



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**19 July 2017**

## ***Moon Fire* shortlisted for the 2017 Art Music Awards**

A composition commissioned by the National Capital Authority (NCA) for carillon, called *Moon Fire*, has been shortlisted in the 2017 Art Music Awards.

In 2015 the NCA commissioned up and coming composer, Jessica Wells, to create the piece and a recording was premiered at the Canberra International Music Festival in May 2016.

Composer, Jessica Wells, said “My career has taken me in amazing directions as an orchestrator, and arranger for concerts, films, theatre, and album recordings, and it was such a privilege to be commissioned by the NCA to create a unique piece for the National Carillon.”

“Working with the NCA’s Lead Carillonist, Lyn Fuller, I recorded fragments of carillon music and used time stretching, reverbs and delays to warp the sound of the bells to indicate an other-worldly feeling and echoes of the past,” Jessica Wells said.

“When the electronic backing track was ready, I then worked with Canberra-based sound designer, Kimmo Vennonen, to finish the recording and the mixing of *Moon Fire* for its premiere.”

“It’s really exciting to have such an innovative and unusual piece like *Moon Fire* shortlisted in the *Instrumental Work of the Year* category of the 2017 Art Music Awards.”

The NCA’s Chief Executive, Malcolm Snow, said the piece is very different to what is usually heard from the National Carillon, as it doesn’t have a melody, instead, a picture is painted by the sound of the Carillon bells combined with a digital backing track.

“The audio system in the National Carillon was upgraded late last year to allow carillonists to incorporate recordings of other instruments into live performances, and it was then possible for *Moon Fire* to be played live at the Special Carillon Concert in December,” Mr Snow said.

“Our carillonists were recently at the World Carillon Congress 2017 in Spain where *Moon Fire* was performed by our Lead Carillonist Lyn Fuller in front of 14 international carillon societies.”

The 2017 Art Music Awards will be held on Tuesday 22 August at the City Recital Hall in Sydney.

## ***Background to Moon Fire***

*Moon Fire* is inspired by a famous tale about a Belgian cathedral tower. Legend has it that on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1687, in the town of Mechelen, a local looked up at St Rumbold’s tower and thought it was on fire. The townsfolk called the alarm and ascended the tower with buckets of water and anything they could muster to extinguish the blaze. Upon reaching the top of the tower it was discovered that there was no fire, but the blood red moon shining through the fog had created a mirage!

Hence the Mechlians were jokingly referred to as Maneblussers (“Moon Extinguishers”) and even named a local beer after the legend. *Moon Fire* is inspired by the imagery of the blood moon, shining through the fog to create a sensation of an eerie sky lit by vaporous flames. Alarm bells are heard, and a panic of the people, but descends into an eerie fog-like mystical trance.

**Jessica Wells is based in Sydney and available for interviews between 3 and 5pm today on 0419 698 278.**