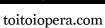
Kate & Richard Burtt Margot Button Val Cotton Elizabeth de Lambert Susan Doig Katherine Doig Raemon Greenwood

# Donors

We would like to thank all those individuals and organisations who have generously provided donations and grants, whether public or private. Without your support and vision this production would not have been possible.







.sbnsive trosda of bstacibab si noitoubord side

# I TDA

"How I escaped seems a strange miracle yet I have a story stranger still,

'isU sungA' .I Cantata: Dona nobis pacem – Ralph Vaughan Williams

Suor Angelica (Sister Angelica) – Opera in one act by Giacomo Puccini

sətuniM 21 – İburətnİ

### II TDA

"My dearest Lucia, I don't know where to start this letter ...."

'Loveliest of Trees' Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad - George Butterworth

When I Was One-and-Twenty .2

Act I Scene 2: Their Spinning Wheel Unwinds' The Rape of Lucretia, Op. 37 – Benjamin Britten

Six Songs from A Shropshire Lad - George Butterworth

- Look Not In My Eyes' .ć
- 'Think No More, Lad' ·4
- 'The Lads in Their Hundreds' ٠ς
- 'faninguol'I meaT vM eI' .9

Anthem for Doomed Youth - Wilfred Owen

III. 'Reconciliation' Cantata: Dona nobis pacem – Ralph Vaughan Williams



The Great Hall The Arts Centre of Christchurch Te Matatiki Toi Ora

Feb 18, 19, 20, 21, 2021 - 7.30pm Feb 21, 2021 - 2.00pm

uor **PUCCINI'S** ngelica & Elegies

> Featuring the music of Britten, Butterworth &

> > Vaughan Williams,

with narration by

Belica & Elegies 101

Nau mai, haere mai, welcome!

of New Zealanders at the front. Suor Angelica, sung in the original Italian, whilst all other words are those New Zealand soldiers and nursing sisters. A narrator guides us through in response to, WWI. The whole is woven together with letters penned by thread of such a diverse program of music is it all was written during, and It is a pleasure to direct this inaugural Toi Toi Opera production. The common

who was killed at the Somme battlefield in 1916. of the war and the deaths of his friends. Among them was George Butterworth Vaughan Williams composed *Dona nobis pacen* in a direct plea for peace, in the wake Great turmoil inspires great art, and from conflict comes a deeper understanding.

as the world emerged from yet another war. pacifism, premiered in 1946. It was the sole opera at Glyndebourne that year, at the Metropolitan Opera in 1918. The Rape of Lucretia, inspired by Britten's tale of Suor Angelica includes his greatest of arias, 'Senza Mamma'. It was first staged Puccini wanted to 'make people cry'; his sister was a nun and the heartbreaking.

Director Sara Brodie

website: www.mentalhealth.org.nz/get-help help regarding mental health, we recommend you visit The Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand's This production of Suor Angelica & Elegies features a character showing signs of distress. Should you wish to seek

Pty Ltd., exclusive agents for Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd. of London. These performances of The Rape of Lucretia, Op. 37, by Benjamin Britten are given by permission of Hal Leonard

letters held in their care, written by New Zealanders serving abroad during WWI to their loved ones at home. National Library of New Zealand, and the family of Len Shepard, for permission to quote in our production from Thank you to Archives New Zealand, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Invercargill City Council Archives,

For more information about Toi Toi Opera or this production of Suor Angelica & Elegies, please visit www.toitoiopera.com

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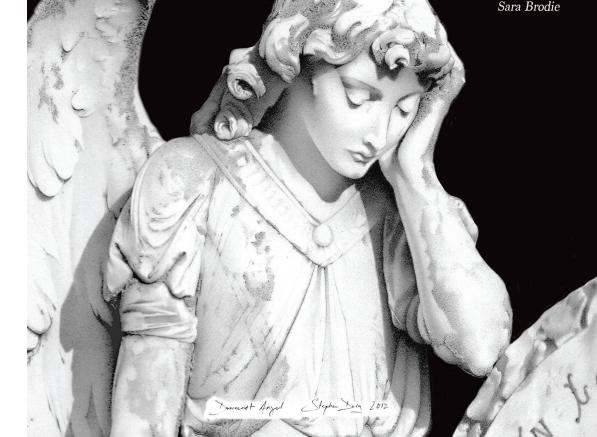


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## Suor Angelica Synopsis

Sister Angelica, the daughter of a noble Florentine family, has taken the veil in order to atone for her sin – an illicit passion when young which resulted in the birth of an illegitimate child. Years have passed, but she is unable to forget her son.

The strains of an Ave Maria can be heard from the convent chapel. A group of nuns emerges, the Monitress admonishes those who were late for vespers, and sends them into the convent for punishment.

Sister Genevieve observes that the fountain is on the verge of turning gold from the rays of the setting sun, as it always does for three evenings during May, a sign of divine grace from the Blessed Virgin Mary. A melancholy moment follows as the nuns recall a sister who recently passed away. Sister Genevieve suggests that, "Perhaps her soul might desire a libation from the fountain?" Sister Angelica declares that desires only come to fruition for the living – the dead have already fulfilled their earthly purpose and their destinies cannot be changed. Displeased with the theme of the conversation, the Monitress reminds them that, as nuns, all desires are forbidden to them. Sister Genevieve begs to differ – she, for example, yearns to hold a pet lamb. Sister Dolcina also has a wish, to which the nuns laughingly reply that it must be for something tasty to eat. To the amazement of all, Sister Angelica denies wishing for anything (yet all know she has been craving news from her family).

The Nursing Sister rushes in, much distressed – a nun has been stung by a wasp and is in great pain. Sister Angelica swiftly prepares a herbal remedy. The Nursing Sister leaves, praising Sister Angelica's skill. Two Alms Sisters appear. They mention that a magnificent carriage with a coat-of-arms has arrived at the convent. The Abbess enters and summons Sister Angelica into the hall. Her aunt, the Princess, has come to demand her niece sign away her inheritance in favour of a younger sister, whose fiancé is willing to overlook the family dishonour Sister Angelica caused, so long as she pays for her actions. Unmoved by Sister Angelica's protests, and her desperate enquiries about her son, the Princess brutally informs her that her son died of fever two years previously.

The document is signed, and the Princess departs. Grieving in the utmost despair, Sister Angelica begs for divine mercy. The nuns depart for the evening. Sister Angelica goes to follow, but then returns to prepare a lethal herbal draught. Bidding a tender farewell to the sisters, she swallows the poison but is suddenly overcome by guilt at having committed the mortal sin of taking her own life. She prays to the Virgin Mary for salvation, and her prayer is answered – as she dies, she sees a miracle – the Virgin Mary appears, along with Sister Angelica's young son, who runs to embrace her. Sister Angelica – Sarah-Jane Rennie The Princess - Leisa Falconer The Abbess - Raemon Greenwood The Monitress – Tara Martin The Mistress of the Novices – Louisa Pilkington Sister Genevieve – Katherine Doig Sister Osmina (Suor Angelica) & Bianca (Elegies) – Elizabeth Emeleus Sister Dolcina (Suor Angelica) & The Maid (Elegies) - Emma Gilkison The Nursing Sister (Suor Angelica) & Female Chorus (Elegies) - Margot Button First Alms Sister – Jillian Hewson Second Alms Sister – Iona Taylor First Lay Sister (Suor Angelica) & Lucretia (Elegies) – Matilda Wickbom A Novice & Second Lay Sister – Kristina Saul Sister Lucilla - Rachel O'Brien Hamilton Sister Chiara – Waitahi McGee Narrator – Philip Nordt Soldier-Soloist – Malcolm Leitch Soldier-Soloist - Alex Robinson Soldier-Soloist – Rory Sweeney Angelica's Son – Cole Moffatt Chorus – Andy Fu Chorus – Ian Thomas

### Orchestra

Conductor – Mark Hodgkinson Piano – Alison Holden Organ & Piano – Jeremy Woodside Violin (Concertmaster) – Matthew Oswin Viola – Alastair Sands Cello – Iain Brandram-Adams Double Bass – Gerald Oliver Flute – Susan Dollin Percussion – Craig Given Orchestra Manager – Ian Thorpe

### Acknowledgements

#### General

Cecelia Schieve Deborah Wai Kapohe Francesca Marisa, You Speak Italian New Zealand Opera Society Inc. NZ Opera Patrick Power, ONZM Peter Squires Showbiz Christchurch Stephen Doig The Opera Club, Christchurch The Piano: Centre for Music and the Arts

### Costuming

Greg Olsen – Sir Greg Theatrics Iona Taylor Michelle Balk – The Malthouse

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### **Creative Team**

Director – Sara Brodie Production Designer – Mark McEntyre Lighting Designer – Sheena Baines Assistant Lighting Designer – Jacob Patchett Costume Designer – Tina Thomas Costume Consultant – Bronwyn Corbet Properties Manager – Christy Lassen Hair & Makeup Manager – Deirdre Fell

### Crew

Production Management – Margot Button, Katherine Doig, Alex Robinson Stage Manager – Danielle Rackham Assistant Director – Waitahi McGee Lighting Operator – Hana Pearce

### Cast

Miranda Russell – First Scene Nicky Newman Rachel O'Brien Hamilton Susan Saul Tracey Hollander

#### Props

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