

20–21 June 2025



SIGNATURE CHOIR & THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

«SYDNEY»
«SYMPHONY»
«ORCHESTRA»

Principal Partner



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

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

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

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

PERFORMING IN THIS CONCERT

FIRST VIOLINS

Andrew Haveron
Concertmaster
Harry Bennetts
Associate Concertmaster
Alexandra Osborne
Associate Concertmaster
Fiona Ziegler
Assistant Concertmaster
Jennifer Booth
Sophie Cole
Claire Herrick
Georges Lentz
Emily Long
Alexandra Mitchell
Alexander Norton
Léone Ziegler
Marcus Michelsen°
Benjamin Tjoo°

SECOND VIOLINS

Kirsty Hilton
Principal
Wendy Kong
Acting Assistant Principal
Alice Bartsch
Victoria Bihun
Rebecca Gill
Emma Hayes
Shuti Huang
Benjamin Li
Nicole Masters
Robert Smith
Caroline Hopson°
Riikka Sintonen°
Nanda Hong*

VIOLAS

Richard Waters°
Acting Principal
Justin Williams
Acting Associate Principal
Rosemary Curtin
Leonid Volovelsky
Andrew Jezek°
James Wannan°
Stephen Wright°
Ariel Postmus†
Jacqueline Cronin*
Rachel Dyker*

CELLOS

Catherine Hewgill
Principal
Simon Coboerft
Associate Principal
Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal
Fenella Gill
Timothy Nankervis
Elizabeth Neville
Christopher Pidcock
Noah Lawrence†

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Steven Larson
Richard Lynn
Jaan Pallandi
Benjamin Ward

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Rosie Gallagher*
Guest Principal
Carolyn Harris
Dana Alison†

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Stephane Rancourt*
Guest Principal
Amy Clough†

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Christopher Tingay
Oliver Crofts†
Alexander Morris
Principal Bass Clarinet

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Principal
Noriko Shimada
Principal Contrabassoon

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Principal
Euan Harvey
Acting Principal
Rachel Silver
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Anthony Heinrichs

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Christopher Harris
Principal Bass Trombone

TUBA

Steve Rossé
Principal

TIMPANI

Joshua Hill°
*Acting Associate
Principal Timpani*

PERCUSSION

Rebecca Lagos
Principal
Timothy Constable
Anthony Brahe*

HARP

Natalie Wong*

Bold Principal
* Guest Musician
° Contract Musician
† Sydney Symphony
Fellow

2025 CONCERT SEASON

Friday 20 June, 7pm
Saturday 21 June, 7pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

SIGNATURE CHOIR & THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

MANA MOANA – SPIRIT OF THE OCEAN

SIGNATURE CHOIR directed by Fepulea'i Helen Tupai & Jadrah Tupai
CARLO ANTONIOLI conductor
FEPULEA'I HELEN TUPAI, JADRAH TUPAI, THOMAS GOSS arrangers
TOFIGA FEPULEA'I MC

- 1. *Fātuga Suifefiloi Fa'asamoa*
- 2. *Siueli 'o e pasifiki*
Maselusa Washburn, Leu Seumanutafa Ulu, Fepukeakinima Liku soloists
- 3. *Kua iti te marama*
- 4. *Psalms 91*
- 5. *Nukututaha*
- 6. *Te Hiva*
- 7. *Tukua*
Wayne La'ai, Nathan Lopa, Eden Leota soloists
- 8. *Le Tu'una Oe*
- 9. *Nepituno*
Lesia Fomai soloist

INTERVAL

- 10. *Manu o le vave ao*
- 11. *Lo'u Fesoasoani*
- 12. *Viti Medley*
Evan Belford, Jadrah Tupai soloists
- 13. *Fifteen Stars*
Hoseah Parstch Tuialii, Rosita Vai-Gibbons soloists
Nathan Lopa chant
- 14. *Ūpē 'a Palu Vava'u kia Siu'ilikutapu*
- 15. *Isa Lei*
John Meli soloist
- 16. *Tama a Samoa*
Nathan Lopa soloist

Pre-concert talk
Nick Afoa in conversation
with John Nolan, in the
Northern Foyer (6.15pm)

Estimated durations
55 minutes
Interval – 20 minutes
50 minutes

The concert will run for
approximately 2 hours
and 15 minutes

Cover image
Signature Choir performing with
the New Zealand Symphony
Orchestra, November 2023.
Photo by Penina Momoisea.

Principal Partner



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tonight, we take you on a voyage across the Pacific – singing songs and telling stories from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau and Tonga, celebrating Pasifika culture in harmony with classical music.

Mana Moana is about honouring our roots and highlighting the connections that bring us together — through story, through song, and through the ocean that connects us all.

We are deeply humbled and honoured to stand on this stage — not just as performers, but as the descendants of Pasifika voyagers, dreamers, and storytellers. To share our voices at the Sydney Opera House, alongside the world class Sydney Symphony Orchestra, is more than a milestone — it's a moment of history for our choir, our communities and the generations who came before us.

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather, the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We pay our deepest respects to their Elders past and present, and honour the enduring connection they hold to land, waters, song and story. As Pasifika people, we recognise the shared journeys and strengths of our Indigenous brothers and sisters, and we are privileged to stand in solidarity with them through our music.

A heartfelt thank you to Craig Whitehead, Melissa King, and your amazing team at Sydney Symphony. From the very beginning, you embraced us with open hearts and open minds — showing deep respect for our vision and genuine care for our art and stories. Thank you for not only making space for our Pasifika voices, but for championing them. Your belief in this project has been unwavering, and we are truly honoured to stand alongside you on this beautiful stage.

We want to especially acknowledge the organisations who believed in this vision and helped make it possible — Pacificast, the New Zealand High Commission, Creative New Zealand, Eveni Pacific, Boosted x Moana, Pasifika Film Festival, Signature Tautai Trust and all those who've stood behind us from day one. Your support has been vital in carrying us here.

And last but not least, our greatest thank you goes to our dear families and communities who have made this possible. We are here because of your sacrifices, your prayers, and your belief in us. We sing with you, for you, and because of you.

Signature Choir would like to thank:

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creative *nz*



Signature
TAUTAI

boosted x moana



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SIGNATURE CHOIR

Signature Choir is one of New Zealand's leading vocal ensembles — known for their rich harmonies, powerful storytelling, and a sound that brings together gospel, classical, modern and traditional Pasifika music in a way that's fresh, moving, and unmistakably Pacific.

Founded by Fepulea'i Helen Tupai, the choir began as a space where Pasifika voices could find strength, freedom and belonging through music. Since then, it has grown into an award-winning choir that's moved audiences across Oceania and beyond. In 2024, they were named Best Gospel Artist at the Pacific Music Awards — a proud moment for a choir grounded in faith, culture, and community.

Signature Choir has worked alongside some of New Zealand's most respected organisations and artists — from the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and New Zealand Opera, to international names like Swiss, Tree, A.R.T, and Josh Tatofi — steadily carving out a place as one of the leading voices in the New Zealand arts scene.

At the heart of their journey is *Mana Moana* — a world-first Pacific, choral and orchestral production that explores the ocean as a symbol of connection, heritage and strength. Premiered with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra to standing ovations and sold-out arenas, *Mana Moana* has become a powerful celebration of identity, resilience and unity.

Now making their Australian debut on one of the world's most iconic stages, Signature Choir joins forces with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to deliver an experience that's unapologetically Pasifika — bold, rooted in faith, and woven with the stories, struggles, and strength of their Pasifika people. Every note is a testament to who they are, where they come from, and the future they're building — one rooted in pride, purpose, and possibility.



Signature Choir performing with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, November 2023. Photo by Penina Momoisea.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

FEPULEA'I HELEN TUPAI

Fepulea'i Helen Tupai is an internationally renowned composer, conductor and the visionary founder and Music Director of Signature Choir. She has spent over 30 years helping shape the sound of Pasifika music across communities in Aotearoa and beyond. Also a pianist, educator, and creative leader, Helen's known for her ability to bring together the worlds of gospel, choral, traditional and modern Pasifika music in a way that feels fresh, powerful, and deeply moving.

Together with her husband Tana Tupai (who manages Signature Choir), Helen was one of the driving forces behind *Mana Moana* — a show that blends orchestra, choir, and Pasifika storytelling to honour the unifying power of the ocean and the way it connects our people. What started as a dream has grown into something far bigger, with *Mana Moana* now touching audiences from all walks of life across the country and the Pacific.

Helen's music has been performed on major stages — from her local church in Newtown, to the concert halls of national tours, and through collaborations with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Two of her most loved compositions, *Lo'u Fesoasoani* and *Psalms 91*, have become anthems in Pasifika communities here and overseas.

In 2024, Helen was a judge for the first-ever Musika Moana Choir Competition — a kaupapa she helped create to grow and support emerging Pasifika choirs. She has also been invited to judge at the 2025 National Big Sing Finale, a nod to the respect she holds in the wider choral world as one of the country's top Choral Directors.

Helen's commitment to the next generation continues through the Signature Music Academy, where she mentors young Pasifika artists and leaders. For her, it's never just about the music — it's about helping people stay connected to who they are, where they come from, and the stories that shape them.

She's also a proud wife, mum of three, and long-time choir director at her home church, PIPC Newtown. Whether she's on stage with a full orchestra or leading Sunday worship, Helen shows up with the same heart — one grounded in faith, service, and love for her people.

Through all of it, she remains focused on what matters most: honouring those who came before, uplifting today's generation, and creating space for Pasifika voices to be heard and celebrated — on every stage, in every room.



Fepulea'i Helen Tupai

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

JADRAH TUPAI

Jadrah Tupai is the Co-Director of Signature Choir and plays a big part in shaping both its sound and its long-term direction.

With more than 15 years' experience working with some of Aotearoa's top music groups, he brings a mix of creativity, collaboration and steady leadership that's helped grow Signature Choir into one of the most respected ensembles in the country.

Together with Helen and Tana Tupai, Jadrah helped bring *Mana Moana* to life — helping shape the story behind the show and co-arranging its choral pieces. What started as a simple idea to honour the connections between Pacific peoples has become an award-winning experience that's reached audiences across Aotearoa and the wider Pacific.

He also co-produced the *Mana Moana* album and contributed original songwriting to the choir's latest EP, *Reach the Sky*, working alongside well-known artists like Tomorrow People, Tree, Swiss, IKON Music, and A.R.T.

Outside of the music, Jadrah is the Chair of the Signature Tautai Trust — the umbrella organisation for Signature Choir, the Signature Music Academy, and the Musika Moana Choir Competition. These initiatives support young Pasifika creatives and leaders, while also giving older generations the chance to reconnect with music and be part of something meaningful and high-quality. It's a space where different generations come together to share stories, celebrate culture, and make something powerful.

For Jadrah, family is everything — they inspire him, keep him grounded, and remind him of why he does the work. He's a proud dad, partner, brother, uncle and son — and each of those roles helps shape the kind of leader and artist he is.

Whether he's in rehearsal, on stage, or behind the scenes, Jadrah stays focused on the bigger picture: using music to uplift, connect, and celebrate Pasifika stories around the world.



Jadrah Tupai

SIGNATURE CHOIR

Music Directors

Fepulea'i Helen Tupai
Jadrah Tupai

Manager

Tana Tupai

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Dion Lealofi
Alani Faaeteete

Sydney Leadership

Aaifou Taanoa
Elena Malietoa Toafa
Joelita Taanoa

Section Leaders

Soprano: Atelina Malagamaali'i
Alto: Tepora Samia
Tenor: Elama Elama
Bass: Kisena Asi & Mason Malagamaali'i



Signature Choir performing *Mana Moana* in Auckland, 2025. Photo by Tom Grut.

SIGNATURE CHOIR

Adam Leifi	Henrietta Hunkin-Tagaloa	Noema Fili
Alesi Purcell	Hepisipa Liku Maka	Noema Leota
Alisa Belford	Hoseah Tuialii Parstch	Patricia Savea
Ana Sirila	Iafeta Pele	Paul Leitupo
Analote Leiataua	James Aufa'i	Pemerika Pemerika
Anita Maalo	Jesse Antonio	Punipua Allan
Anita Ulugia	John Meli	Rachel Foma'i
Audrey Moors	Julian Tupai	Rachel Jacobs
Autagavaia Iosua Savea	June Peilua	Rev Vaega Tiafau
Ave Malua	Latoia Sasa-Lepania	Rona Mitai
Avele Kirisome	Lauina Tauaifaiga	Roseta Lopa
Ben Komiti	Leah Schwenke	Rosita Vai-Gibbons
Bessie Fepuleai	Lemalie Pama Tafaovale	Rowena Yates
Chucky Fonoti	Leoh Moelau	Seborah Hanipale
Eden Leota	Lesa Fomai	Serita Gaualofoa
Elama Elama	Letupu Fonoti	Shekinah Semaia
Elise Fa'atali	Leu Seumautafa Ulu	Siaki Malietoa
Elizabeth Masoe	Liana Komiti	Svetlana Siulai
Emeline Pusa	Lope Leiataua	Tana Faitua
Ese Enari	Lo'u Leota	Taylah-Ann Enari
Esita Tuidama	Lucy Latuinipulu	Tianey Tagaloa
Ester Gaolo	Maliko Gaolo	Tino Fretton
Eteuati Leiataua	Mary Poleis	Tiu Danica Fonoti
Evan Belford	Maselusa Washburn	Tonga Latuinipulu
Ezra Iupeli	Mata Tufi	Tooa Pele
Faaea Gibbons	Mathew Peni	Tufosa Savea
Falealii Tafaovale	Maylani Franheim	Tupuse Mataittoa
Faoa Taupau	Melania Akenese Lui	Valta Fosi
Fepukeakinima Liku	Merita Jacob	Warren Asi
Fili Fili	Mise Samuela	Wayne La'ai
Fililemoe Moananu	Nathan Lopa	
Gabrielle Mackintosh	Nevaeh Pele	

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

TOFIGA FEPULEA'I MC

The Humble King of Comedy. Wellington born Samoan, Tofiga Fepulea'i, has graced screens and stages across New Zealand and beyond for more than 20 years. Audiences have been delighted by his standup comedic genius, acting and musicianship. Tofiga first rose to stardom as one half of the iconic The Laughing Samoans and has gone on to be one of the most recognisable Samoan comedy talents today.

Widely recognised as one of the most iconic Pacific entertainers in the world, Tofiga draws inspiration from his old-school Samoan upbringing, his experiences as a Pacific Islander in New Zealand, and, his transition into fatherhood with three young teenage sons. In addition to stand up, Tofiga performs hilarious characters, a fan favourite is his character Aunty Tala and Uncle Sam.

In addition to standup comedy, Tofiga has been seen most recently on screen in *Taskmaster NZ* and feature film *Take Home Pay* and was the voice of Nalo in Disney's *Moana 2*.

A proud man of faith and community, Tofiga remains grounded in service — regularly playing the organ at his church, supporting youth initiatives, and mentoring emerging comedians through workshops and mentorship. His work continues to uplift, inspire, and unite audiences — reminding us that laughter is a powerful connector.



Tofiga Fepulea'i

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

CARLO ANTONIOLI conductor

Carlo Antonioli is one of Australia's most dynamic young conductors, who previously held the positions of Cybec Assistant Conductor at the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Assistant Conductor at the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

For the MSO, Carlo's engagements have included concerts at Hamer Hall, the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, Melbourne Town Hall and the Melbourne Recital Centre, Ears Wide Open presentations, regional tours and Classic Kids concerts.

Rapidly establishing himself both with Australia's leading symphony orchestras, and with vibrant, cutting-edge ensembles, some of Carlo's most recent engagements include working with the Queensland, Tasmanian and Canberra Symphony Orchestras, Orchestra Victoria, *Book of Longing* (Philip Glass), *The Loser* (Lang) and *To Hell and Back* (Heggie) for the Australian Contemporary Opera Company, the Australian, Sydney and Melbourne Youth Orchestras, the Australian National Academy of Music, Ensemble Apex, Australian Doctors Orchestra and the Stonnington Symphony. Carlo is also a composer and member of the Sydney-based Dreambox Collective. A passionate advocate for new music, Carlo has conducted for composer development programs with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Australian Youth Orchestra.

In addition to assisting MSO Chief Conductor Jaime Martín and WASO Principal Conductor Asher Fisch, he has assisted many prominent guest conductors in Australia including Vasily Petrenko, Sir Mark Elder, Sir Andrew Davis, Karina Canellakis and Mark Wigglesworth, as well as Vladimir Ashkenazy and Chief Conductor Simone Young at the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Carlo was one of five conductors selected for the newly-expanded Australian Conducting Academy in 2023-2024, having previously been selected for the inaugural Academy in 2018. This sees him returning to all of the Australian state symphony orchestras and Orchestra Victoria.

A recipient of the Alan Bellhouse Memorial Award for Conducting and the Ada Thompson Prize for Postgraduate Students, Carlo completed a Master of Music Studies (Conducting) at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2017 and a Bachelor of Music (Performance) with First Class Honours in 2015. Concurrent with his studies, he was a participant in the Symphony Services International Conductor Development Program in 2015-2016, working with the Tasmanian, Adelaide and West Australian Symphony Orchestras and the Opera Australia Orchestra.



Carlo Antonioli. Photo by Laura Manariti.

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BUSINESS SERVICES

Sarah Falzarano
Director of Finance
Daniela Ramirez
Finance Manager
Laura Soutter
Payroll Manager
Jonathan Zaw
IT Manager
Alex Hong
Assistant Accountant
Julian Konle
Accounts Officer

DEVELOPMENT

Jennifer Drysdale
Director of Development
Rachel Shafran
Development Manager
Benjamin Moh
Head of Corporate Relations
Sabrina Jelcic
Corporate Relations Officer
Fleur Griffiths
Head of Philanthropy
Patricia Laksmono
Events Manager
Gabriela Postma
Philanthropy Officer
Alison Eom
Philanthropy Coordinator

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

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

MARKETING

Charles Buchanan
Director of Marketing
Alexandra Barlow
Head of Communications & Content
Craig Abercombie
Content Producer
Hugh Robertson
Editorial Manager
Andrea Reitano
Head of Growth Marketing
Nicola Solomou
Senior Marketing Manager
Ann He
Marketing Manager
Laura Dang
Marketing Coordinator
Amy Zhou
Graphic Designer
Chris Slavez
Digital Marketing Coordinator
Lynn McLaughlin
Head of Lifecycle Marketing
Douglas Emery
Senior Marketing Manager & Insights Analyst

Customer Relations

Pim den Dekker
Head of Customer Relations
Georgia Mulligan
Jennifer Calacoci
Meg Chaseling
Customer Relations Team Leads

OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION

Kerry-Anne Cook
Director of Operations & Production
Aeva O’Dea
Operations Manager
Tom Farmer
Production Manager
Elissa Seed
Production Manager
Jacinta Dockrill
Production Administrator
Shanell Bielawa
Production Coordinator
Jordan Blackwell, Jess Hughes, Rory Knott, Matthew Landi, Harvey Lynn, Ella Tomkins
Production Assistants
Georgia Holmes, Reede Palmer
Production Interns

ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT

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

PEOPLE & CULTURE

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

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