



## Benson Wilson

### Baritone

New Zealand-born Sāmoan baritone Benson Wilson is the winner of the prestigious 64th Kathleen Ferrier Award. That same year he was awarded the Most Outstanding Overseas Performer of the Royal Overseas League Competition, the Worshipful Company of Musicians Award, and was the 2018 winner of the Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngge Foundation Award and the People's Choice Award.

In 20/21 Benson joins English National Opera as a Harewood Artist, opening the season as Schaunard *La bohème* for their Drive & Live production at Alexandra Palace. Further engagements this season had been due to include Patroclus *King Priam* and Guglielmo *Così fan tutte* for ENO, and his debut as Figaro *Le nozze di Figaro* for Queensland Opera (now postponed). On the concert platform he began the season with a recital tour of New Zealand at venues including Auckland Chamber Concert Hall, Hawkes Bay Opera House and Auckland Opera Studio. His UK recitals this season include Brighton, Oxford Lieder and Leeds Lieder Festivals, and at Wigmore Hall and St Martin in the Fields, with pianists Iain Burnside, Lucy Colquhoun, Ella O'Neill and Joseph Middleton. He will appear in concert with the Orchestra of Opera North, and for Auckland Opera Studio. Further ahead, engagements include recitals for King's Lynn and Ludlow Song Festivals, his house debut in the title role of Orpheus (*Orpheus and Eurydice*) for New Zealand Opera, as well as further roles for Welsh National Opera and ENO.

Previous operatic roles include Marullo *Rigoletto* for Glyndebourne on Tour, John Shears *Paul Bunyan* (ENO), Mirza *Der Gesang Der Zauberinsel* at the Salzburger Festspiele as a 2019 Salzburg Young Singer, cover John Sorel *The Consul* (WNO), Guglielmo *Così Fan Tutte* and Count Almaviva *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Bloomsbury Opera), Schabernack *Le Grand Macabre* with London Symphony Orchestra, Schaunard *La Bohème* (Festival Opera Napier), and Guglielmo *Così Fan Tutte*, Demetrius *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Assan *The Consul* as a scholar on the Guildhall School of Music & Drama Opera Course.

Benson regularly appears in concert in repertoire including Handel *Messiah*, Mozart *Requiem*, Faure *Requiem*, Duruflé *Requiem* and Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, and in 2016 he joined the BBC Symphony Orchestra for a Total Immersion Concert featuring works by Richard Rodney Bennett.

Prior to relocating to the UK, he won New Zealand's premiere singing competition, the Lexus Song Quest, and graduated with a BMus from the University of Auckland. Benson is a former young artist of the Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto, the Samling Young Artist Programme, the International Vocal Arts Institute, New Zealand Opera School and the National Opera Studio in London.