

You say waffle, I say wonderful

Sharu Delilkan talks to a young woman who proves that poetry can be energetic, provocative and, above all, entertaining

Charis Boos (pronounced Karis) plans to savour her final performance with the Literatti group.

The 28-year-old, who's been with the poetry group for a year, says she's glad to have the chance to perform her polished poems one last time, this weekend, before leaving Auckland to study in Wellington.

Literatti, formed in 2006, takes poetry off the page, shakes off its dusty, academic reputation and shows people that verse can be evocative, dynamic, provocative, entertaining and, above all, enjoyable.

Boos, founder Shane Hollands, Miriam Barr, Andra, Murray Lee and Murray Haddow make up Literatti. They don't merely recite poems; they portray them vigorously, energetically, to their audiences.

"The first time I went [to hear poetry performed] I took along a tiny poem stuffed in the back pocket thinking I was not going to do it," says Boos.

"But when I got there, and there were so few people, I decided to get up and do it. It was exhilarating."

The classics and Latin teacher at Epsom Girls Grammar says that while she has always written journals and short stories, it was only when she took to reading poetry that she realised she could write it.

The more Boos went to Poetry Live nights the more she was inspired to write.

A year on, Literatti invited her to audition. "I had to come up with 10-12 minutes of music and poetry almost immediately. It was quite a scramble especially since I was teaching at the same time.

"The whole experience is one I've never had before. It's been an incredible journey."

■ **The Literatti — Rhyme or Reason, the Wine Cellar, St Kevins Arcade, 183 Karangahape Rd, Feb 10, 7.30pm. Tickets: door sales. Email: mims-53@hotmail.com**