

Review by Hanno Fairburn for the *Rotorua Daily Post* of The Big Sing Cadenza Gala Concert, Rotorua.

What: The Big Sing Cadenza
Where: Energy Events Centre, Rotorua
When: Monday 26 August 2019

A large audience had a feast of fine choral music at a gala concert when thirteen secondary school choirs took to the stage in this inaugural Big Sing Cadenza festival, after being selected from regional competitions in Auckland and Waikato/Bay of Plenty.

Under the auspices of the New Zealand Choral Federation, they competed here in the Upper North Island Big Sing Cadenza, held in Rotorua on 25 and 26 August. The Big Sing Finale will be held in Dunedin from 29-31 August.

Tim Sharp, Executive Director of the American Choral Directors Association, was eminently qualified and experienced to be the adjudicator, and he needed these qualities to discriminate between closely matched choirs. As well as picking choirs to get awards of Merit, Distinction or Excellence, he led the singers in a series of workshops during the two-day event.

Then came a Really Big Sing when Tim Sharp conducted a massed choir of all the students. He achieved great results using Hogwarts-like gestures as if he was casting a spell on the singers. John Rosser, the Big Sing Director, did some effective multitasking when he also conducted all the choir directors to get an impressive choral sound.

Three choirs were awarded an Excellence award, and Raukura Choir from Rotorua Boys' High School gained a Distinction. At the conclusion of the evening, a spirited haka by the Rotorua Boys' High School singers lent the occasion some fitting local flavour.

This was a splendid start to The Big Sing Cadenzas, helped by efficient organisation at the local and national levels, and it pointed the way to later successful Cadenza festivals.

Hanno Fairburn