

**ORCHESTRA
WELLINGTON**


**GREAT
AND
NOBLE**

SEASON '18



SEAS ON '18

RCHESTRA
WELLINGTON



Welcome to Orchestra Wellington's 2018 season! Please read on, and discover what lies in store - from great and noble music on the concert stage, to Sol3 Mio outdoors, to the music of Disney's Moana, and more.

We strive to be the most accessible orchestra in the country, and to enable people from all walks of life to experience the thrill of a live orchestra performance. You, our audience, are our raison d'être, and we are delighted to share our passion for this wondrous art form with you.

We look forward to sharing some amazing performances with you in 2018!

Kirsten Mason
General Manager

Marc Taddei
Music Director



AMALIA HALL, CONCERTMASTER AND STEPHANIE ROLFE, PRINCIPAL.



Wellington City Council -Supporting Wellington's place as New Zealand's Capital of Culture

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Together with other public investors such as the Wellington City Council, Creative New Zealand is proud to be a cornerstone investor in Orchestra Wellington. We all like to back a winner.

We are fortunate to have an orchestra operating here that lives up to its vision of being New Zealand's most accessible orchestra.

Full houses at concerts, and more demand for the education and community development work than the orchestra can deliver, point to the public benefits Orchestra Wellington contributes to the region. Everyone who attends and participates is lifted higher by their engagement with the orchestra.

Enjoy the season and thank you for your personal support of Orchestra Wellington.

Stephen Wainwright

Chief Executive, Creative New Zealand



**GREAT
AND
NOBLE**

What constitutes great and noble music? What is its source? Does the character of a composer's culture or land impact on their style? I contend that all great music is linked to the composer's culture, especially its folk music and contemporary musical language.

This season, we focus on an extraordinary composer whose music is inextricably linked with the music of his homeland. Antonín Dvořák's music is inconceivable without acknowledging his reverence for the folk traditions of Bohemia. Dvořák himself said even his most serious works were constructed from the "half-forgotten tunes of the Bohemian peasants".

Towards the end of his life, Dvořák went to America, where he taught young composers in an effort to help forge an American style. It was time to shed the cultural cringe that had kept American composers almost wholly focused on Germanic developments. Steeped in his awareness of folk music, Dvořák urged these composers to look to the music of the African American folk tradition for inspiration.

His suggestion that the music of a people born into slavery was to have the greatest influence on the music of America was met with an incredulity that was at times overtly racist. Dvořák would never know how successful he would be in identifying the roots of a new nation's music. I imagine he would have been surprised at the direction this music was to take, because it was the 12-bar blues, and not the 12-tone row, that became the 20th century's most influential style!

To complement our symphonic cycle, we have chosen some composers with links to

Dvořák and Bohemia. We'll perform Taras Bulba by Janáček, and Smetana's The Moldau. Bohemia's Prague was a special city to Mozart as well. His great opera Don Giovanni and the Prague Symphony were both premiered there.

We also explore composers who were forging a national style for their countries; Bartók in Hungary, whose first piano concerto and second violin concerto we will perform; Benjamin Britten, whose muse was as much the literature of Britain as its music. Likewise, the works of our two composers in residence, Michael Norris and Gao Ping, demonstrate the power of culture. Ping's amalgamation of Chinese and European art music idioms is a significant aspect of his artistry. Michael Norris is both the product of our multi-cultural society and the result of classical music's international discourse.

These composers are powerfully linked by the fact that they all mine the rich veins of their cultures' heritage. To complete our story, we present a composer who epitomised the concept of nationalism within their art – the great Giuseppe Verdi. His operas were considered rallying cries for Italian Nationhood, with cries of "Viva Verdi!" shouted in the streets. We perform his spectacular Verdi Requiem in a rare gala performance, with the Orpheus Choir!

Join us in this journey of discovery – from the extraordinary quality of Dvořák's voice, through to Verdi and everything in between! Great and Noble, indeed!

Marc Taddei
Music Director

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

It takes a great and noble soul to recognise greatness and nobility where others cannot. This was the case with Dvořák in America.

Dvořák's nobility is a subtle thing. Outwardly he was, as one biographer said, "a staid, taciturn middle-class citizen who liked to go to bed early, disliked official and ostentatious occasions, receptions and the like, and hated being treated with obsequiousness." He liked to walk in nature and listen to the birds. His hobbies were trainspotting and breeding pigeons; he liked to drink beer with railwaymen and miners, whose trades fascinated him.

He wasn't a larger-than-life figure with a dramatic life, wrestling with philosophy and ideas. He didn't make big statements about the human condition. When spoken to, Dvořák sometimes didn't answer at all. He was a man who, according to his African-American student Harry Burleigh, "composed in his shirtsleeves"; happy to work at the kitchen table among the uproar of a large family. His life rejects the common belief that an artist must be some kind of suffering outsider.

He would have laughed to hear himself described as "great and noble". He was the son of a tavern-keeper and butcher, born in Nelahozeves, a village just north of Prague, in 1841. His father was an indifferent businessman who played many instruments well and, having travelled throughout the Austro-Hungarian lands, surely knew a wide range of music. Dvořák fiddled in his father's tavern to entertain the guests, and his life was filled with music, but he was no child prodigy. A dutiful

son, he completed his apprenticeship as a butcher before finally, aged 16, being allowed to enrol at the Church Music School in Prague.

There, for 14 years, he worked hard and lived humbly, either boarding with his extended family or rooming with other musicians in crowded flats where they shared a piano (or thanks to his gift for friendship, his better-off friends loaned him the use of theirs). Between 1860 and 1871 he composed music in all genres, none of which was publicly performed. He played in tavern bands or led the violas for Prague's Provisional Theatre Orchestra.

It might seem a poor life. But Dvořák may have felt nothing short of blessed. He could eat, he could compose, he lived among musicians. He sometimes played under the baton of Smetana, Wagner and Liszt. He was privileged to premiere Smetana's *Dalibor* and *The Bartered Bride*, seminal works of the Czech Nationalist school. It seems Dvořák required little more of life, unless it was to have a family.

Dvořák fell in love with one of the young stars of his theatre, Josefina Čermáková. He taught piano to her and her sister Anna; when eventually Josefina married Count Kaunitz, Dvořák recorded his disappointment with a song cycle, then married Anna a few years later. Jealousy, bitterness and regret seemed to get no grip on Dvořák's spirit: he remained lifelong friends with both Josefina and her husband, eventually building his family's summer house on Count Kaunitz's land.

Fame came to Dvořák in 1873, helped by established musicians well positioned to aid him. His first break-out work was a patriotic choral work, *Hymnus*. Shortly afterwards his

Moravian Duets for two voices brought him to the attention of Brahms. Brahms was juror on a committee that awarded Dvořák a state grant in order to compose full time. Brahms also recommended him to his own publisher Simrock, who had the Moravian Duets published and sold internationally. Brahms and Simrock became friends to Dvořák, as did Tchaikovsky and other musicians who could promote his work, such as the violin virtuoso Joachim and the great conductors Hans Richter and Hans von Bülow.

In 1874, newly married, Dvořák took the post of church organist to better support his family. The next three years were marked by tragedy, as his first three children all died in infancy. Dvořák seemed to process his grief through his faith, which was an understated constant in his life. He began work almost immediately on a setting of the Stabat Mater, perhaps the clearest expression of the couple's loss:

Who would not be able to feel compassion on beholding Christ's Mother suffering with her Son?

Returning to the theme of Dvořák's nobility, one must admire his stoicism in the face of tragedy; in his music, every expression of feeling in a minor key exists beside a dominant drive towards beauty and joy. It is the music of hope.

Life proceeded smoothly after this, with commissions and performances coming in steadily from an ever-widening sphere. Thanks to Richter, Dvořák was popular in England, receiving commissions for his Requiem and travelling there to conduct it and his Eighth Symphony. In 1892 he was invited to run the National Conservatory of Music in New York.

Dvořák was employed to reorganise the Conservatory along European lines, but he didn't simply preach the gospel of European culture. America's spirit of progress and technical innovation fascinated him, and so did the culture and music of the African American and Native American people. The egalitarian Jeanette Thurber accepted men and women of all races to her Conservatory, waiving fees if they could not afford them. There, Dvořák befriended Harry Burleigh, and heard his childhood songs, the music of the workers building this new world.

"Dvořák especially liked Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen and Go Down Moses," Burleigh said. "He asked hundreds of questions about Negro life. When I sang Go Down Moses, he exclaimed, 'Burleigh, that is as great as a Beethoven theme!'"

Dvořák listened with an ear attuned to the folk songs of his native Bohemia, and responded with his New World Symphony. While New York loved it, its reception elsewhere was different. Composers like George Chadwick wrote in the Boston Times, "Such Negro melodies as I have heard I should be sorry to see become the basis of an American school of composition".

But Dvořák had the gift of seeing things in their own light. No prejudice blinded him from valuing a Bohemian peasant dance or plantation slave's song alongside a Handel oratorio or a Mozart opera. From a humble background himself, he recognised greatness wherever it might be, and composed with a simplicity and directness that speaks straight to the heart, always finding the beauty and the joy in life.

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NEW WORLD

RCHESTRA
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GREAT
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SEASON '18

GOLDEN CITY



#5 GOLDEN CITY

Saturday 9 June, 7.30pm
Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

**Wolfgang Amadeus
MOZART**

**Symphony No. 38
in D major 'Prague'**

Béla BARTÓK
Violin Concerto No. 2

Amalia Hall, violin

Antonín DVOŘÁK
**Symphony No. 5
in F major**

Mozart's Prague symphony makes a perfect curtain-raiser to the orchestra's 2018 season, from its dramatic opening chords to the crackling energy of its main themes. Seldom has a work expressed the clear light of reason with such a sense of joy. Mozart counted the day he presented this symphony to the public, in 1787, as one of the happiest in his life.

The orchestra's concertmaster, Amalia Hall, takes up solo duties in Bartók's amazing Violin Concerto No. 2. "It may sound odd," said Bartók in a 1920 essay, "But I do not hesitate to say that the simpler the melody the more complex and strange may be the harmonisation and accompaniment that go well with it." Bartók's imagination is evident from the opening, as a gently strummed harp leads us into a mercurial piece that dances between folk-inspired melodies, birdsong-like gestures and lively dialogues with the orchestra in the outer movements. The slow movement presents a simple, appealing theme that Bartók extends with five magically inventive variations.

Dvořák's Fifth Symphony opens with a fanfare scored for clarinets, whose softer tones turn an otherwise military gesture into the perfect introduction to a movement full of sweetness and beauty. It shares a similar air of woods and streams to Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, and it is probably no accident that it shares the same F major key. The second movement continues a calmer variant of the same mood, with long, gentle melodies featuring the orchestra's most lovely colours in turn. A lively scherzo alternates delicacy with the boisterousness of a peasant dance, while the Finale takes a dramatic theme reminiscent of Tchaikovsky and develops it at length before restoring the sunny mood of the beginning.

THE PROPHECY



#6 THE PROPHECY

Saturday 7 July, 7.30pm
Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

Leoš JANÁČEK
Taras Bulba

Benjamin BRITTEN
Piano Concerto
Jian Liu, Piano

Antonín DVOŘÁK
Symphony No. 6
in D major

This season's Bohemian theme is continued with Janáček's 1918 orchestral rhapsody, *Taras Bulba*, loosely inspired by a novella by Gogol about a Cossack war leader. Janáček's dramatic score matches the intensity, if not the narrative, of Gogol's tale of love, betrayal and the struggle for freedom.

The orchestra is delighted to welcome back pianist Jian Liu to perform Britten's Piano Concerto. Written in 1938 as a vehicle for Britten's own performance, the concerto's sparkle and wit recall Britten's debt to Shostakovich, with a hint of Mahler's *Wunderhorn* lyricism. "Music for me is clarification; I try to clarify, to refine, to sensitise... My technique is to tear all the waste away; to achieve perfect clarity of expression, that is my aim." –Benjamin Britten

Dvořák's Sixth Symphony seems to open in midstream: life in full bloom. The main theme has a rocking, wave-like quality that underpins much of the first movement. Despite moments of drama, the dominant mood is a kind of gentle delight, with sweeping string melodies delicately ornamented by pairs of woodwinds. There's a hint of Beethoven's Ninth in the gentle and ruminative Adagio, decorated by fine woodwind and horn solos. Dvořák uses a striking folk dance rhythm, the *Furiant*, for the Scherzo, allying it to the world of his Slavonic Dances. He contrasts it with a most delicate trio filled with alluring woodwind solos. The finale is, like much of this symphony, an homage to Brahms, but flavoured with Dvořák's characteristic sense of enthusiasm about life in general.

**LONDON
SYMPHONY**



#7

LONDON SYMPHONY

Saturday 11 August, 7.30pm
Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

Gao PING

Wild Cherry Tree

(Orchestra Wellington commission)

Xiao Ma, Countertenor,
and Roger Wilson, Bass

**Wolfgang Amadeus
MOZART**

**Piano Concerto No 14
in E-flat major**

Michael Houstoun, piano

Antonín DVOŘÁK

**Symphony No. 7
in D minor**

Wild Cherry Tree is a five-movement symphony with songs telling the story of a wanderer in the Tibetan region of China's Sichuan Province. The orchestra is explored in many ways to produce sounds that relate feelings of love, desire, enlightenment, and regret. The singers are the makers of a song and tellers of a story, using their vocal range in both a singing and an instrumental capacity.

Mozart's sunny 1784 concerto was composed for Mozart's own performance as part of a series of subscription concerts to capitalise on the Viennese public's enthusiasm for his work. The first movement abounds with themes and the contrast of major and minor tonalities generates an almost operatic sense of drama. The slow movement begins with the simplicity of a song and develops into a gentle dialogue between the orchestra and soloist, while the last movement rondo displays Mozart's fertile imagination working with counterpoint.

Completed in 1885, Dvořák's Seventh Symphony was written around the time of his beloved mother's death and the distressing mental illness of his friend and mentor Smetana. The symphony's opening is intense. Yet the undertones of tragedy are lifted by fragments of beautiful melody from the woodwinds and horns. The second movement begins with a statement that echoes the simplicity and depth of a Bach chorale. Dvořák transforms this theme in a leisurely and imaginative way, with the clarinets and horns in particular given a chance to shine. The scherzo movement is instantly recognisable as Dvořák's, with its hopping folk melodies and cross-rhythms. A yearning phrase opens the Finale, which builds up into a furious march through some of Dvořák's stormiest music.

REQUIEM

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REQUIEM

Saturday 8 September, 7.30pm
Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

Giuseppe VERDI Requiem

Antoinette Halloran,
Soprano

Deborah Humble,
Mezzo Soprano

Diego Torre, Tenor

James Clayton, Baritone

Orpheus Choir of
Wellington

Verdi wrote his Requiem in 1873 when he was at the height of his powers as an operatic composer. By then, he was also a national hero, his works a symbol and expression of the Italians' quest for unity and self-rule. This Requiem, so filled with dramatic power and unforgettable melodies, is also a monument to the Italian spirit, and a perfect work for the orchestra's 2018 season, which focuses on nationalism in music.

To call this Requiem viscerally exciting is the literal truth: the titanic strokes of the bass drum and the roar of the brass in the opening to the Dies Irae can be felt through your entire body. Certainly Verdi calls on a well-honed sense of theatre that turns up the emotional temperature to the fullest. If Verdi's piety is questionable – and he was fiercely anti-clerical – his ability to encompass humanity's joys and sorrows is not. Verdi's voice is filled with faith and triumph. The work, structured in 18 parts, builds from a broken murmur pleading for the peace of eternal rest to a joyful high point in the Sanctus before falling away to a final intense appeal for mercy in the Libera Me.

When he wrote this Requiem, Verdi was reaching a peak in his career and from this point on, his leading place in Italian music was assured. But Verdi did not only measure his life by his career successes. He was a nationalist, dedicated to the cause of Italian reunification and independence, and he was deeply moved by the political events of his time. When Milan revolted in 1848, Verdi told his librettist Francesco Piave: "Honour to these heroes! Honour to all Italy, which in this moment is truly great! The hour of her liberation has sounded." The only music Italy should hear, he said, was cannons.

**THE
RIVER**



#8

THE RIVER

Saturday 27 October, 7.30pm
Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

Bedřich SMETANA
The Moldau

Béla BARTÓK
Piano Concerto No. 1
Christopher Park, Piano

Antonín DVOŘÁK
Symphony No. 8
in G major

The Moldau is one of a suite of six pieces entitled *Ma Vlast*, or *My Homeland*. It follows the course of the Moldau River from its origins to the sea. Musicologist Paul Stefan says Smetana's music "sings to us today of the Bohemia of old; its woods and cultivated plains, its villages, its romantic hills and old legends, its great past and even its future."

Bartók wrote his First Piano Concerto in 1926 as a vehicle for his own performances. With his personal harmonic style already well established, Bartók explored the piano's possibilities as a percussive instrument. It's a dynamic work that blends Bartók's awareness of folk music with a rich Impressionist palette of orchestral sounds.

Dvořák was no slouch at writing memorable tunes, and the heartfelt cello melody that opens the Eighth Symphony is one of his best. This is a movement of contrasts, with a second theme that is both a march and a dance, and brimming with life. Even more melodic treasures follow, with pastoral interludes filled with woodwind birdsong. The slow movement begins with the strings again, followed by delicate replies from the woodwinds. Although this movement is often described as a pastoral idyll, full of the sounds of the Bohemian countryside, it is just as easy to imagine this movement as an intimate, leisurely conversation between people who have long known each others' moods and secrets.

The Scherzo is one of Dvořák's most graceful dance movements, spiked with typical Czech cross-rhythms. It finishes with a burst of rowdy energy before a trumpet fanfare launches the Finale.

NEW

WORLD



#9

NEW WORLD

Saturday 1 December, 7.30pm

Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

**Wolfgang Amadeus
MOZART**

**Overture from
Don Giovanni
(arr. Busoni)**

**Michael NORRIS
Violin Concerto**

(Orchestra Wellington commission)

Amalia Hall, violin

**Antonín DVOŘÁK
Symphony No. 9
in E minor, “From the
New World”**

Mozart's opera of lust, betrayal and revenge is prefaced by one of the most dramatic overtures ever written. The weighty brass chords of the opening serve notice that judgement is certain, before launching into music as lively as the society it was written for.

Michael Norris' Violin Concerto embarks on a journey through different energies, emotional states and relationships between the soloist and the orchestra. At times the violin floats above the orchestra; at other times, it leads the charge in passages of flurrying virtuosity.

Dvořák's last symphony, From the New World, is a product of the years between 1892 and 1894 when Dvořák left Bohemia to become the director of New York's National Conservatory. He toured around the Midwest, observing the people, landscapes and music. In Spillville, a town of Bohemian immigrants in Iowa, he finished this symphony, which celebrates the energy of the “new world” he found himself in, and reflects his yearning for home.

The adagio opening leads quickly to a dramatic theme announced by the horns; the woodwinds respond with a light reply. The most famous melody in the symphony is the cor anglais solo that begins and ends the slow movement. The tune shows how Dvořák was inspired by the African-American music he heard, particularly the spirituals.


In the scherzo, Dvořák sets the boisterous folk dance rhythms of his homeland against a more relaxed tune suggesting wagon trains traversing the wide landscapes, “home on the range”. The Finale begins with a call for action in the brass and proceeds with even more wonderful new themes.

Disney



SONGS OF

MOANA



ORCHESTRA
WELLINGTON

TE VAKA

Saturday 14 July, 2pm

Michael Fowler Centre, Wellington

An explosive show with a full live orchestra, filled with singing, dancing and of course those famous log drums, this is a family concert not to be missed!

Orchestra Wellington will be joined by the South Pacific ensemble Te Vaka to perform 'We Know The Way', 'How Far I'll Go' and other favourites from Disney's hit movie Moana.

Te Vaka return to New Zealand shores after more than a decade, and for the first time since scoring the 2016 film. Te Vaka is a group of musicians and dancers from the South Pacific brought together under the inspired leadership of Opetaia Foa'i. They have toured the world extensively for more than 20 years, representing New Zealand and the South Pacific. In 2013 Opetaia was requested by Disney to write the soundtrack for Moana.

"Think Lion King, set in the South Pacific 2,000 years ago and we would like you to write the music" ... you can start to feel like you are in a Disney movie because things like this don't happen in real life - but it did! –Opetaia Foa'i

Adult \$30 / Child \$18

Tickets from www.ticketmaster.co.nz



WELLINGTON
AMENITIES FUND

SYMPHONY AT THE PARK

with SOL3 MIO

Saturday 3 March, 6pm,
Jerry Collins Stadium, Porirua

Join Orchestra Wellington and superstar opera trio SOL3 MIO for a special outdoor concert in the heart of Porirua. Samoan brothers Pene and Amitai Pati from Mangere, and their North Shore baritone cousin Moses Mackay return to New Zealand, bringing their mix of powerful and moving operatic voices (with more than a dash of irrepressible Samoan humour!).

SOL3 MIO bring opera alive, breathing new life into time honoured classics. Their desire to share, entertain and inform, and the easy manner in which they go about it, is positively infectious. With your favourite orchestra alongside them, it's an orchestral match made in heaven!

Featuring a mix of opera, contemporary and show tunes, and ending with Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture complete with live cannons and a fireworks display - this is an incredible affordable event not to be missed!

Tickets at amazing prices available from
15 December: www.ticketmaster.co.nz

Orchestra Wellington in the Hutt

**Friday 18 May, Walter Nash Stadium,
Taita**

Join Orchestra Wellington and friends for a fun and memorable evening of popular music, well-loved arias and entertainment for all the family.

Dancing with Mozart

**Royal New Zealand Ballet production
31 May - 2 June**

Works by two of the greatest choreographers of the 20th and 21st centuries, together with an exciting new commission from Birmingham-based, Christchurch-born choreographer, Corey Baker.

The Elixir of Love

**New Zealand Opera production
23 - 30 June, Opera House Wellington**

Set in an Antipodean country town at the turn of the 20th century, Simon Phillip's production beautifully captures this opera's light-hearted humour.

La Bohème

**New Zealand Opera production
4 - 13 October, Opera House Wellington**

Puccini's glorious masterpiece of youth, passionate love and heartbreak springs to life in this exciting new production by Jacqueline Coats.

BEAT IT! BLAST IT!

With their funny, engaging and ever-popular show 'A History of Music' created by composer Thomas Goss, Orchestra Wellington's brass and percussion ensemble continues to take the region's schools by storm. School by school, the loudest musicians in the orchestra beat and blast their way through the history of music, from cavemen pounding rocks, to soldiers tootling fanfares, jazz cats playing the vibes to headbanging along to Nirvana.

For more information about the programme or to request a school visit, please contact the Orchestra Wellington office: 04 499 4480

ORCHESTRA WELLINGTON ROCKS!



WELLINGTON
AIRPORT





PLAYING FOR YOU

2018 ARTISTS



Amalia Hall **Violin**

Appointed as Orchestra Wellington's concertmaster last year, Amalia Hall is widely recognised as one of the foremost young violinists to emerge from New Zealand. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music, Amalia has won all of the major awards in New Zealand, including the Gisborne International Music Competition at the age of 16, the National Concerto Competition and the National Young Performer of the Year.

Amalia won the top prize at the Jeunesses International Music Competition Dinu Lipatti, and has received 1st Prize and "Absolute winner" prize at the Postacchini International Violin Competition, 2nd Prize at the International Violin Competitions "Premio R. Lipizer", and is a laureate of both the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians and the Kloster Schöntal International Violin Competition.

Since the age of 9 Amalia has had over fifty solo appearances with orchestras in New Zealand. Recently, Amalia has performed as a soloist with I Virtuosi Italiani conducted by Federico Mondelci and Alvis Casellati, recitals in Italy with Sergio De Simone, and concert tours to Mexico, Vietnam and South Africa.



Jian Liu **Piano**

Jian Liu has gained a global reputation as a solo pianist, chamber musician, and educator, performing in Europe, Asia, and North America. His artistry has taken him to some of the most prestigious concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, Steinway Hall in New York, and the Lincoln Centre's Rose Hall. He has featured as a soloist with orchestras including the Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine's National Philharmonic Society, the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestra Wellington, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, and Yale Philharmonia, among others.

He is a prize-winner at the Horowitz (Ukraine) and Missouri Southern (USA) international competitions and has performed at music festivals in Auckland, Idyllwild (USA), Beijing and Xiamen, Lausanne, and Krakow.

Jian is the founding pianist of Te Kōki Trio, the resident trio at New Zealand School of Music, which has appeared in chamber series in Singapore, Australia and New Zealand. Jian is Head of Piano Studies at the New Zealand School of Music.

2018 ARTISTS



Michael Houstoun **Piano**

Michael Houstoun was born in Timaru in 1952. He studied with Sister Mary Eulalie and Maurice Till, and by the age of 18 had won every major piano competition in New Zealand. His first international success came in 1973 when he won third prize at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. Further study with Rudolf Serkin followed and in 1975 he took fourth prize at the Leeds International Piano Competition. After six years living in the USA and London he returned to New Zealand in 1981.

His connection with Orchestra Wellington dates back to the first subscription concert of what was then the Alex Lindsay String Orchestra, in 1972. Since then he has performed with the orchestra almost every year, including an entire season as conductor in 1996. He has performed in the USA, Europe, Australia and Asia, and is renowned for being the only New Zealand pianist to perform the complete cycle of Beethoven sonatas.

His awards include the Turnovsky Prize, honorary doctorates from Massey University and Victoria University and a New Zealand Arts Foundation laureateship.



Xiao Ma **Countertenor**

Xiao Ma is China's first professional countertenor. He was discovered by renowned Chinese bass Gong Dong-Jian in 2006, and made his debut the following year with Shanghai Opera as Cherubino in Mozart's Marriage of Figaro, which has become his signature role. A master of diverse styles, Xiao Ma won China's Top Ten Tenors award in 2015, while his bel canto countertenor repertoire includes Rosina in The Barber of Seville and Vivaldi and Handel arias. He is equally at home in Chinese and Western operas, art songs, musicals and popular music, and he garners universal praise for his bright, solid, yet flexible coloratura, seamless integration of chest voice and head voice, and rich musical expressiveness.

Since his Shanghai debut, Xiao Ma has given numerous recitals and appearances in China as well as the US, Europe and other countries in Asia. In 2012 he made his New Zealand debut with a tour of four cities.

2018 ARTISTS



Roger Wilson **Bass**

Singing both baritone and bass, Roger is one of New Zealand's most experienced and versatile resident singers. He has a wide repertoire, has been engaged as a soloist by all New Zealand's major opera companies, orchestras and choirs, and is also well known as a recitalist and broadcaster.

Roger began his professional career in 1970, performing in Germany, France and Switzerland. He has performed a number of premieres of New Zealand composers' works, including Gillian Whitehead's *Tristan and Iseult*, Dorothy Buchanan's *The Woman at the Store*, Helen Fisher's *Taku Wana* and the re-created *Ribbands & Don Marama* musical.

He has also recorded a CD *The Songs of the Morning: A Musical Sketch*, a recording of narrative, poems and music composed in the Antarctic by his maternal grandfather, Lt. Gerald Doorly, on board the *SY Morning*, the relief ship to Scott's *Discovery* expedition in 1902.



Antoinette Halloran **Soprano**

Antoinette Halloran is one of Australia's most accomplished sopranos. She performs with all the major Australasian opera companies and symphony orchestras and appears frequently on national television and radio.

Leading appearances for Opera Australia have included the title roles in *Madama Butterfly* and *Rusalka*, Mimi in *La Bohème*, Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*; for New Zealand Opera, Cio-Cio-San and Mimi; for Victorian Opera, Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* and Adina in *L'elisir d'amore*; for Melbourne Opera, Cio-Cio-San, Violetta, Musetta and many others.

Concert appearances have included Mozart's *Requiem* with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, and Haydn's *Creation* and Fauré's *Requiem* with the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic.

Since 2010, Antoinette has sung the title role in *The Merry Widow* for Opera Queensland, Mimi, Cio-Cio-San and Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus* for Opera Australia and Micaela in *Carmen* for State Opera of South Australia, as well as the World Premiere of *Midnight Son* for Victorian Opera.

2018 ARTISTS



Deborah Humble **Mezzo-soprano**

Deborah Humble is one of Australia's most successful mezzo-sopranos, performing regularly internationally and at home. Orchestra Wellington audiences might remember her from the Wesendonck Lieder in 2014.

It was with her 2008 performances of Erda in *Das Rheingold* at the Hamburg Staatsoper that Deborah first came to international attention. In the same cycle, she also performed the roles of Waltraute and 1st Norn.

Deborah was a member of the ensemble of the Hamburg Staatsoper from 2005 through 2011, singing such roles as Zenobia (*Radamisto*), Bradamante (*Alcina*), Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*), Olga (*Eugene Onegin*), and Malik in the German premiere of Hans Werner Henze's *L'Upupa*.

Prior to her engagement with the Hamburg Staatsoper, Deborah was a member of the ensemble of Opera Australia, performing such roles as Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*), Sonyetka (*Lady Macbeth von Mzensk*), and Clarissa (*The Love for Three Oranges*). She has most recently performed Verdi's *Requiem* at Southwark Cathedral in London.



Diego Torre **Tenor**

Born in Mexico City, Diego Torre was a Domingo-Thornton Young Artist at Los Angeles Opera, where he made his company debut as Don José in performances of *Carmen*. With Wolf Trap Opera Company, Diego sang Rodolfo in *La Bohème*.

He was then engaged for the 2009/2010 season at The Metropolitan Opera to play the Messenger in *Aida* and Federico in *Stiffelio*. This was followed by Masaniello in *La muette de Portici* for Dessau Opera, Edgardo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for Savonlinna Opera Festival Finland and covering for Plácido Domingo in the title role of *Il Postino* at Los Angeles Opera.

Since then, performances have included Gustavus (*Un ballo in maschera*), The Duke (*Rigoletto*) and Cavaradossi for Opera Australia; Gabriele Adorno at Teatro Regio di Parma; Rodolfo in Oslo and Darmstadt; Cavaradossi in Florida, Karlsruhe, Boston and Finland; Don José at Eugene Opera and Darmstadt and Forresto (*Attila*) for San Francisco Opera. He has sung the Verdi *Requiem* in Sydney in 2017.

2018 ARTISTS



James Clayton **Baritone**

James Clayton is one of the leading singers to emerge from Western Australia in recent years, and a firm favourite with Wellington audiences. In recent years, James has performed Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Stravinsky's *Renard the Fox* with Orchestra Wellington, as well as Handel's *Messiah* with the NZSO, *Escamillo* in *Carmen*, the title role in *The Mikado* and *Papageno* in *The Magic Flute* with NZ Opera, among many others.

After ten years as a professional horn player, James began his career as a singer as a Young Artist with West Australian Opera in 2006. James' many roles for West Australian Opera have included the title role in *The Marriage of Figaro* and the *Barber of Seville*, *The King in Aida*, *Ashby* in *La Fanciulla del West*, *Nourabad* in *The Pearl Fishers*, *Schaunard* in *La Boheme*, *Papageno* in *The Magic Flute*, *Steersman* in *Tristan und Isolde* and *Marullo* in *Rigoletto*. Recent engagements have included *Escamillo* in *Carmen* for Opera Australia and the title role in *Rigoletto*, *Leporello* in *Don Giovanni* and *Schaunard* in *La Boheme* for West Australian Opera.



Christopher Park **Piano**

Christopher Park is a Bamberg-born musician with German-Korean roots. In 2014 he won the coveted Leonard Bernstein award at the Stiftung Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, thereby joining the ranks of musicians such as Lang Lang, Lisa Batiashvili and Martin Grubinger, who all started their careers with this internationally sought-after award.

Christopher has performed with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, both Frankfurt and North German Radio Symphony Orchestras, Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Frankfurt Opera Orchestra, Spanish National Orchestra, Cape Philharmonic Orchestra, China NCPA Orchestra, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, Chambre Orchestra of Lausanne, English Chamber Orchestra, Munich Symphony Orchestra and Bamberg Symphony, to name but a few. In November 2014, Christopher Park stood in for Emanuel Ax to great acclaim with the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra.

His new Oehms Classics CD with works by Schumann, Stravinsky and Neuwirth is celebrated in European magazines as a "brilliant recording" and "reference version".

2018 ARTISTS



Orpheus Choir of Wellington

Led by Conductor Brent Stewart, the Orpheus Choir of Wellington is New Zealand's leading symphonic choir and has been a significant contributor to choral music in the Wellington region for the past 60 years. Comprising up to 150 voices, the choir performs regularly at major Wellington venues with highly regarded musicians and soloists, both national and international.

The choir's repertoire covers the major classic choral works, exciting contemporary and challenging music, and new works by New Zealand composers. Their singing has been described as 'powerful', 'polished' and possessing 'razor-sharp ensemble and diction' and 'verve'. The Choir is committed to enriching the musical life of the Wellington community and providing opportunities for young singers through its choral scholarship scheme.



Michael Norris Composer

Michael Norris holds composition degrees from Victoria University of Wellington and City University, London, and is currently Senior Lecturer and Programme Director of Composition at the New Zealand School of Music. He is recipient of the 2001 Mozart Fellowship, the 2003 Douglas Lilburn Prize, the 2012 CANZ Trust Fund Award and has been nominated for the SOUNZ Contemporary Award four times, winning it in 2014 with his work Inner Phases for string quartet and Chinese instrument ensemble.

Michael maintains strong links to Austria, Germany and the Asia-Pacific region. He was commissioned by the SWR (Sudwestdeutsche Rundfunk) to write a new chamber orchestra work, Sgraffito, which was premiered at the Donaueschinger Musiktage 2010.

He has also had works performed and recorded by the Vienna Saxophonic Orchestra, Pierrot Lunaire Ensemble Wien, Radio Kamer Filharmonie, Ensemble SurPlus, NZSQ, NZTrio, NZSO, Dunedin Symphony Orchestra, Stroma, 175 East, Stephen de Pledge and Michael Houstoun.

2018 ARTISTS



Gao Ping **Composer**

Gao Ping is a composer and pianist born in Sichuan province. As a young pianist at the Sichuan Conservatory in Chengdu, Gao Ping was affected by China's transformation from a collective to a market economy. This transitional phase between old and new - and the productive cultural clash between East and West - left traces that would later be evident in his music.

In his recent works, Gao returns more fully to China as a creative theme. Works such as Piano Quintet "Mei Lan Zhu Ju" (2009) and Four Not-Alike for multi-function pianist and Chinese instruments (2012) reflect the appeal of Gao's fusing of Western and Eastern idioms, as well as the expanding interest in his compositions dealing with China and its multiple pasts.

Dr. Gao is currently the Professor in Composition at Conservatory of Music - Capital Normal University in Beijing. He also holds a guest professorship at the China Conservatory. He previously taught composition at the School of Music at Canterbury University.



Andrew Atkins **Assistant Conductor**

Andrew Atkins began his conducting studies under Kenneth Young in 2012 whilst completing his BMus in Classical performance piano. He has been the principal conductor of Tawa Community Orchestra since 2014. Highlights in recent seasons included Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto (soloist Thomas Nikora), Mozart's Piano Concerto no. 20 in D minor (soloist Xing Wang, NZSM DMA student), as well as Beethoven's Seventh Symphony and Tchaikovsky's Capriccio Italien.

Andrew has been the principal conductor of the Virtuoso Strings Charitable Trust Orchestra as well as conductor of Wellington Girls College, Wellington East Girls College, and Wellington College combined orchestra since 2015. He completed his MMA in classical performance piano in April 2016 and has been studying towards a Graduate Diploma in conducting under Kenneth Young. Recent performances include the Kapiti Concert Orchestra's mid-season concert with oboe soloist Peter Dykes and the Manawatu Sinfonia concert in November performing Mozart's Clarinet Concerto in A major.



Marc Taddei **Music Director**

Conductor Marc Taddei begins his 12th season as Music Director of Orchestra Wellington with the 2018 season. During his tenure critics have repeatedly remarked on his extraordinary connection with audiences and zest for continually creating engaging, erudite and innovative programmes.

Marc is also music director of the Vallejo Symphony Orchestra near San Francisco in the United States. He is a frequent guest conductor in Australia as well as with every professional orchestra in New Zealand, working with the national ballet and opera companies, the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts, the Auckland Festival and the New Zealand International Film Festival.

He has worked with such diverse artists as Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Anne Sofie von Otter, Ilya Gringolts, Julian Lloyd Webber, Horacio Gutiérrez, Simon O'Neill, Michael Houstoun, Joshua Redman, James Morrison, Diana Krall, Bobby Shew, Art Garfunkel, Dave Dobbyn and Kenny Rogers, among many, many others. His discography includes more than 30 recordings.

Marc is a graduate of the Julliard School in Manhattan, where he received both bachelors and masters degrees before moving to New Zealand. He divides his time between Queenstown, Wellington and San Francisco.





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Arohanui Strings Sistema Hutt Valley

Founded in 2010 by Director (and Orchestra Wellington violist) Alison Eldredge, Arohanui Strings - Sistema Hutt Valley is a ground-breaking music education / social development programme. Their goal is to help children in areas of high deprivation to reach their full potential, using teamwork, harmony and ensemble playing. Arohanui Strings now works with hundreds of children in the Hutt Valley each year, teaching violin, viola, cello, double bass, singing and music literacy through in-school, afterschool and holiday programmes (arohanuistrings.org).

Orchestra Wellington is proud to support Arohanui Strings' programmes, and we look forward to continuing our partnership in 2018 and beyond.

"Social change through music is a long road, but it is full of discovery, creativity and joy. Our kids benefit from quality immersive music programming, many hours a week. We see transformations every day!"
-Alison Eldredge, Founder and Director

Virtuoso Strings

The Virtuoso Strings Orchestras are based in Cannons Creek, Porirua. The aim of the Senior Virtuoso Orchestra is to provide real opportunities for committed local string players to develop advanced ensemble skills in a supportive environment.

The Virtuoso Strings Charitable Trust provides every aspect of music education freely to all participants from low decile schools. They emphasise inclusivity, accessibility and excellence, and their mission is to foster greater diversity among youth, amateur and professional orchestras within New Zealand.

Wellington Chamber Orchestra

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Sunday December 9, 2.30pm
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