

Christina Tourin Workshops Auckland 2016

New Zealand harpists had a visit from Christina in April 2016 – and harpists from Christchurch, Dunedin, Wellington, Tauranga and Auckland took up the opportunity to work with Christina, and also to forge new friendships in the NZ harp scene.

The Thursday/Friday afternoon workshops were a hands-on chance to learn about some of the aspects of easy ensemble playing and improvisation – no knowledge of either was necessary to join into this workshop. Christina had us working from the cards from the set up she sells for working in therapeutic harp situations – with little cards suspended from a “pillar prompter” – a material band with a little clip to hold the card. This eliminates the need for a music stand and book, and the cards are kept in a little pouch worn by the harpist.

The weekend workshop was An Introduction to the International Harp Therapy Program which Christina teaches all over the world. It was a very full two days learning about the research behind the programme, behind the modes and therapeutic techniques involved in the course. It also gave some of us, from opposite ends of the country, and from opposite ends of the city, a chance to get to know each other better!!



Back – Anna, Christina, Trisha, Carolyn, Tobi, Fredrich, Gill, Noes, Marsa
Seated – Denise, Wendy, Robyn, Marie Christine



Back – Bronwyn, Wendy, Ann, Raewynn, Nadia, Marion, Noes, Christina, Claire, Libby, Trisha, Mikaele, Marie Christine, Odyssee
Front – Siobhan, Promise, Cybelle, Laura, Anna, Luc-Aime, Emily (absent- Lynx)

Christina Tourin “Hands-On” Workshop

Thursday 21, Friday 22 April 2016 – 2:00 to 4:00pm

Well, I won't go into technical details – that's for the 'paper-trained' (music reader) buffs. This was a first full-on workshop for me. After 10 years of 'playing around' and exploring harp harmonies and their effect on me and my wonderful small audiences, I was ready to take the plunge and be immersed fully into the world of 'harp groupies', from Auckland, New Zealand and beyond.

So many harps! (20) Such variety in size, shape, colour, texture, beauty and sound! Lovely to see and hear good playing (to my ear at least) from girls, boy, teenagers and adults up to age 72. Everybody being themselves, no airs, friendly and sharing our love of harp music-making.

And then Christina. Quiet, graceful and a huge amount of harp experience, great teaching and gentle healing packed into that small person. Interesting stories, information, playing techniques and chord sequences and their effect on listeners were shared with skill and humour.

As I understood it, the harp is one of very few instruments capable of producing the closest approximation of 'pure sound'. This is because of the particular sound wave pattern created by its shape, frame structure and string arrangement. "Pure sound" includes all sound and the Infinite Silence (I think that was what Christina implied). That's why it has such a profound, comforting effect on people's emotions. Fascinating!

Christina showed us **note sequences** in chords which resonated very strongly with me: Left hand C, ↑G, ↑E. This requires a big stretch between 4th finger and thumb. To prevent RSI from many repetitions in practice, she suggested we start with C, ↑G, ↑C, progress to C, ↑G, ↑D, to end with C, ↑G, ↑E.

‘Feathering’ – rapid fingering sequence of right hand repeated to form a continuous patten of notes in the high register;

eg **key of C** : **top C, ↓A, ↓G, ↓E** (C chord)
top G, ↓E, ↓D, ↓B (G chord)
top D, ↓C, ↓A, ↓F (F chord)

Combining Feathering with above Left hand note sequence produces a wonderful, soothing, full harp sound – when you get it right, that is!

I came away feeling replete with several skill-extending ideas and information, some of which I was able to share with my regular listeners in our local aged-care hospital and resthome, to our mutual pleasure and interest. They inspired me from the start with my harp playing after all!

Noes Butt (Patetonga)