

FRIDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER | 7PM  
DR JOHN GALLAGHER CONCERT CHAMBER



**FAAMANU FONOTI-FUIMAONO**  
SOLO RECITAL

WITH NICK FLETCHER, PIANO



TE PAE KŌKAKO  
**TANZOS**

THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND OPERA STUDIO

# Programme

## PIANIST - NICK FLETCHER

Oratorio Aria: **'For the mountains shall depart'** - *Elijah* - Mendelssohn

Song Cycle: *A Shropshire Lad* - Butterworth

1. **Loveliest of Trees**
2. **When I Was One-and-Twenty**
3. **Look Not in My Eyes**
4. **Think No More, Lad**
5. **The Lads in Their Hundreds**
6. **Is My Team Ploughing?**

Duet: *Dirge for Fidele* - Vaughan Williams

1. **Fear no more the heat o' the sun**

Baritone: Tomairangi Henare

Aria: **Hai gia vinta la causa... Vedro mentrio sospiro** - *Le nozze di Figaro* - Mozart

### INTERVAL - 10 minutes

Lieder: Selections from *Drei Lieder* - Strauss & *Sechs einfache Lieder* - Korngold

1. **Schneeglöckchen**
2. **Allerseelen**
3. **Liebesbriefchen**

Duet: **Doute de la lumière** - *Hamlet* - Thomas

Soprano: Jasmine Jessen

Aria: **Questo Amor** - *Edgar* - Puccini

## Faamanu Fonoti-Fuimaono - Baritone

Faamanu is a proud Samoan/Kiwi baritone from Flaxmere, Hastings, currently completing his Master in Advanced Opera Studies, under the tutelage of Nikki-Li Hartliep, at the University of Waikato, as part of Te Pae Kōkako TANZOS (The Aotearoa New Zealand Opera Studio). His major engagements include NZ Opera's *Rigoletto* (2024), and Festival Opera's *La Traviata* (2019), *Madama Butterfly* (2017), *La Bohème* (2016), *Carmen* (2018), and *Harasta in The Cunning Little Vixen* (2022). He was in the ensemble for NZ Opera's *Orfeo ed Euridice* or (m)Orpheus, and sang in the chorus in Verdi's *Requiem*, *Il Trovatore*, *Die tote Stadt*, and *Tristan und Isolde* with international casts in collaboration with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. In 2023, he toured with NZ Opera for their Opera in Schools Tour, performing Respighi's *The Sleeping Beauty*, returning in 2025 to tour Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* to over 10,000 students across the country



## Nick Fletcher - Piano

The British Pianist and Conductor Nick Fletcher is the Deputy Head of Music for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh, Royal Academy of Music and the National Opera Studio. He has worked as a freelance répétiteur with multiple UK opera companies, including Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Opera North and English National Opera. From 2016-2018 he was a member of of the Jette Parker Artists programme at the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, making his main stage debut conducting the Orchestra of Opera North in the 2018 Jette Parker Summer Show. After his time on the programme ended he immediately returned to the Royal Opera to work on the 2018 Ring cycle with Sir Antonio Pappano, who he subsequently assisted on the Royal Opera's 2024 Japan tour.



From 2018-2025 he was a member of music staff at the Royal Danish Opera in Copenhagen where, alongside his regular duties he conducted over 35 performances for the company, including a Danish tour of *Così fan Tutte* with the Aalborg Symphony, and in Copenhagen conducting performances of, amongst others *Kat'a Kabanova*, *Simon Boccanegra* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*. He also conducted the Danish National Orchestra in the first week of rehearsals for their concert performance of *Parsifal* with Adam Fischer.

# Programme Notes

**Aria: 'For the mountains shall depart' - *Elijah* - Mendelssohn (1809-1847) - Libretto by Julius Schubring (1839-1914), English translation by William Bartholomew (1831-1919)**

Felix Mendelssohn had a deep affection for England and its people, visiting the British Isles ten times during his short life of thirty-eight years. He was warmly received at the London Philharmonic and at the Birmingham Festivals of 1837 and 1840, where he conducted his works *St. Paul* and *Hymn of Praise*. It was therefore natural that the Birmingham Festival Committee turned to him to compose a new work for their 1846 Festival—one that would enhance the Festival's growing reputation.

The libretto for *Elijah* was written in German, based on texts from the Lutheran Bible. Because the oratorio was intended for performance in England, Mendelssohn asked William Bartholomew (1793-1867), who had translated many of his works, to prepare an English version. Mendelssohn closely supervised the translation through detailed correspondence, refining both the 1846 original and the 1847 revised versions.

The phrase "for the mountains shall depart" comes from the Book of Isaiah, expressing the idea that while great things may pass away, God's love and covenant remain constant. In *Elijah*, the prophet sings these words as he returns to God, and Mendelssohn sets the text with calm, devotional music—a gentle contrast to the storm that precedes it.

**Song Cycle: *A Shropshire Lad* - Butterworth (1885 - 1916) - Text by: A. E. Housman (1859-1936)**

George Butterworth was born in London on July 12, 1885, and died in Pozières, France, on August 5, 1916. *A Shropshire Lad* received its first performance at the Leeds Festival on October 2, 1913, with Arthur Nikisch conducting the London Symphony Orchestra.

As a young man, Butterworth developed a deep interest in English folksong. Alongside his friend and fellow composer Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), he travelled through the English countryside collecting and studying traditional songs. These experiences had a lasting influence on both composers' musical styles. Butterworth's promising career was tragically cut short when he was killed in action at the Battle of the Somme at the age of thirty-one.

Between 1911 and 1912, Butterworth composed a series of songs for voice and piano based on poems from *A Shropshire Lad* (1896) by Alfred Edward Housman (1859-1936). Housman's poems reflect on youth, love, and mortality, expressed with striking simplicity and emotional honesty. Butterworth's settings, steeped in the style of English folksong, capture both the tenderness and melancholy of Housman's verse. The pastoral imagery and nostalgic tone of the poems evoke an idealised vision of rural England—beautiful yet shadowed by irony and loss.

The songs follow a loose narrative. 'Loveliest of Trees' opens the cycle with a reflection on the fleeting beauty of spring, its gentle falling motif suggesting both renewal and mortality. 'When I was One-and-Twenty', the only song to use an existing folk tune, conveys a carefree mood as a young man ignores wise advice about love—until experience teaches him its truth. In 'Look Not in My Eyes', the myth of Narcissus becomes a metaphor for lost love, while 'Think No More, Lad', with its urgent piano accompaniment, broadens the theme to the reckless spirit of youth in the face of danger. 'The Lads in Their Hundreds' paints a lively scene at Ludlow Fair, yet its cheerful tone is tinged with foreboding for those soon to go to war. The final song, 'Is My Team Ploughing?', is a poignant dialogue between a fallen soldier and his surviving friend, each with his own melody, bringing the cycle to a deeply moving close.

**Duet: 'Dirge for Fidele' - Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) - Text by: William Shakespeare (1564-1616)**

Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Dirge for Fidele* is a setting of Shakespeare's elegiac poem from *Cymbeline* (Act IV, Scene 2), which mourns the supposed death of the character Fidele (Imogen in disguise). In this poignant part song, Vaughan Williams combines his love of English poetry with his distinctive musical language, steeped in the modal harmonies and gentle lyricism of English folk song.

The piece unfolds as a tender lament, its slow tempo and rich vocal textures evoking a deep sense of mourning and stillness. Subtle dissonances and modal inflections heighten the atmosphere of sorrow, while the flowing lines of the voices suggest both grief and consolation. *Dirge for Fidele* belongs to Vaughan Williams' broader exploration of English literary and musical heritage, demonstrating his remarkable gift for transforming timeless words into equally timeless music.

**Recit. and Aria: 'Hai già vinta la causa... Vedrò mentr'io sospiro' - *Le nozze di Figaro* - Mozart (1756-1791) - Text by: Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838)**

*The Marriage of Figaro* is a comic Italian opera in four acts, composed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and premiered in Vienna in 1786. Based on Beaumarchais's play and serving as a sequel to *The Barber of Seville*, the opera follows the events of "The Mad Day," during which the servants Figaro and Susanna attempt to marry while outwitting their employer, Count Almaviva. The Count, now unfaithful to his wife, seeks to revive an old feudal right allowing him to spend the wedding night with Susanna. While this scheme is resolved by the second act, the later scenes focus on the Countess's efforts to win back her husband's affection, exploring love in its many forms—romantic, jealous, and forgiving.

The third act opens in a grand chamber, where the Count broods over the tangled situation before him. Susanna enters, following her mistress's instructions, and pretends to agree to a secret meeting with the Count that evening. Their exchange unfolds in the duet "Crudel! perché finora?" ("Cruel girl, why did you make me wait so long?"), in which the Count seeks assurance of her sincerity. Their conversation is interrupted by Figaro's arrival; the Count hides as Susanna whispers to Figaro that he has won his legal case. Misinterpreting this, the Count grows furious and vows revenge in his aria "Hai già vinta la causa! ... Vedrò, mentr'io sospiro."

Hai già vinta la causa!  
Cosa sento?  
In qual laccio cadea?  
Perfidi! io voglio di tal modo punirvi,  
A piacer mio la sentenza sarà.  
Ma s'ei pagasse la vecchia pretendente?  
Pagarla! In qual maniera?  
E poi v'è Antonio  
Che all'incognito Figaro ricusa  
Di dare una nipote in matrimonio.  
Coltivando l'orgoglio di questo mentecatto..  
Tutto giova a un raggiro...  
Il colpo è fatto.  
Vedrò mentr'io sospiro  
Felice un servo mio?  
E un ben che invan desio,  
Ei posseder dovrà?  
Vedrò per man d'amore  
Unita a un vile oggetto  
Chi in me destò un affetto,  
Che per me poi non ha  
Ah no! lasciar in pace  
Non vo' questo contento,  
Tu non nascesti, audace,  
Per dare a me tormento,  
E forse ancor per ridere  
Di mia infelicità.  
Già la speranza sola  
delle vendette mie  
Quest'anima consola,  
E giubilar mi fa.

"You've won the case already!"  
What do I hear?  
What trap have I fallen into?  
Scoundrels! I'll punish you in this way,  
The decision will be how I want it.  
But if he pays off the old plaintiff?  
Pay her! How?  
And then there's Antonio,  
Who won't give his niece in  
marriage to the nobody Figaro.  
To nurture that lamebrain's pride...  
Everything's useful for the plot...  
The die is cast.  
Shall I, while I'm sighing,  
See one of my servants happy?  
And the good thing I want in vain,  
Shall he have it?  
Shall I see the woman who woke in me  
A feeling she doesn't have for me  
United to a vile object  
By the hand of love?  
Ah no! I won't leave  
This happiness in peace,  
You weren't born, rash person,  
To torture me,  
And maybe to laugh  
At my unhappiness.  
Now only the hope  
Of the revenges I'll have  
Consoles this soul  
And makes me rejoice.

**Lieder Collection: 'Schneeglöckchen', 'Allerseelen' and 'Liebesbriefchen' - Korngold (1897-1957) and Strauss (1872-1958) - Text by: Paul Morand (1864-1949)**

Erich Wolfgang Korngold was a remarkable Austrian composer and one of the most celebrated child prodigies of his time. Hailed as a genius in the tradition of Mozart, he composed sophisticated and expressive works while still in his teens.

The songs heard tonight are filled with nostalgia, tenderness, and youthful beauty—qualities all the more striking given that Korngold was only fourteen when he began composing them. Even at this young age, he had already found a distinctive voice, blending the lyric grace of Mozart, the warmth of Schubert, and the emotional depth of Mahler. Mahler himself famously called Korngold “the new Mozart.” Korngold’s later career took a dramatic turn. With the rise of Nazism in the 1930s, he left Vienna for the United States, where he became one of the pioneers of the Hollywood film score. His lush, romantic style shaped the sound of cinema and continues to influence film music today—a lasting echo of the Vienna he never returned to.

Two of his *Einfache Lieder* (“Simple Songs”), written between 1911 and 1913, are featured in this programme. *Schneeglöckchen* (“Snowdrops”), the first song in the cycle, sets a poem by Joseph von Eichendorff. Composed in 1911 and published in 1916, it evokes the fragile beauty of early spring and the wistful melancholy of Romantic poetry, with the snowdrop symbolising both renewal and transience. *Liebesbriefchen* (“Little Love Letter”), the fourth song in the set, was composed around 1913 to a text by the little-known poet Elisabeth Honold. It is an intimate declaration of love and devotion, simple in form yet deeply heartfelt.

Richard Strauss was one of Germany’s greatest composers and a master of orchestration. He elevated the symphonic tone poem to new expressive heights and achieved equal acclaim as an opera composer and conductor. Influenced by Wagner, Strauss developed a style of brilliant colour and sweeping emotion. Though he held prominent musical posts in Munich, Weimar, and Berlin, his uneasy relationship with the German authorities during the 1930s complicated his later years and led him to spend his final period in self-imposed exile in Switzerland. *Allerseelen* (“All Souls’ Day”) is one of eight songs from Strauss’ *Acht Gedichte aus Letzte Blätter*, Op. 10, composed in 1885 when he was just twenty-one. Set to a poem by Hermann Gilm von Rosenegg, this song combines an ardent melody with rich harmonic colour to express love remembered and renewed. Its haunting beauty and emotional immediacy have made *Allerseelen* one of Strauss’ most beloved lieder.

### **Schneeglöckchen**

'S war doch wie ein leises Singen  
In dem Garten heute Nacht,  
Wie wenn laue Lüfte gingen:  
"Süße Glöcklein, nun erwacht,  
Denn die warme Zeit wir bringen,  
Eh's noch Jemand hat gedacht." --  
'S war kein Singen, s' war ein Küssen,  
Rührt' die stillen Glöcklein sacht,  
Daß sie alle tönen müssen  
Von der künft'gen bunten Pracht.  
Ach, sie konnten 's nicht erwarten,  
Aber weiß vom letzten Schnee  
War noch immer Feld und Garten,  
Und sie sanken um vor Weh.  
So schon manche Dichter streckten  
Sangesmüde sich hinab,  
Und der Frühling, den sie weckten,  
Rauschet über ihrem Grab

For it was like a quiet singing  
In the garden this past night,  
As if warm breezes were saying:  
"Sweet little bells, now wake up,  
For we are bringing warm weather  
Sooner than anyone might have thought."  
It was not a singing, it was a kissing,  
It gently touched the silent little bells,  
So that they all had to ring out the tidings  
Of the coming colourful splendour.  
Ah, they could not await it,  
But the fields and gardens  
Were still white from the last snowfall  
And the snowdrops sank to the ground for woe.  
Thus many poets have already  
Lain down, weary of singing,  
And the springtime that they wakened  
Soughs over their graves

### **Allerseelen**

Stell auf den Tisch die duftenden Reseden,  
Die letzten roten Asten trag herbei,  
Und laß uns wieder von der Liebe reden,  
Wie einst im Mai.  
Gib mir die Hand, daß ich sie heimlich drücke,  
Und wenn man's sieht, mir ist es einerlei,  
Gib mir nur einen deiner süßen Blicke,  
Wie einst im Mai.  
Es blüht und duftet heut auf jedem Grabe,  
Ein Tag im Jahr ist ja den Toten frei,  
Komm an mein Herz, daß ich dich wieder habe,  
Wie einst im Mai.

Set on the table the fragrant mignonettes,  
Bring in the last red asters,  
And let us talk of love again  
As once in May.  
Give me your hand to press in secret,  
And if people see, I do not care,  
Give me but one of your sweet glances  
As once in May.  
Each grave today has flowers and is fragrant,  
One day each year is devoted to the dead;  
Come to my heart and so be mine again,  
As once in May.



## Liebesbriefchen

Fern von dir  
Denk' ich dein,  
Kindelein,  
Einsam bin ich,  
Doch mir blieb  
Treue Lieb'.  
Was ich denk',  
Bist nur,  
Herzensruh.  
Sehe stets  
Hold und licht  
Dein Gesicht.  
Und in mir  
Immerzu  
Tönest du.  
Bist's allein,  
Die Welt  
Mir erhellt.  
Ich bin dein,  
Liebchen fein,  
Denke mein!

Far from you  
I think of you,  
Dear child.  
I am lonely,  
But my love  
Has stayed true.  
I think  
Only of you,  
O peace of my heart.  
I always see,  
Fair and bright,  
Your face.  
And you sound  
Within me  
Always.  
It is you alone  
Who brightens  
For me the world.  
I am yours,  
My sweetest,  
Think of me!

## Duet: 'Doute de la lumière' - *Hamlet* - Thomas (1811-1896) - Text by: Michael Carre (1821-1872) and Jules Barbier (1825-1901)

Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet* is the most successful of several operatic adaptations of Shakespeare's great tragedy and stands as a prime example of the French grand opera tradition that flourished in 19th-century Paris. This genre captivated audiences with its large-scale productions, featuring imposing choruses, elaborate ensembles, and opulent staging, all framing moments of striking vocal display.

Although Thomas and his librettists inevitably altered and condensed Shakespeare's play, the drama of a prince paralyzed by doubt and moral conflict proved ideally suited to musical expression. Beyond its spectacle, the opera also explores deeper psychological dimensions. Ophélie's mad scene offers one of the most dazzling and poignant moments ever written for coloratura soprano, while Hamlet's music sustains a brooding intensity that made the role a favourite showcase for the great baritones of the age. Like many works of the grand opera tradition, *Hamlet* fell out of fashion in the early 20th century, as audiences turned toward new forms of music drama. In recent decades, however, it has enjoyed a welcome revival, appreciated anew for its dramatic depth and lyrical invention.

Two months after the death of King Hamlet, fanfares announce the marriage of his brother and successor, Claudius, to the widowed Queen Gertrude. Prince Hamlet, mourning his father, stands apart from the celebrations, tormented by grief and disgusted by his mother's haste to remarry. His brooding is interrupted by Ophélie, daughter of the Lord Chamberlain, Polonius. She loves Hamlet and is troubled by rumours that he plans to leave the court. Reassuring her of his devotion, Hamlet joins her in the tender duet "Doute de la lumière."

**H:** Vains regrets! - tendresse éphémère! ...  
Mon père tombe sous les coups  
Du destin aveugle et jaloux! ...  
Deux mois se sont à peine écoulés ... et ma mère  
Est au bras d'un nouvel époux!  
- Voilà ces larmes éternelles!  
Quelques jours ont tout emporté!  
O femme! ... tu t'appelles  
Inconstance et fragilité!  
**O:** Monseigneur ...  
**H:** Ophélie!  
**O:** Hélas! votre âme, en proie  
A d'éternels regrets, - condamne notre joie! ...  
Et le roi, m'a-t-on dit, a reçu vos adieux! ...  
Vous fuyez cette cour, vous partez! ...

**H:** Vains regrets! - ephemeral tenderness! ...  
My father falls under the blows  
Blind and jealous destiny! ...  
Two months have just passed ... and my mother  
Is on the arm of a new husband!  
- These are the eternal tears!  
A few days have taken everything away!  
O woman! ... you're named  
Inconstancy and fragility!  
**O:** My lord...  
**H:** Ophelia!  
**O:** Alas! your soul, prey  
To eternal regrets, - condemn our joy! ...  
And the king, I am told, has received your farewells! ...  
You are fleeing this court, you are leaving! ...

**H:** Ophélie!  
**O:** Pourquoi détournez-vous les yeux?  
 Quel sombre désespoir vous chasse de ces lieux?  
 Dois-je penser que votre cœur m'oublie?  
**H:** Non, j'en atteste les cieux!  
 Je ne suis pas de ceux dont l'âme  
 Sait oublier en un jour  
 Les doux serments de l'amour! ...  
 Je n'ai pas le cœur d'une femme.  
**O:** Ah! cruel! – Ophélie a-t-elle mérité  
 Que vous lui fassiez cette injure?  
**H:** Pardonne, chère créature!  
 Je ne t'accuse pas! – Ton âme chaste et pure  
 Se révèle dans ta beauté! ...  
 – Ah! doute de la lumière,  
 Doute du soleil et du jour,  
 Doute des cieux et de la terre,  
 Mais ne doute jamais, jamais de mon amour!  
**O:** Hélas! Hamlet, cet amour même  
 Ne pouvait vous retenir!  
 Songeriez-vous à me fuir,  
 Si vous m'aimiez autant que je vous aime?  
**H:** Non, je ne te fuyais pas!  
 Je fuyais l'inconstance humaine! ...  
 Ton image calme et sereine  
 Eût dans la solitude accompagné mes pas.  
 Mais ta présence me console,  
 pleurs sont moins amers par l'amour essuyés.  
 Et c'est assez d'une parole  
 Pour me retenir à tes pieds! ...  
**H:** Ah! doute de la lumière,  
 Doute du soleil et du jour,  
 Doute des cieux et de la terre  
 Mais ne doute jamais, jamais de mon amour!  
**O:** Astre éclatant de la lumière,  
 Qui sur nos fronts verses le jour,  
 Esprit des cieux et de la terre,  
 Soyez témoins de son amour!

**H:** Ophelia!  
**O:** Why are you looking away?  
 What dark despair drives you away from these places?  
 Should I think that your heart is forgetting me?  
**H:** No, I attest the heavens!  
 I am not one of those whose soul  
 Know how to forget in a day  
 The sweet oaths of love! ...  
 I do not have the heart of a woman.  
**O:** Ah! cruel! – Ophelia deserved  
 That you do this injury to him?  
**H:** Forgive, dear creature!  
 I do not accuse you! – Your chaste and pure soul  
 Reveal in your beauty! ...  
 – Ah! doubt of the light,  
 Doubt of the sun and the day,  
 Doubt of the heavens and the earth,  
 But never doubt, never my love!  
**O:** Alas! Hamlet, that same love  
 Could not hold you back!  
 Would you like to run away,  
 If you loved me as much as I love you?  
**H:** No, I did not run away from you!  
 I fled human inconstancy! ...  
 Your image calm and serene  
 Had loneliness accompanied my steps.  
 But your presence comforts me,  
 tears are less bitter by the love wiped away.  
 And that's enough of a word  
 To hold me at your feet! ...  
**H:** Ah! doubt of the light,  
 Doubt of the sun and the day,  
 Doubt of the heavens and the earth  
 But never doubt, never my love!  
**O:** Star bursting with light,  
 Who on our foreheads were born,  
 Spirit of the heavens and the earth,  
 Be witnesses of his love!

### **Aria: 'Questo amor' – Edgar – Puccini – Text by: Ferdinando Fontana (1815-1990)**

Puccini's second opera *Edgar*, unfortunately did not meet the same success as a lot of his later operas soon would. The story was loosely based on the play *La Coupe et les lèvres* by Alfred de Musset and used an Italian libretto provided by Ferdinando Fontana.

Premiering in 1889, the original four act opera went through countless revisions from Puccini before he eventually gave up on it in 1905, saying that "It was an organism defective from the dramatic point of view. Its success was ephemeral. Although I knew that I wrote some pages which do me credit, that is not enough—as an opera it does not exist". Though the opera was unsuccessful, Puccini would later find comfort in some passages which truly reflected his potential as an operatic composer.

'Questo amor, vergogna mia' is sung by the knight Frank in Act I. His friend Edgar is caught in a love triangle between the pure maiden Fidelia and the seductive and impure Tigrana. Frank is in love with Tigrana and he can't seem to shake his feelings, despite her constant mockery and belittlement to him.

Questo amor, vergogna mia,  
Io spezzar, scordar vorrei;  
Ma d'un' orrida malia  
Sono schiavi i sensi miei...  
Mille volte al ciel giurai  
Di fuggirla!... E a lei tornai!  
Ella ride del mio pianto,  
Del mio sdegno si fa scherno;  
Ed io, vil, col cuore infranto,  
Ai suoi piedi mi prosterno...  
E lei sola io sogno, io bramo!  
Ah sventura!... Io l'amo!... Io l'amo!

This love, my shame,  
I would break, to forget I would like;  
But of a hideous spell  
My senses are slaves ...  
A thousand times to heaven I swore  
To escape her! ... And I returned to her!  
She laughs at my tears,  
My ridicule is mocked;  
And I, coward, with a broken heart,  
At her feet I will prostrate ...  
And she alone I dream, I yearn!  
Ah misfortune! ... I love her! ... I love her

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