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NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST PODCAST NOVELIST TAKES ON THE BARD

New Zealand artists have been taking the entertainment world by storm over the past few years. Peter Jackson led this invasion with J.R.R. Tolkein's *The Lord of the Rings*. The Conchords were next as their comedy won audiences everywhere with *The Flight of the Conchords*. With her own sultry combination of blues, jazz, and hip-hop, Hollie Smith takes her sound to the United States. Now, in 2008, author Philippa Ballantine presents to the world her award-nominated tale of manipulative goddesses, friendly Tricksters, and William Shakespeare through the exciting new medium of podcasting.

After loaning her voice to other podcast novels such as *Murder at Avedon Hill*, *Metamor City* and assuming the lead role as Askana Moldarin in *Morevi: Remastered*, Philippa now brings Dragon Moon Press' *Chasing the Bard*, her own Sir Julius Vogel nominated novel, to life. This dark fantasy epic places William Shakespeare in the midst of his own midsummer nightmare, and a dark goddess plots to use his bardic powers to save her world whether he want to or not. This ambitious project will feature an international voice cast of other well-known podcasting personalities. "I not only hope to introduce my work to new readers, but I also hope to show the international reach of this new media," Philippa states. "Podcasting is very exciting that way as it is an instant connection with the world. I am proud to be a literary voice for New Zealand, but I'm also having a lot of fun with my friends from around the world."

Chasing the Bard is a free podcast of the entire novel and will also include new scenes and commentary from the author herself about novel and its production. The podcast will launch on 31 March and be made available on iTunes or directly through its website, www.chasingthebard.com. *Chasing the Bard*'s sequel, *Digital Magic*, will be available from Dragon Moon Press in August 2008. Philippa Ballantine is available for interviews and comment, and can be best reached at pip@pjballantine.net. You can find the podcast at and further information on the writer at www.pjballantine.net