

JUDITH WRIGHT CENTRE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

Media Release
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GENRE-DEFYING BAND PLAYS NEW MUSIC FOR BRISBANE

Judith Wright Centre presents
SUNWRAE ENSEMBLE: AUTUMN NEVER FALL

"Sunwrae...weaves a calming magic." The Age
"... Sunwrae is, without question, Australia's best kept secret." thesilentballet.com.au

Dubbed "pop rock jazz" by the classical world and "chamber funk" by pop rock aficionados, critically acclaimed **Sunwrae Ensemble** will launch their latest genre-defying album, *Autumn Never Fall*, at Judith Wright Centre on Friday 22 May 2009.

Sunwrae Artistic Director and Composer Rae Howell says the nine-piece band is "extremely excited" about embarking on their 18-date national tour to launch their third album, which defies genre definition.

"We are extremely excited about the tour and sharing our new music, which, to be honest, can't be pigeon-holed into any particular genre as it covers so many diverse styles, including classical, jazz, funk, rock and pop," Rae said.

"Playing a large range of instruments means the music is always very dynamic; the luscious string quartet and grand piano create a cinematic chamber sound, while vibraphone, bass and percussion add a splash of funk," she said.

"Throw in some pop tunes and jazz-inspired improvisations with horns and you've got quite an eclectic mix," she said.

Having toured across Australia and the US, **Sunwrae** has performed at the Spiegeltent (Melbourne), SxSw (Texas) and Otto's Shrunken Head (New York), while their albums have sold across Australia, the US, UK and Europe.

Sunwrae's Rae Howell has worked and toured with the likes of New Buffalo (co-writer of Feist's song *1234*), Triple J Unearthed artist Mei Lai Swan, festival favourites CODA and Melbourne's balaclava-clad rock band TISM.

Last year Sunwrae's Rae Howell was invited to take part in the John Butler Seed Artist Management program.

Influenced by the works of Philip Glass and Steve Reich, **Sunwrae's** latest album, *Autumn Never Fall*, was recorded at Melbourne's 3MBS Studios with acclaimed Japanese engineer Nao Anzai and mastered by Franc Tétaz (composer of the film soundtracks of *Rogue* and *Wolf Creek*).

The *Autumn Never Fall* tour also incorporates visual media, including the debut screening of an animation by Tom Fraser and video projection by Cinematic Accompaniment.

Sunwrae's Rae Howell says the visual component of the show is important because it adds to the evocative nature of the band's music, and also profiles the work of talented artists.

"We invite the audience to interpret the stories they hear in the music we play, and work with visual artists to further evoke these stories and profile our country's very talented visual artists," Rae said.

Tom Fraser's animation, *The Machine*, is inspired by the same-titled song by **Sunwrae** (track 4 on *Autumn Never Fall*), which is based on the dichotomy of mechanical city life and country bliss.

For one-night-only **Sunwrae** will perform at Judith Wright Centre in a show that Artistic Director and Composer Rae Howell is "very excited about because Brisbane audiences are amazingly responsive to our music".

-ENDS-

Date	Fri 22 May 2009
Time	7.30pm
Venue	Performance Space, Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts
Tickets	\$20-\$30 Reserved Cabaret Seating: Full/Concession \$30 (max 4 per table) Unreserved Theatre Seating: Full \$25, Concession \$20
Bookings	07 3872 9000 or judithwrightcentre.com

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SUNWRAE ENSEMBLE – BIOGRAPHY

Founded in 2001 by composer and Artistic Director Rae Howell, Sunwrae Ensemble is a nine piece chamber group who perform with a unique combination of instruments including grand piano, vibraphone, string quartet, harp, alto flute, double bass and percussion. Their music blends melodic phrases and interweaving rhythms, creating beautiful, flowing music that appeals to both classical and contemporary music lovers. The Ensemble has toured across Australia and the United States, performing at festivals including Golden Plains, The Apollo Bay Festival and SxSw in Texas, and Artistic Director Rae Howell has completed several music residencies both locally and internationally.

"The Sunwrae Ensemble have true power and a brilliant finish..." Karl Schwonik, Calgary, Canada 2006

RAE HOWELL – BIOGRAPHY

Artistic Director and leader of the Sunwrae Ensemble, Rae Howell is a Melbourne-based composer and performer on piano and vibraphone. A graduate of the University of Melbourne Conservatorium, Rae works regularly as a multi-instrumentalist (also on trumpet and mellophone, glockenspiel and melodica) and performs as a guest artist crossing various genres in live performance, recording and international touring. In addition to the Sunwrae Ensemble, Rae composes and performs live for an Australian Puppet Theatre Company Peepshow Inc, an Improvised Dance Ensemble State of Flux, and numerous project-based film and mixed-media ventures.

Rae was a finalist in the 2006 APRA Professional Development Awards and is a represented composer of Cantilena Music in London, UK. Rae's collaborations extend internationally to diverse audiences of music and sound; she has been a Musician in Residence at the Banff Centre in Canada, and the Atlantic Centre for the Arts in the US.

Rae has worked with jazz musician/composer and Blue Note Records Artist Sam Rivers (USA), Royal Society of Arts Fellow and composer/percussionist Eugene Skeef (Sth Africa/UK) and currently works by correspondence in an ongoing electronic recording project with engineer Jon Cohrs (USA), in 'Rabbits without Spleens'.

With the Sunwrae Ensemble, Rae has released independent studio album *Never Stops to Wait* (2005) (funded by Arts Victoria and the Australia Council) and three Live EP's (2004), as well as a live album and DVD from a series of music recitals called *Eavesdropping*. Howell is the founder of *Eavesdropping*, an annual touring series of musical concerts showcasing new music and exhibits of visual art. *Eavesdropping* recitals are recorded live and produced as a series of live CDs and DVDs, featuring diverse compositions and instrumentations.

ABOUT THE ALBUM – AUTUMN NEVER FALL (MGM Distribution)

Sunwrae Ensemble's third album, *Autumn Never Fall*, was recorded live at Melbourne's 3MBS Studios by acclaimed Japanese engineer Nao Anzai and mastered by Franc Tétaz. The album's seven tracks are thematically linked, each influenced by natural weather elements like wind, rain, snow and sun. Two of the tracks were composed in Canada during a Music Residency in 2006 and inspired by 'the freezing temperatures of winter in the rocky mountains'.

The album release will coincide with the launch of the animation film, *The Machine*. Created by animator Tom Fraser and inspired by Sunwrae's song, 'The Machine' (track 4), the six-minute film will be screened during the ensemble's performance. Sunwrae has a long history of collaboration with visual artists, having previously worked with Domenico de Clario, Alisdair MacIndoe, Garry Anderson, Dean Jones and Jacqueline Kennedy. Live sketching and drawing often form part of the Ensemble's performances, and the 2009 National Tour will feature live visual projections by Cinematic Accompaniment.

The 2009 national tour is an extension of the *Eavesdropping* concert series, an annual collaboration with Australian visual artists.

Sunwrae Ensemble is proudly toured by Regional Arts Victoria in 2009. The Contemporary Music Touring Program aims to give all Australians, wherever they live, better access to some of the country's best live contemporary music. The Australian Government is proud to be associated with the Sunwrae Ensemble's 'Autumn Never Fall' Tour.

Autumn Never Fall Track Listing

1. Autumn Never Fall (title track)
2. Chinook Winds
3. Poly
4. The Machine
5. Soluble Sun II
6. Disappointing
7. Drawn Down

For further information, images and interview opportunities please contact
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