values as crucial to musical success as talent.

This year's QVSS students, aged between 8 and twenty-five, worked with professional musician artist/teachers in daily lessons, masterclasses, concerts and Feldenkrais Method® movement awareness classes. The students, selected by audition, attended from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Whangarei, Auckland, Hamilton, Cambridge, Wellington, Nelson, Blenheim, Christchurch, Dunedin and Gore.

Mr Lefohn (USA/New Zealand), Artistic Administrator of Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, headed a teaching staff of leading international violinists including Professor Yair Kless (Austria/Israel), Professor at Graz University, Austria, Feng Ning, world-renowned concert violinist, Dimitri Atanassov (Bulgaria/New Zealand), Concertmaster of the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Vesa-Matti Leppänen (Finland/New Zealand), Concertmaster of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Lara Hall (New Zealand), Lecturer at the University of Waikato and Kristina Zelinska (Ukraine/New Zealand), first violinist with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to private and corporate partnership, the inaugural Festival and annual Summer School were supported by Creative New Zealand, Central Lakes Community Trust, Creative Communities Queenstown Lakes, Community Trust of Southland, Aspiring Arts and Culture, The Trusts Charitable Foundation and Queenstown Lakes District Council.

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