

Lieder by Brahms and Schubert

Performers: Will King (baritone) and Nicholas Kovacev (piano)

Wednesday Lunchtime Concerts *providing lunchtime music in the heart of the city since 1974*



Welcome

It is wonderful that you have come. Thank you.

We want your experience today to be the best that it can be and would appreciate you taking a moment to read the following before the concert commences.

Keep safe by locating the exit nearest to your seat.

In the event of an earthquake, our recommendation is to **Drop, Cover and Hold**.

Bon appetit! You are welcome to have your lunch during the performance. Switching your cell phone to **silent** is important to the performers and other members of the audience. Your support by way of a **donation** and telling others about the concerts would be fantastic and very much appreciated. It does make a difference.

If you wish to photograph or video today's concert, please ask for permission from the performer(s) before the concert begins. This is important.

We invite you now to sit back, relax and **enjoy** the concert.

Our Mission is to create a lively, open Christian faith community, to act for a just and peaceful world, and to be catalysts for discovery, compassion and celebration in the capital.

These lunchtime concerts are **advertised** through Radio New Zealand Concert's Live Diary at around 8.10 am on the day of the concert, and listed on St Andrew's website.

To be placed on the email **circulation list** for concert information, please email Marjan on marjan@marjan.co.nz. Also join our facebook group Friends of St Andrew's on The Terrace Lunchtime Concerts, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/315497448862287/>.

Check out the noticeboards in the foyer each time you come.

Programme

Part One

Brahms's *Vier Ernste Gesänge* (Four Serious Songs) is a song cycle written specifically for bass voice 1896, although the range is more suggestive of a baritone with a lower extension. While the texts are compiled from the Luther Bible, there is not a single mention of God or a Christ figure, which is in line with Brahms's faith as a self proclaimed 'Humanist'. While the first three songs speak of death and transience of life, the fourth and final songs is about of faith, hope, and charity, proclaiming that charity (note that this is a contextual translation of the German word *Liebe*) is the greatest of the three. This progression from sorrow to comfort is mirrored in Brahms's *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, which also takes text from the Luther Bible.

The first song is declamatory and *semplice*, and proclaims that nobody knows whether people are greater than beasts, for thinking such is but vanity. We are all made of the same dust and return to the same dust. There is a certain menace to the allegro section, characterised by the cascading piano octaves and sweeping chords.

The second song is more internalised and sorrowful, with a motif of descending thirds that represents a descent into the grave. Indeed, the narrator praises those that are already dead and those that were never born. One can assume that the reference was to original sin in the text, but can also be interpreted as admonishment of those who see oppression and do nothing.

O Tod (O Death) shows two differing perspectives on death: firstly how bitter it is for the young with lots to live for, and second to the elderly who craves release from their earthly body. This takes a warm and comforting approach to death, paving way for the fourth song, which has a far more optimistic outlook.

1. *Denn es gehet dem Menschen wie dem Vieh* - It is for Man as it is for beast (*Ecclesiastes 3:19-22*)
2. *Ich wandte mich, und sahe an alle* - I turned and looked upon everyone (*Ecclesiastes 4:1-3*)
3. *O Tod, wie bitter bist du* - O Death, how bitter you are (*Sirach 41:1-2*)
4. *Wenn ich mit Menschen und mit Engelnungen redete* - Though I speak with the tongues of humans and angels (*First Epistle to the Corinthians 13:1-3, 12-13*)

It is for Man as it is for beast;
as the one dies, so dies the other; they have all one breath;
so that Man has no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity.
All go to one place; all are of dust, and all turn to dust again.
Who knows if the spirit of Man goes upward
and the spirit of the beast that goes downward under the earth?
Therefore I perceive that there is nothing better,
than that Man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his lot.
For who shall bring him to see what shall happen after him?

So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun;
and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter;
and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.
I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are alive.
Yea, better is he than both they: which hath not yet been,
And who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

O death, how bitter are you
When you are thought on by a man that lives at rest in his possessions,
to the man that has nothing to vex him, and that has prosperity in all things;
unto him that is still able to receive food!

O death, how bitter are you
O Death, how good you feel to those that need you
Those who are weak and old, and full of cares
He who is weak and old, and is vexed with all things
And has nothing more to hope for, and has lost patience.
O Death, how good you feel.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels,
And have no charity, I am like sounding brass or a clinging cymbal.
And though I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge;
And though I have all faith, so that I could level mountains,
And have no charity, I am nothing.
And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned.
It profiteth me nothing...
For now we see through glass, darkly; But the face to face:
Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.
Now but remains faith, hope, charity, these three;
But charity is the greatest of these.

Part Two

This selection of famous songs by Franz Schubert provides a light refreshment to the serious songs of the first half.

Frühlingsglaube D.686 (Faith in Spring)

Die schöne Müllerin D.795 (The Beautiful Miller Maid)

5. *Am Feierabend* (Evenings Rest)

6. *Der Neugierige* (The Inquirer)

Nacht und Träume D.827 (Night and Dreams)

An die Musik D.547 (Ode to Music)

Biography

Will King (BMus, Hons) is a Wellington-based baritone currently pursuing a Master of Musical Arts at the NZ School of Music, taught primarily by Margaret Medlyn. His operatic roles include the title role in Monteverdi's 'L'orfeo', Count Almaviva in 'The Marriage of Figaro', and Sam in NZ Opera's premiere of Gareth Farr's 'The Bone Feeder,' among others. Will was the winner of the 2019 North Shore Aria Competition, the 2018 Wellington Aria Competition, and runner up in the 2019 McCormick Opera Award and the 2019 Napier Aria Competition. Will was a 2019 Emerging Artist with NZ Opera would like to acknowledge the continued support of the Dame Malvina Major Foundation.

Nicholas Kovacev is a Serbian-New Zealand pianist from Wellington, currently finishing his 4th year of studies at the New Zealand School of Music under Dr. Jian Liu and David Barnard. He is active in performing in recitals and competitions around the region, having won several IRMT competitions. He also holds an associate diploma from the New Zealand Music Examinations Board. During his time at NZSM he has participated in the Adam Summer School several times, with coaching from the New Zealand String Quartet and Diedre Irons. He has received the NZSM Postgraduate Piano Scholarship, Expressions Trust and Rere Beckway pianoforte performance awards and was a finalist for the Body-Harris prize for best performance of a New Zealand work. In 2021 he will travel to Berlin for the Dramatic Voices Program, a chance to work intensively on German Art Song for a month with leading musicians in the city. He hopes to embark on a career as a collaborative pianist.

Contact us



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Coming Up

July

- 1st Monique Lapins (violin); Ken Ichinose (cello); Gabriela Glapska (piano) –**
Andrzej Panufnik, Piano Trio Op.1,
Ludwig van Beethoven Piano Trio in C minor Op.1 No. 3
- 8th 'Piano students of the NZSM'**
- 15th Lucas Baker and Noelle Dannenbring - Music for violin and piano**

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