

14 April 2008

A little known Australian has won international recognition in the world's most prestigious songwriting competition.

The International Songwriting Competition - renown for its celebrity judges including Tom Waits, Nelly Furtado, Michael W Smith and tobyMac - this year received more than 15 000 entries from amateur and professional songwriters in 100 countries.

Wade Idema from Lismore NSW secured second place in the gospel/Christian category for his song *Wildflower*.

Wade is the 30 year old lead singer, songwriter and guitarist with Lifetone, a contemporary/P&W group that has been performing together for about one year.

He says the recognition is "very encouraging".

"It's not easy to get your songs heard, but they [the judges] liked the song," Wade says.

"So it means I'm probably doing something right, which is encouraging.

"I think it's the band that really helped bring the song together. And it's their instrumentation that takes the song to another level. So in many respects, the recognition is shared with them too."

Other Aussie artists to gain recognition in the gospel/Christian category this year include Roma Waterman and Stadium.

Meanwhile, Melbourne singer/songwriter Michael Paynter has scored honorable mentions in the Performance category with his song *Soul*, and again in the Pop/Top 40 section with *Closer*. Sony BMG this week releases *Closer* to mainstream and Christian radio.

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Sony BMG has just released the World Youth Day 2008 commemorative CD *Receive The Power – Songs Of Faith and Love*.

Taking its name from the Guy Sebastian/Gary Pinto penned song *Receive The Power* which is the theme song for the week long event in July, the CD presents a wide range of music with songs by Guy, Stacie Orrico, MaryMary, Carrie Underwood, Rachael Lampa, and Russell Watson.

Executive Producer Bonnie Boezeman says the collection aims to uplift and inspire listeners to believe there's a "great reason to live life"!

"I wanted to create an album that people could put on in their cars," Bonnie says.

"And when they're really down and searching for some faith or hope, they put this on and they'd be suddenly joyous.

"If people listen to the album, it takes them on a journey from pop and rock to classical, country and blues," she says.

*Receive The Power – Songs Of Faith and Love* is available now in mainstream stores.