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Gillian Ansell, MNZM

Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Registered Music Teachers of NZ (HonFIRMT)

Gillian Ansell, born in Auckland, made her concerto debut as a violinist with the Auckland Philharmonia at the age of 16. At 19, an Associated Board Scholarship took Gillian to the Royal College of Music in London for 3 years to study violin, viola and piano. She then won a German Academic Exchange (DAAD) scholarship for further study in Germany at the Musikhochschule Cologne with Igor Ozim and the Amadeus Quartet.

After working professionally in London for three years she returned to New Zealand to become a founding member of the New Zealand String Quartet in 1987. She was second violinist for two years before taking up the position of violist of the group. Since the NZSQ's formation over 30 years ago, Gillian has performed well over 1,500 concerts with the quartet all round New Zealand and in many parts of the world, including scores of commissioned works by New Zealand composers. Since 1991, the NZSQ has been Ensemble in Residence at the School of Music at Victoria University of Wellington (now called the New Zealand School of Music). Gillian is now an Associate Professor there, teaching viola and chamber music.

In 2001 she became Artistic Director, with fellow quartet member Helene Pohl, of the Adam New Zealand Chamber Music Festival, a biennial event, attracting hundreds of music lovers from round the world.

In 2008 she was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for her outstanding services to music in New Zealand.

Gillian plays on a 1619 Nicolò Amati viola, generously loaned by the Adam Foundation.