

The Arts Foundation of New Zealand

The Arts Foundation of New Zealand New Generation Awards celebrates early achievement and is an investment in artists' careers. Biennially five artists are awarded \$25,000 each, donated by Freemasons New Zealand. Each Award recipient has developed an individual identity demonstrating richness, range and depth, standing for the strength and quality of his or her particular art form in New Zealand, at their level. They are at an early stage of their career, and have demonstrated excellence and innovation through an output of artistic work at high levels. The inaugural Awards were held in 2006, with the announcement of five further New Generation artists to be made in Christchurch on 19 November 2008.

On 28 March, in Dunedin, the Arts Foundation of New Zealand, in association with Freemasons New Zealand, introduced Art, Film, Music Now: New Generation Artists Talk About Their Work. This event, the first of three programmed for 2008, featured three of the inaugural New Generation Artists – visual artist Eve Armstrong, musician Warren Maxwell and stone artist Joe Sheehan.

At the event, each artist presented elements of their practise and reflection upon their creative processes. The discussion was framed within a focus on the use of symbolism in their work, considered alongside an exploration of Freemason symbols presented by Rob Cope-Williams. Connections were clearly spelt out by Chair Kate De Goldi (2001 Laureate) who found the presentation by Rob "fascinating". As Kate said "the connections between Freemasonry and artistic endeavour effloresced in front of my eyes ... It occurred to me Freemasons are, in a sense, builders as are artists - building from the bottom up, with ideas and materials. Freemasons have working tools - the ideals of freemasonry and actual things that they carry through their life. A kind of moral framework in the same way as artists do - they also have working tools and a kind of artistic moral framework that they adhere to". Kate felt "the square and compass symbolism might be something that artists unconsciously took notice of in their work ... through

the stretch and range these instruments represent."

Update on the Inaugural New Generation Artists:

Eve Armstrong began her Asia New Zealand Foundation artist residency in Hong Kong in April. She is participating in a month-long series of planned workshops with three other international artists and four local counterparts. Eve's work will also feature in Earth Matters at the Auckland Art Gallery, an exhibition which includes work by artists who make reference to themes of global and environmental concern. The exhibition runs to 28 September 2008.

Warren Maxwell (pictured below) and his band 'Little Bushman' are working on a joint project with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, along with internationally renowned New Zealand composer John Psathas (Arts Foundation Laureate). Best known for his ceremonial music for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, John is truly excited to be working with Little Bushman and Warren in particular. John says "I made a fairly important decision early on to get to know the Bushmen as a live band, rather than as a studio band. Both of their commercial releases are brilliant, but they really articulate fully in a live setting. Warren

is so versatile and expressive a musician that it's a treat to think of placing him in more lush musical environments; which is what the Orchestra and the band together allow."

Tze Ming Mok's short story Tunnel of Love is in issue #69 of the Kyoto Journal. Tze Ming appeared at the PEN International festival Free the Word in London this April, as a backup singer for poet Yang Lian. Grant Smithies has written about 118 albums that he personally loves, *Soundtrack - 118 Great New Zealand Albums*. He enlisted the help of a range of other writers, including Tze Ming Mok.

Joe Sheehan has moved from Wellington to Auckland with his wife and children. Joe has set up a new studio and now works with other artists in a studio alongside Arts Foundation Laureate and glass artists Ann Robinson and her partner, stone artist John Edgar.

Warner Bros. Video NZ has released **Taika Waititi's** romantic comedy *Eagle vs. Shark* on DVD. Taika's latest venture is a feature length film, *Volcano* - an exploration of some of the characters and ideas introduced in his Oscar-nominated debut short *Two Cars, One Night*. The film will be shot in the Bay of Plenty later in the year.

