



Music

Thrills and riches galore

THIS concert offered riches galore. From Rossini's almost infamous *William Tell Overture* to Berlioz' best-known work, divided by a 2002 clarinet concerto which featured music that gave comfort to doubters of contemporary music, this was an evening that thrilled a filled hall.

The music of Finnish composer Magnus Lindberg might be a closed book to most of us, but his *Clarinet Concerto* will have left many in the audience clamouring for more. This is not, however, a populist work pandering through cliché to a conservative audience, but a multi-faceted piece of great mastery and originality that immediately grabs the imagin-

WHAT: New Zealand Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pietari Inkinen with Kari Kriiku (clarinet) Music by Rossini, Lindberg and Berlioz.

WHEN: Michael Fowler Centre, June 5.

REVIEWED BY: John Button.

ation. Lindberg's scoring exploits the full resources of the modern orchestra with sounds of delicacy on the one hand and full-blown ecstasy on the other. And then there was the staggering playing of Finnish clarinetist Kari Kriiku. I had never realised just what this instrument is capable of before the magic that flowed from his fingers. From the bewildering range of sounds,

seamlessly produced – screaming, almost human, outbursts, contrasted with wisps of sounds that came from a wondrous cadenza – and the small partnership passages with his fellow clarinetists in the orchestra, his was the charismatic heart of a major modern concerto.

The orchestra was a superb partner under Inkinens understanding baton, and he added to his stature with a beautifully prepared performance of Berlioz' *Symphonie Fantastique*.

The concert opened with a swift *William Tell Overture*, distinguished mostly by some wonderfully sensitive playing from principal cellist David Chickering.