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O Matou Malaga, Our Voyage

2020 TEACHERS RESOURCE

CAST AND CREATIVES

VIRTUOSO STRINGS virtuosostings.org.nz

The Virtuoso Strings Charitable Trust aims to generate social benefit through an accessible, inclusive and holistic music education programme in a community-based setting.

Accessible: All aspects of all music programmes (e.g. instruments, tuition, uniform, trips, food, exam fees) are provided freely to students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to participate.

Inclusive: All youth residing in socio-economically disadvantaged communities can join the Virtuoso Strings music programmes. Our Virtuoso Strings Orchestra based in Cannons Creek is open to all young people from around the Wellington region.

Holistic: Our mantra is “If you care about the whole person, they will care a whole lot about learning.”

Community: If we work together on common goals, we have more fun and everyone benefits.

JONATHAN LEMALU jonathanlemalu.com

Grammy Award Winning Bass Baritone *Jonathan Lemalu* continues to be in great demand on the global stage as an opera singer, concert performer, recitalist and recording artist. Jonathan’s commitment as patron of Wellington’s *Virtuoso Strings*, brings him back home to be with us for our the Te Ata Festival in Porirua.

SINFONIA FOR HOPE sinfoniaforhope.com

Conducted by Donald Maurice, *Sinfonia for Hope* brought us the deep and moving presentation of “Violins of Hope”, a work written to feature the collection of violins once played in the ghettos and concentration camps of Europe in WW2, since restored by Israeli violin maker Amnon Weinstein.

Each year members of this important orchestra volunteer their time to bring audiences exciting and innovative presentations to fundraise for important causes across the globe.

ABOUT THE SHOW

“The players bent their backs to the task with great spirit, keeping their rhythms buoyant, attacking the beginnings of the lines fearlessly and ‘terracing’ the dynamics so that the sounds had ear-catching ebb-and-flow” Peter Mechen, Middle C

Grammy Award-winning Bass Baritone *Jonathan Lemalu* joins Porirua’s own *Virtuoso Strings*, winners of the People’s Choice Award at the NZCT Chamber Music 2019 Nationals, for a special afternoon of vibrant and moving music, and the first performance of the Te Ata Festival.

The esteemed *Sinfonia for Hope*, drawn from musicians of New Zealand School of Music, Orchestra Wellington and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra add their support to this celebration of arts and creativity for all and the growth of our country’s top talent.

GENRE

The performance covers classical music including Mozart and Vivaldi, opera arias, musical numbers and classical contemporary including *Danzón No.2* by Arturo Márquez and *Kia Hora Te Marino* by Christopher Tin.

PRODUCTION AND TECHNIQUES

COLLABORATION:

The performance is a result of a collaborative process with *Virtuoso Strings* and Jonathan Lemalu. They have worked together on performances in the past driven by Jonathan's role as the patron of *Virtuoso Strings*. Working together with an internationally renowned artist supports the core aims of the Te Ata Festival and *Virtuoso Strings* - creating an opportunity for young people to lead the creative thinking and direction of the performance.

Jonathan and *Virtuoso Strings* are joined by *Sinfonia of Hope*, an orchestra that volunteer their time each year to fundraise for important causes.

INCLUSIVITY:

An important part of the *Virtuoso Strings* project is inclusivity and accessibility. Welcoming all youth from socio-economically disadvantaged communities who can join the music programmes where everything is free. Young people of all ages and backgrounds are represented. It is important to *Virtuoso Strings* that the classical music scene is made more progressive and diverse.

THE PROGRAMME:

A mix of European opera and classical music and pieces in Māori and Samoan composers, the programme covers a range of different pieces utilising different combinations of the three collaborators. Take a look at the histories of some of the pieces played below:

'Lota Nu'u'

This is an anthem of pride and patriotism about Samoa. It is often sung together in large groups at church and family gatherings. Find the lyrics and a translation here: samoan-lyrics.com/lo-ta-nuu/

'Kia Hora Te Marino' by Christopher Tin

This is a piece from *Calling All Dawns*, a classical crossover album that includes 12 songs in 12 languages. *Kia Hora Te Marino* is based on a whakataukī and written with Taonga Puoro musician Jerome Kavanagh. You can read more about the song here: blogger.christophertin.com/2010/11/origin-of-kia-hora-te-marino-discovered.html

'Some Enchanted Evening' from *South Pacific* by Rodgers & Hammerstein

A three verse solo, this song is the single biggest popular hit from a Rodgers & Hammerstein production. Sung by Emile, the show's male lead expresses his love for the young nurse Nellie, in this song about falling in love with a stranger.

FURTHER RESOURCES AND READINGS

WATCH

Watch the *Virtuoso Strings Octet* (Peoples Choice and Gold Award Winner) in action at the Chamber Music NZ Contest National Finals in Auckland youtube.com/watch?v=s11dy7tEnxs

Behind the scenes of *Virtuoso Strings* tour in Northland July 2019: youtube.com/watch?v=jLKsoDOrKUA

Watch Jonathan Lemalu and *Virtuoso Strings* in concert at the Opera House in an interview with Tagata Pasifika: youtube.com/watch?v=y8fd8H-nP7o

Jonathan Lemalu, Opeloge Ah Sam (piano) and Members of the Victoria University Pasifika Ensemble perform *Le Manu Tagie*: youtube.com/watch?v=eHel8volAQ4

READ

Read about the amazing work that *Virtuoso Strings* do for young people in Wellington: virtuosostings.org.nz/

An article about Jonathan Lemalu and his partnership with *Virtuoso Strings*: stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/capital-life/capital-day/108932566/grammyaward-winner-jonathan-lemalu-partners-with-porirua-youth-orchestra

Read about *Sinfonia for Hope* and their goal to make a difference through music: sinfoniaforhope.com/

LISTEN

A feature on RNZ about *Virtuoso Strings* and their concert with Jonathan Lemalu in December 2018: rnz.co.nz/concert/programmes/upbeat/audio/2018674466/jonathan-lemalu-and-elizabeth-sneyd-discuss-why-youth-orchestra-virtuoso-strings-is-so-special

GO FURTHER:

Explore the London Philharmonic Orchestra's guide to instruments and find out more about the strings family: youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqR22EoucCyccs5J639SCefaM7mD9dMSz

Fancy yourself the next Jonathan Lemalu? Enter the Lexus Song Quest, the biennial opera singing competition won by Jonathan in 1998: songquest.nz



Two musicians from *Virtuoso Strings* prepare for a performance.

PROVOCATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

PRE-FESTIVAL

Read about the two ensembles and Jonathan Lemalu who are performing in *O Matou Malaga – Our Voyage*. Discuss the different groups and why they might be working together on this performance.

Discuss the different types of music that you might hear at the performance; opera, classical, contemporary classical and musicals. What are the differences between these genres and what do they have in common?

AT THE FESTIVAL

What do you notice about the stage and the performance space before the performance starts? What sort of energy is in the space?

What emotions, feelings and thoughts do you have while listening to the performance?

What or who captures your attention during the performance? What questions do you have about the piece?

AFTER THE FESTIVAL

What were some of the thoughts you had as you listened to the concert?

How did the music make you feel? Did you enjoy this style of music? Why?

Did the performers express a range of emotions through their music making? How?

Did you have a favourite piece in the performance? Why? What can you find out about this song or piece of music?

Discuss the strong social and cultural ethos at the core of what *Virtuoso Strings* and *Sinfonia for Hope* do. What other examples can you think of where an art movement affected social change?

How did it feel to see young people performing on stage with Jonathan Lemalu and *Sinfonia for Hope*?

What different languages did you recognise in the performance?

The Te Ata festival was dreamt up by young people from Porirua City. They came up with a list of things they would like to see in the festival:

“We want better ways to express ourselves”

“We want to collaborate”

“We want to explore and challenge the parameters we live in”

“We want to see stories that reflect us”

“We want an event of scale”

“We need access to creative and performance-based training”

How were these needs and ideas reflected in the performance *O Matou Malaga, Our Voyage*.

Need something more? Contact your SchoolFest team with any questions about the performance.

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