

MENDELSSOHN'S ELIJAH WITH BRYN TERFEL

30 & 31 OCTOBER 2026

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House



SYDNEY
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Emirates

Principal Partner

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

The Orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australian-born Simone Young commenced her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra made its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS CONCERT

Expect to enjoy yourself! Maybe your heart will beat a little faster. Maybe your hair will stand on end. It's hard to predict or describe how the vast sound of a symphony orchestra will affect each of us. Just bring an open mind and engage with the music – close your eyes, watch the conductor and the musicians, or just sit back and let the music take you away.



When do I clap?

Good question. The simplest thing is to wait until the conductor turns around – or when everyone else starts applauding.

The conductor may leave the stage and come back on a few times, and acknowledge the different sections of the orchestra. You can keep clapping as long as you want to – and feel free to cheer and stomp your feet if you really enjoyed the concert!



Can I take photos or videos?

You can take photos and videos on your phone during the applause at the end of a piece of music. **Please switch your phone to silent, make sure the flash is off and dim the brightness of your screen so you don't distract other audience members.** And if you share it to your socials, tag us in your posts! We love seeing what people have captured.

Please leave professional and semi-professional camera gear at home and limit yourself to a phone camera inside the venue.



What happens at interval?

The interval will begin when the conductor leaves the stage and the lights go to their full brightness. You can choose to stay in your seat and wait, go to the bathroom, walk around or purchase food or drink from one of the foyer bars.

An announcement will play through the speaker system 10 minutes, 5 minutes and 1 minute before the concert resumes.

2026 CONCERT SEASON

MENDELSSOHN'S ELIJAH WITH BRYN TERFEL

CONDUCTED BY SIMONE YOUNG

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847)
Elijah, Op.70 (1846)

Part One

INTERVAL

Part Two

SIMONE YOUNG conductor
SAMANTHA CLARKE soprano
ELEANOR LYONS soprano
NOA BEINART contralto
SHANUL SHARMA tenor
BRYN TERFEL bass-baritone

SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS
BRETT WEYMARK chorus master

AMY MOORE soprano
SUSANNAH LAWEGREN soprano
HANNAH FRASER alto
ELEANOR ADENEY alto
TIM REYNOLDS tenor
LOUIS HURLEY tenor
HAYDEN BARRINGTON baritone
ANDREW O'CONNOR baritone

Friday 30 October, 7pm
Saturday 31 October, 7pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

Estimated durations

1 hour and 10 minutes
Interval – 20 minutes
1 hour and 10 minutes

Assistant Conductor

Timothy O'Malley
*Appears courtesy of Australian
National Academy of Music (ANAM)*

Cover image

By Daniel Boud

We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of the land and water on which we work and perform. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

Emirates

Principal Partner



Photo by Peter Brew-Bevan

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SIMONE YOUNG AM conductor

Sydney Symphony Orchestra's Chief Conductor, Simone Young has previously held the posts of General Manager and Music Director of the Hamburg State Opera and Music Director of the Philharmonic State Orchestra Hamburg, Music Director of Opera Australia, Chief Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of both the Gulbenkian Orchestra, Lisbon and the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra. Her appointment as Chief Conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has recently been extended through until the end of 2029.

An acknowledged interpreter of the operas of Wagner and Strauss, she has conducted complete cycles of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* at the Bayreuth Festival, Vienna Staatsoper, Berlin Staatsoper, Hamburg Staatsoper and La Scala Milan.

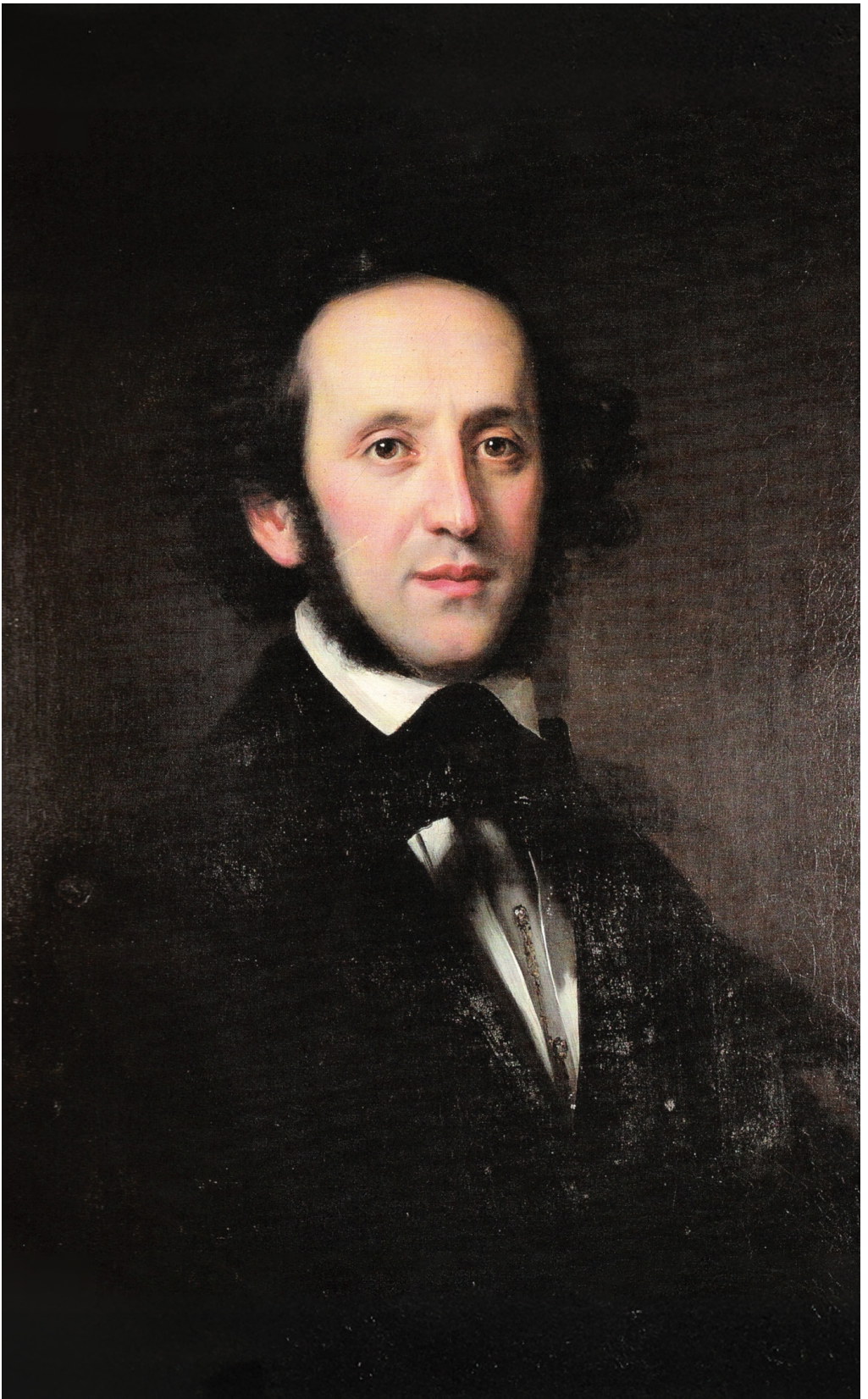
Simone Young has an extensive and celebrated recording catalogue. Her first performance as Chief Conductor in Sydney, featuring Mahler's Symphony No.2 *Resurrection* and the world premiere of William Barton's *Of the Earth* was released worldwide on Deutsche Grammophon, and performances of Elgar & Vaughan Williams, *Das Rheingold* and *Gurrelieder* have been filmed for Sydney Symphony On Demand. Her Hamburg recordings include the *Ring Cycle*, *Mathis der Maler* (Hindemith), *Das Buch mit sieben Siegeln* (Schmidt) and symphonies of Bruckner, Brahms and Mahler. She has also recorded Benjamin Britten Folk songs and songs of Richard Strauss with Steve Davislim, and songs by Wagner and Strauss with Lisa Gasteen.

Simone Young's return invitations to the great orchestras of the world in 2026 include the Suisse Romande, the Orchestre nationale de Lyon, West German Radio Orchestra Cologne, Orchestre philharmonique de Radio France Paris, National Symphony Orchestra Washington, Los Angeles Philharmonic, the San Francisco and Montreal Symphony Orchestras, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London, National Symphony Orchestra RAI (Britten *War Requiem*), and the BBC Philharmonic, Manchester. She also returns to ANAM, Melbourne to lead their orchestra in a 30th birthday celebration Gala performance.

Firmly established as one of the world's leading opera conductors, this season Simone Young returns to the Berlin Staatsoper (*Lohengrin* and *Nabucco*), La Scala Milan (the *Ring* cycle), Opera Nationale de Paris (*Katya Kabanova*), and conducts *Götterdämmerung* in concert, completing Sydney Symphony's *Ring Cycle*.

The presentation of Sydney Symphony Orchestra's *Ring Cycle* in concert, commencing in 2023, has played to sold out audiences, standing ovations and 5-star reviews. A second, feature-length documentary film, *Knowing the Score*, showcasing Simone Young and her career was also internationally released in 2023.

In 2025 Simone Young was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Sydney. Her many accolades also include the 2024 Conductor of the year (British *Opera* magazine), Honorary Member (Ehrenmitglied) of the Vienna State Opera, the 2019 European Cultural Prize Vienna, a Professorship at the Musikhochschule in Hamburg, Honorary Doctorates from the Universities of Western Australia and New South Wales, Griffith University and Monash University, the Sir Bernard Heinze Award, the Goethe Institute Medal, the 2013 Helpmann Award for Best Individual Classical Music Performance and the Officier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres from France.



An 1846 portrait of Mendelssohn by Eduard Magnus. Source: Berlin State Library/Wikimedia Commons.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Mendelssohn has been described by Charles Rosen as ‘the greatest child prodigy the history of Western music has ever known’. He also had the great good fortune to be born into a milieu of enormous cultural and material privilege. He was a grandson of celebrated philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, and the friends of his family in Mendelssohn’s childhood and early adult life reads like a ‘who’s who’ of German philosophy and literature, including Goethe, Heine and Hegel; he would later enjoy friendships with everyone from Queen Victoria through Berlioz to the brothers Grimm.

When Mendelssohn was two years old the family left Hamburg, and the threat of Napoleon, for Berlin where his father Abraham quickly became indispensable in financing the Prussian war-effort. Despite the Jewish family’s social status, however, the four Mendelssohn children were all secretly baptised in the Lutheran church in 1816, and in 1822 Abraham and his wife Lea converted, adopting the less Jewish-sounding Bartholdy as a surname.

The two eldest children, Felix and Fanny, showed early talent for music and their parents put considerable resources at their disposal. Both had the finest available teachers and Abraham Mendelssohn initiated a series of Sunday concerts at the family home where Felix and Fanny would perform with paid members of the Court Orchestra (forerunner of the Berlin Philharmonic). Among the works that Felix wrote for these concerts between 1822 and 1824 were his celebrated 13 string sinfonias, five early concertos, and five *Singspiele* (that is operas in German with spoken dialogue).

In 1821 Weber’s *Der Freischütz* blew Mendelssohn’s mind; its supernatural element, a staple of the new Romantic aesthetic, was also to be found in German writers’ discovery of Shakespeare, especially plays like *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, a decade after the brothers Grimm had reignited interest in fairy tales.

The beginning of 1829 saw Mendelssohn’s performance of his version of the *St Matthew Passion*, a work still occasionally done in Bach’s last home-town, Leipzig, but elsewhere unknown. Then it was off on one of his many European tours, this time taking in Scotland, which would inspire the ‘Hebrides’ Overture and ‘Scottish Symphony. He would later visit Paris and Rome, where he experienced Holy Week liturgies in the Sistine Chapel. Nevertheless, major works from this time include the ‘Reformation’ Symphony.

Mendelssohn spent 1833-5 as music director in Düsseldorf, but more congenial was the appointment to the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig from 1835, where, with occasional official forays back to Berlin, he would be based until his death and where he helped found the Conservatorium.

He was committed to new music, but paradoxically his enthusiasm for reviving novelties of Baroque and Classical music led indirectly to the ‘masterpiece culture’ that drives out the new. Above all he understood the power of music, noting that words ‘seem to me so ambiguous, so vague, so easily misunderstood in comparison to genuine music that fills the soul with a thousand things better than words.

Gordon Kerry © 2009

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT *ELIJAH*

Elijah is Mendelssohn's most ambitious work. He nursed the idea of an oratorio on the biblical story of the prophet Elijah in his heart for at least ten years, excited by its possibilities. Mendelssohn felt confident he could improve on his first oratorio, *St Paul*, and create a work even more popular and esteemed. He succeeded: the first performance of *Elijah* at the Birmingham Festival of August 1846 was the greatest musical triumph of Mendelssohn's life. For many generations this oratorio was regarded, in England at least, as his masterpiece. It became a great favourite with amateur choral societies, partly no doubt because it contains so much rewarding music for the chorus. In the English oratorio tradition, it was ranked second only to *Messiah*. This would not have displeased Mendelssohn, who was quite consciously trying to fashion a work worthy of the oratorios of Handel and the Passions of Bach, in an appropriate modern style.

Yet it may be that Mendelssohn's artistic temperament was not best suited to large-scale oratorio, with its combination of dramatic and reflective elements, and, more to the point, that his music does not always match the ferocity of parts of the story of *Elijah*. When the inevitable reaction set in against the excessive veneration of Mendelssohn's music, a reaction which accompanied the passing of the Victorian age, some of his other works weathered better than *Elijah*. Nowadays the *Midsummer Night's Dream Music*, the Violin Concerto, the *Scotch* and *Italian* Symphonies, and the *Hebrides* Overture are staples of the repertoire. Performances of *Elijah*, comparatively, are rare. Perhaps the work has lain fallow long enough to be heard by today's audiences with fresh ears, which is the best way. *Elijah* should not be treated as a relic of the heyday of the amateur choral society, but as a highly personal and resourceful musical treatment of its story, containing much which is dramatically apt and striking, and more which is of high musical beauty. After all, when do we hear a note nowadays of the many oratorios of Mendelssohn's imitators?

Mendelssohn's background and artistic leanings made it likely that he would write large-scale oratorio. His brilliant natural talents were nurtured in an upper-middle-

class family of high cultural and intellectual achievements. He became a learned composer, who knew and understood the vocal music of the great masters: Palestrina, Bach, Handel, and Beethoven. One of the exciting tasks of his youth was his dedicated revival of choral masterpieces, by Bach and Handel in particular. Mendelssohn deserves part of the credit for restoring the *St Matthew Passion* to the musical public. Less well-known is his championship of the oratorios of Handel, particularly *Israel in Egypt*. Handel and Bach help define the poles between which lies *Elijah's* style: Handelian drama and story-telling, Bachian reflection and musical expression of feelings.

Elijah was also a new kind of oratorio. In *St Paul* Mendelssohn had followed Bach in using chorales, and imitated the Leipzig master where he had set an unapproachable standard. *Elijah*, too, contains choral material which ponders and sums up the religious meaning of the drama, but Mendelssohn's way of integrating this material into the overall style and unfolding of the piece represents a real discovery. The sustained and imaginative series of choruses in the confrontation between *Elijah* and the prophets of Baal, for example, – moving with assurance from vivid dramatic representation to prayerful contemplation and back, were novel in their variety and continuity of choral and orchestral textures. This aspect of *Elijah* even influenced Wagner when he was composing *Parsifal*.

Elijah posed Mendelssohn and his librettist a problem they did not entirely solve. The composer summarised his intentions in a letter to the librettist Julius Schubring:

With such a subject as Elijah... the dramatic must predominate...and the contemplative, moving aspect which you demand must be conveyed to us through the words and moods of the characters

But Schubring's libretto confusingly varies the identity of chorus and soloists, without explanation. Story-telling recitative, such as we find in Handel's biblical oratorios, is not used, and the singers appear without introduction, impersonating characters and crowds, or commenting on the action. The listener, if he is to grasp Mendelssohn's purpose, must note who each singer or the chorus represents at every point of the oratorio.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Another difficulty, arising from the basic division of aim in the text, is pointed out by Anthony Payne: 'The text relates the primitive religion of Elijah's time to a symbolic interpretation of the prophet as Christ's forerunner which stems from the more sophisticated thought of later ages! The central character, Elijah, tends to be portrayed as pious and sympathetic where he should be fierce and uncompromising, the prophet of a jealous God. The second half of the oratorio, in particular, is weakened by too many improving texts appropriate for uplifting church music, while the plot is unclear. Modern critics tend to agree with Mendelssohn that 'the dramatic should predominate', and they have revised their forerunners' favourable view of some of the religious sentiment in text and music. Performers, too, should highlight the dramatic, and avoid making heavy weather of Elijah's sententiously religious aspects.

These are equivocal comments, but it should be stressed that *Elijah* gains many of its strengths from an unusually close collaboration of composer and librettist. Mendelssohn, composing possibly the first oratorio to be conceived simultaneously in two languages, corresponded continually with William Bartholomew, who made the English singing translation of the German text.

The labour of composing to a deadline exhausted Mendelssohn and helped precipitate the ill-health, restlessness and depression of the last year of his life. Even after the triumphant first performance of *Elijah* he continued revising it for publication, and only five of the work's numbers were untouched. This painstaking care is characteristic of Mendelssohn, and corrects the received idea of his facility.

As for the music, its highlights and beauties hardly need signposting. The very opening is of great originality and power. Elijah's recitative prophesies the drought with the sinister descending interval which reappears later acting as a kind of 'curse motive'. The overture, which follows immediately, represents the growing distress of the afflicted people, and its accumulating tension leads straight into the great cries of the whole people for help. Mendelssohn has found a new role for the overture, giving it striking dramatic relevance. It is up to the listener to discover *Elijah's* many other felicities.

Elijah is scored for an orchestra of 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets and 2 bassoons; 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones and ophicleide; timpani, organ and strings, a large chorus usually singing in four, but occasionally eight parts, and 8 vocal soloists (2 each of bass, tenor, alto, soprano).

It was first performed on 26 August 1846 at Birmingham Town Hall, conducted by Mendelssohn himself.

The Sydney Symphony has performed *Elijah* on just a handful of occasions:

October 1977, conducted by Moshe Atzmon, with singers Pearl Berridge, Sandra Browne, Raymond McDonald, Phillip Langshaw and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs;

January 1994, conducted Christopher Hogwood, with Marilyn Richardson, Irene Waugh, David Hobson, Robert Dawe and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs;

And most recently in May 2014, conducted by Paul McCreesh, with Lachlan Massey, Gillian Webster, Deborah Humble, Thomas Walker, Andrew Foster-Williams and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs.

Scoring and history by Hugh Robertson

TEXTS

PART ONE

Elijah calls down a curse on his faithless people.

Introduction: Recitative — Elijah

As God the Lord of Israel liveth, before whom I stand: There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

Overture

Elijah's curse causes drought and famine

1. Chorus

— *The People*

Help, Lord! Wilt thou quite destroy us?
The harvest now is over, the summer days are gone; and yet no power cometh to help us. Will then the Lord be no more God in Zion?

Recitative Chorus

The deeps afford no water, and the rivers are exhausted! The suckling's tongue now cleaveth for thirst to his mouth; The infant children ask for bread, and there is no one breaketh it to feed them!

2. Duet with Chorus

— *The People*

Lord, bow thine ear to our pray'r.

— *Soprano and alto duet*

Zion spreadeth her hands for aid; and there is neither help nor comfort.

3. Recitative

— *Obadiah, the King's chamberlain*

Ye people, rend your hearts, and not your garments; For your transgressions the prophet Elijah hath sealed the heavens through the word of God. I therefore say to ye, forsake your idols, return to God; for He is slow to anger, and merciful, and kind and gracious, and repenteth Him of the evil.

4. Aria

— *Obadiah*

"If with all your hearts ye truly seek me, ye shall ever surely find me." Thus saith our God. Oh! that I knew where I might find Him, that I might even come before His presence!

5. Chorus

— *The People*

Yet doth the Lord see it not: He mocketh at us; His curse hath fallen down upon us; His wrath will pursue us till He destroy us!

For He, the Lord our God, He is a jealous God: and He visiteth all the fathers' sins on the children to the third and the fourth generation of them that hate him.

His mercies on thousands fall, fall on all them that love Him and keep His commandments.

Elijah meets a widow, and restores her son to life.

6. Recitative

— *An Angel (alto)*

Elijah, get thee hence, Elijah: depart and turn thee eastward, thither hide thee by Cherith's brook. There shalt thou drink its waters; and the Lord thy God hath commanded the ravens to feed thee there; so do according unto His word.

7. Double Chorus

— *The Angels*

For He shall give His angels charge over thee; that they shall protect thee in all the ways thou goest; that their hands shall uphold and guide thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Recitative

— *An Angel (alto)*

Now Cherith's brook is dried up; Elijah, arise and depart, and get thee to Zarepath; thither abide; for the Lord hath commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee; and the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

8. Recitative, Aria and Duet

— *The Widow (soprano)*

What have I to do with thee, O man of God? Art thou come to me, to call my sin unto remembrance? To slay my son art thou come hither?

Help me, man of God, my son is sick! and his sickness is so sore that there is no breath left in him! I go mourning all the day long, I lie down and weep at night! See mine affliction! Be thou the orphan's helper! Help my son! There is no breath left in him!

— *Elijah*

Give me thy son.

Turn unto her, O Lord, my God; O turn in mercy, in mercy help this widow's son; for Thou art gracious, and full of compassion and plenteous in mercy and truth. Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

— *Widow*

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? There is no breath in him.

— *Elijah*

Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return, that he again may live!

TEXTS

— *Widow*

Shall the dead arise and praise Thee?

— *Elijah*

Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return,
that he again may live!

— *Widow*

The Lord hath heard thy prayer; the soul of my
son reviveth!

— *Elijah*

Now behold, thy son liveth!

— *Widow*

Now by this I know that thou art a man of God,
and that His word in thy mouth is the truth:
What shall I render to the Lord, render for all His
benefits to me?

— *Both*

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, love Him with
all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all
thy might. O, blessed are they who fear Him!

9. Chorus

Blessed are the men who fear Him; they ever
walk in the ways of peace. Through darkness
riseth light to the upright. He is gracious,
compassionate; He is righteous.

Elijah challenges the priests of Baal.

10. Recitative — *Elijah, Ahab and Chorus*

— *Elijah*

As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth, before whom
I stand, three years this day fulfilled, I will show
myself unto Ahab; and the Lord will then send
rain again upon the earth.

— *Ahab (tenor)*

Art thou Elijah? Art thou he that troubleth Israel?

— *The People*

Thou art Elijah, he that troubleth Israel!

— *Elijah*

I never troubled Israel's peace; it is thou, Ahab,
and all thy father's house. Ye have forsaken God's
command; and thou hast followed Baalim! Now
send and gather to me the whole of Israel unto
Mount Carmel; There summon the prophets of
Baal, and also the prophets of the groves who
are feasted at Jezebel's table. Then we shall see
whose god is the Lord.

— *The People*

And then we shall see whose god is God the Lord.

— *Elijah*

Rise then, ye priests of Baal; select and slay
a bullock, and put no fire under it; uplift your
voices, and call the god ye worship; and I then
will call on the Lord Jehovah and the god who
by fire shall answer, let Him be God.

— *The People*

Yea: and the god who by fire shall answer,
let Him be God.

— *Elijah*

Call first upon your god; your numbers are many;
I, even I, only remain, one prophet of the Lord!
Invoke your forest gods and mountain deities.

11. Chorus

— *Priests of Baal*

Baal, we cry to thee; hear and answer us! Heed
the sacrifice we offer! Baal, O hear us, and
answer us! Hear us, Baal! Hear, mighty god!
Baal, O answer us! Baal, let thy flames fall and
extirpate the foe! Baal, O hear us!

12. Recitative

— *Elijah*

Call him louder, for he is a god! He talketh;
or he is pursuing; or he is on a journey; or,
peradventure, he sleepeth; so awaken him;
call him louder.

— *Chorus — Priests of Baal*

Hear our cry, O Baal! Now arise!
Wherefore slumber?

13. Recitative

— *Elijah*

Call him louder! He heareth not. With knives
and lancets cut yourselves after your manner;
Leap upon the altar ye have made; call him and
prophecy! Not a voice will answer you; none will
listen, none heed you!

— *Chorus — Priests of Baal*

Hear and answer, Baal! Mark how the scorner
derideth us! Hear and answer!

14. Recitative and Aria

— *Elijah*

Draw near, all ye people; come to me!

Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel! This
day let it be known that Thou art God; and I am
Thy servant! O show to all this people that I have
done these things according to Thy word! O hear
me Lord and answer me; and show this people
that Thou art Lord God; and let their hearts again
be turned!

TEXTS

15. Chorale

— *Angels*

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee. He never will suffer the righteous to fall; He is at thy right hand. Thy mercy, Lord, is great; and far above the heavens. Let none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.

16. Recitative and chorus

— *Elijah*

O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits; Thou, whose ministers are flaming fires, let them now descend!

— *Chorus* — *The People*

The fire descends from heaven; the flames consume his offering! Before Him upon your faces fall!

The Lord is God; O Israel, hear! Our God is one Lord; And we will have no other gods before the Lord!

— *Recitative* — *Elijah*

Take all the prophets of Baal; and let not one of them escape you; bring them down to Kishon's brook, and there let them be slain.

— *Chorus* — *The People*

Take all the prophets of Baal; and let not one of them escape us; bring all, and slay them!

17. Aria

— *Elijah*

Is not His word like a fire; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock into pieces? For God is angry with the wicked every day; and if the wicked turn not, the Lord will whet His sword; and He hath bent His bow, and made it ready.

18. Arioso

— *Alto*

Woe unto them who forsake Him! Destruction shall fall upon them, for they have transgressed against Him. Though they are by Him redeemed, yet have they spoken falsely against Him; from Him have they fled.

Elijah's prayer ends the drought.

19. Recitative

— *Obadiah*

O man of God, help thy people! Among the idols of the Gentiles, are there any that can command the rain, or cause the heavens to give their showers? The Lord our God alone can do these things.

— *Elijah*

O Lord, Thou hast overthrown Thine enemies and destroyed them. Look down on us from heaven, O Lord; regard the distress of Thy people; open the heavens and send us relief; help, help Thy servant now, O God!

— *The People*

Open the heavens and send us relief; help, help Thy servant now, O God!

— *Elijah*

Go up now, child, and look toward the sea. Hath my prayer been heard by the Lord?

— *The Youth (treble)*

There is nothing. The heavens are as brass, they are as brass above me.

— *Elijah*

When the heavens are closed up because they have sinned against Thee, yet if they pray and confess Thy Name, and turn from their sin when Thou didst afflict them; then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin! Help! send Thy servant help, O God!

— *The People*

Then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin! Help! send Thy servant help, O Lord!

— *Elijah*

Go up again, and still look toward the sea.

— *The Youth*

There is nothing. The earth is as iron under me!

— *Elijah*

Hearest thou no sound of rain? — seest thou nothing arise from the deep?

— *The Youth*

No; there is nothing.

— *Elijah*

Have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, O Lord, my God! Unto Thee I will cry, Lord, my rock; be not silent to me; and Thy great mercies remember, Lord!

— *The Youth*

Behold, a little cloud ariseth now from the waters; it is like a man's hand! The heavens are black with clouds and wind; the storm rusheth louder and louder!

— *The People*

Thanks be to God, for all His mercies!

TEXTS

— *Elijah*

Thanks be to God, for He is gracious, and
His mercy endureth forevermore!

20. Chorus — The People

Thanks be to God! He laveth the thirsty land!
The waters gather, they rush along; they are
lifting their voices! The stormy billows are high,
their fury is mighty. But the Lord is above them,
and Almighty!



Detail of Elijah from *Madonna and Child with Saints* by
Italian painter Andrea di Bonaiuto da Firenze (1319–1377).

PART TWO

21. Aria (soprano)

Hear ye, Israel; hear what the Lord speaketh:
“Oh, hadst thou heeded my commandments!”
Who hath believed our report; to whom is the
arm of the Lord revealed?

Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and
His Holy One, to him oppressed by tyrants; thus
saith the Lord: “I am He that comforteth; be not
afraid, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee.
Say, who art thou, that thou art afraid of a man
that shall die; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker,
who hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid
the earth’s foundations? Be not afraid, for I, thy
God, will strengthen thee.”

22. Chorus

“Be not afraid!” saith God the Lord. “Be not
afraid!” thy help is near. God, the Lord thy God,
sayeth unto thee, “Be not afraid!” Though
thousands languish and fall beside thee, and
tens of thousands around thee perish, yet still it
shall not come nigh thee.

***Elijah is threatened by the queen Jezebel
and the people when he accuses the king
of idolatry.***

23. Recitative

— *Elijah*

The Lord hath exalted thee from among the
people; and o’er His people Israel hath made
thee king. But, thou, Ahab, hast done evil to
provoke Him to anger above all that were before
thee; as if it had been a light thing for thee to
walk in the sins of Jeroboam. Thou hast made a
grove and an altar to Baal, and served him and
worshipped him. Thou hast killed the righteous,
and also taken possession. And the Lord shall
smite all Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water;
and He shall give Israel up, and thou shalt know
He is the Lord.

Recitative with Chorus

— *Jezebel (alto)*

Have ye not heard he hath prophesied against
all Israel?

— *Chorus — The People*

We heard it with our ears.

— *Jezebel*

Hath he not prophesied also against the king
of Israel?

— *The People*

We heard it with our ears.

TEXTS

— *Jezebel*

And why hath he spoken in the name of the Lord?
Doth Ahab govern the kingdom of Israel while
Elijah's power is greater than the king's? The gods
do so to me, and more; if, by tomorrow about this
time, I make not his life as the life of one of them
whom he hath sacrificed at the brook of Kishon!

— *The People*

He shall perish!

— *Jezebel*

Hath he not destroyed Baal's prophets?

— *The People*

He shall perish!

— *Jezebel*

Yea, by the sword he destroyed them all!

— *The People*

He destroyed them all!

— *Jezebel*

He also closed the heavens...

— *The People*

He also closed the heavens...

— *Jezebel*

... and called down a famine upon the land.

— *The People*

... and called down a famine upon the land.

— *Jezebel*

So go ye forth and seize Elijah, for he is worthy to
die; slaughter him! Do unto him as he hath done!

24. Chorus — The People

Woe to him, he shall perish; for he closed the
heavens! And why hath he spoken in the Name of
the Lord? Let the guilty prophet perish! He hath
spoken falsely against our land and us, as we
have heard with our ears. So go ye forth; seize on
him! He shall die!

Elijah flees to the wilderness.

25. Recitative

— *Obadiah*

Man of God, now let my words be precious in thy
sight. Thus saith Jezebel: "Elijah is worthy to die."
So the mighty gather against thee, and they have
prepared a net for thy steps; that they may seize
thee, that they may slay thee. Arise, then, and
hasten for thy life; to the wilderness journey. The
Lord thy God doth go with thee; He will not fail
thee. He will not forsake thee. Now begone, and
bless me also.

— *Elijah*

Though stricken, they have not grieved!
Tarry here, my servant; the Lord be with thee.
I journey hence to the wilderness.

26. Aria — Elijah

It is enough; O Lord, now take away my life, for
I am not better than my fathers! I desire to live
no longer; now let me die, for my days are but
vanity! I have been very jealous for the Lord God
of Hosts! For the children of Israel have broken
Thy covenant, and thrown down Thine altars,
and slain all Thy prophets — slain them with the
sword; and I, even I, only am left; and they seek
my life to take it away.

27. Recitative

— *An Angel (tenor)*

See, now he sleepeth beneath a juniper tree in
the wilderness; and there the angels of the Lord
encamp around about all them that fear Him.

28. Trio

— *The Angels*

Lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh
help. Thy help cometh from the Lord, the Maker
of heaven and earth. He hath said, thy foot shall
not be moved; thy Keeper will never slumber.

29. Chorus

— *The Angels*

He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor
sleeps. Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish,
He will quicken thee.

30. Recitative

— *An Angel (alto)*

Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey before
thee. Forty days and forty nights shalt thou go to
Horeb, the mount of God.

— *Elijah*

O Lord, I have laboured in vain; yea, I have spent
my strength for nought! O that Thou wouldst rend
the heavens, that thou wouldst come down; that
the mountains would flow down at Thy presence,
to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries,
through the wonders of Thy works! O Lord, why
hast Thou made them to err from Thy ways, and
hardened their hearts that they do not fear Thee?
O that I now might die!

31. Aria

— *An Angel (alto)*

O rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him, and
He shall give thee thy heart's desires. Commit
thy way unto Him, and trust in Him, and fret not
thyself because of evil doers.

TEXTS

32. Chorus

He that shall endure to the end, shall be saved.

After a vision, Elijah returns to the city to overthrow the idolators. He is then taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire.

33. Recitative

— *Elijah*

Night falleth round me, O Lord! Be Thou not far from me! Hide not Thy face, O Lord, from me; my soul is thirsting for Thee, as a thirsty land.

— *An Angel (soprano)*

Arise, now! get thee without, stand on the mount before the Lord; for there His glory will appear and shine on thee! Thy face must be veiled, for He draweth near.

34. Chorus

Behold! God the Lord passed by! And a mighty wind rent the mountains around; brake in pieces the rocks, brake them before the Lord; but yet the Lord was not in the tempest.

Behold! God the Lord passed by! And the sea was upheaved, and the earth was shaken; but yet the Lord was not in the earthquake.

And after the earthquake there came a fire; but yet the Lord was not in the fire.

And after the fire there came a still small voice; and in that still voice, onward came the Lord.

35. Recitative, Quartet and Chorus

— *An Angel*

Above Him stood the Seraphim, and one cried to another:

— *The Angelic Host*

Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord — the Lord Sabaoth! Now His glory hath filled all the earth.

36. Chorus

— *Angels*

Go, return upon thy way! For the Lord yet hath left Him seven thousand in Israel, knees which have not bowed to Baal. Go, return upon thy way; thus the Lord commandeth.

— *Recitative — Elijah*

I go on my way in the strength of the Lord. For Thou art my Lord; and I will suffer for Thy sake. My heart is therefore glad, my glory rejoiceth, and my flesh shall also rest in hope.

37. Arioso

— *Elijah*

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but Thy kindness shall not depart from me, neither shall the covenant of Thy peace be removed.

38. Chorus

Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire; his words appeared like burning torches. Mighty kings by him were overthrown. He stood on the mount of Sinai, and heard the judgments of the future; and in Horeb, its vengeance. And when the Lord would take him away to heaven, Lo! there came a fiery chariot, with fiery horses; and he went by a whirlwind to heaven.

39. Aria

— *Tenor*

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in their heavenly Father's realm.

Joy on their head shall be for everlasting, and all sorrow and mourning shall flee away forever.

40. Recitative

— *Soprano*

Behold, God hath sent Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children unto their fathers; lest the Lord shall come and smite the earth with a curse.

41. Chorus

But the Lord from the north hath raised One, Who from the rising of the sun shall call upon His Name and come on princes. Behold, my Servant and mine Elect, in whom My soul delighteth! On Him the spirit of God shall rest; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of might and of counsel, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord: "I have raised One from the north, Who from the rising, on My Name shall call."

41a. Quartet

O come everyone that thirsteth, O come to the waters; O come unto Him. O hear, and your souls shall live forever.

42. Chorus

And then shall your light break forth as the light of the morning breaketh; and your health shall speedily spring forth then; and the glory of the Lord ever shall reward you.

Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy Name is in all the nations! Thou fillest heaven with thy glory. Amen.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

BRYN TERFEL bass-baritone

Welsh bass-baritone Sir Bryn Terfel has forged an extraordinary international career, performing regularly on the world's most prestigious concert stages and opera houses. After winning the Song Prize at the 1989 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition, he made his professional operatic debut in 1990 as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* with Welsh National Opera. The following year, he made both his international operatic debut as the Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte* at Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels and his American debut as Figaro at Santa Fe Opera.

Sir Bryn's operatic repertoire spans a wide range of leading roles, including Méphistophélès in *Faust*, the title role in *Aleko*, Leporello and the title role in *Don Giovanni*, Jochanaan in *Salome*, Scarpia in *Tosca*, Wotan in *The Ring Cycle*, Hans Sachs in *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, Dulcamara in *L'élisir d'amore*, Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, Balstrode in *Peter Grimes* and the title role in *Sweeney Todd*. He has performed these roles at major opera houses and festivals worldwide, including the Royal Opera House, the Metropolitan Opera, Bayerische Staatsoper, Wiener Staatsoper, Opernhaus Zürich, Welsh National Opera, Grange Park Opera and the Verbier Festival.

The 2026–27 season sees Sir Bryn take on a number of major engagements. A particular highlight is the launch of Oxford International Opera, of which he is Artistic Director, with a new fully staged production of Puccini's *Tosca* at the New Theatre, Oxford, in which he sings Scarpia. He also returns to the Royal Opera House as the title role in *Gianni Schicchi*, performs Dulcamara in *L'élisir d'amore* at Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich and takes on the title role in *Sweeney Todd* at Grange Park Opera. His concert engagements include performances in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne, as well as a recital at Harpa Hall in Reykjavík.

Sir Bryn is equally celebrated in concert, having appeared in recitals at the Herbstgold Festival, Staatsoper Hamburg, Stadttheater Klagenfurt, Müpa Budapest and the Tanglewood Festival, as well as performances such as *Belshazzar's Feast* with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra under Adam Hickox and a gala debut in Mexico with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Minería under

Roberto Kalb. In 2000, he founded the Faenol Festival (Gŵyl y Faenol) near his hometown in North Wales, a vibrant celebration of opera, classical and popular music that ran for nine years and became a beloved cultural fixture.

A Grammy, Classical Brit and Gramophone Award winner, Sir Bryn's extensive discography includes operas by Mozart, Wagner and Strauss, alongside more than fifteen solo albums spanning Lieder, American musical theatre, Welsh song and sacred repertoire, most recently the album *Bryn Terfel: Sea Songs*. He performed at the Coronation of King Charles III, singing the *Kyrie* by Paul Mealor, a historic national event.

He was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2003, received the Queen's Medal for Music in 2006 and was knighted for services to music in 2017. He holds the title of Austrian Kammersänger, was the final recipient of the Shakespeare Prize awarded by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation and in 2022 was honoured with a European Cultural Award at the Tonhalle, Zurich. In 2015, he received the Freedom of the City of London. In August 2026, he received the Medal of Owain Glyndŵr from the Machynlleth Festival, becoming the final recipient of the honour.



Photo by Mitch Jenkins, courtesy Deutsche Grammophon

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SAMANTHA CLARKE soprano

Australian/British soprano Samantha Clarke is the winner of the 2019 Guildhall Gold Medal and prize winner in the 2019 Grange International Festival Singing Competition. Samantha studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, as a Sir John Fisher Foundation and Independent Opera Scholar, under the tutelage of Mary Plazas. She is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama Opera School as a Baroness de Turckheim Scholar, Help Musicians, Tait Memorial and Countess of Munster Trust Scholar and studied with Yvonne Kenny. In addition to the 2019 Guildhall Gold Medal, Samantha is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Leverhulme Royal Northern College of Music Award, the Dame Eva Turner Award and the Michael and Joyce Kennedy Award for the singing of Strauss.

In the 2026/27 season, Samantha returns to West Australian Opera as Artist in Residence for her role debut as Juliette (*Roméo et Juliette*). She also returns to Opera Australia as Mimì (*La bohème*) and Liù (*Turandot*), both also role debuts. In concert, she joins the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Simone Young for Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* as Woglinde, as well as Mozart's Requiem conducted by Stephen Layton. Samantha also performs with the London Philharmonic Orchestra for *Das Paradies und die Peri* and with West Australian Symphony Orchestra and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for Handel's *Messiah*.

Her operatic roles include: Violetta (*La traviata*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*), Pamina (*Die Zauberflöte*), Countess (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Anne Trulove (*The Rake's Progress*), The Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*) and Theodora.

Recent engagements include Euridice (*Orfeo ed Euridice*) with Opera Australia; Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*) for the Seiji Ozawa Music Academy in Japan, Grange Festival and Opera Queensland; Countess (*Le nozze di Figaro*) at Garsington; Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) and Theodora for Pinchgut Opera; Woglinde (*Das Rheingold*), Marzelline (*Fidelio*), Waldvogel (*Siegfried*) and Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Simone Young; Violetta (*La traviata*) with The Grange Festival, Opera Australia and West Australian Opera; a US tour with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra; *Messiah* and *War Requiem* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra; Beethoven's Symphony No.9 in Tasmania and Britten's *Les Illuminations* with Western Australia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Edward Gardner.

Samantha features on the Resonus' *Samuel Barber: The Complete Songs* recording with accompanist Dylan Perez.



Photo by Benjamin Ealovega

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ELEANOR LYONS soprano

Australian soprano Eleanor Lyons has established herself as a Beethoven and Mahler specialist, with extensive performances and recordings of their works central to her artistic profile. Admired for the breadth of her musicianship and expressive clarity in lyric-dramatic repertoire, Lyons studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music before continuing her training in Russia and the UK.

Eleanor's operatic work includes her Semperoper Dresden debut as Leonore in Beethoven's *Fidelio*, a role to which she returns in the Beethoven Year 2027, and appearances in Australia as Dvořák's *Rusalka* and Tatyana in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Other roles include Anne Truelove in Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* and Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème* at the Hungarian State Opera, Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for Opera Australia, and Mimì and Gretchen in a staged adaptation of Schumann's *Szenen aus Goethes Faust* with Flemish Opera.

On the concert platform Lyons' close association with Beethoven and Mahler is particularly prominent, alongside major vocal repertoire including Britten's *War Requiem*, Verdi's *Messa da Requiem*, Bruckner's *Te Deum* and Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem*. Here in Australia Eleanor is a regular guest with the leading orchestras including the Sydney, Melbourne, Tasmania and West Australia Symphony Orchestras.

Outside of Australia, Eleanor is in great demand with orchestras such as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Tonkünstler Orchestra, RSO Wien, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic and Concertgebouw Orchestra, and with conductors including Philippe Herreweghe, Andris Nelsons, Iván Fischer, Lahav Shani and Simone Young.



Photo by Elisabeth Gattenburg

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

NOA BEINART contralto

With a voice of arresting depth and rare expressive power, Noa Beinart is rapidly carving out a distinct place on international stages. A true contralto, she moves seamlessly between eras and styles, from the intricate lyricism of the Baroque to the towering emotional and vocal demands of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

This season, Noe Beinart makes her debut with the London Symphony Orchestra, joining Sir Antonio Pappano for Mahler's *Resurrection Symphony* at the Barbican Centre, before touring Japan and Europe. She also appears with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* under the baton of Simone Young, and with the Bamberg Symphony in Beethoven's *Symphony No.9* conducted by Eva Ollikainen. On the operatic stage, she returns to the Royal Opera House as the First Norn in Barrie Kosky's new production of *Götterdämmerung*, conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano, and to Opernhaus Zürich as Erda in *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. She also reprises Erda in concert performances with Gianandrea Noseda at Carnegie Hall and the Philharmonie de Paris, before singing the First Norn in Tobias Kratzer's new production of *Götterdämmerung* at the Bayerische Staatsoper under the baton of Vladimir Jurowski.

In the 2025/26 season, Noa made her role debut as Handel's *Orlando* in a new production at the Opéra national de Lorraine and Opéra de Caen, conducted by Christophe Rousset. She also made her debut at the Mozartwoche in Salzburg as *Dritte Dame* in *Die Zauberflöte*, directed by Rolando Villazón, and returned to the Opéra national de Paris as the Third Nymph in *Rusalka*. At the Bayerische Staatsoper, she appeared as First Maid in *Elektra* and as Schwertleite in a new *Die Walküre* under Vladimir Jurowski and Tobias Kratzer. Concert highlights included her return to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra as Erda in *Siegfried* with Simone Young. She also joined Les Talens Lyriques and Christophe Rousset for a recording of Porpora's *Ifigenia in Aulide*.

In the 2024/25 season, Noa returned to the Wiener Staatsoper as Erda in *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, to Opernhaus Zürich as Amastre in *Seerse*, and to the Bayerische Staatsoper as Hannah in *The Passenger*. She made her Royal Danish Opera debut in the title role of

Vivaldi's *Griselda*. In concert, she sang Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with the Wiener Symphoniker under Philippe Jordan, the *Alto Rhapsody* with Eva Ollikainen, and Mahler's *Symphony No. 3* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Simone Young.

Recent operatic highlights include her Royal Opera House, Covent Garden debut as 1st Maid in Christof Loy's new *Elektra* under Sir Antonio Pappano, and returns to Opernhaus Zürich (*Die Walküre*), Bayerische Staatsoper (*Gianni Schicchi*, *Elektra*, *The Passenger*), Wiener Staatsoper (*Daphne*), and the Bayreuth Festival (*Götterdämmerung*). She made her debut with the Staatsoper Unter den Linden in Berlin as the First Norn in Dmitri Tcherniakov's production of *Götterdämmerung* conducted by Christian Thielemann and has appeared at the Opéra National de Paris (*Die Walküre*) and the Salzburg Festival (*Elektra*, *Die Zauberflöte*).

Noa Beinart was born in Tel Aviv and between 2020–2023 was a member of the ensemble at the Wiener Staatsoper, where she sang a wide range of roles including Erda (*Der Ring des Nibelungen*), Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), Auntie (*Peter Grimes*), and Suzuki (*Madama Butterfly*). She previously trained in the Opera Studio of the Bayerische Staatsoper and is a graduate of the Hanns Eisler Hochschule für Musik in Berlin.



Photo by Klara Leschanz

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SHANUL SHARMA tenor

Tenor Shanul Sharma made his operatic debut in 2014 with Opera Australia as Don Ramiro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, followed by the Madman in Berg's *Wozzeck* (2019) and the roles of Il Conte di Libenskof in Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims* and The Student in Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*, to critical acclaim in both Sydney and Melbourne. Shanul has also appeared in concert with the Opera Australia Orchestra for Mazda Opera in the Domain which was broadcast live on ABC Classic.

Shanul will make two significant debuts this year: for the Opera national de Paris in their new production of *Satyagraha* and for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Simone Young conducting, as Obadiah and Ahab in Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. He will also return to Opera Australia as Don Ottavio in the national tour of *Don Giovanni*.

Last year he began the year by singing the Indian National Anthem, unaccompanied, in front of a sell-out crowd at the Pink Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground and ended the year by singing the Australian National Anthem at the Boxing Day test in Melbourne. Further performances included the role of Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*) for Opera Australia in both their Sydney and Melbourne seasons; Opera by the Lakes; Arnold (*Guillaume Tell*) and the tenor solos in Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* for Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, and a Victorian regional tour of *A Night at the Opera*.

Most recently Shanul has performed the roles of Tamino (*The Magic Flute*), Gandhi (*Satyagraha*) and Almaviva (*The Barber of Seville*) on the national tour, all for Opera Australia; the role of Cardinale Francesco Barberini in the world premiere of Richard Mills' new opera, *Galileo*, for Victorian Opera; Opera Queensland's Bel Canto festival, and his Perth Festival debut in the festival's opening night concert, *Music of the Spheres*. Shanul also returned to Germany to perform the role of Gandhi in an extended season of *Satyagraha* (Glass) with Hannover State Opera.

With other companies Shanul has most notably appeared as Il Conte di Libenskof for the Bolshoi Theatre of Russia in Moscow (2020 & 2019) and the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro, Italy (2018); in the title role of Mozart's *Mitridate*,

Re di Ponto at Teatro Olimpico for Festival Vicenza in Lirica (Sept 2021); Almaviva for Teatro del Giglio in Lucca, Italy (2018); and Ernesto in Donizetti's *Don Pasquale* in Pavia, Italy (2017). Shanul also represented the Rossini Opera Festival at the LaVerdi Auditorium in Milan as the tenor soloist in Rossini's *Stabat Mater* and at the Norwegian National Opera in Oslo in 2018 and has performed the roles of Florville in Rossini's *Il Signor Bruschino*, the title role in Massenet's *Werther* and the tenor soloist in Mendelssohn's oratorio *Elijah*.

Shanul regularly appears in festivals and features at gala performances in Australia as well as in Italy and the United Kingdom, also performing in Christopher Tin's Grammy Award winning composition *Calling All Dawns* at the Llangollen Festival in Wales in 2017.

Shanul holds an MA in Advanced Vocal Studies from the Wales International Academy of Voice in Cardiff, UK and is a winner of the 2017 *Canto Lirico* discipline and the Rossini International Award from Pesaro, Italy. He remains the only artist to have won both the awards in the same calendar year. In 2019, he was awarded Broadway World Sydney's Best Male Performer in an Opera for his performance as The Student in *The Ghost Sonata* for Opera Australia and was a part of the company's Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Program from 2018-2021.



SYDNEY PHILARMONIA CHOIRS

BRETT WEYMARK OAM chorus master

One of Australia's foremost choral conductors, Brett Weymark OAM was appointed Artistic & Music Director in 2003, and he has conducted the Choirs throughout Australia as well as internationally. He has also conducted the Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland, West Australian and Tasmanian symphony orchestras, Orchestra of the Antipodes, Sydney Youth Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic, as well as productions for WAAPA, Pacific Opera and OzOpera, and he has performed with Opera Australia, Pinchgut Opera, Australian Chamber Orchestra, The Song Company and Musica Viva.

He studied singing and conducting at the University of Sydney and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, continuing his conducting studies with Simon Halsey, Vance George, Daniel Barenboim and Sir John Eliot Gardiner, amongst others.

His repertoire at SPC has included Bach's Passions and Christmas Oratorio, the Mozart, Verdi, Duruflé and Fauré requiems and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. He champions Australian composers and has premiered works by Matthew Hindson, Elena Kats-Chernin, John Peterson, Daniel Walker, Rosalind Page, Peter Sculthorpe, Andrew Schultz and Ross Edwards. In 2011 he premiered his own work *Brighton to Bondi* with the Festival Chorus. He has also conducted musical theatre programs including Bernstein's *Candide*, which won multiple BroadwayWorld Sydney awards.

Under his direction, SPC received a Helpmann Award for *Oedipus Rex* and *Symphony of Psalms*, directed by Peter Sellars, and was nominated for a Limelight Award for Purcell's *King Arthur*.

He was chorus master for the Adelaide Festival productions of *Saul* (2017), *Hamlet* (2018) and *Requiem* (2020) and he has prepared choirs for Sir Charles Mackerras, Zubin Mehta, Edo de Waart, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Sir Simon Rattle. He has recorded for the ABC and conducted film scores for *Happy Feet*, *Mad Max Fury Road* and *Australia*.

Recent conducting highlights include Bernstein's *Candide* and Joseph Twist's *Watershed: The Death of Dr Duncan* (Opera Australia), Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* (West Australian Opera), *Jandamarra* by Paul Stanhope and Steve Hawke (SSO), Michael Tippett's *A Child Of Our Time* (Adelaide Festival) and *Carousel* (State Opera South Australia).

In 2001, he was awarded an Australian Centenary Medal and in 2021 the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to the performing arts through music.

Brett is passionate about singing and the role that music plays in both the well-being of individuals and the health and vitality of a community's culture. He believes music can transform lives and should be accessible to all.



Photo by Keith Saunders

SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

ARTISTIC & MUSIC DIRECTOR BRETT WEYMARK OAM

Brett Weymark Artistic and Music Director

Elizabeth Scott Associate Music Director

Tim Cuniffe Assistant Chorus Master
and Principal Rehearsal Pianist

Benjamin Crowe and Naomi Hnat

Conductor Fellows

Dono Ng, Estella Roche, Stephen Walter

Rehearsal pianists

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs is Australia's premier choral organisation. Since it was founded in 1920, SPC has brought people together through music, and for over five decades, it has been the heartbeat of choral performance at the Sydney Opera House.

Led by Artistic and Music Director Brett Weymark OAM and Associate Music Director Dr Elizabeth Scott, and with more than 2,000 singers across six ensembles, SPC brings the full power of the human voice to dynamic music making. From blockbuster choral classics like Verdi's Requiem and

Orff's *Carmina Burana*, to the soaring soundtracks of films such as *Gladiator*, heartwarming musical theatre, and world premieres by leading Australian composers.

Each year, SPC performs approximately 50 performances across Sydney and beyond, collaborating with top-tier orchestras, soloists and conductors, performing regularly with many of Australia's most prominent arts companies and festivals. SPC has performed in the Sydney Opera House, Hamer Hall Melbourne, the Singapore National Football Stadium, Westminster Abbey, the Tokyo Dome and the Royal Albert Hall. Nagano Olympic Games and being the first (and most recent in 2026) Australian choir to perform at the BBC Proms. SPC is also proud to have been the choir of choice for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra since 1936.

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs concerts celebrate diversity – of voices, of stories, and of sound – with programs that allow singers and audiences to connect with an exhilarating range of music in languages from English to Gadigal, keeping things fresh with premieres, commissions and new interpretations of beloved classics.



Photo by Keith Saunders

SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

<u>SOPRANO</u>	Christine Li	Alisa-Jean Fifita	Louise Underwood	William Bond
Leonie Aitken	Maggie Lin	Kayla Flynn	Alanna Vaz	Jeremy Brett
Veronica Alfano	Blanche Ling	Susan Gandy	Angela Veerhuis	Peter Callaghan
Shelley Andrews	Maria Lopes	Sofia Garcia	Joanna Warren	Edwin Carter
Nicola Awad	Lucy Lush	Jennifer Gillman	Lydia Weir	Julian Coghlan
Briar Babington	Ellen Madhani	Jane Greaves	Marianna Wong	Daryl Colquhoun
Julie Bangura	Claudine McAloon	Charlotte Greig	Priscilla Yuen	Paul Couvret
Claire Bennett	Alison McDonald	Amanda Hamilton	Emily Zhou	Robert Cunningham
Jacqui Binetsky	Harriet McLean	Jenny Harry	<u>TENOR</u>	Nicholas Davison
Georgina Bitcon	Lindy McMahon	Kathryn Harwood	James Blomfield	Marco Deininger
Olga Bodrova	Sarah Moore	Vesna Hatezic	Langzi Chiu	David Fisher
Nikki Bogard	Sarah Muetterlein	Abigail Hatherley	Daniel Comarmond	Tom Forrester-Paton
Elizabeth Bragg	Jane Nieminska	Margaret Hofman	Robert Cousins	Oliver Golding
Catherine Bryant	Jayne Oishi	Sarah Howell	Malcolm Day	Robert Green
Kirsten Busby	Georgia Rivers	Haley Hutchins	Nicki Elkin	Oliver Hervir
Grace Carter	Jolanda Rotteveel	Louise Imray	Robert Elliott	Derek Hodgkins
Laura Carter	Allison Rowlands	Lindy Jefferson	Tony Green	Peter Hogg
Joann Chiang	Emma Sedlak	Ines Maison	Steven Hankey	David Jacobs
Anna Claude	Nastaran Shahnazi Nia	Hannah Mason	Nick Hazell	Ross Johnston
Anne Cooke	Josie Taylor	Clare McDonogh	Leo Hui	Bruce Lane
Pamela Cunningham	Britta Thelen	Janice McKeand	Benjamin Jackey	Selwyn Lemos
Prasadhini De Silva	Katherine Thompson	Maggie McKelvey	Mel Keenan	Sebastian Lush
Vanessa Downing	Sarah Thompson	Penelope Morris	Michael Kertesz	Chris Masson
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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

AMY MOORE soprano

Soprano Amy Moore moved to Australia from the UK in 2015. With a voice praised for its 'crystalline clarity', Amy is an adept soloist and ensemble singer, and a particular affinity for both Early and Contemporary Music.

In Australia, Amy has performed solo concerts with the Melbourne, Tasmanian and Sydney symphony orchestras, Pinchgut Opera, Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Bach Akademie Australia and Ensemble Apex, with whom she gave the Australian premiere of Kitty Xiao's *In flesh ii* for soprano, chamber ensemble and electronics.

A dynamic and versatile musician with exceptional aural acuity, Amy is increasingly sought after as a director, conductor, vocal ensemble coach and voice teacher. Amy was Co-Artistic Director of The Song Company from 2023 to 2025, taking particular pride in mentoring and coaching emerging talent through their Artist Development Program.

Amy is co-founder and Artistic Director of CASTALIA Vocal Consort and was conductor from 2022 to 2025 of Phoenix Choir in Blackheath.

During her distinguished career in the UK, she performed with many of the leading ensembles, including The Tallis Scholars, Tenebrae, The BBC Singers and The English Concert. As a core member of EXAUDI Vocal Ensemble, Amy premiered numerous new works and collaborated with some of the world's foremost contemporary orchestras.

Her solo career highlights include radio broadcasts with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, performances with The Gabrieli Consort, and concert appearances with the Bochumer Symphoniker, Irish Baroque Orchestra, Hanover Band, and London Contemporary Orchestra.



SUSANNAH LAWERGREN soprano

Soprano Susannah Lawergren has developed a reputation for her versatility, 'stunning vocal expression', and 'compelling stagecraft', performing both as a specialist ensemble member and soloist. A principal artist with Bach Akademie Australia since its inception and The Song Company for over ten years, her repertoire varies widely, bridging art song, opera, oratorio, early music and contemporary music. She has performed with some of the foremost musicians and ensembles in Australia, including Sydney Chamber Opera, Opera Australia, William Barton, Genevieve Lang, Ensemble Offspring, Sydney Philharmonia, ACO, SSO, MSO and the Australia Ensemble as well as international artists like Voces8, the Wallfisch Ensemble, Forma Antiqua, Eamonn Dougan and Nigel North.

Susannah's repertoire varies widely, from performing Elena Kats-Chernin's *Wild Swans* flying harnessed through the air with aerialists Legs on the Wall, singing in the semichorus of Brett Dean's *Hamlet* for the Adelaide Festival and OA, and performing an operatic recital at Australia House in Colombo, Sri Lanka. She has worked with many emerging and established composers, including premieres and recordings by Ross Edwards and Elena Kats-Chernin, a new commission by Michael Bakrncev with Apeiron Baroque, a recording by Elliot Gyger with Halcyon and multiple premieres with Hourglass Ensemble, the Song Company and Bach Akademie Australia. This year she recorded all of Bach's Motets with BAA, and tours as a soloist with them for Arts in the Regions and Renaissance Tours. Next month she joins Sydney Chamber Opera for performances of Es Devlin's *Come Home Again*, marking the opening of Powerhouse Parramatta.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

HANNAH FRASER mezzo soprano

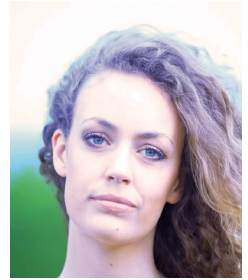
Hannah Fraser is a highly regarded mezzo soprano specialising in historically informed performance, with a repertoire spanning from early music to contemporary compositions of today. Known for her expressive artistry and technical finesse, she has captivated audiences across Australia and internationally.

She has performed with some of Australia's most esteemed ensembles and orchestras, including Pinchgut Opera, Bach Akademie Australia, Canberra Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, The Song Company, Australian Vocal Ensemble and many more. Whether performing the intricate ornamentation of Baroque arias, the precision of contemporary works, or the grandeur of symphonic repertoire, Hannah brings depth and nuance to every performance.

Her excellence in early music performance was recognised on the international stage when she was awarded the Ex-Aequo Prize at the XIII Ancient Fatima Terzo Early Music Competition in Italy.

Hannah honed her craft under the guidance of internationally acclaimed coaches when she was selected from around the world to join the Academy of Belcanto "Rodolfo Celletti" in collaboration with the reputable Festival della Valle d'Itria, Italy.

Beyond a busy performance schedule, she is committed to education, masterclasses, and outreach programs. Her work with Moorambilla Voices reflects her dedication to nurturing the empowerment of children, celebrating Australia's young talent and rich cultural heritage through art, dance and music.



ELEANOR ADENEY alto

Eleanor Adeney, alto and violinist, is Artistic Director and Co-Founder of One Equal Music, Director of Music at the Brisbane Oratory and made her debut in 2025 as a Principal Artist with leading Sydney-based ensembles, Bach Akademie Australia and The Song Company.

Hailed by *Limelight Magazine* as a 'gifted alto anchor', Eleanor is regularly engaged as an oratorio soloist for local Brisbane ensembles with repertoire highlights including Rachmaninov's *Vespers*, Duruflé's Requiem, Handel's *Messiah*, Charpentier's *Te Deum*, Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostri*, the full collection of Bach's cantatas for solo alto, excerpts from the Mozart Requiem with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and most recently, Vivaldi's Gloria with Camerata, Queensland's Chamber Orchestra in QPAC Concert Hall.

Above all, Eleanor is driven by a love of ensemble singing. She has sung professionally in Brisbane's major churches – from St Stephen's Cathedral Schola to Lay Clerkships at St John's Cathedral and All Saints' Wickham Terrace – and gets a great deal of satisfaction from singing challenging one-per-part consort music by composers such as Gesualdo, Britten, and Poulenc.

An Honours Graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Advanced performance, Classical Violin, Eleanor balances out her time spent singing by playing the violin in session ensembles and has performed with popular artists including Michael Bubl , Delta Goodrem, Ms. Lauryn Hill and the Ministry of Sound as well as esteemed conductors including Sir Mark Elder CH CBE and Simone Young AM. Eleanor is the grateful custodian of a 1798 French Violin (anon) on loan to her by a private patron.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

TIMOTHY REYNOLDS tenor

Timothy Reynolds is highly sought after as a soloist and ensemble singer across Australia, and is praised for his vocal clarity and expressive musicality spanning oratorio, opera, and chamber music.

Timothy is widely recognised for his exceptional interpretations of Bach – including as the Evangelist in the *St John Passion* – appearing with Australia's foremost early music ensembles, including the Bach Akademie Australia, Pinchgut Opera, Ludovico's Band, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, La Compañía, the Canberra Bach Ensemble and international groups The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Gesualdo Consort Amsterdam.

Timothy has appeared with Australia's major orchestras, including the Melbourne and Sydney symphony orchestras, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra and Melbourne Chamber Orchestra. On the opera stage he has performed principal roles with Victorian Opera, Pinchgut Opera, Oper Stuttgart, Hampstead Garden Opera, and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

A passionate and versatile ensemble singer, Timothy regularly performs with a wide variety of groups across Australia. He joined The Song Company as principal tenor in 2023, is a founding member of ensembles The Consort of Melbourne and Melbourne Octet, and has performed with other leading groups including e21 and Luminscence Chamber Singers.

Notable performances in 2026 saw Timothy appear as the Evangelist in the *St John Passion* with the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, and with the Australian Boys Choir in Melbourne. Later this year he will appear with the Bach Akademie Australia in multiple programs and with the ACO with Pinchgut Opera for Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*.

LOUIS HURLEY tenor

Sydney-based tenor Louis Hurley is a versatile performer whose work spans opera, concert and chamber music.

Recent operatic engagements include Victorian Opera's *The Coronation of Poppea*, alongside a long association with Pinchgut Opera, where he has appeared in numerous productions including *The Fairy Queen*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Giustino*, *Orontea* and *Acis and Galatea*. Louis was also the inaugural recipient of The Humanity Foundation Taryn Fiebig Scholarship with Pinchgut Opera. His operatic work encompasses repertoire from the early Baroque through to contemporary works.

On the concert platform, Louis has performed with leading Australian orchestras and ensembles including the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. Internationally, he has appeared as a soloist at Wigmore Hall and with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican.

As a chamber musician, Louis regularly performs with ensembles and in recital at festivals and concert series around Australia, including regular appearances with The Song Company, Australian Vocal Ensemble (AVÉ) and Cantillation.

Louis studied at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts before completing a Master of Music at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in London, where he was a Hazell Scholar.



Photo by Charlie Kinross



Photo by Blair Winters

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

HAYDEN BARRINGTON baritone

After honing his skills at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Hayden discovered his love for consort singing, oratorios, and music education. He has worked with renowned musical groups such as the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Australian Brandenburg Choir and has been a core member of The Song Company.

As a soloist, Hayden has performed across Australia in numerous oratorios. In addition to his performance accomplishments, Hayden is also a voice teacher and has inspired countless musicians through his work as a choral director over the past decade.

Hayden established the Chamber Choir at the Wollongong Conservatorium and was its Director for five years. He was appointed as Artistic Director for the Sutherland Shire Choral Society in 2025, taking their rich 50-year history and steering the ensemble into the future.



ANDREW O'CONNOR bass-baritone

For more than a decade Perth-born Andrew O'Connor has maintained a busy freelance career encompassing opera, the concert platform, and vocal chamber music and the classroom. Praised for his 'remarkable musicianship' (*Limelight*) and 'textured, fine-wine bass-baritone' (*Arts Hub*) he has appeared with many of Australia's leading music organisations.

Andrew has sung more than twenty projects for Pinchgut Opera and will soon take the stage in Handel's *Semele* and Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* with the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Later this year he debuts as bass soloist with the NZ Symphony Orchestra in Handel's *Messiah*, which he sang with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in 2025; and in 2024 he gave the World Premiere of Katy Abbott's *Hidden Thoughts III* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He is a Lay Clerk at St Mary's Cathedral Sydney and in 2021 became a founding member of Australian Vocal Ensemble. He was a member of The Song Company 2015–19; 23–26 and teaches at Sydney Grammar School.



Photo by Jared Leibowitz

Internationally he has worked with the VOCES8 Foundation and in 2023 was a member of the American Bach Soloists Academy in San Francisco.

His debut solo album *Transformations* with Van Diemen's Band features bass cantatas by Buxtehude, Bruhns, Tunder and Schütz alongside new Australian commissions from Brooke Shelley and Alice Chance. Other 2026 highlights include the premiere of *Chronicle* 时・录 with SANSARA at the Aldeburgh Festival and further staged performances in London; and other touring, recording, and education projects with Bach Akademie Australia, Australian Vocal Ensemble, WA Renaissance Music Summer School, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Moorambilla Voices and more.

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Alexandra Osborne
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Assistant Concertmaster
Sophie Cole
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Emily Long
Alex Mitchell
Benjamin Tjoa
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Ita Buttrose ^{AC} ^{OBE}
Yvonne Kenny ^{AM}
Wendy McCarthy ^{AC}
Dene Olding ^{AM}
Leo Schofield ^{AM}

MANAGEMENT & STAFF

Craig Whitehead
Chief Executive Officer
Jocelyn Baker
Executive Officer

ARTISTIC PLANNING

Melissa King
Director of Artistic Planning
Sam Torrens
*Associate Director –
Concerts and Programming*
Andrew Groch
Executive Producer
Vico Thai
Producer Artistic Planning
Sarah Thomas
Concert Manager
Ilmar Leetberg
Artist Liaison Manager

Library

Alastair McKean
Head of Library
Victoria Grant, Mary-Ann Mead
Library

BUSINESS SERVICES

Sarah Falzarano
Director of Finance
Daniela Ramirez
Finance Manager
Laura Soutter
Payroll Manager
Jonathan Zaw
IT Manager
Alex Hong
Assistant Accountant
Anel Jansen van Vuuren
Accounts Payable Officer

DEVELOPMENT

Jennifer Drysdale
Director of Development
Rachel Shafran
Development Manager
Benjamin Moh
Head of Corporate Relations
Rebecca Zatti
Corporate Relations Officer
Fleur Griffiths
Head of Philanthropy
Patricia Laksmono
Events Manager
Alison Eom
Philanthropy Coordinator

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

John Nolan
Director of Learning & Engagement
Daniella Garner
Program Manager, Schools & Families
Giulian Favrin
*Program Manager, Artist Development
& Public Engagement*
Alice Jarman-Powis
Learning & Engagement Coordinator

MARKETING

Charles Buchanan
Director of Marketing
Alexandra Barlow
Head of Communications & Content

Craig Abercrombie
Content Producer
Hugh Robertson
Editorial Manager
Brittany Wyper
Social Media Specialist
Tina Ma
Publicity Coordinator
Andrea Reitano
Head of Growth Marketing
Nicola Solomou
Senior Marketing Manager
Katelyn Del Rosario
Digital Marketing Specialist
Amy Zhou
Graphic Designer
Laura Dang
Marketing Specialist
Lynn McLaughlin
Head of Lifecycle Marketing
Douglas Emery
Senior Marketing Manager & Insights Analyst
Elinor Hillock
Database Specialist
Olivia Georgas
Loyalty Marketing Coordinator

Customer Relations

Adrian Ward
Customer Relations Manager
Adriana Law
Customer Relations Project Manager
Meg Chaseling
Customer Relations Coordinator
Jennifer Calacoci, Milly McPherson
Customer Relations Team Leaders
Maia Jelavic-Cummins
Customer Relations Representative

OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION

Kerry-Anne Cook
Director of Operations & Production
Aeva O’Dea
Operations Manager
Shanell Bielawa, Elissa Seed
Production Managers
Jacinta Dockrill
Deputy Production Manager
Jordan Blackwell, Jess Hughes,
Rory Knott, Matthew Landi,
Harvey Lynn, Ella Tomkins
Production Assistants
Sophie Patava
Operations & Production Coordinator

ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT

Aernout Kerbert
Director of Orchestra Management
Brighdie Chambers
Orchestra Manager
Emma Winestone
Deputy Orchestra Manager
Joseph Hourigan
Orchestra Assistant

PEOPLE & CULTURE

Daniel Bushe
Director of People & Culture
Rosie Marks-Smith
Head of Culture & Wellbeing
Keanna Mauch
People & Culture Advisor
Sue Burnet
Work Health & Safety Specialist

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