

Major performances of Mozart, Beethoven and Mahler here soon

John Daly-Peoples | WEEKEND REVIEW

There are a lot of big concerts on in the next few weeks, with Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Beethoven's *Symphony No 7* and Mahler's *Symphony No 5* and *No 7*

Così Fan Tutte

By Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Auckland Chamber Orchestra and Auckland Opera Studio

Mercury Theatre

Sunday, November 11, 7pm



Madeleine and Anna Pierard

Auckland Chamber Orchestra combines with Auckland Opera Studio to present one of Mozart's most loved operas, *Così fan tutte*. It features some of the best operatic talent in New Zealand, with Madeleine Pierard as Fiordiligi and Anna Pierard as Dorabella. Also in the cast are Kawiti Waetford, Tom Atkins, Barbara Graham and Joel Amosa.

The opera raises eyebrows with its political incorrectness. The librettist wanted to call it *The School for Lovers*, which sheds light on the direction the plot takes.

The work combines both comic and serious opera to make a multi-layered depiction of chaotic interpersonal relationships. It juxtaposes notions of true love and fidelity, betrayal and manipulation, farce and genuine human emotion in a mosaic woven together by the most glorious music.

The opera is being staged at the Mercury Theatre, which is only used occasionally for performances but is a perfect venue for opera, having once been home to Auckland's opera world.

The performance will be sung in Italian with abridged recitative text spoken in English. The directors are Frances and Patrice Wilson and the conductor will be Peter Scholes

ACO and AOS have successfully collaborated on 4 opera projects in the past. Mozart's *Idomeneo* featured Simon O'Neill and Anna Leese. The others were Kurt Weill's *Seven Deadly Sins*, Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* and Poulenc's *La Voix Humaine*. The ACO also produced Gluck's *Orfeo & Euridice*.

Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra

Eckehard Stier, conductor

Messiaen *l'Ascension*Mahler *Symphony No 5*

Thursday, November 22, 8pm

Auckland Town Hall

Messiaen's *l'Ascension* is a testimony to the depth of the composer's Catholic faith – it was described as "spiritually ecstatic" by one reviewer. Whatever its ecclesiastical references, this is a dramatic orchestral work.

Considerably grander is Mahler's *Fifth Symphony*, which was composed in 1901 and 1902, mostly during the summer months at his cottage at Maiernigg. Among its most distinctive features are the funereal trumpet solo that opens the work and the frequently performed *Adagietto*.

The musical canvas and emotional scope of the work, which lasts over an hour, are huge. After its premiere, Mahler is reported to have said, "Nobody understood it. I wish I could conduct the first performance 50 years after my death."

Conductor Herbert von Karajan said that when one hears Mahler's *Fifth*, "You forget that time has passed. A great performance of the *Fifth* is a transforming experience. The fantastic finale almost forces you to hold your breath".

The Newstalk ZB Concerts

New Zealand Symphony Orchestra

Pietari Inkinen, conductor and violin

Vesa-Matti Leppänen, violin

BACH *Concerto for Two Violins in D minor*MAHLER *Symphony No 7*

Wellington, November 10

Auckland, November 17

Christchurch, November 22

An enigmatic dream-world infused with nocturnal mysteries, Gustav Mahler's tantalising *Seventh Symphony* is as intriguing as it is intoxicating. Combining modernist influences with the luscious textures and the bombastic Romanticism of the 19th century, this complex symphony continues to fascinate and beguile musicians and audiences.

Conjuring fantastical night visions, Mahler's music is animated by evocative mandolins, spectral waltzes and a strangely triumphant finale.

Such a magical score finds its perfect companion in J S Bach's Concerto for Two Violins. One of Bach's most well-known and beloved compositions, this concert provides a rare opportunity to see NZSO Music director Pietari Inkinen, take on the role of violin soloist.

Highlighting the impressive breadth of this maestro's extraordinary talents, he will perform alongside the hugely gifted NZSO concertmaster Vesa-Matti Leppänen.

With music that finds a perfect balance between soloists, experience the wonder of Bach as our two Finnish stars deftly weave overlapping phrases of exquisite counterpoint, unveiling the beauty and emotion of Bach's sublime concerto.

New Zealand Symphony Orchestra

Pietari Inkinen, conductor and violin

Vesa-Matti Leppänen, violin

MOZART Symphony No 29

BACH Concerto for Two Violins in D minor

BEETHOVEN Symphony No 7

Napier, November 14

Hamilton, November 16

Dunedin, November 21

Beethoven's glorious Seventh Symphony was composed in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars and was first performed to benefit wounded soldiers.

Filled with dancing rhythms and a driving, forward momentum that will sweep you up in the fervour of wild festivities, Beethoven's Seventh is, as Richard Wagner once enthused, "The Apotheosis of the Dance itself".

Inspired by a visit to Vienna, Mozart's Symphony No 29 is another landmark composition. Bathed in sunny tonalities, this youthful masterpiece captures the delight, elegance and operatic drama that make Mozart's music so inviting.

J S Bach's Concerto for Two Violins provides a rare opportunity to experience the breadth of excellence of NZSO music director Pietari Inkinen as he takes on the role of violin soloist, playing alongside talented NZSO concertmaster Vesa-Matti Leppänen.

Performing together in one of Bach's most well-known works, their contrapuntal violin lines will create music that is filled with beauty and wonder.

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