

WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER | 7PM  
DR JOHN GALLAGHER CONCERT CHAMBER



WITH NICK FLETCHER, PIANO



TE PAE KŌKAKO  
**TANZOS**

THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND OPERA STUDIO

# Programme

**'Don Juan's Serenade'** – Tchaikovsky

**Fünf Lieder (Five Songs) Op. 105** – Brahms

- I. 'Wie Melodien'
- II. 'Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer'
- III. 'Klage'
- IV. 'Auf dem Kirchhofe'
- V. 'Verrat'

Aria: **'Cruda funesta smania'** – *Lucia di Lammermoor* – Donizetti

*Interval*

Duet: **'Crudel perche finora'** – *Le Nozze di Figaro* – Mozart

Aria: **'Hai gia vinta la causa'** – *Le Nozze di Figaro* – Mozart

**Let Us Garlands Bring** – Finzi

- I. 'Come Away Death'
- II. 'Who is Silvia?'
- III. 'Fear no more the Heat o' the Sun'
- IV. 'O Mistress Mine'
- V. 'It was a Lover and his Lass'

## Tomairangi Henare - Baritone

Raised in Nuhaka, Tomairangi Henare's journey with opera began in high school with the Hawke's Bay youth initiative Project Prima Volta. There he began singing in opera choruses with Festival Opera at the age of 15 before going on to study at Te Kōki – NZ School of Music as the recipient of the Deane Endowment Trust Scholarship 2019. Tomairangi has gone on to sing around the country in roles including: Pandolfe ('Cendrillon', Massenet), Pasek ('Cunning Little Vixen', Janáček), Aeneas ('Dido and Aeneas', Purcell) and Simone ('Gianni Schicchi', Puccini). Among that, he has also performed in choruses, schools performances and was a soloist in Dame Gillian Whitehead's recently debuted "Journey to Mataatua Whare: The House that Came Home".



## 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 repetiteur 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 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

## ***Don Juan's Serenade, Op. 38, No. 1* - Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

(Text: Aleksey Konstantinovich Tolstoy)

Tchaikovsky composed 'Don Juan's Serenade' in 1878 as part of his Six Songs, Op. 38, during a period of renewed productivity following his separation from his wife Antonina Milyukova. The song sets a poem by Count Alexei Tolstoy, a respected writer and distant relative of Leo Tolstoy. Although Tchaikovsky never met Alexei Tolstoy personally, he greatly admired his poetry and set several of his texts to music.

Tolstoy's verses often combined romantic imagery with vivid characterization, which suited Tchaikovsky's expressive style. In 'Don Juan's Serenade', the lively rhythm and dramatic vocal line reflect the poem's depiction of the famous Spanish lover addressing his beloved beneath her window. The work shows Tchaikovsky's growing interest in text setting and characterization within song, blending Russian lyricism with Western European influences typical of his output in the late 1870s.

*Night falls on the golden lands  
Of distant Alpujarras,  
Come out, my dear, to the call of my guitar!*

*If anybody dares to claim  
That another can compare with you,  
I shall fight them all, burning with love,  
Fight them to the death!*

*The sky's horizon is aglow in the moonlight,  
Oh come out, Nisetta, come out, Nisetta,  
Come out on to the balcony now*

*From Seville to Grenada,  
In the quiet darkness of the night,  
Comes the sound of serenading,  
Comes the clatter of swords.*

*Blood is spilt and songs flow forth,  
All for the sake of beautiful ladies,  
I will give my song and my blood  
To the one who is loveliest of all!*

*The sky's horizon is aglow in the moonlight,  
Oh come out, Nisetta, come out, Nisetta,  
Come out on to the balcony now*

## ***Fünf Lieder, Op. 105* - Johannes Brahms**

(Text: Various)

Following the publication of *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 105 in 1888, Johannes Brahms faced frustration when the first song, 'Wie Melodien zieht es mir', was performed independently. In a letter from that year, he lamented how performers extracted songs from their intended context, disregarding his deliberate ordering and sense of unity.

Unlike Schubert or Beethoven—whose cycles follow a single protagonist through a linear emotional journey—Brahms' collections resist narrative continuity. He described his approach as that of assembling a "song bouquet": selecting texts by diverse poets and binding them together with the musical "rush" that unified their spirit. As he noted, performers often "group the songs completely arbitrarily ... and totally ignore the trouble he would always take to group his songs together like a bouquet" (quoted in Sams, *The Songs of Johannes Brahms*, 2000).

Op. 105 exemplifies this principle. Its five songs draw on five poets, offering varied moods and temporal settings that together form a kaleidoscopic reflection on love and longing. For Brahms, the integrity of the Liederstrauß lay not in narrative continuity, but in the organic cohesion of sentiment and sound—a redefinition of what a song collection could mean.

### I. 'Wie Melodien' - Text by Klaus Groth

An ode to poetry itself, explaining how only the "moist eye" can truly decipher what art means to its beholder.

*It moves like melodies  
Softly through my mind;  
Like spring flowers it blossoms  
And wafts away like fragrance.*

*But comes the word and grasps it  
And leads it before the eye,  
It turns pale like gray mist  
And disappears like a breath.*

*And yet, remaining in my rhymes  
Perhaps a still fragrance hides,  
That gently from the quiet bud  
My moist eye calls forth.*

### II. 'Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer' - Text: Hermann Lingg

Written from the perspective of a dying woman as she clings to the final glimpses of her beloved, she hopes to see him one last time even though he has moved on.

*Ever softer grows my slumber  
Only my grief, like a veil,  
Trembling over me.  
I often hear you in my dreams  
Calling outside my door,  
No one keeps watch and lets you in,  
I awake and weep bitterly.*

*Yes, I shall have to die,  
You will kiss another  
When I am pale and cold.  
Before May breezes blow,  
Before the thrush sings in the wood;  
If you would see me once again,  
Come soon, come soon!*

### III. 'Klage' - Text: Anonymous

The anonymous text was adapted to a folk song by Brahms with each stanza representing a new winter which the narrator must spend alone

*Dearest, do not trust him,  
Then he won't break your heart,  
He'll speak fine words,  
They'll cost you your young life,  
Believe me!*

*I'll never be happy again,  
For that is what happened:  
The leaves have fallen from the tree  
With all those fine words,  
It's winter!*

*Now it's winter,  
The little birds are far distant  
That sang to me in spring,  
My heart is broken  
With the sorrow of love.*

### IV. 'Auf dem Kirchhofe' - Text: Detlev von Liliencron

The poet speaks of the graves in his local churchyard and how their stones remain still through the storm and rain.

*The day was heavy with rain and storms,  
I had stood by many a forgotten grave.  
Weathered stones and crosses, faded wreaths,  
The names overgrown, scarcely to be read.*

*The day was heavy with storms and rains,  
On each grave froze the word: Deceased.  
How the coffins slumbered, dead to the storm—  
Silent dew on each grave proclaimed: Released.*

### V. 'Verrat' - Text: Karl Lemke

Lemke tells the story of a man coming home to find his wife having an affair.

*One mild night I was standing  
By a green linden tree,  
The moon shone brightly, the wind blew softly,  
And swiftly flowed the torrent.*

*The linden tree stood before my love's house,  
I heard the door creak,  
Cautiously my love let a man out:  
'Don't keep me waiting tomorrow.*

*Don't keep me waiting, sweet man,  
I love you so very dearly!  
Tap gently against the window-pane,  
My sweetheart's far away.'*

*Leave your cuddling and kissing, my dear,  
And you, handsome man in velvet,  
Make haste, you cunning thief,  
A man awaits you on the moor.*

*The moon shines bright, the green turf  
Is fit for our encounter,  
You wear a sword and nod so boldly,  
I shall bless your liaison! -*

*And when the light of dawn appeared,  
What did it find on the moor?  
A dead man lay among the flowers,  
To a false woman's sorrow.*

### **Aria: 'Cruda, funesta smania'** from *Lucia di Lammermoor* – **Gaetano Donizetti**

Text: Salvatore Cammarano

Donizetti's growth in popularity in the 1830s came from the success of *Anna Bolena* and, shortly after, *L'elisir d'amore*. The latter set Donizetti up with a reputation of being a prolific opera buffa composer, being well renowned for his light-hearted tone and comedic musical timing.

Donizetti gained a lot of momentum and was quickly being touted as a stand-out Italian opera composer, one capable of rivaling the likes of Rossini and Bellini. At the time, Italian audiences were taken by the gothic romanticism found in Scottish culture and it inspired Donizetti to write *Lucia di Lammermoor* based on the 1819 novel *The Bride of Lammermoor* by Walter Scott.

Donizetti composed the opera in a short span of two months, during which he collaborated with librettist Salvatore Cammarano for the first time. They would go on to write eight more operas together.

The opera debuted in 1835 in Naples and became one of the high points of the Bel Canto period. Rossini had recently retired and Bellini died shortly after the opera's premiere and the success of *Lucia* left Donizetti as the "sole reigning genius of Italian Opera".

The opera begins with the Ashton family searching for an intruder near their castle. It is confirmed to Lord Enrico Ashton that the intruder was in fact Edgardo di Ravenswood, presumably visiting Enrico's sister Lucia of whom he is romantically involved. Enrico, in a fit of rage, sings 'Cruda, funesta smania'; reaffirming his hatred for the House of Ravenswood and vowing to end the relationship between Edgardo and his sister.

*A cruel, deadly frenzy  
you have roused in my heart!  
Too, too horrible  
is this fatal suspicion!  
I freeze and tremble,  
and my hair stands on end, ah!*

*So shameful is she  
who was born my sister!  
Ah, rather than see you guilty  
of so perfidious a love,  
if you were struck by a thunderbolt,  
my grief would be less bitter,*

*In vain your pity  
leads you to plead for her...  
speak to me of revenge  
and I will hear you.  
Wretched pair! The storm  
of my terrible fury is upon you,  
the evil flame that consumes you,  
I shall quench with blood*

### **Duet: 'Crudel, perche finora'** from *Le Nozze di Figaro* – **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Soprano: Sarah Mileham

Text: Lorenzo Da Ponte

Mozart's opera *Le Nozze di Figaro* is arguably one of the most influential operas in history. The opera is based on the Beaumarchais play *Le Mariage de Figaro* which was originally banned in Vienna, where Mozart resided, due to its frank criticism of the class system. Lorenzo Da Ponte received special permission from Emperor Joseph II to adapt the play with Italian libretto for Mozart's opera.

The opera still comments on the class conflicts of the time but steered clear of a lot of the protesting monologues that Beaumarchais had originally written, instead opting to tell a more intimate story surrounding unrequited love, fidelity and authority.

'Crudel, perche finora' takes place in Act III. Count Almaviva's goal throughout the opera is to seduce Susanna, who is to be wed to Figaro. Susanna and the Countess Rosina are intent on exposing the Count's infidelity and hatch a plan to do so. Susanna meets with the Count and promises him a rendezvous on the night of her wedding out in the garden. The Count is overjoyed, not knowing the secret plan behind her promise.

**Count:** *Cruel one, why until now  
did you leave me to languish?*  
**Susanna:** *Sir, every lady has her time to  
say yes*  
**C:** *Then you'll come to the garden?*  
**S:** *If it pleases you, I'll come*  
**C:** *And you won't fail me?*  
**S:** *No, I won't fail you.*  
**C:** *My contented heart now feels full of  
joy*  
**S:** *(aside) Forgive me if I am lying  
All you who understand love's ways!*

**Aria: 'Hai gia vinta la causa... Vedro mentrio sospiro' from Le Nozze di Figaro – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

Text: Lorenzo Da Ponte

Susanna almost successfully tricked the Count into feeling secure about meeting her in the garden. However, as she leaves the Count hears her and Figaro's conspiratorial whispers as they say "Hai gia vinta la causa" or "The case is won". The Count lashes out in a rage, plotting his own plan for revenge on the two lovers.

**Count Almaviva:**

*"We've already won the case!"  
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! With what money?  
And then there's Antonio,  
Who won't give his niece in marriage to the  
nobody Figaro.  
To nurture that fool'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.*

## ***Let Us Garlands Bring, Op. 18* - Gerald Finzi**

(Text: William Shakespeare)

Finzi was best known as an English choral and song composer, whose prominence in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was influential in developing England's identity in the world of classical music. Taught by composer Ralph Vaughan Williams, he and Finzi had a great working relationship, often exchanging letters, with the former giving helpful advice on Finzi's compositions.

*Let Us Garlands Bring* was written over an extensive period from 1929 and 1942. Finzi had left his home in London and was residing in Wiltshire with his lover Joyce Black. The cycle consists of five songs, each derived from a Shakespeare monologue from a different play.

The song cycle was dedicated to Ralph Vaughan Williams when it premiered on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 1942 at the National Gallery in London. It was Vaughan Williams' 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**I. 'Come Away, Death'** - *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Scene IV

**II. 'Who is Silvia?'** - *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act IV, Scene II

**III. 'Fear no more the Heat o' the Sun'** - *Cymbeline*, Act IV, Scene II

**IV. 'O Mistress Mine'** - *Twelfth Night*, Act II, Scene III

**V. 'It was a Lover and his Lass'** - *As You Like It*, Act V, Scene III

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