



WHAKATIPU  
**MUSIC**  
FESTIVAL

18-21 APRIL 2025

PRESENTED BY  
**HILL FAMILY  
FOUNDATION**  
for **ARTS  
AND MUSIC**

2022 WMF YOUNG ARTIST  
**CLARE HOOD, SOPRANO**  
PHOTO: JAMES ROBERTSON

# NAU MAI WELCOME

*Kia ora koutou,  
kua haere mai nei,  
ki tēnei wāhi ki te ako i te aroha.  
Ka nui mo to koutou kai ngākau  
ki te aro mai ki te hāpai tō  
oranga.*

Greetings to you all who  
have come here, to this place,  
to learn about love.  
Thank you for your heartfelt  
contributions to support  
your wellbeing.



The Whakatipu Music Festival was an initiative born out of the quiet of the Covid pandemic and the space it gave to hear ourselves think. The Board of the Hill Family Foundation for Arts and Music considered what was needed and how it could best give back to its beneficiaries, and one such initiative was a festival that recognised exceptional talent and that nurtured and raised up New Zealand’s next generation of musicians on the cusp of, or at the start of, their careers.

We also recognise that the Foundation importantly helps to stimulate the arts and culture in the Whakatipu Basin. The 2023 Infometrics Creativity Index placed second for creativity in New Zealand – behind Wellington but ahead of Auckland. 5.64% of the workforce here is employed in the creative industries. The Hill Family Foundation for Arts and Music (that also presents the acclaimed Michael Hill International Violin Competition) is known for bringing world-class musicians to the district which attracts desirable cultural tourism. This Festival delivers that same outstanding experience to visitors and it also contributes to the efforts and achievements of the many local community organisations, educators and arts consumers who are driving awareness to the value the arts have in the community.

A festival of this complexity requires a great deal of skilled and passionate people to pull it off. Our sincere thanks go to all of the musicians, sponsors, donors, funders, staff and audience for making the Whakatipu Music Festival such an integral part of the development and enjoyment of the arts and music scene in Tāhuna/Queenstown.

Nō reira, tēnā koutou katoa

**Anne Rodda**

Executive Director

Hill Family Foundation for Arts and Music

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# HILL FAMILY FOUNDATION for ARTS AND MUSIC

Jenny Jin (Korea/USA), winner of the 2023 Michael Hill International Violin Competition  
PHOTO: JAMES ROBERTSON



Sir Michael and Christine Hill, the violin Competition founders and supporters of arts in New Zealand  
PHOTO: MARK CLINTON

The Hill Family Foundation for Arts and Music exists to encourage the appreciation of fine music and to proudly showcase the talents and works of New Zealand’s artists. The Foundation recognises and rewards excellence and it advances the education of young New Zealanders.

The Hill Family Foundation for Arts and Music is committed to the future of the arts in New Zealand and is the umbrella organisation of five initiatives that are presented over three-year cycles in pursuit of enabling, encouraging, supporting, presenting and celebrating New Zealand art and music.

## Michael Hill International Violin Competition

The Michael Hill International Violin Competition stands for excellence, opportunity, integrity and transformation; it is the launch-pad for violin virtuosos - the foundation stone of brilliant musical careers.

With a prize package valued at over NZ\$100,000, the ‘Michael Hill’ shapes the artistry of 16 of the world’s finest young violinists. The 2023 Competition attracted 160 applicants and over 1.3m online audiences.

**29 May – 6 June 2026**  
**Queenstown and Auckland**

## The Winners Tour

The Winners Tour, presented the following year, is where the 1st prize winner builds their artistic muscle and delighting and inspiring audiences across the country.

**24 Oct – 19 Nov 2024**  
**NZ and Australia nationwide**  
**Next Tour 2027**

## National String Competition

In the service of New Zealand’s talented high-performance young musicians, the National String Competition is delivered alongside the Lewis Eady National Piano Competition to showcase the country’s next generation of classical music talent.

**14-16 December 2024**  
**Auckland**  
**Next Competition 2027**

## Whakatipu Music Festival

The Whakatipu Music Festival showcases extraordinary music from international guests, Aotearoa’s leading musicians, emerging artists, and local talent workshoping and performing outstanding classical, jazz, singer-songwriting, Broadway hits and more. Brought to life by a local workforce, the festival supports and stimulates the arts, cultural and events scene in the Queenstown region and is a treasure for the community and the whole of Aotearoa.

**14-21 April 2025**  
**Queenstown**

## The Instrument Bank

The Instrument Bank is an initiative that matches string instruments with young Kiwi musicians who are in need of instruments that will springboard them to the next level of their music education, yet often lack access and the resource to make the necessary financial investment.

**Year-round and nationwide**



[michaelhillviolincompetition.co.nz/hill-family-foundation](https://michaelhillviolincompetition.co.nz/hill-family-foundation)



## FROM THE **CREATIVE TEAM**

It is a great thrill to be entering our third iteration of the Whakatipu Music Festival. In a matter of a few short years this festival has become an important and valuable pathway for our finest young musicians to gain a huge array of experiences and prepare themselves for a career in the performing arts. In addition to the performing and recording opportunities they receive, the WMF offers skill-enhancement and connections that are crucial for every young aspiring musician. The shared sense of purpose and the community cohesion created in a festival environment are inspiring to musicians at all stages of development – and we are ALL still learning, every day, from each other!

On behalf of the Professional Artists I welcome you all; performers, audience members and supporters. We are so grateful for the continuing support of the Hill Family Foundation and the other sponsors, and we applaud their dedication to the future of music-making in Aotearoa New Zealand.

I am delighted that this year we welcome the input of Karen Grylls, and the opening up of our offerings to aspiring conductors. This is an exciting step in a new direction, and these young conductors will be vital members of our musical community in years to come. We have

created together an intriguing range of music to delight one and all – music spanning many centuries and continents – music that was created to be enjoyed and shared. Welcome one and all!

**Stephen De Pledge**  
Programme Curator

**Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand** is the organisation managing Aotearoa's award-winning national choirs.

Established to promote excellence in choral singing, the organisation oversees three nationally renowned choirs: the New Zealand Youth Choir, Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir, and New Zealand Secondary Students' Choir. Each ensemble represents a different stage in a singer's development, providing opportunities for young and professional vocalists to train, perform, and collaborate on a national and international level.

Through innovative programming and artistic leadership, Choirs Aotearoa NZ brings a diverse range of choral music to audiences, blending traditional works with contemporary compositions, often

highlighting the country's unique cultural heritage. Māori and Pasifika influences feature prominently in their repertoire, reflecting Aotearoa's rich musical identity.

The organisation also plays a vital role in the development of choral music in New Zealand through education and outreach initiatives. It delivers a national choral academy named Aotearoa Academy Choir, nurtures young singers, provides mentorship and professional development opportunities for conductors, composers and vocal coaches. It runs the annual 'Compose Aotearoa!' choral composition competition and regularly commissions new works and waiata from local composers, ensuring a vibrant future for choral music.

With a history of international acclaim and national recognition, our national choirs continue to inspire and elevate Aotearoa's choral scene, connecting communities through the power of stories and song.

It is an absolute pleasure to partner with this year's Whakatipu Music Festival to bring the art (and secrets) of ensemble singing to life together with young artists and our Artistic Director Emerita Karen Grylls.

**CHOIRS**  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

# FRIDAY 18 APRIL PROGRAMME



## Opening night

7pm

Austin Haynes **COUNTERTENOR**

Marlon Sullivan **CLARINET**

Julian Smiles **CELLO**

Stephen De Pledge **HARPSICHORD**

**Vivaldi** (1678 – 1741)

*Veni, me sequere fida*

Esther Oh **VIOLIN**

Bernadette Harvey **PIANO**

**Ysaÿe** (1858 – 1931)

Solo Sonata No 1 in G Minor  
*Grave*

**Beethoven** (1770 – 1827)

Sonata No 9 in A Major, Op 47  
*Adagio Sostenuto*

**Tchaikovsky** (1840 – 1893)

*Meditation, No 1, Op 42*

Felicity Tomkins **SOPRANO**

**Haydn** (1732-1809)

*She never told her love*

**Rachmaninoff** (1873 – 1943)

*O ne rydai, mai Paolo* from *Francesca da Rimini*

**Poulenc** (1899-1963)

*La Dame de Monte-Carlo*

*Interval*

Felicity Tomkins **SOPRANO**

Stephen De Pledge **PIANO**

Festival String Orchestra

conducted by Reuben Brown

**Mozart** (1756 – 1791)

*Ch'io mi scordi di te?*

Ioana Cristina Goicea **VIOLIN**

Julian Smiles **CELLO**

Bernadette Harvey **PIANO**

**Brahms** (1833 – 1897)

Piano Trio in B Major, No 1, Op 8

*Allegro con moto*

*Scherzo: Allegro molto – Trio: Più lento*

*Adagio non troppo – Allegro*

*Finale: Allegro molto agitato*

# SATURDAY 19 APRIL PROGRAMME

## Next Gen 1

3pm



Students from  
Turn Up The Music

Damon Herlihy-O'Brien **CELLO**

with William Sun **PIANO**

**Prokofiev** (1891 – 1953)  
Cello Sonata in C Major, Op 119  
*Andante Grave*

**Bach** (1685 – 1750)  
Cello Suite No 4 in E-Flat Major, BWV 1010  
*iii Courante*  
*iv Sarabande*

**Mark Summer** (b. 1958)  
*Cello-La, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

**Martin Lodge** (1954 – 2024)  
*Epitaph, in memoriam Douglas Lilburn*

### Interval

Tal Amoores **VIOLA** with

Otis Prescott-Mason **PIANO**

**Prokofiev** (1891-1953)  
*Romeo and Juliet, Op 64*  
*Introduction*  
*The Street Comes Alive*  
*Juliet as a Young Girl*  
*Dance of the Knights (Montagues and Capulets)*  
*Balcony Scene*  
*Dance of the Five Couples*  
*Death of Juliet*

Marlon Sullivan **CLARINET**

Ioana Cristina Goicea **VIOLIN**

Julian Smiles **CELLO**

Stephen De Pledge **PIANO**

**Rabl** (1873-1940)  
Quartet for Piano, Violin, Clarinet  
and Cello, Op 1  
*III. Andantino, un poco mosso*  
*I. Allegro Moderato*



## Urbane

7pm

Sarah Lee **VIOLIN**

with Bernadette Harvey **PIANO**

**Brahms** (1833 – 1897)  
Sonata No 2 in A Major, Op 100  
*Allegro amabile*  
*Andante tranquillo – Vivace – Andante*  
*– Vivace di più – Andante – Vivace*  
*Allegretto grazioso (quasi andante)*

**Nadia Boulanger** (1887 - 1979)  
Nocturne & Cortège

### Interval

Austin Haynes **COUNTERTENOR**

Stephen De Pledge

**HARPSICHORD/PIANO**

**Schubert** (1797 – 1828)  
*Auf Dem See*

**Handel** (1685 – 1759)  
*Agitato da fiere Tempeste* from  
*Ricardo re d'Inghilterra*

**Handel** (1685 – 1759)  
*Vaghe Fonti* from *Agrippina*

**Caccini** (1551 – 1618)  
*Fortunata Augellino (E te manu waimarire)*  
translated into te reo by Austin Haynes  
*Andante tranquillo – Vivace – Andante*  
*– Vivace di più – Andante – Vivace*  
*Allegretto grazioso (quasi andante)*

**Paraire Tōmoana** (1874 – 1946)  
*I runga o ngā puke*

**Schubert** (1797 – 1828)  
*Wohin?*

**Āpirana Ngata** (1874 – 1950)  
*Te Kāinga Tupu*  
(translation of *Home Sweet Home*)

**Handel** (1685 – 1759)  
*Yet I can hear that dulcet lay*  
from *The Choices of Hercules*

Marlon Sullivan **CLARINET**

Yuxin Chen **VIOLA**

Otis Prescott-Mason **PIANO**

**Mozart** (1756 – 1791)  
*Kegelstatt Trio* in E-Flat Major, K 498  
*Andante*  
*Menuetto*  
*Rondo*

# SUNDAY 20 APRIL PROGRAMME



## Musical Smorgasbord

7pm

Otis Prescott-Mason **PIANO**

**Liszt** (1811 – 1886)  
Piano Sonata in B Minor S178

Yuxin Chen **VIOLA** with  
Stephen De Pledge **PIANO**

**Rebecca Clarke** (1886 -1979)  
Sonata for Viola and Piano  
*Impetuoso*  
*Vivace*  
*Adagio*

### Interval

Felicity Tomkins **SOPRANO**  
Austin Haynes **COUNTERTENOR**  
Ivan Zhang **TENOR**  
Mark Bobb **BARITONE**  
with Stephen De Pledge **PIANO**

**Kander & Ebb**  
*Willkommen* from *Cabaret*

**Sammy Fain**  
*Secret Love* from *Calamity Jane*

**Nico Dostal**  
*Spiel' mir das Lied* from *Die Ungarische Hochzeit*

**Humperdink** (1854 – 1921)  
*Evening Prayer* from *Hansel and Gretel*

**Bernstein** (1918 – 1990)  
*Maria* from *Westside Story*

**Sullivan** (1842 – 1900)  
*Orpheus with his Lute and O Mistress Mine*

**Stephen Sondheim** (1930 – 2021)  
*Agony!* from *Into the Woods*

## Next Gen 2

3pm



Piano Students from  
Kinga Krupa Music

Marlon Sullivan **CLARINET**  
with Stephen De Pledge **PIANO**

**Egon Kornauth** (1891 – 1959)  
Clarinet Sonata in F Minor Op 5  
*Leidenschaftlich bewegt (Allegro con brio)*  
*Gemütliches Tanzzeitmaß (Molto commodo) – Trio*  
*Ruhig Gehend (Andante espressivo)*  
*Entschlossen (Allegro energico, alla marcia)*

William Sun **PIANO**

**Schubert** (1797 -1828)  
Fantasie in C Major, Op 159, (*Wanderer Fantasy*)

### Interval

Felicity Tomkins **SOPRANO**  
Austin Haynes **COUNTERTENOR**  
Ivan Zhang **TENOR**  
Mark Bobb **BARITONE**  
Festival String Orchestra  
Euan Safey **CONDUCTOR**  
Esther Oh **CONDUCTOR**

**Alessandro Scarlatti** (1660 – 1725)  
*Dormi, o fulmine di Guerra*

**Monteverdi** (1597 - 1643)  
*Pur ti miro* from *L'incoronazione di Poppea*

**Morley** (1557 – 1602)  
*April is in my mistress' face*

**Arcadelt** (1507-1568)  
*Il bianco e dolce cigno*

Festival Young Artist Choir  
Reuben Brown **CONDUCTOR**

**David Hamilton** (b. 1955)  
*Shine out, fair sun*

Members of the Central Otago  
Community Orchestra

Euan Safey **CONDUCTOR**  
Sonja Sparrow, Heather Reid, Richard  
Howarth, Fiona McPherson, Brian Budd,  
Jane Shearer, Kate Lovell  
with members of the Festival string orchestra

**Bach (1685-1750)**  
Brandenburg Concerto No 3 in G Major, BWV 1048  
*Allegro moderato*  
*Adagio*  
*Allegro*



# MONDAY 21 APRIL PROGRAMME



## Rejoice!

2pm

Austin Haynes **COUNTERTENOR**

Marlon Sullivan **CLARINET**

Stephen De Pledge **PIANO**

Euan Safey **CONDUCTOR**

Esther Oh **CONDUCTOR**

Reuben Brown **CONDUCTOR**

Young Artists choir

Members of the

Queenstown community

Festival Young Artist Choir

**Leonie Holmes** (b. 1962)

*Nocturne from Silvers Whispers Suite*

Festival String Orchestra,

conducted by Euan Safey

and Reuben Brown

**Grieg** (1843 – 1907)

*Holberg Suite*

*Praeludium*

*Sarabande*

*Gavotte-Musette-Gavotte*

*Air*

*Riguadon*

Austin Haynes **COUNTERTENOR**

Festival String Orchestra,

conducted by Esther Oh

**Kaihau** (1855 – 1920)

*Akoako o Te Rangi (Whisper of Heaven)*

*E mae te Ra (Shadows of Evening)*

*Interval*

Rejoice! Choir

with Otis Prescott-Mason **PIANO**

conducted by Esther Oh

**Carl Orff** (1895 – 1982)

*O Fortuna from Carmina Burana*

Rejoice! Choir

with Festival Orchestra,

conducted by Reuben Brown

**Handel** (1685 – 1759)

*The Hallelujah Chorus from The Messiah*

Festival String Orchestra,

conducted by Reuben Brown

**Mascagni** (1863 – 1945)

*Intermezzo from Cavalleria Rusticana*

(arr by Gustav Saenger)

Rejoice! Choir

with Festival Orchestra,

conducted by Euan Safey

**Beethoven** (1770 – 1827)

*Ode to Joy*, from Symphony No 9 in D minor,

Op 125, movement 4 (Vocal score arranged

by Meg Hirata, orchestral score arranged by

Geoff Hill)

A young woman with short reddish hair, wearing a vibrant red, draped, short-sleeved dress, is the central focus. She is playing a violin with intense concentration. She is surrounded by other musicians in an orchestra, including violinists and brass players, all focused on their performance. The setting is a concert hall with warm lighting.

# FESTIVAL ARTISTS

Internationally acclaimed artists from overseas and Aotearoa bring their artistry to the Whakatipu Music Festival to share with audiences and aspiring young artists.

Ioana Cristina Goicea winning the 2017  
Michael Hill International Violin Competition  
PHOTO: SHEEENA HAYWOOD



## Ioana Cristina Goicea

ROMANIA

### VIOLIN

Ioana Cristina Goicea is one of the outstanding violinists of her generation and the First Prize Winner of the 2017 Michael Hill International Violin Competition, where critics praised her passionate performance and describing her as “a new star in the musical firmament.” She was also the winner of the International German Music Competition (2018) and the J. Brahms International Competition (2013), and a laureate of the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis (2018), Queen Elisabeth Competition (2019); and the “Fritz Kreisler” International Violin Competition (2014).

Ms Goicea has performed as a soloist at renowned venues such as the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Konzerthaus Berlin, St Martin-in-the-Fields London, the Melbourne Recital Centre, Wiener Konzerthaus, Bozar Brussels, Meistersingerhalle Nürnberg, the Shanghai Concert Hall, the Athenaeum Bucharest, and the Auckland Town Hall.

Ioana Cristina was born into a family of musicians in Bucharest in 1992. She studied with Mariana Sirbu, Petru Munteanu and Krzysztof Wegrzyn at the Universities of Music Leipzig, Rostock and Hannover and is an avid chamber musician.

Ioana Cristina lives in Vienna where she is a Professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts and plays a J.B. Vuillaume violin, on loan from a generous private donor as well as a modern violin by Jürgen Manthey (Leipzig, 2021).



## Julian Smiles

AUSTRALIA

### CELLO

Julian has occupied many of the most prestigious positions in the Australian classical music scene. He was for several years principal cellist with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and has performed frequently as guest principal cello with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra.

In 1991 he was invited to join the Australia Ensemble, the University of New South Wales’ acclaimed resident chamber music ensemble, and in 1995 formed the highly successful Goldner String Quartet with ensemble colleagues Dene Olding, Irina Morozova and Dimity Hall.

These two groups continue to be regarded as representing the pinnacle of chamber music in the country, and the Goldner Quartet in particular has established an international reputation with rave reviews of their recordings and performances in the UK. Julian is also frequently heard as a soloist and has performed concertos with the Melbourne and Canberra Symphony Orchestras, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and several community orchestras in Sydney.

He has also performed as a soloist at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music and the Huntington Estate Music Festival, and premiered solo works by Australian composers such as Mark Isaacs, Carl Vine and Ross Edwards.

As a well-respected teacher, Julian draws on his many years of experience as a performer at the highest level, as well as his studies with Nelson Cooke, one of the most significant teachers in Australia, and with Janos Starker at Indiana University.



## Bernadette Harvey

AUSTRALIA

### PIANO

Acclaimed international pianist, Bernadette Harvey, was awarded the Centenary Medal in 2000 by then Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, for her contribution to Australian Music. Bernadette has won many accolades since her first medal in a Sydney Eisteddfod at the age of two and a half, including the ABC ‘Young Performer of the Year’ in 1987.

She has worked with such artists as the Dover Quartet, the Miró Quartet, Alexander Sitkovetsky, Ani Kavafian, Joseph Lin, Axel Strauss, Antonio Lysy, Paul Coletti, Alan Vogel and David Schifrin. She presented the world premiere of Pierre Jalbert’s Piano Quintet with the Jupiter Quartet, which she subsequently recorded in 2019 for the Canadian label Marquis. She also appeared with the Tokyo Quartet and the Shanghai Quartet in the premiere of Carl Vine’s Piano Quintet, *Fantasia* in 2013. She and the Shanghai Quartet later presented the Australian premiere of the Bright Sheng Piano Quintet, *Dance Capriccio*. She now joins her husband, Peter Rejto, as Co-Artistic director of the Tucson Winter Chamber Music Festival.

Bernadette has performed extensively for Musica Viva Australia including tours with cellist Jian Wang and the Goldner Quartet. Bernadette has recorded most of the solo piano music of Ross Edwards, one of Australia’s most well-known and loved composers, who wrote his first piano sonata for her and a shorter two movement work, *Sea Star Fantasy*.

Bernadette has recently joined the Streeton Trio with violinist Emma Jardine and cellist Rachel Siu, cello. She has a DMA from Eastman and is Senior Lecturer in piano at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.



## Stephen De Pledge

NEW ZEALAND

### PIANO

New Zealand pianist Stephen De Pledge won the Gold Medal at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and subsequently spent two years as a Junior Fellow at the Royal College of Music. He then continued his studies in Paris with Yvonne Loriod.

After winning the NFMS Young Concert Artist Award, he made his debuts in the Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and St John's Smith Square in London, and broadcast for BBC Radio 3 and BBC2 television. His concerto performances have included appearances with the Philharmonia, Bournemouth Symphony, New London, BBC Scottish Symphony and all the major New Zealand orchestras. His solo performances in recent seasons have taken him to Cologne, Paris and New York, as well as throughout New Zealand and Australia.

Stephen has given recitals with many musicians, including Dame Felicity Lott, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Viktoria Mullova, Raphael Wallfisch, Alan Hacker and Rivka Golani, and given chamber performances with the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet, Chamber Domaine and the Scottish Ensemble. His extensive discography includes works by Bliss, Barber, Messiaen, Shostakovich, Brahms, Mussorgsky and Prokofiev. He takes a particular interest in contemporary music and has worked with a great number of composers, making world premiere recordings for Arvo Pärt, Henryk Gorecki and Ned Rorem.

In addition to his performing schedule Stephen De Pledge is Head of Piano at the School of Music, University of Auckland.



## Dr Karen Grylls

NEW ZEALAND

### CHORAL DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR

Karen Grylls ONZM (1999), CNZM (2023) is an Honorary Associate Professor at the University of Auckland and is Artistic Director of the Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Trust, the managing body for the NZ Youth Choir, NZ Secondary Students' Choir, the Aotearoa Academy Choir and Voices NZ. In 1996 Auckland University honoured her with a Distinguished Teaching Award in Music. In 1999 she became an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) and in 2023 she was awarded the King's Coronation Companion of the NZ Order of Merit (CNZM) for services to choral music. Karen was Conductor and Artistic Director of the New Zealand Youth Choir from 1989 to 2011, founded Voices New Zealand in 1998 and was Artistic Director of Toronto's Exultate Chamber Choir from 2011 to 2013.

Karen is much in demand as an adjudicator for competitions and festivals worldwide. She is sought after internationally as a choral clinician and regularly conducts masterclasses and workshops. Her performances with the Youth Choir and Voices NZ have won international competitions and awards: NZYC Choir of the World, Llangollen (1999), TOWER Voices CD Spirit of the Land took the 2006 Tui Award for Best Classical Album, and the CD Voice of the Soul was a finalist in the 2013 Vodafone NZ Music awards.

In August 2019 Karen was a plenary speaker at the Oxford Conducting Institute at the Sydney Conservatorium Conference. Online lecture appearances

continue and have included the Sydney International Series (Gondwana). In 2025 Karen presented lectures online to Temple University Philadelphia and Nuorten Kuoroliitto Helsinki and she will be on the International Jury in Bali in July.



# CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

## Ivan Zhang TENOR

Ivan is in his final year of a Bachelor of Music/Laws conjoint at the University of Auckland. As a soloist, Ivan has performed with Pakuranga Choral, the Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir, and Auckland Philharmonia. He has also performed in the chorus of New Zealand Opera's *Le Comte Ory* and *Tristan und Isolde*, and will be performing in this year's *La Bohème*. Ivan is an alumnus of the 2025 New Zealand Opera School. This year, Ivan was the tenor soloist for Stainer's *The Crucifixion* with the Holy Trinity Cathedral Choir, and the tenor soloist for Mozart's *Requiem* with Cantando Choir.

As a chorister, Ivan is a member of the Voices New Zealand Chamber Choir, the St Matthew's Voices at St Matthew-in-the-City, and the New Zealand Youth Choir. Later this year, he will be competing with the Youth Choir at the European Choir Games in Denmark and the Llangollen International Eisteddfod in Wales.

## Mark Bobb BARITONE

Mark did his Performance Arts degree in London followed by Performance and Teaching diplomas at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He sang with Opera North in the UK after leaving college and before moving to NZ.

In NZ he has performed often with NZ Opera as well as had lead roles with Eternity Opera in Wellington, including the title role of *Don Giovanni*.

Mark sings with Voices NZ as well as number eight choir, an 8-voice a Cappella group set up by Voices NZ and coached by Chris Bruerton of The King's Singers.

Mark has conducted WELLSO (Wellington Late Starters Orchestra) for 9 years as well as a number of choirs in Wellington. He also performs with Jazz ensembles as a vocalist and violinist.

## Gordon Hill DOUBLEBASS

Gordon was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA. He started playing the bass at age 14 and went to high school at the Interlochen Arts Academy. After graduating high school he attended the Cleveland Institute of Music and finished at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston where he studied with Edwin Barker and Larry Wolfe.


He spent two summers with the National Repertory Orchestra, participated in the Spoleto Festival in Italy, and performed a season with the New World Symphony. Gordon has performed with the Boston Pops Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He has been Principal Bass of the New Hampshire Symphony, Principal Bass of the Boston Philharmonic, and performed two seasons as Principal Bass with the Sarasota Opera Festival.

He has held the role of Principal Bass of the Auckland Philharmonia since 1997 and is a founding member of AOTANGO, an NZ-based quintet specializing in tango and world music.

## Elise Bradley CONDUCTOR/EDUCATOR

A passionate musician, award-winning conductor, and internationally respected educator, adjudicator and clinician, Elise Bradley served for many years as the HOD Music at Westlake Girls' High School in Auckland, where she founded the school's internationally renowned choir, Key Cygnetures. She directed the NZ Secondary Students' Choir from 2001-2007, which won numerous international awards. She was also a soloist and member of Voices New Zealand from 1998 - 2010. In January 2018, Ms. Bradley was named a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM), and in March 2025, it was announced that she is a recipient of the King Charles III Coronation Medal from Canada.

Elise repatriated home to New Zealand at the end of 2021, after 14½ years as the Artistic Director of the Toronto Children's Chorus. During her tenure, the Chorus recorded professionally, commissioned Canadian compositions, collaborated with numerous international and national artists, and represented Toronto and Canada nationally and internationally. Since returning to New Zealand, Elise has become conductor of several school choirs and an adult community choir; Artistic Director/Co-Founder of the New Zealand Children's Choral Academy, and she is also co-director of Aotearoa New Zealand Academy Choir.



Through a nationwide audition, these 12 emerging classical music talents have been selected to participate in the Festival's Young Artist Programme. During the festival week, they receive coaching and mentoring from our Festival artists, rehearse and perform chamber music with one another, share their gifts with the local community and participate in career development workshops to hone their professional skills.

Supported by



# YOUNG ARTIST PROGRAMME

Begonia Chan, 2022 Young Artist and now member of the Auckland Philharmonia's cello section  
PHOTO: JAMES ROBERTSON



## Felicity Tomkins

### SOPRANO

Soprano Felicity Tomkins is currently based between Australasia and the UK/Europe. In 2023 she completed her overseas training in America at the prestigious University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, obtaining her Artist Diploma (Opera) under the tutelage of tenor Stuart Skelton.

In 2024, Felicity was named as the winner of the centenary Melbourne Opera Herald Sun Aria Competition, and of the Sydney Eisteddfod Opera Scholarship. Other recent international competition accolades include: Lockwood NZ Aria Winner (2023), AIMSGraz Meistersinger Audience Choice (2023), JSRB Bel Canto Award Third Prize (2023), Elizabeth Connell Prize Finalist (2023), Metropolitan Opera Laffont Competition Kentucky District Winner/Central Region Finalist (2022/23), and Lexus Song Quest DMMF Runner-Up (2022).

Felicity's recent performance highlights include; Auckland Choral (Handel Messiah), AOS/MSO 'Verdi Meets Puccini' (Cio-Cio-San Madama Butterfly), Cincinnati Opera (Military Wife/Soprano 1 The Knock), CCM Opera (Madame Lidoine Dialogues des Carmélites, Jeannette L'amant Anonyme, Mahler Symphony No. 4). Felicity has been a NZOpera Studio Artist (2021), and an AIMSGraz Opera Studio Artist (2023). She is an alumna of the University of Waikato (MMus/BMus(Hons)/BSc), and of the NZ Opera School.

[felicitytomkinsoprano.com](http://felicitytomkinsoprano.com)



## Austin Haynes

### COUNTERTENOR

Austin is a countertenor, poet, translator (winning the 2023 *takahē* journal's Monica Taylor Poetry Prize) and researcher originally from Kā Muriwai/Arrowtown. He grew up between there and Narm/Melbourne. In 2019 he moved to Oxford to study a BA and a Masters in Medieval and Renaissance Literature where he appeared as a soloist with groups including Instruments of Time and Truth, Oxford Bach Soloists, New Chamber Opera and the Selene Consort.

Austin was the 2022 winner of the Herald Sun Aria competition in Melbourne and also won the 2022 City of Kingston Aria prize. In 2024, he came third in the Lexus Song Quest and was a finalist in the NZ Aria, where he won the first prizes for Māori Song and Oratorio. Austin's music studies have been supported by the Isla Baring Prize from the Tait Trust and the Tait White Loewenthal Memorial Prize. He has performed in masterclasses with artists such as Joyce DiDonato, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Emma Kirkby, James Conlon, and Laurence Cummings.

Austin is now pursuing a PhD in Wellington on the history of the translation of songs and literature between English and te reo Māori. His current project is to translate all 154 of Shakespeare's sonnets into te reo Māori.



## Sarah Lee

### VIOLIN

Sarah is currently in the third year of her Bachelor of Music degree at The University of Auckland, studying under the guidance of Stephen Larsen.

Her passion for music has led to various achievements, such as receiving second place at the National String Competition 2024 and PACANZ National Competition 2022, the Chiron Lewis Eady Foundation Scholarship in 2022, and a Gold award at the NZCT Chamber Music Competition in 2021. She has also performed as a first violinist in the NZSO National Youth Orchestra in 2022, and was selected as the Emerging Artist for the At the World's Edge music festival 2024 in Central Otago. This year, she has been selected as a recipient for the 2025 ROSL Pettman Scholarship.

Sarah has performed in masterclasses for internationally renowned artists such as Maxim Vengerov, Augustin Hadelich, and Ning Feng. She plays on a violin generously on loan to her through the Hill Family Foundation's Instrument Bank.



## Esther Oh

### VIOLIN

Esther Oh was born in New Zealand and is in their second year studying violin and conducting at the University of Auckland. Picking up the violin at age five after declaring the piano “too difficult”, Esther worked up to a LTCL diploma with Distinction at age 16. Esther credits Mark Bennett, Stephen Larsen and Andrew Beer as influential violin teachers and for conducting, Michael Joel and Rupert D’Cruze.

Esther was recently invited to participate in Orchestras Central’s Advanced Conductor’s Workshop which culminated in directing the professional OCT ensemble in Stravinsky’s *Octet for Wind Instruments*. Esther has also conducted the Auckland University Student Chamber Orchestra, and directed orchestra rehearsals at Diocesan School for Girls.

In June 2024, Esther was sent as the NZ student representative to the Pacific Alliance of Music Schools Summit in Thailand. This week-long exchange with conservatories around the Pacific Rim sparked an interest in the status of music education and youth development.

Esther was concertmaster of the 2024 NZSO National Youth Orchestra and played in Masterclasses with Augustin Hadelich, Anne-Sophie Mutter, and Maxim Vengerov.



## Yuxin Chen

### VIOLA

Yuxin Chen was born in Shenzhen, China, where she started playing viola at the age of eight. In 2010 she was accepted into the Shenzhen Arts school in China where she studied under Nisha Ren. Yuxin received a full scholarship from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in 2018, where she received lessons from Professor Louise Lansdown.

She was also awarded Leverhulme Art Scholarship in 2020. Yuxin completed her Masters degree in viola at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam in 2024, where she studied under the guidance of Professor Marjolein Dispa.

Deeply passionate about both chamber and orchestral music, Yuxin has performed with a variety of ensembles and festivals. She participated in the Grafenegg Festival in 2023 and Dorset Opera Orchestra in 2022 and she is also a member of the Damsco Quartet. Yuxin joined the NSKA (Nederlandse Strijkkwartet Academie) in 2023 under the mentorship of Marc Danel.

Yuxin has participated in masterclasses led by Thomas Riebl, Martin Outram, Garth Knox, Wolfram Christ, Timothy Ridout, and Nobuko Imai, among others.



## Tal Amooore

### VIOLA

Born in Sydney and based in Aotearoa, violist Tal Amooore a recipient of the NZSM Director’s Award, he is completing his Bachelor of Music at Te Kōkī, New Zealand School of Music, studying with Peter Clark and Gillian Ansell. He is a founding member of the Antipodes Quartet, a newly formed ensemble in partnership with Chamber Music New Zealand, the New Zealand String Quartet, and the Adam Chamber Music Festival.

A versatile orchestral musician, Tal has performed with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, NZ Opera, the Royal New Zealand Ballet, Orchestra Wellington, Wellington Opera, the Hawke’s Bay Symphony Orchestra, and the Nelson Symphony Orchestra. He has also participated in the Gisborne International Music Competition, National Concerto Competition, and the National String Competition, where he was a semi-finalist.

Tal was recently awarded one of two Royal Over-Seas League Pettman Scholarship’s. He has also been an Emerging Artist at the At the World’s Edge Festival in 2022 and 2024.





## Damon Herlihy-O'Brien

### CELLO

Damon began playing the cello shortly before his fourth birthday and is currently studying a conjoint BMus/BSc (psychology) degree at The University of Auckland under James Tennant for his cello studies.

In 2021, Damon achieved both the NZQA Top Scholar award for the highest NCEA Scholarship Music score in the country and offer of a prestigious Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship from Waikato University. In 2023, he performed as one of the Emerging Artists in Central Otago's At the World's Edge music festival.

Much in demand as both a soloist and ensemble musician, Damon is the Principal Cello of the Auckland Youth Orchestra (winning the AYO Concerto Competition in 2021), and Principal Cello of the University of Auckland Symphony Orchestra. He also performs as a drummer for the popular heavy metal band Cyanide Altar and is a percussionist for Waitakere Brass. He plays a fine Carboni cello on generous loan to him through the Hill Family Foundation's Instrument Bank.



## Marlon Sullivan

### CLARINET

Originally from Auckland, Marlon Sullivan began his tertiary studies in Wellington under Pat Barry, Principal Clarinet of the NZSO. Marlon now lives in Austria where he attends the Kunstuniversität Graz and studies with Stefan Schilling, Principal Clarinet of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Marlon has had success in numerous competitions including being a semi-finalist in the NZ National Concerto Competition 2023 and, with his Clarinet Quartet, winning four awards, including the Gold Award, at the NZCT National Chamber Competition. He was a 2023 Dean's List Scholar at Victoria University of Wellington, awarded the Tangiwai Scholarship at Victoria University of Wellington in 2022 and named Dux Cantorum of St Peter's College Auckland in 2021.

Marlon has performed in public masterclasses for internationally renowned clarinetists including soloist Annelien Van Wauwe, Jože Kotar, Fatima Boix (Solo Eb Finnish Radio Symphony) and Franklin Cohen (Principal Clarinet Cleveland Orchestra). He is an experienced chamber musician and his wind quintet currently studies under Marlies Gaugl, Principal Flute of the Graz Philharmonic Orchestra.

Marlon has performed as Principal Clarinetist with the NZSM Orchestra, Nelson Symphony Orchestra, Hawkes Bay Orchestra and the Auckland and Wellington Youth Orchestras. He is also a skilled Eb Clarinetist and has been selected to perform this with the Zell am See Festival Orchestra (Austria) and the Kunstuniversität Graz Classical Concert Band.



## Yixuan (William) Sun

### PIANO

Yixuan (William) Sun has just started his postgraduate at the University of Auckland, studying classical performance on the piano and the trumpet.

William is a talented pianist, who studies under Rae de Lisle and Justin Bird. He began his musical journey at age 4 with his mother, a piano teacher. He has since achieved notable success, including winning two classes at the 2021 North Shore Performing Arts Competitions and receiving prizes in the 2023 Margaret Doone Memorial Piano Sonata Scholarship. He was also a student under Stephen de Pledge and Richard Mapp, meanwhile, he experienced masterclasses with Joyce Yang, Michael Tsalka, Daniel Lehardt, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, etc. In 2024, he was selected as a semifinalist in the University of Auckland School of Music Concerto Competition and the Lewis Eady National Piano Competition. Also, he is honoured to receive the Haydn Staples Auckland Philharmonia Piano Scholarship Programme in 2025.

In addition to his piano study, he has been learning the trumpet with Huw Dann since the beginning of his brass journey. He is currently in the Tian Guo Marching Band, Auckland Youth Orchestra, and University of Auckland Symphony Orchestra.



## Otis Prescott-Mason

### PIANO

Otis Prescott-Mason is a Wellington-born pianist who began his piano studies with Erin Taylor at the age of five. He is currently studying classical performance piano at Victoria University of Wellington's New Zealand School of Music with Dr Jian Liu.

Otis has seen numerous successes in national competitions: in 2022 he was awarded first prize, Best Performance of a Classical Sonata, and the Audience Choice Award at the Lewis Eady National Piano Competition; the same year he was awarded first prize at the PACANZ National Piano Competition; and in 2020 was awarded first prize at the New Zealand Junior Piano Competition.

Otis also enjoys chamber music and has played in many ensembles – one of which won a silver award at the 2020 NZCT Chamber Contest, and in 2021 he attended the Adam Summer School for Chamber Music in Nelson.

Otis is a grateful recipient of generous support from Professor Jack Richards, The Adam Foundation, and the Royal Over-Seas League which enabled him to perform and study in Europe and the United States of America.



## Euan Safey

### CONDUCTOR

Euan Safey is a New Zealand-born conductor, pianist and teacher. He is currently studying conducting with Dr Luke Dollman at the Elder Conservatorium of Music in association with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and has been accepted into the Australian Conducting Academy in 2025.

Euan initially completed a Bachelor of Music with first class Honours in Piano Performance at the University of Waikato under Katherine Austin before going on to spend two years as a New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Conducting Fellow under Hamish McKeich and James Judd.

Euan has also studied under notable New Zealand conductors Kenneth Young, Peter Walls, Michael Joel, and Peter Adams, and received tutelage from NZSO Principal conductor Gemma New and international guest conductors Miguel Harth-Bedoya, André de Ridder, Mark Wigglesworth and Alice Farnham.

Euan's conducting engagements have included positions and performances with Opus Orchestra, NZSO National Youth Orchestra, Elder Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra and Wind Orchestra, Adelaide Summer Orchestra, St Matthews Chamber Orchestra, Bay of Plenty Symphonia, Trust Waikato Symphony Orchestra, Youth Orchestra Waikato and the University of Waikato Orchestra. He also conducted the University of Waikato's productions of Puccini's opera *Gianni Schicchi* in 2022/2023.

As a pianist, Euan is a versatile collaborator, performer, orchestral player and teacher, and is currently Assistant Chorus Master with State Opera South Australia.



## Reuben Brown

### CONDUCTOR

Hailing from the deep south of Aotearoa New Zealand, Reuben Brown is the 2025 NZ Assistant Conductor-in-Residence, where he will debut with the Auckland Philharmonia, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, and Dunedin Symphony Orchestra, assisting resident and visiting conductors.

In 2023, Reuben made his conducting debut with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO), leading *Christmas Brass* at Te Papa Museum. He has assisted NZSO Principal Conductor Gemma New and, as a 2022-2024 NZSO Conducting Fellow, was mentored by James Judd, Hamish McKeich, and visiting conductors André de Ridder, Stéphane Denève, and Miguel Harth-Bedoya.

Reuben has conducted the NZSO National Youth Orchestra and recorded four works by Aotearoa composers for the NZSO/CANZ Composer Workshops. He has also directed several touring NZSO Tamariki Time & Open Doors outreach concerts.

A euphonium musician, Reuben performs with the Royal New Zealand Air Force Band and Aotearoa's premiere band, Wellington Brass, where he is Associate Musical Director. He led Wellington Brass to champion the 2024 Wellington District Contest with an entirely NZ music programme. As the 2022/2023 Musical Director of the National Secondary Schools' Development Brass Band, he continues to advocate for young brass talent.

An honours graduate of Te Kōkī – New Zealand School of Music, Reuben co-founded Wellington's Gallery Orchestra and conducted a forthcoming album with artist Arjuna Oakes.

# TRAINING GROUND

THE LOCAL WORKFORCE CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT

The Training Ground Programme is an innovative career development and local capability building programme. Through an application and interview process, the Festival has selected early-career professionals with great potential who undertake an unparalleled hands-on skills training programmes in a paid apprenticeship opportunity.

The apprentices deliver the presentation of the Festival, overseen and mentored by experienced music and event industry professionals.



2022 Apprentice Wren Glover,  
now working in the Film Industry in Australia.  
PHOTO: JAMES ROBERTSON



## Artistic

### APPRENTICE

#### Lucy Shearer

Lucy Shearer is a Kiwi-British born trained soprano who has come back to her home country of New Zealand after living in New York for 14 years. During her time in New York, she received a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies and a Minor degree in Classical Vocal Performance at the State University of New York at Purchase College. While studying at Purchase College, Lucy worked in management and administration in adventure tourism and retail. Now back in New Zealand, through opportunity of the Training Ground and under the mentorship of Anne Rodda Lucy has been able to combine her skills in management with her love of classical music to work as the artist liaison apprentice for the Wakatipu Music Festival.

### MENTOR

#### Anne Rodda

##### FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Hailing from Tucson Arizona, Anne studied cello and arts administration through university and was awarded a Master's Degree in cello performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music. She successfully combined a career in performance, education and arts administration in the Boston area until immigrating to New Zealand in 1997.

Anne is a sought-after senior arts leader and creative business consultant in New Zealand. In addition to being the Hill Family Foundation's Executive Director, she is the former General Manager of the Auckland Philharmonia, and Auckland Writers and Readers Festival as well as the head of a private-public art gallery and NZ's largest sculpture exhibition. Anne regularly lectures on and facilitates for creative not-for-profit strategy and management, serves on boards, is a certified family business adviser and co-authored Tomorrow's Board Diversity: the Role of Creatives.

In addition to her creative work, Anne is the Manager of Dilworth's Response Programme and is a member of the NZ Institute of Directors and the Project Management Institute.

## Marketing and Communications

### APPRENTICE

#### Violet Hirst

Violet Hirst is an Aotearoa singer-songwriter and artist born and raised in Tāhuna/Queenstown. Born on the opening night of her mother's musical Kitchens, Violet has grown up extremely comfortable with the stage. Her debut album Donegal released in 2023 with placements on SRN and Radioscope charts was followed by a nationwide tour with sold out shows. Violet enjoys collaborating through dance and film, directing many of her own videos with creative friends. Her creative Aotearoa community is wide spanning over dance, theatre, film, writing and is one she cherishes.

Violet completed a Bachelor of Arts with Film, Philosophy and Media in 2020 at Victoria University of Wellington, and has since lived in Tāmaki Makaurau and Dunedin, interacting with the arts communities there. She has been a mentor at To The Front (Girls Rock Aotearoa), written as a freelance journalist for Flying Nun and a choir facilitator at Commonsense in Pōneke.

Violet is now home with family after recently touring the USA with alternative-rock band Office Dog and can sometimes be found performing at the Blue Door in Arrowtown.

### MENTOR

#### Fiona Woodham

##### SOUTHERN PR

Fiona Woodham is Queenstown's most experienced communications professional, having helmed public relations company Southern PR for nearly 30 years. She has a strong journalism background including many years in London working at national newspaper level. In New Zealand she gained invaluable radio skills to add to her portfolio, helping set up a local radio news bureau with national reach and contributing features to national print publications. Fiona is known for strong interviewing, writing and editing skills (with a keen eye for attention to detail), national media relations and marketing, and for building enduring business and media relationships. [southernpr.co.nz](http://southernpr.co.nz)



## Back of House and Stage Management

### APPRENTICE

#### Nadia El Kastawi

Nadia El Kastawi is a Spanish actress, director, playwright, voice-over artist, and stage manager whose career spans theater, music, and live performance. She holds a degree in Performing Arts from the Royal School of Drama in Madrid and has completed advanced training at the William Layton Theatrical Laboratory. Throughout her career, she has worked extensively in Spain, Portugal, Germany, and Austria, performing in theater productions, short films, commercials, and cultural festivals.

As an actress, Nadia has explored a diverse range of roles, from classical repertoire to contemporary experimental works, always emphasizing physicality and emotional depth. As a playwright and director, she approaches stage creation with a poetic sensibility, weaving together movement, imagery, and rhythm to craft immersive narratives. Her work in voice-over further extends her storytelling abilities, bringing characters and narratives to life through spoken word.

In addition to her stage work, she studied violin at the Conservatory of Almería, which has deepened her understanding of the relationship between sound and dramatic expression. She has also been a drama educator in Spain and Germany, fostering creativity in students and guiding them in their exploration of theatrical language.

She is currently part of the stage management team at the festival, where she applies her experience in performance coordination and artistic production.

### APPRENTICE

#### Kieran Leftley

Kieran Leftley is a passionate and technically skilled Year 13 student at Wakatipu High School, currently serving as an Apprentice Stage Hand at the Whakatipu Music Festival. With a strong foundation in theatre production, Kieran brings extensive experience across stage management, sound, lighting, and audiovisual operation. He has contributed to numerous large-scale productions as Stage Manager for *Hairspray* and *Mamma Mia*, as well as technical roles in *Spamalot*, *Fame Jr.*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Rock Apocalypse* and *Footloose*.

Kieran is known for his professionalism, attention to detail, and calm presence under pressure. These qualities along with technical proficiencies, excellent problem-solving and collaborative skills make him a valuable member of any production team.

Beyond the stage, Kieran demonstrates strong leadership and community involvement. He was recently appointed Deputy Head Student for 2025 and has served on multiple student councils, as well as acting as a STARS Peer Mentor. He is also actively involved with volunteering in the community.

Kieran has received multiple accolades for his dedication to the arts, including the Bruce Grant Memorial Trust Scholarship and the Douglas Kano Crew Excellence Award/Scholarship and the President's Award from Showbiz Queenstown. With a deep passion for performance and production, Kieran is excited to contribute to the Whakatipu Music Festival and further develop his craft alongside industry professionals.

### MENTOR

#### Samantha Stout

##### TREGOLD WEDDING

Samantha is a highly experienced events professional with over 20 years in the industry. As the founder of Tregold, a bespoke wedding planning business, and the Events Manager for At Worlds Edge Festival, she specializes in creating unforgettable experiences. With a strong background in festival and live event production, Samantha has worked as a stage manager and in production at world-renowned events such as Glastonbury Festival and the Eden Sessions. Bringing expertise, creativity, and precision to every event, she is dedicated to delivering seamless and memorable occasions.

[tregoldweddings.com](http://tregoldweddings.com)



## Front of House, Ticketing and Hospitality

### APPRENTICE

#### Claudia Witkowski

Claudia Witkowski is an event manager by profession and has organised numerous events for various clients in Germany and Austria, including award ceremonies, gala dinners, concerts and conferences.

She studied Cultural Studies in Lüneburg and was involved in project work for Steinway & Sons and the Hamburg cultural scene. After her graduation she was responsible for event management in the Career Centre at the University of Hamburg. In addition to working with companies, she was involved in projects with start-ups and conceptualised new event formats.

Claudia discovered classical music through her first job in a theatre and has since enjoyed visiting the world's great concert halls on her travels. She is currently travelling in New Zealand on her working holiday visa and continues to work at various events.

### APPRENTICE

#### Petronella Rosenquist

Music has always been a huge part of Petronella's life. Studying musical theatre in New York allowed her to be immersed in the art of storytelling through performance, learning from incredible mentors along the way. Petronella has worked as a singer in Spain performing in various venues and embracing the country's rich music culture, all shaping her as an artist with a deepening passion for music and live performance.

Beyond performing, Petronella studied Events Marketing Management, which led her to work as an Event Programmer and Support Specialist at Ticketmaster Sweden. Her background as a performer is extremely helpful in blending with an understanding of how live events come together behind the scenes.

Whether on stage or working behind the scenes, nothing compares to the energy of music for Petronella. "I'm always excited to take on new projects, meet inspiring people, and create unforgettable experiences."

She is thrilled to be part of the Whakatipu Music Festival 2025. "It's an incredible opportunity to connect with talented musicians, embrace new experiences, and share my love for music with a new audience. I can't wait to be involved in this amazing event!"

### MENTOR

#### Janey Labes

Originally from Dunedin, where she gained a degree in information technology, Janey followed her passion into the world of event management, working with a range of venues and operations. For six years in Wellington she ran events at the TSB Bank Arena, immersing herself in music concerts, festivals and live performance. It was also where she honed her skills in setting up thousands of chairs! She moved to Queenstown in 2012 for the lifestyle and to raise a family. Here she started from scratch again, volunteering with all the major events in Qtn such as Winter Festival, Winter Games and LUMA and working her way up into management roles. Her detailed knowledge of how events 'work' in Queenstown has led her to Front of House, Box Office and Hospitality management for the Wakatipu Music Festival and the Michael Hill Violin Competition. She loves her work as a mentor for young people considering entering the industry, enabling them to gain invaluable experience working with a small team that delivers a big job.



## Technical Production

### APPRENTICE

#### Baxter Bamford

Baxter Bamford, 17, is a dedicated and talented stage production professional from Queenstown, New Zealand. A student at Wakatipu High School, Baxter discovered his passion for technical theatre in 2021 when he joined the school's production team as a lighting assistant for *Grease*. Over the past five years, he has honed his skills behind the scenes, progressing to the role of head lighting designer for the last three years.

Beyond school productions, Baxter extended his expertise to the wider Queenstown theatre community, volunteering with Showbiz Queenstown on *School of Rock* in 2022 and every year since. His commitment and adaptability were evident when he even stepped in as a performer, showcasing his versatility in the industry.

His dedication caught the attention of the team at TomTom Productions, where he has worked for the past three years. This role has given him incredible opportunities to be involved in major events across Queenstown—an exciting and rewarding experience that far exceeded what he imagined at 14. Through TomTom, Baxter has received professional training, recently completing the latest certification in operating the GrandMA lighting board through MA University.

Two years ago, after suffering a serious spinal injury, Baxter used his rehabilitation period to complete his pre-apprenticeship in lighting.

Currently completing his university entrance, Baxter plans to continue working at TomTom before traveling and pursuing his dream of becoming a lighting director for a live touring show.

### APPRENTICE

#### Hunter Cotterill

Hunter Cotterill, a 17-year-old from Queenstown, is an aspiring audio and video technician with a deep-rooted passion for sound. His journey began in 2022 at Wakatipu High School, where he stepped into the world of technical theatre as a “mic boy” for the musical *Footloose*. That spark led him to dive into audio production, and over four years, he sharpened his skills, eventually taking charge as the lead technician for school performances during the past three years.

Outside of school, Hunter has broadened his horizons by volunteering with Showbiz Queenstown, working on shows like *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Spamalot* since 2023. These opportunities allowed him to learn from seasoned pros and refine his craft. His talent and drive landed him a position at TomTom Productions, where he's spent the last year working and gaining experience at local events and festivals.

Nearing the end of his university entrance studies, Hunter intends to stay with TomTom Productions to further hone his expertise before embarking on global adventures. Training to become a sound engineer for live touring productions and bands in the future.

### APPRENTICE

#### Jacob Neuhauser

Born and raised in New York, Jacob spent most of his recent past in Utah and the western U.S. before coming to New Zealand in 2022. Jacob prefers being surrounded by mountains and desert rather than skyscrapers and high lines. He currently works as a Video Technician with TomTom Productions, and his experience stems from working in production for film festivals - Sundance, Tribeca, Mountainfilm, NZIFF. That being said, Jacob has a keen passion for events, film, and seeing the clearest picture, whether it be on the silver screen or an LED wall.

When he is not walking in the bush or at the cinema, you'll find Jacob in the kitchen creating a culinary masterpiece with whatever's in the pantry. As an avid traveler, Jacob sees the world through what's on his plate and in his glass.

### MENTOR

#### Benn Lapper

##### TOM TOM PRODUCTIONS

After completing a Bachelor's degree in Television & Broadcasting, Benn spent a number of years working in the television industry based in London and working in a variety of genres such as Food Competitions, History & Factual Entertainment for a number of broadcasters including the BBC, Discovery Channel & MTV. After honing his skill set, Benn landed his dream job producing a weekly Football based highlights show for Nickelodeon UK, where he was tasked with writing the scripts, directing live recordings, editing VT's and delivering a finished show to a strict deadline. "I have been working for TomTom Productions since moving to New Zealand in 2019, where I have been fortunate to experience a different side of the entertainment industry and helping to produce amazing live events, with hands-on experience in lighting, LED walls, projection mapping and live streaming." [tomtomproductions.co.nz](http://tomtomproductions.co.nz)



## Audio Engineering

### APPRENTICE

#### Breege Ferry

Breege-Marie Ferry, from Donegal, Ireland, has spent the past 10 years living in the Southern Hemisphere, with 6 years in Queenstown, New Zealand. Raised with the native language Gaeilge and a strong connection to Irish culture, Breege-Marie values diverse cultures and backgrounds. She was recently granted residency through the Skilled Migrant Programme, with her experience in music, outdoor instruction, and teaching contributing to her qualification.

Her musical journey began with the tin whistle, which sparked her passion for music and laid the foundation for her ability to play a variety of instruments. Over time, her taste in music expanded from Irish traditional and pop to genres like dance, rock, jazz, classical and reggae are few to mention.

Bree holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Technology and Production from LIT Limerick, along with training as a general technician at the Irish National Event Centre in Killarney. She has also worked as a Music and Cultural Facilitator in a recording studio in Gweedore, where she taught, organized classes, recorded musicians, and set up for events.

Breege-Marie's love for the outdoors and adventure drew her to Queenstown, where she has made a second home. She is thrilled to contribute her skills to the Whakatipu Music Festival and gain further experience by shadowing Adrian Hollay.

### MENTOR

#### Adrian Hollay

##### RNZ CONCERT

Adrian Hollay is a composer, sound designer and music producer with over 15 years' experience. He works predominantly for Radio New Zealand and has recorded hundreds of concerts by New Zealand's orchestras and chamber music groups. Many of those concerts have been live broadcasts on RNZ Concert and have been streamed live online.

Adrian's recordings have been released on music labels Naxos and Atoll, as well as being broadcast on public radio stations across the globe.

In 2023 and 2019 his work was awarded Gold, and in 2017 Silver, at the New York Festivals World's Best Radio Program Awards for 'Best Live Sound'.

Adrian has worked on theatre plays by the Auckland Theatre Company, composing soundtracks and designing for many major productions. His music has also featured in short films, documentaries and commercial media in Germany, Australia and New Zealand. Adrian composed and produced the theme music for RNZ's morning programme First Up. [hollay.com](http://hollay.com)

## Photography

### APPRENTICE

#### Pablo Herrero

Pablo Herrero is a photographer originally from Spain and now living in New Zealand. Photography has been Pablo's passion for as long as he can remember and has become his way of experiencing the world. For him, photography isn't just about taking pictures; it's about capturing moments that tell a story and evoke emotion. Specializing in landscape, adventure, and lifestyle photography, Pablo is always looking for that perfect shot that speaks to the soul.

Traveling is a huge part of Pablo's journey. Every new place visited, every adventure embarked on, brings a fresh perspective which shapes his work. Inspiration is in the raw beauty of nature. Whether it's the vastness of the mountains, the quiet of the sea, or the thrill of an outdoor adventure. Pablo's style is minimalist, focusing on the simple yet powerful aspects of the world around him. "I love capturing the calm and serenity of nature, while also embracing the energy and movement of outdoor activities."

Constantly evolving as a photographer, Pablo is pushing himself to learn new techniques and challenge his creativity. The goal is to create images that not only showcase the beauty of the world but also connect with people on a deeper level. He believes in the power of storytelling through visuals, aiming to capture moments that are meaningful, memorable, and full of emotion. "I want my images to serve as a window into my world, inviting viewers to experience the same emotion and wonder that I felt when I captured each moment."

### MENTOR

#### Sadhbh Ní Chathasaigh

Sadhbh is a photographer originally from the scenic town of Killarney, Kerry, Ireland, now living in Wanaka, New Zealand. Her passion for art, culture, and human connection drives her work, with a keen eye for capturing authentic moments and emotions.

After completing her photography studies at St. John's College, Sadhbh took her talents to New Zealand, where she worked with Alpine Image Company, honing her skills in landscape and wedding photography. Now, as a freelance photographer under the name \*Sadhbh Photography\*, she brings her unique perspective to a wide range of projects, from weddings, events, portraiture and everything in between.

Her work is not just about capturing images, but about telling stories through her lens, creating a visual connection between the subject and the viewer. Sadhbh is deeply inspired by the interplay of light, texture, and the beauty of the natural world, all of which find their way into her photography. With an eye for detail and a deep appreciation for the rich stories that unfold in everyday life, she strives to create images that are as meaningful as they are beautiful.

Sadhbh's photographs resonate with those who value art, culture, and the human experience. Through her lens, she invites you to pause, reflect, and connect with the world around you.

[sadbhphotography.com](http://sadbhphotography.com)





# COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

## Tues 15 April

5:30 – 7pm

TE ATAMIRA

**Open Piano Class with Stephen De Pledge and Bernadette Harvey – an intimate and informal setting for piano students and their teachers.**

Stephen and Bernadette are not only internationally-renowned soloists and collaborating pianists, they are also sought-after piano teachers and on faculty at the University of Auckland and the Sydney Conservatorium.

## Wed 16 April

5:30 – 7pm

TE ATAMIRA

**Workshop with Dr Karen Grylls and Elise Bradley – “Singing in an Ensemble”.**

Legendary choral educators Karen and Elise will work with singers in an informal setting to develop blending, voicing, articulation and other necessities for singing in a choir.

Dr Karen Grylls is Artistic Director of Choirs Aotearoa and led the NZ Youth Choir to win the ‘Choir of the World’ in 1992. Elise Bradley, returned to New Zealand from an illustrious 14 ½ year as the Artistic Director of the Toronto Youth Choir and is the co-founder, (along with Karen), of New Zealand’s Choral Academy.

## Thurs 17 April

5:30 – 7pm

TE ATAMIRA

**Open String Class with Ioana Cristina Goicea and Julian Smiles – an intimate and informal setting for string students and their teachers.**

After winning the 2017 Michael Hill International Violin Competition, Ioana Cristina has made her home in Vienna where she is a professor at the University of Music and Performing Arts as well as maintaining a busy solo career. Cellist Julian Smiles has occupied many of the most prestigious chamber music and orchestral leadership positions in Australia including Head of Strings at the Sydney Conservatorium.

## Rejoice! Choir

Regional singers and choral lovers have joined the choir and partaken in rehearsals, coachings and guidance from directors Dr Karen Grylls and Elise Bradley in the lead up to our Rejoice! Concert on Easter Monday 21 April. They have been supported by members of the National Youth Choir, our Festival Young Artists and Orchestra.



2022 Young Artist Xuan Liu,  
now pursuing graduate studies in Germany  
PHOTO: JAMES ROBERTSON



2022 Festival Artists  
PHOTO: JAMES ROBERTSON

We wish to thank our many supporters that have helped to make this festival happen

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The Hill Family and Jan Spary for  
artist accommodation  
Jan Maxwell, Queenstown  
Lakes District Council, for loan  
of the piano  
University of Otago for loan of  
the harpsichord  
Kinga Krupa for loan of the  
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The Festival reserves the right  
to vary artists or programmes  
without notice.  
Latecomers will not be admitted  
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performance.  
Please turn off all mobile  
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