

## **Wakatipu (2009)**

### *Notes about the work*

Commissioned by the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra for the 2009 Michael Hill International Violin Competition, *Wakatipu* is a virtuosic work for the violin, employing angular driving rhythms and scales built on minor seconds and minor thirds. The winner of the competition, Josef Spacek, premiered the work at the Theatre Royal, TSB Showplace, New Plymouth, New Zealand on 28 June 2010. The name of the work is taken from a lake and township in New Zealand's Central Otago region, where the finals for the competition are held.

The composer writes:

*The title of the piece refers to Lake Wakatipu in Queenstown NZ, and the Maori legend behind it. One of the great mysteries of the lake is that its level rises and falls every few minutes. Scientists explain that it is due to changing atmospheric pressure – but the legend has it that this fluctuation is caused by the beating heart of a giant demon. Long ago, the demon abducted the daughter of a local Maori chief and took her to his home in the heights of the ice-clad mountains. After the long climb he became tired and lay down to sleep – however, the girl's lover had followed close behind them all the way, and set the giant on fire as he lay sleeping. His burning flesh carved into the ice and snow and created a huge lake – but his heart remained indestructible, causing the rising and falling of the water level to this day.*