

Taddei's greatest day

MARC Taddei is an unprecedented success in classical music circles.

Last September, the first musical director of the Vector Wellington Orchestra, conducted John Paskos' *View From Olympus*.

The CD, released by Rattle Records, has sold over 2500 copies and after being at the top of the classical music charts for five months after release is still sitting around third.

This surprised the director of Rattle Records, Tim Gummer.

"While New Zealand music has popped up in the top ten frequently to my knowledge its unprecedented for new music or NZ composed work to stay in the classical top ten for any

significant duration, let alone at number one," says Gummer.

Newly appointed music director, Taddei had a dream debut conducting the Vector Wellington Orchestra last month.

Three standing ovations followed the orchestra's Wellington premiere leaving Taddei gleaming. "This is the best performance the work has received thus far - this is about as hard as it gets."

Taddei's aspiration for the orchestra is to merge the present with the past.

"During his tenure the orchestra enjoyed a rise in audience numbers of over 80%."

"An orchestra should be both an art gallery and a museum," says Taddei.

"To keep classical music relevant today we need to be both cutting edge as well as a repository of the great works."

"There were heaps of younger people at the Wellington premiere and I am certain that they were impressed. Attracting new audiences to orchestral music is a priority for me. There are many ways to do this and certainly presenting the very best in contemporary art music is one way of achieving this goal."

Taddei is a New Zealand citizen with a rich, rounded American accent. Despite 20 years here he has not assimilated the Kiwi twang.

From principal trombonist for the NZSO following graduation from Juilliard School of Music in New York city, he was appointed musical director of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra (2001). During his tenure the orchestra enjoyed a rise in audience numbers of over 80%.

"I was gratified by the abrupt rise in standards that occurred during this time. I suppose the



Meet Marc Taddei, Vector Wellington Orchestra's first musical director.

success that I had in Christchurch helped pave the way for the appointment with the Vector Wellington Orchestra."

During his years in the NZSO, he met his wife, who is now a violin player in the New Zealand Trio.

Now the couple live in Porirua, from where he commutes for Vector Orchestra practice.

And when he isn't directing, he's in the kitchen listening to classical music and cooking up fabulous French dishes, or at the

gym (four times a week) to counter his passion for fine dining.

"French food is my favourite because, in my opinion, it is the most complete and complicated of foods."

"I mainly listen to classical music when I cook. Even though I do a lot of work with pop musicians, I'm more into the classical stuff."

Taddei is also an avid art collector. It took him and his wife a number of years to pay off a work by Scottish painter Colman Innes that hangs on his wall.

"But it's mainly New Zealand and Australian art I collect. I have three pieces by Michael Parokowhai. The humour in his work is amazing. I like the way he uses blues as another colour - his art is quite startling."

Now with a dream debut directing the Vector Wellington Orchestra under his belt, Taddei is excited about the future.

"With two such wonderful orchestras resident in our city, the concert goer in Wellington is very lucky indeed."