

# ARIA



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## Dame Kiri comments ...

I want to begin by paying tribute to the late Rodney Macann who died earlier this year. I am sure Rodney was known to many of you. He was a very special man, such a dear friend and a loyal and respected trustee of my Foundation – I will miss him very much and send my deepest sympathy to his wife Lorna and his family. This edition of Aria includes a special 'Memorial Tribute' to Rodney.

The Foundation's 20th anniversary is a significant milestone, an opportunity to celebrate, to review two decades of enjoyable and rewarding work and to focus on the future. When I launched the Foundation in 2003 I was under no illusion about the hard work that would be required to achieve our objectives but I was also convinced there were many singers with outstanding potential who needed our help. Over the last two decades I have been very encouraged by the way our support continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of students. We are proud that we have been able to make a measurable contribution to the development of these highly talented young singers.

I was recently delighted and very proud when the Trustees accepted my recommendation that Phillip Rhodes receive the inaugural Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation Laureate. This 31st issue of Aria includes details about the Laureate, news about the highly successful 2022 Lexus Song Quest and the latest Wellington Opera season along with some lovely anniversary messages received from many of the New Zealand singers we have supported over the years as well as a catch-up on their careers and individual achievements. They all have very special stories to share. Personally I found it very exciting to be able to share some of these special performances – just two examples – to be at the finals concert when Filipe Manu won the 2022 Lexus Song Quest; and in Wellington on opening nights to see Phillip Rhodes in his lead roles in Wellington Opera's productions of La Traviata and Lucia di Lammermoor.

Finally, I want to thank my Trustees in NZ and the UK for the time and energy they devote to our important work and for their enthusiastic support for all our projects.



COURTESY NZ WOMENS WEEKLY

## Welcome to the 31st edition of Aria

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PHOTO: STUFF LIMITED

## Rodney Macann MNZM (1942-2023)

Dame Kiri, the Foundation Trustees and many of the singers supported by the Foundation are mourning the loss of New Zealand's distinguished bass-baritone Rodney Macann who died on January 20 following a short illness – a loyal and much valued Trustee of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation.

Rodney enjoyed a long and illustrious singing career including 20-years based in the UK as he pursued a profession as an operatic bass-baritone, concert and oratorio singer.

In 2006 Dame Kiri invited him to become a Trustee of her Foundation and with it came the opportunity to mentor and coach young up and coming NZ classical singers giving them the benefit of his long experience, expertise and wisdom. He was a member of the Foundation's Artistic Panel whose role was to oversee the selection of potential candidates seeking Foundation grants. He was subsequently the co-organiser of 'The Kiri Programme' – a Foundation initiative in the form of a series of mentoring workshops. It provided a high-level, personalised and sustained skilled boost to a select group of outstanding young opera singers preparing to leave NZ for post graduate training.

Many of the Foundation supported singers who had worked with and benefited from Rodney's wise advice sent messages and heartfelt condolences. They are included along with the funeral eulogies on the Foundation's website.

Follow link to view the 'Memorial Tribute to Rodney' [➤](#)

### **The final words go to two of the many singers in whose future careers Rodney had so much enthusiasm ...**

*'I've been thinking of the Foundation after such a sad time, losing Rodney. I have been thinking of all of his closest friends and his family. It was devastating news. Rodney was one of those mentors who really made a difference for me, at the very beginning of my career, and especially in those moments later on, where I needed his advice and his wisdom. He always felt like the biggest cheerleader, which for me, was such a privilege to have him on my team. I'm going to miss him very much. It's feels very surreal, which I know everyone who knew him, can resonate with'.*

– NATASHA WILSON

*'Rodney Macann MNZM showed interest in my potential very early on in my singing journey and he always made himself available to me since the first coaching session we had together. I could always confide in Rodney whenever I needed advice on singing, career decisions and life in general. Both he and Lorna showed amazing hospitality towards me and other singers throughout the years and I will never forget the love shown towards us all. May his memory live on through this Foundation and all the amazing work they continue to do with the singers from Aotearoa'.*

– SAMSON SETU

# 20th Anniversary

– a time to reflect and be thankful



In 2003, Dame Kiri established the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation to offer mentoring, financial support and career assistance to young New Zealand singers with exceptional potential as a way of underwriting their efforts to win international success. From the outset it was conceived as her way of giving back to an industry that had given her so much.

“Those who have been blessed with talent deserve the opportunity to nurture it and develop it to full potential,” says Dame Kiri. “My passion is to see young people succeed and it is such a joy to see Foundation recipients progress along the difficult journey of a career in music.”

The Foundation was launched at a gala concert at the Aotea Centre featuring Dame Kiri supported by her good friends Dame Malvina Major, Simon O’Neill and Helen Medlyn along with young singers from The Opera Factory. Video messages with good wishes from HRH Prince Charles, Placido Domingo, Sir Edmund Hillary, Jackie Stewart and Neil Finn were screened. The concert sold out quickly; was filmed and recorded and broadcast nationally with CD and DVD formats being marketed worldwide. It was a memorable occasion ironically staged in a theatre that 20 years later bears Dame Kiri’s name (renamed the Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre in 2019).

Three years later in 2006 a second gala fundraising concert followed at The Michael Fowler Centre in Wellington featuring Dame Kiri supported by her life-long friend and colleague the legendary mezzo-soprano, Frederica von Stade and two very talented singers – NZ soprano Anna Leese and Korean baritone Seung-Wook Seong.

During its first 20 years, the Foundation made more than 160 grants of various sizes to 40 New Zealand singers all displaying exceptional potential. They included Ana James, Kristen Daragh, Claire Egan, Phillip Rhodes, Johanna Foote, Kawiti Waetford, Jonathan Abernethy, Pene Pati, Alexander Wilson, Bianca Andrew, James Ioelu, Anthony Schneider, Kieran Rayner, Julian van Mellaerts, Thomas Atkins, Oliver Sewell, Edward Laurenson, Kathryn McIndoe, Eliza Boom, Madison Nonoa, Natasha Wilson, Bianca Andrew, Filipe Manu and latterly Manase Latu, Samson Setu and Samuel Downes.

Looking back Dame Kiri describes her work with the Foundation as very satisfying – “more satisfying than my own career in some ways because you are looking at these singers taking small steps, and then suddenly large steps. I find it incredibly exciting”.

Gala concert launched Foundation



Jenny Wollerman’s UK research project report

## Other highlights included:

- 2007** Jenny Wollerman research project launched – a 3-month Foundation sponsored fact finding mission to the UK to visit music schools and observe their operations – 112-page report distributed to singing teachers in NZ.
- 2012** First sponsorship of NZ Opera School.
- 2012** First sponsorship of Lexus Song Quest.
- 2013** First sponsorship of NZ Singing School.
- 2015** First ‘Kiri Programme’ launched. Victoria League Scholarship announced.
- 2019** Gala concert – Aotea Centre Theatre renamed ‘Kiri Te Kanawa’ Theatre.
- 2021** First sponsorship of Wellington Opera season.

Dame Catherine Tizard (founding Deputy Chair) and Dame Kiri (Foundation Chair)





Victoria League House - Leinster Square, London

### Victoria League Singing Scholarship awarded to Madison Nonoa – again

In 2022 NZ Soprano Madison Nonoa was awarded the Victoria League Scholarship for Singing for a second successive year. The award is funded by the Victoria League Trust in NZ and presented annually in association with the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation. The prize includes 12 months' accommodation at the League's London House (current value \$14,000).

Congratulating Madison on receiving the award David van Schaardenburg (Chair of the Victoria League Trust) said "the League is delighted to be presenting the award again to Madison – and it's well deserved.

With a developing freelance career and the attendant travel to various European destinations the League's accommodation prize provides an ideal base in London. We wish her continuing successes".

Madison was obviously very pleased to receive the prize again – 'I am so happy to be able to continue my relationship with the Victoria League and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation which began when I was selected to be part of the inaugural Kiri Programme. Over the past year both organisations have given me incredible support during this most difficult time. I am honored to have been awarded this scholarship again. Thank you with all my heart".

Previous winners of the Victoria League Scholarship for Singing include James Ioelu (2015,2017), Kieran Rayner (2016), Katherine McIndoe (2019) and Harry Grigg (2020).

Nominations for the 2023/24 Scholarship are being accepted now. Contact the Foundation office for details.



## Inaugural Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation Laureate

*Renowned Māori baritone, Phillip Rhodes, has been appointed the inaugural Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation Laureate, with a grant of \$65,000. This is the largest single grant awarded by the Foundation since it was established in 2002.*

The Laureate has been established to mark the 20th anniversary of the Foundation and Dame Kiri's 80th birthday next year (6 March 2024).

Phillip Rhodes has been appointed Laureate in recognition of his outstanding achievements as a classical singer, here and internationally. Dame Kiri and the Foundation have helped guide Phillip's career and training over a number of years, and Dame Kiri said today both the establishment of the Foundation's Laureate and Phillip Rhodes as its first recipient give her enormous pleasure.

"Phillip is an exceptional young man with an exceptional voice. He has overcome so much to achieve a stunning international career. To succeed in the tough, competitive world of opera, one that takes no prisoners, a great voice is essential of course, but it also requires tremendous discipline, drive and focus. And ideally, humility. Phillip has all of these in spades", Dame Kiri said.

Phillip Rhodes' career highlights include winning both the New Zealand Aria Competition and the Lexus Song Quest in 2005. He went on to perform in sell out productions of Carmen and Rigoletto at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He has sung with the Welsh and Scottish National Opera companies, as well as performing in Europe. He has returned to New Zealand for the 2022 – 23 opera seasons where he sang the title role of Macbeth in the NZ Opera production last year and will shortly sing as Enrico in Wellington Opera's production of Lucia di Lammermoor. He looks forward to returning to the Royal Opera House in London and to making his opera debut with Opera Australia.

"I am overwhelmed to be made Laureate and awarded this grant. My thanks to Dame Kiri and the Foundation trustees. Dame Kiri has guided me through much of my career and I owe her and her Foundation an enormous debt. I hope I will continue to make Dame Kiri proud of me.

This will make an extraordinary difference to my life, enabling me to continue with my singing training and career, and also to support the Foundation's aims to nurture young singers with exceptional potential, wherever possible", said Phillip Rhodes".

Dame Kiri presented Phillip with a small piece of art to accompany the Laureate – a styled Waka created by Anne Gedson a Wellington based artist.

Follow this link to hear the deeply moving interview with Phillip that featured recently on Radio NZ 'Nine to Noon' show with Katherine Ryan [▶](#)

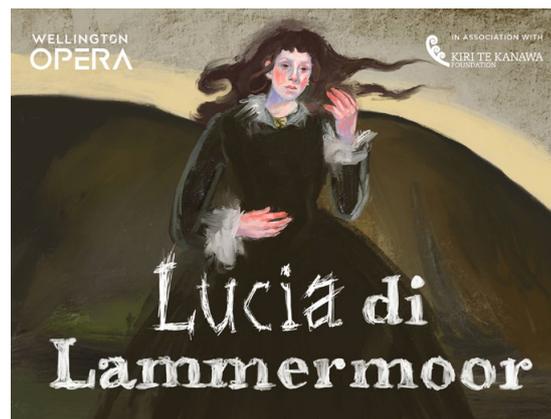


Lucia di Lammermoor – Emma Pearson (Lucia), Samson Setu (Raimondo), Oliver Sewell (Edgardo) & Phillip Rhodes (Enrico)

PHOTO: ROOZEN + SIBANDA

## Wellington Opera provides opportunities for live performance

In addition to educational, travel, rehearsal grants the Foundation was always focused on the need to provide on-stage performance opportunities in NZ for the young singers it supported. This was particularly important in the post Covid era. For that reason, the Foundation was very quick to accept Wellington Opera's invitation to support their first production (Don Giovanni) in 2021. Further financial support for the second production (La Traviata) followed in 2022 and then earlier this year the Foundation agreed to significantly increase its support to the extent that it was the major sponsor of the 2023 production of Lucia di Lammermoor which included sponsorship of four of the principal singers – Phillip Rhodes, Oliver Sewell, Samson Setu and Emmanuel Fonoti Fuimaono. This production was very well received with many excellent reviews.



Filipe Manu, Dame Kiri and Emmanuel Fonoti Fuimaono  
– Lexus 2022 Final Concert

PHOTO: HAGEN HOPKINS

## Lexus Song Quest returns after a 4-Year Absence

The Lexus Song Quest (formerly the Mobil Song Quest) was established in 1956 to identify New Zealand's operatic voices of the future. It remains New Zealand's most prestigious opera singing competition. The Foundation's partnership with the Lexus Song Quest began 10-years ago.

The 2022 contest, returning to Wellington after a four-year Covid enforced break provided an intriguing contest between five young singers who had successfully survived the rigorous preliminary adjudicating process.

The winner on the night was 3-time finalist tenor Filipe Manu whom the Foundation had supported for a number of years. He took away a cash prize of \$20,000, a study scholarship of \$27,000 plus internal travel worth \$3,000.

Part of the Foundation's support included a \$15,000 scholarship awarded to the finalist judged to have 'exceptional potential' – which was presented on stage by Dame Kiri to Emmanuel Fonoti Fuimaono.



PHOTO: LYNN MCKENZIE



PHOTO: RAWHITIROA PHOTOGRAPHY

## Phillip and Friends in concert

In association with the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation, the Rotary Club of Wellington recently presented Phillip Rhodes, Emmanuel Fonoti-Fuimaono and Michaela Cadwgan in concert accompanied by Terence Dennis, singing their favourite songs. Aria asked event organiser John Boshier for this report.

The idea had humble beginnings – Phillip knew the singers would be rehearsing for Wellington opera’s season of *Lucia di Lammermoor* and suggested to Rodney Macann that he would like an opportunity to present an intimate concert in a smaller setting. Why not consider St Andrews on the Terrace in the city – a venue that had proven popular for previous similar concerts? Rodney agreed and started the discussions with possible support soloists – sadly he died a few weeks later in January 2023. Others picked up the challenge, Phillip spoke to the singers about repertoire, marketing got under way - the evening was a sell-out and a welcome fundraiser for Wellington Opera and Rotary.

The concert was dedicated to the late Rodney Macann and it was definitely a night of two halves. Operatic arias including the ever popular Pearl fishers’ duet. Then Ian Frasers memorable interview with Dame Kiri and Phillip – both interviews providing a deep insight into their lives and careers. In a gentle yet compelling way, Phillip shared his experience of foster care by Henare and Pam O’Keefe after leaving a disrupted family. Dame Kiri’s experience with her loving adoptive parents was just as compelling.

More wonderful music followed – when Phillip sang *Dream the Impossible Dream*, as a tribute to his father, there was scarcely a dry eye in the house. A prolonged standing ovation for all the artists gave them the acclaim they clearly deserved. Guests described the evening as inspiring, unforgettable, and deeply moving. Let us hope the opportunity arises to do it again.

– JOHN BOSHER

## Welcome back to an old friend ... Kawiti Waetford

*Early in the existence of the Foundation Dame Kiri recognised Kawiti Waetford as a young singer with exceptional potential. After 5+ years of study in NZ and overseas his career path changed. Now 10 years later we were delighted to receive the following anniversary congratulatory message – very refreshing and classic Kawiti ...*

“Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini kē nō ōku mātua tūpuna – One’s success belongs not to the individual alone, but is shared by the multitude of people who have gone before and supported along the way.”

As a beneficiary of the incredible work that Dame Kiri and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation has done over the last 20 years, to serve and uplift young singers, I would like to extend my warmest wishes and congratulations to her and the Foundation for reaching this auspicious milestone.

Based here at home in Aotearoa for the past 5 years, my focus has been on empowering Māori through te arts, te reo and mātauranga Māori, and our connection to our environment. Working with Māori communities through schools, marae, businesses and corporations, along with government, like the wonderful work the Foundation does to support young singers, my intention has always been to advance the success and achievement of Māori in these fields.

One particular kaupapa that I was inspired by was the recent APRA Māori SongHubs, where 12 emerging Māori singers and musicians came together to write and compose 16 new, reo Māori songs under the guidance of Sir Timoti Karetu and Dame Hinewehi Mohi. As a singer, I was deeply moved to hear and see the beauty of the Māori language being blended with the aural soundscapes that reflect who we are, and where we are heading to as a people in today’s world.

Dame Kiri will always be a trailblazer for us, achieving heights in her field that no Māori had done before her. She’s an inspiration to many, and her legacy lives on in the work she and the Foundation continue to do today. E mihi nui ana ki a koutou me ngā mahi nui kua oti.

Kia ora rā!

### UK Foundation

The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK) although sharing similar aims and objectives is different to the NZ Foundation – in addition to collaborating with the NZ Foundation on projects involving NZ singers studying in the UK it’s objectives allow it to consider supporting singers regardless of their country of origin. In the past this has allowed a small number of very talented international singers who have come to Dame Kiri’s attention to be supported - including sopranos Louise Alder and Nadia Williams (UK), tenor Joel Williams (UK) and bass-baritone Andri Róbertsson (Iceland).



Regular support is provided for the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation Cover Awards with the Royal Opera House, the annual Royal College of Music scholarship and the prestigious BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition (Dame Kiri is the Patron).

## Anniversary messages and career updates from singers supported by the Foundation



### Filipe Manu

Grüezi from Bern, Switzerland and a very happy 20th anniversary to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation!

It's great to be back on Bernese soil to complete the final quarter of my fest contract for the Stadttheater, after a whirlwind five months away. During that time, I performed in David McVicar's *Die Zauberflöte* as Tamino at the Royal Opera House in London, celebrating its own 20th year anniversary, made my house and professional role debut in *Così fan tutte* as Ferrando at the Staatsoper Hamburg and had the privilege of recording excerpts from Michael Tippett's *A Child of our Time* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra for a documentary celebrating his life – coming out soon!

Looking ahead to the next season, I'm ready to break free like a high C and venture into the world of full-time freelancing, where the thought of new projects and collaborations fills me with excitement. Though the prospect of entering the "real world" makes me a little nervous, I'm eager to embrace all the new adventures that lie ahead. Thank you to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation for your support over the years. Here's to celebrating your 20th anniversary and to many more years of nurturing young singers and their dreams.



Rehearsal shot as 'Big Bad Wolf (but secretly a softie)' Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* for Festival Opera Napier.

### Kieran Rayner

Kia ora from... New Zealand! I'm still London-based, but I came back for the first time in three years this January, to sing Papageno in Napier Festival Opera's production of *Die Zauberflöte*. Sadly, it was not to be. We got as far as the dress rehearsal, and then the whole season was cancelled by Cyclone Gabrielle. It was a traumatic experience, and my heart goes out to all who have been affected by this devastating disaster. Festival Opera founders Anna Pierard and Jose Aparicio deserve a lot of credit: throughout this tumultuous time, they were very supportive and loving. They have even – extremely generously – committed to paying us our full fees, even though our contracts do not require them to do so. It is companies like this that keep the arts world alive! Hopefully we can mount the show again at another time, so our hard work will be fully realised.

The last few months have had some career highlights for me, including my debut at the Royal Opera House as Junius in *The Rape of Lucretia* in November. Rehearsing and performing at ROH was such a wonderful experience, a real bucket list moment! Looking ahead, I've just won a prestigious residency with Samling Arts to develop and perform my second interactive play/art song recital *What If?*, which I started writing in 2020. It has a twist – the audience gets to vote on what happens in the story, changing the plot and the songs performed. I debuted my first show of this type, *Wohin – Where To?*, at the Aldeburgh Festival last year, which was warmly received by a sold-out crowd. Other upcoming engagements include Bach's *St John Passion* in London, and a recital of Finzi and Judith Weir for a song festival in beautiful Shropshire.

I am immensely grateful to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation, for all you do to support classical music and champion us as artists across the world. Congratulations on your 20th anniversary – your contributions, time and energy are more valuable than ever. Kia kaha tātou!



2022 Moniuszko Competition

### Eliza Boom

Congratulations to Dame Kiri and everyone at the Foundation on 20 remarkable years! It is a truly wonderful achievement, and the foundation's influence is seen all over the globe in countless singers working in this demanding but rewarding industry, myself included.

The 22/23 season has been one of transition for me, as I finished in the Munich Opera Studio and moved into life as a fully-fledged artist. I was taken on as a member of the Bayerische Staatsoper Ensemble this season, which has helped me ease into this new stage of my career. Alongside that I have been freelancing; it's always exciting to be working in a new city, country, opera house. In November I performed in Marina Abramovic's *7 Deaths of Maria Callas* in Amsterdam, and I am currently doing my first Ring Cycle in Stuttgart, singing Woglinde in *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung*.

Once shows in Stuttgart finish up, I will be heading to Hannover to make an exciting house and role debut as Pat Nixon in *Nixon in China*. It's fascinating music, and Pat gets some of the most beautiful moments (though I may be biased); I can't wait to get stuck into what I'm sure will be a very gratifying process. Next season I will be fully freelance, which is both intimidating and exciting. Unfortunately, no one has officially announced their season programmes yet, but I'm looking forward to making my debuts in a couple of truly great roles and revisiting some others. So there is plenty going on and as always, I hope to make you all proud as a singer who has greatly benefited from the support of the Foundation. Sending my love on this wonderful occasion.



PHOTO: BARBARA AUMÜLLER

Angelina in *La Cenerentola* at Oper Frankfurt in 2022

### Bianca Andrew

After the pandemic years, it is a joy to be back performing like we used to and none of us take our work for granted. Dame Kiri and her Trustees have been such close supporters as we've navigated the past few years - without them, without the many people who contribute to the work of the Foundation, many of us would not still be singing. It is a real pleasure to congratulate everyone at the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation on this 20th Anniversary!

I've been kept very busy at Oper Frankfurt this season. I gave my debut of the title role in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* in September, followed by Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel* at Christmas. In January I sang the lead role of Aurelia in the world premiere of *Blühen*, an opera by composed by Vito Zuraj and directed by Brigitte Fassbaender, one of my greatest role models. It was a highlight of my career to work with her, especially on a brand new piece that we built together from the ground up. The music was almost impossible to learn and vocally taxing. Midway through rehearsals when I was at my most exhausted, I got a call to jump in and sing *La Cenerentola* at Staatsoper Stuttgart. I seriously doubted whether I could sing tonal, bel canto music after weeks of being in a contemporary setting, but it turned out to be just what I needed - Rossini's vocal lines were like a balm for my voice and heart!

The rest of the season ahead holds plenty more wonderful working opportunities. I'm currently rehearsing a new production of *Elektra*, and in May I will sing my first *Xerxes*, followed by Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly*



### Oliver Sewell

Happy 20th anniversary! It has been a huge privilege to be involved with and supported by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation over the last 8 years. Being an opera singer is at times a rather unusual and challenging path to follow. The KTK Foundation has been an unwavering and expert guide helping me navigate down that path. They have helped at critical times when it has been hard to see where the path is leading (or when trying to ford a stream that is blocking your way!). It is amazing to think that I am just one of many people over the last 20 years who the KTK Foundation have helped guide through this challenging yet hugely rewarding art form and career.

My path is finally taking me back overseas after a very pleasant and surprisingly busy few years in New Zealand. As I write this, I am currently in Wellington nearing the opening night of Lucia. And in August of this year I am returning overseas with a move to Bremen, Germany, to take up the position of lyric tenor at Theater Bremen. I am hugely looking forward to being in a large operatic scene again and to be able to test my mettle in Europe!



Opera Le Docteur Miracle

### Samuel Downes

Happy 20th Anniversary to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation from chilly San Francisco. I'm very lucky to be studying my Masters of Music with Cesar Ulloa at the San Francisco due to the support of the Foundation. Without their support I would not be here. They have helped me so much and I will be forever grateful.

As a side message I have been trying to find the words and way to message the foundation regarding the passing of Rodney McCann. Rodney was very important to me in helping me with making the next steps and he was one of the first people I asked advice from when it came to coming to San Francisco.

It was heart-breaking to be so away when I found out and I wanted to come home to attend the funeral because of how important Rodney was to me. I will be home in May and hopefully I will have the chance to come down to Wellington to visit Rodney's wife Lorna and I would love to see anyone from the foundation and tell them all the wonderful stories from my year here in San Francisco.

I have had so many wonderful opportunities with the chance to sing in three Operas, learning four full roles, masterclasses, and lots of other performance opportunities. I am currently working on *The Consul* by Giancarlo Menotti with Patricia Racette directing and Donata Cabrera conducting.



### Natasha Wilson

It's wonderful to be even a small part of such an amazing legacy. I will always be grateful to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation for believing in my work and potential, as a performer. I wouldn't be where I am in my career without the help and guidance of the Foundation. Thank you!

I'm currently based in Stuttgart, finishing my last half of the year as a member of the opernstudio with the Staatsoper. After a very full first four-months; which included six different productions, and a trip to America to perform Susanna, in Pittsburgh Opera's *'Le Nozze di Figaro'*, I'm now preparing the role of Frasquita for our upcoming, *'Carmen'*, in Stuttgart. I'm also preparing new roles for the next season with the company, which is very exciting too. The house here in Stuttgart is wonderful, and I'm really enjoying the support and incredible standard of production and performance of an A-house in Europe.



PHOTO: DAVID BACHMAN

### Madison Nonoa

I would like to say an enormous 'CONGRATULATIONS' for your 20th anniversary! The legacy of just 20 years already serves to remind us all of how vital an organisation such as the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation truly is, especially now.

Thanks to your dedication and belief, we have received the guidance, support and help we have needed as artists. In turn, we hope to enrich our communities and promote opera as a needed and cherished art form. We are all living through challenging times, and it is perhaps difficult to always prioritise arts and see their immediate need and benefit. I want to say, from the bottom of my heart, thank you for the work you have done and for the causes that the Foundation has always championed; thank you for your steadfastness. Thank you for being there for me, for my colleagues and for safely guiding us through these last years – and, of course, for the years before COVID! It has been support that has changed the course of my life and has also provided a solid foundation for the musical community of our country.

The next year has a few lovely things in store for me. Next month I head to Salzburg where I will make my Salzburg Festival debut alongside Cecilia Bartoli as Amore in Gluck's *Orfeo*, after which I will return home to NZ to perform the same role with our very own national company. Looking ahead to 2024, I will make a theatre debut in Lille and return to Strasbourg with Opera National du Rhin to perform the role of Galatea in the French Baroque opera, *'Polifermo'*, which will be conducted by Emmanuelle Haim, a hero of mine. It will be a busy and challenging time, as I begin to really ground myself in this wonderful baroque world! Earlier this month I have my finals audition for the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in London. The auditions never end!

PHOTO: DAVID BACHMAN



PHOTO: BEN REASON

### Katherine McIndoe

I am currently working with English Touring Opera on their Spring Tour, covering the title role in Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*, and singing in the ensemble and covering a role in *Rossini's Il viaggio a Reims*.

I am also performing in *Zoo!*, which is a wonderful opera devised for children with special educational needs that we are touring around the country alongside ETO's mainstage shows (I get to play a zookeeper, a parrot, and a warthog – a particular dream role!). We have just opened all of these shows in London, and are now looking forward to getting on the road to tour until June.

I had a busy 2022, working with ETO on last year's tour, and then on the Glyndebourne Tour for the last few months of the year. In between, I returned to the Aldeburgh Festival to perform in the Britten-Pears Young Artist Gala Concert celebrating 50 years of the programme, as well as performing the role of Amelia in the premiere performances of a new chamber opera, *TIDE*.

I also worked with If Opera (formerly Iford Arts) on their inaugural season, performing the title role in Wolf-Ferrari's *Il segreto di Susanna* and covering Magda in Puccini's *La rondine*. I'm looking forward to what's to come – including hopefully returning to sing in New Zealand in the not-too-distant future!

I want to say congratulations to Dame Kiri and to the Foundation on its 20th Anniversary: you have helped so many Kiwi singers to do what we love, and we are so lucky to have your support.

### Samson Setu

Firstly, massive congratulations to Dame Kiri and all the foundation members for this milestone of 20 years. I am extremely grateful for the time invested by the Foundation in my career. I would not have achieved what I have without their assistance and support. I wish the KTK foundation all the best for the future and I will continue to support all they do and I will always be extremely grateful to them.

I am currently in Wellington sitting in an apartment, nine days out from the opening performance of *Lucia di Lammermoor*. I will be debuting the role of Raimondo which was Rodney's idea and I will be thinking of him as I perform this role. When I finish this opera I will be performing in NZ Opera's (m)Orpheus in September.

Later in September I will be moving to Zürich, Switzerland to join the opera studio at the Zürich Opernhaus. I am excited for this next move and I look forward to singing and exploring the European opera scene.

Once again, I am grateful to the Foundation and Dame Kiri for all the support. Fa'afetai telê lava,



PHOTO: WIGMORE HALL

### Julien van Mellaerts

Happy birthday to Kiri and the Foundation!!! 20 years of helping and supporting budding young opera singers is an enormous milestone, and one we are ENORMOUSLY thankful for. Congratulations and thank you!! I know I speak on behalf of every singer you have supported when I say, we wouldn't be here without you. Kiri too!! I'm sure the celebrations will last all year round.

As I write, I'm about to go on stage for our dress rehearsal at the Opéra National de Lorraine in Nancy, making a role and house debut as Oreste in Gluck's "Iphigénie en Tauride". It's actually a coproduction with Theater Bern, so Filipe will be in the exact same production in a couple of months! Been an incredible experience that I've just loved. A demanding and intense role both dramatically and vocally, I've certainly learned a lot but had a lot of fun doing it.

Prior to Christmas I was in Israel for a month in *Madame Butterfly* before a brief stint to recharge in Valencia, then January was full on. Two separate CD recordings (for release later this year), one of which was Poulenc's orchestrated songs with the Manchester Camerata, and then a wonderful jump in at the Salzburg Mozartwoche 2023. I sang Figaro there before the pandemic and this was their first festival since.

I was teaching at the RCM on a Wednesday morning when I had a missed call from Sir Andrés Schiff. He needed me there by Friday to sing Masetto in a new production by Rolando Villazon. So I was there by Friday! It was an incredible experience with outstanding colleagues both on and off stage.

Now I'm preparing for my first *Guglielmo* in *Così fan tutte* back at home. Can't wait to be back in NZ in May, so I hope to see you all then! Come to a show and say hi please. More exciting things on the horizon, so I'll have to keep you all updated. Back to Israel, more CD recordings, Wigmore recitals, return to Verbier festival, and my first *Wozzeck* in November in the NZ premiere of the work with Orchestra Wellington.

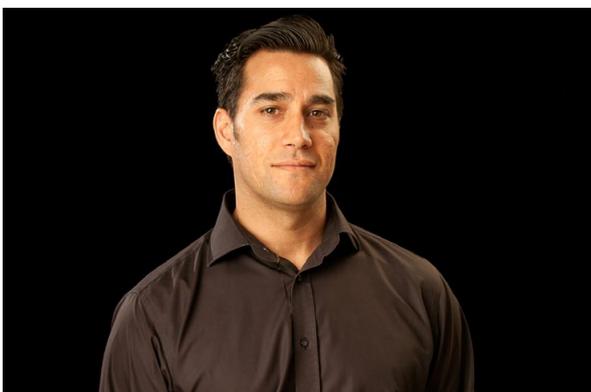




### Manase Latu

I would like to wish the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation a joyous 20th Anniversary celebration this year. There no words to fully express my love and gratitude towards Kiri and the foundation. Their unwavering support has opened so many important doors and allowed me to develop and excel both on the National and International stage. I am very humbled to represent the Foundation and join the legacy of amazing kiwi singers who have come and gone before me.

I am currently in my third year of the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program at The Metropolitan Opera in New York. I define my time on the program as a period of significant growth both as an artist and a person. Not only was I spoilt by the calibre of coaching and teaching staff offered at the Met, but also blessed with so much knowledge of what a singer needs to have a successful career on and off stage. Simply a priceless experience. During my time at the Met, I was involved in the North American premiere of Brett Dean’s Hamlet. More recently, I was a part of Idomeneo and The Magic Flute - Holiday presentation productions on the main stage. I now look forward to an orchestral workshop with the Met orchestra conducted by Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin and a song recital as part of the Lindemann Artists Recital series.



### Phillip Rhodes

I would love to send my congratulations and my gratitude to Dame Kiri, and her amazing team at the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation for their 20 years of supporting young artists. I have been a beneficiary of the Foundation’s generosity since 2008. During that period, I’ve had their help to study in the U.K., bridging the gap between study and building a steady portfolio of work, to lending a helping hand during the great amount of losses during Covid lockdowns. I am a proud recipient of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation Laureate award.

The personal acknowledgement of one of the greatest in our profession, is a result of a solid foundation, built with great experience and a deep understanding of the international standard and expectation on young singers entering the operatic world. Congratulations to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation on the first 20 years, here’s to the next 20!



### Thomas Atkins

There are so many of us out there that have so much to thank The Foundation for. 20 years of us in fact! It’s an incredible achievement to have provided support to so many. For me personally, The Foundation have been and continue to be there for me throughout my operatic journey and I am truly thankful.

There are many exciting things in the diary up ahead. Over the next few months I will make house and role debuts in Rouen (Carmen) and Hamburg (La Traviata) as well as returning to Gothenburg (La Boheme) and Glyndebourne (The Rake’s Progress).

All the best to The Foundation and a huge congrats on your 20th Anniversary.



### Anthony Schneider

Through all the ups and downs of a career, it’s so important to have good support, and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation has been an absolute stalwart for kiwi singers for the last 20 years. Happy anniversary and best wishes for the future!”

“I’m enjoying living in Frankfurt, where I’ve been part of the ensemble for 4 years now. This season started with several smaller roles – the Second Armored Man in “The Magic Flute”, Hans Schwartz in “Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg”, and recently Der Wirt in “Der ferne Klang” by Franz Schreker. It’s part and parcel of the “Fest” life to sing a blend of bigger and smaller stuff, but as the saying goes “there are no small roles!” It can be a nice change to spend time in rehearsal getting familiar with an opera one hasn’t done before, and to be totally honest, goofing off with colleagues when one doesn’t have as much to sing is also quite fun!

The next months will be quite different, since I’m singing my first title role in “Hercules” by Handel – an oratorio that will be staged by the renowned director Barrie Kosky. The week before those rehearsals start, I’ll be singing with The Cleveland Orchestra in Mozart’s Requiem, and right before that I was just asked to jump in as Sarastro at the Semperoper Dresden, my house début! An exciting period of work ahead that I feel ready to tackle.



## We need your help, to help them achieve their dreams

Donations and bequests to the Foundation of any size are always welcome and very important for the continued support of young singers who have exceptional potential.

The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (CC 34307) and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK) (1098213) are registered charitable trusts which offer a wide range of opportunities to support their work.

Further details about how to make a donation or leave a bequest in your will can be obtained from the Foundation office – see contact details below or visit [www.kiritekanawa.org](http://www.kiritekanawa.org)

There are many convenient ways to make donations electronically including direct debit, automatic regular payments, direct credit and telephone banking.

For all these arrangements you will need to know the Foundation's bank account details – Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation: BNZ – 020192-0112452-00.

#### KIRI TE KANAWA FOUNDATION TRUSTEES:

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Dame Kiri Te Kanawa ONZ, DBE, AC, CH | Gary Matthewman | Gillian Newson | Nicholas Payne  
Andrew Robinson | Fiona Rose | Chris Welch

*Further information about how to make a donation is on the website or contact the Foundation for details.*

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*The next issue of Aria will feature more news about the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation. If you want information about the Foundation please contact us. However, if you do not wish to receive further editions of Aria please advise us by sending an email.*

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