

# 'Amazing talent'



**ORCHESTRA:** Ralph Hultgren conducts the Mount Isa Orchestra at The Big Weekend, which included more than 120 musicians. Picture: KAY HOOPER/1689

THE Big Weekend lived up to its moniker, with more than 200 people turning out to see the event at the Mount Isa Civic Centre.

Playing pieces by Hayden,



By **EMMA CILLEKENS**  
emma.cillekens.com.au

Dvorak, Beethoven and Bach, about 125 musicians took to the stage on Sunday night.

The highlight of The Queensland Music Festival event was the world premiere of Ralph Hultgren's Wide Brown Land, written especially for The Big Weekend.

The composer worked on the piece with students, community players and professionals during the three-day orchestral workshop, cul-

minating in the performance on Sunday night.

He said Mount Isa was the home of some amazing talent.

"There are so many promising students here, and several that have the talent to be professional musicians," he said.

"They're definitely on par with some musicians in big cities, which is incredible considering Mount Isa is a regional area."

Mr Hultgren was so impressed by the talent that he self-funded two full scholarships for local students to attend the State Honours Ensemble Programs at the Conservatorium of Music in Brisbane.

Ellen Gibbs and Aeryn Larkin were the recipients.

"It's just incredible," Ellen said.

"To be able to have this opportunity means a lot."

Coordinator of The Big Weekend.

Yvonne Moore, said she was proud of all the participants in the event.

"I'm just absolutely thrilled with the weekend, it was just brilliant," she said.

"It all came together so well, all my expectations were met and the kids had a great time."

■ See if you were spotted at the QMF Big Weekend. Pictures pages 10-11.