



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

UQ ARTS



UQ School of Music presents

Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro

Friday 13 December · Saturday 14 December
Opera Queensland Studio

This event is supported by Opera Queensland, UQ Opera Society and Villanova Players.

Reimagining *The Marriage of Figaro* in a 1920s Speakeasy with a Mafia Twist

NOTES PROVIDED BY DR SHAUN BROWN, DIRECTOR

Setting Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in a 1920s speakeasy with a mafia twist brings a fresh and exciting perspective to this classic opera. This innovative approach not only enhances the story's core themes but also makes it more relatable and engaging for contemporary audiences. The power struggles within Mozart's opera align seamlessly with the dynamics of a mafia setting. In this reimagined setting of *The Marriage of Figaro*, the Count becomes a mafia don, whose authority and infidelities drive the plot. Figaro is a savvy, street-smart club manager, loyal but not afraid to challenge his boss. Susanna is a resourceful and quick-witted singer/dancer, central to both the speakeasy's allure and the unfolding drama. The Countess transforms into the elegant but disillusioned wife of the don, seeking respect and fidelity amidst the chaos. The Count's authority and Figaro's cunning are reminiscent of a mafia boss and his clever right-hand man. This parallel intensifies the tension between social classes and the abuse of power, resonating well within the hierarchical structure of a mafia organisation.

Additionally, the speakeasy setting, with its aura of secrecy and forbidden pleasures, mirrors the Count's illicit desires and the clandestine schemes of the other characters. The hidden and often illicit nature of both the speakeasy and the Count's pursuits, enhances the themes of desire and deception. The 1920s speakeasy provides a visually captivating backdrop that combines glamour and grit. The blend of opulence—seen in flapper dresses, jazz music and lavish parties—and the underlying danger of mafia dealings adds significant depth to the narrative.

This setting allows for a vibrant and immersive experience. Period costumes and reduced orchestration of Mozart's score (almost like an early swing band era style band) brings new energy and accessibility to the opera, making it appealing to contemporary audiences while preserving the essence of the original composition.

The era of Prohibition was marked by a spirit of rebellion against restrictive norms, which parallels Figaro and Susanna's rebellion against the Count's authority. This setting underscores the themes of personal freedom and resistance to oppression, making the characters' struggles more vivid. Moreover, the 1920s saw significant shifts in gender roles, reflecting the opera's exploration of relationships and power dynamics between men and women. The Countess and Susanna's clever manoeuvring against the Count fits well within the context of the emerging flapper culture and women's growing independence. This thematic resonance deepens the audience's connection to the characters and their plights. The clandestine nature of a speakeasy enhances the opera's numerous schemes and deceptions. Secret meetings, hidden identities and covert operations are natural fits for this environment, amplifying the drama and intrigue.

Character adaptations further enrich the narrative. These adaptations breathe new life into the characters, making their motivations and conflicts more immediate and compelling. Setting the story in a more recent historical period makes the characters and their struggles more relatable to modern audiences.



The lively atmosphere of a speakeasy, with its music, dance and inherent drama, promises an engaging and entertaining experience. By situating *The Marriage of Figaro* in a 1920s speakeasy with a mafia backdrop, we not only preserve the opera's core themes, but also enhance them with the vibrant and tumultuous energy of the era. This creative reimagining captivates audiences, offering a fresh lens through which to experience Mozart's timeless masterpiece.

This innovative setting brings out the opera's enduring themes of love, deception and rebellion, while infusing it with the glamour and excitement of the 1920s. We hope this production delights you with its blend of classic and contemporary elements, creating an unforgettable theatrical experience.



Synopsis

ACT 1:

Figaro, the clever barman and Susanna, his quick-witted fiancée and flapper dancer, are preparing for their wedding. But their boss, Count Almaviva, has his eyes on Susanna, hoping to revive the old “droit du seigneur” (a medieval tradition allowing the Boss to spend the first night with his underling’s bride). Figaro and Susanna team up with the clever but discontented Countess (who is tired of her husband’s philandering) to outwit the Boss. Hilarity ensues as they concoct a plan to catch the Count in his own trap.

ACT 2:

The Countess, fed up with her husband’s wandering eye, teams up with Susanna and Figaro to teach him a lesson. They hatch a plan to trap the Count in his own flirtations by arranging a rendezvous between him and “Susanna” (the paper boy Cherubino in disguise). Cherubino, dressed as Susanna, hides when the Count unexpectedly arrives while the real Susanna hides behind curtains. Chaos erupts as the Count, suspicious of his wife, tries to catch her in the act, leading to hilarious near-misses, mistaken identities and Cherubino jumping out of the window to escape. The Count, increasingly frustrated, finds himself constantly outwitted, and the Countess and Susanna’s plan starts to unfold perfectly.



Expect a whirlwind of disguises, hidden identities, and enough twists and turns to keep everyone on their toes. It's a comedy of errors where love wins, and the bad guys get what's coming to them, all wrapped up in Mozart's glorious music.

ACT 3:

With the Count now more suspicious than ever, Figaro, Susanna and the Countess continue their scheming. Meanwhile, Marcellina, a housekeeper, tries to enforce an old contract that says Figaro must marry her if he can't repay a debt. A courtroom scene reveals that Figaro is actually Marcellina's long-lost son, and Bartolo, who has his own grudges, turns out to be Figaro's father. This unexpected family reunion turns what was supposed to be a scandalous trial into a bizarre and heartwarming moment. The Count, still clueless and increasingly flustered, is further thrown off balance by the ever-twisting plot.

ACT 4:

The garden at night becomes the stage for the final showdown, with mistaken identities and romantic mix-ups aplenty. Figaro thinks Susanna is meeting the Count for a tryst, so he plans to catch them in the act. Little does he know; Susanna and the Countess have swapped clothes to trick the Count. Cherubino, still lovestruck, mistakes the disguised Countess for Susanna and tries to woo her. The real Susanna, disguised as the Countess, ends up confusing Figaro. Figaro eventually realises the truth and plays along, pretending to woo the "Countess" (actually Susanna) to make the Count jealous. The Count falls into the trap and is caught red-handed, trying to seduce "Susanna" (actually the Countess). When the disguises are revealed, the Count begs for forgiveness, and everyone has a good laugh. All is forgiven, true love wins the day, and Figaro and Susanna finally get married, with everyone vowing to keep better track of who's who in the future.

Nathan Aspinall

CONDUCTOR

Australian Conductor Nathan Aspinall has led orchestras across the globe and is widely admired for his thoughtful, nuanced interpretations and powerful performances. His collaborative approach to performing with fellow musicians has resulted in ongoing partnerships and deep relationships with the orchestras with whom he performs.

In 2022, Nathan began his new role as Resident Conductor with the Nashville Symphony and follows his highly successful subscription performances of Prokofiev's Symphony No. 5 and a last-minute appearance stepping in on subscription with Barber's Violin Concerto and Elgar's Enigma Variations. In the 2024/25 season, he will lead the orchestra in several programs including a special all-Ravel program to mark the composer's anniversary.

Nathan has performed around the world, leading the orchestras of Minnesota, St Louis, Atlanta, Sydney and the Mendelssohn-Orchesterakademie of the Gewandhausorchester in Leipzig. He has assisted many of today's leading conductors, including Stéphane Denève, Jakub Hrůša, Nathalie Stutzmann, Thomas Søndergård and Simone Young.

Nathan was a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center with the Boston Symphony Orchestra where he was mentored by Andris Nelsons, Thomas Adès and Giancarlo Guerrero. He is also a recipient of the Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize at the Aspen Music Festival and studied orchestral conducting with Hugh Wolff at New England Conservatory in Boston.

A strong believer that music is for everyone, Nathan is passionate about orchestras reaching an ever-widening audience. At the Nashville

Symphony, he spearheads education and community initiatives, the commissioning of new projects and the curation of community programming. Supporting future generations of musicians, Nathan is an advocate for music education and outreach and has led performances and masterclasses for conservatories, universities and youth orchestras around the world, including appearances at the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, Oregon Bach Festival and the Tanglewood Music Center Conducting Seminar.

He studied music performance at The University of Queensland in Australia and orchestral conducting with Hugh Wolff at New England Conservatory in Boston.



Dr Shaun Brown

DIRECTOR

Australian baritone Shaun Brown has performed and studied in England, Germany, France, Italy and the US, where he completed a Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of North Texas.

He is currently Director of Performance at The University of Queensland School of Music, where he holds the position of Vocal Performance Fellow.

A former Opera Queensland (OQ) Young Artist, Shaun's engagements with the company span more than 3 decades: he has appeared in over fifty productions in addition to numerous concerts, festival events, workshops and masterclasses. He is known to Queensland audiences for his many appearances, including roles in *Don Giovanni*, *The Merry Widow*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Carmen*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and the Brisbane and touring productions of *La bohème*, *The Barber of Seville* and *Ruddigore*.

In 2021, Shaun performed "A Poet's Love", a recital with Sarah Crane and Alex Raineri as part of OQ's Studio Series in partnership with Brisbane Music Festival. Most recently, he performed in OQ's new productions of *The Sopranos*, *La traviata* singing Baron Douphol, *Così fan Tutte* singing Don Alfonso and performing in Opera at Jimbour and in Winton and Longreach as part of the 2024 Festival of Outback Opera.

Shaun was also the bass soloist in the Queensland Symphony Orchestra's performance of J.S.Bach's *Das Weihnachtsoratorium*.



Internationally, Shaun has sung for Opéra de Lyon, New Zealand International Arts Festival, Freiburg Opera, L'Atelier du Rhin, and in New York at the Center for Contemporary Opera in operatic works by Jake Heggie. He has performed to critical acclaim as a concert soloist in repertoire including Britten's *War Requiem*, Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Handel's *Messiah* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.

In 2025, Shaun will be performing Alindoro in Opera Queensland's *La Cenerentola* in their Bel Canto Festival.

Sarah Crane

VOCAL CONSULTANT / ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Brisbane soprano Sarah Crane is the winner of several prestigious competitions, including Opera Foundation Australia's German and Metropolitan Opera Awards.

Sarah has worked extensively in Europe, with engagements at Cologne Opera, Opéra National du Rhin-Strasbourg, Basel Opera and Freiburg Opera. She has also performed with Opera Australia, Opera Queensland, Opera Victoria and South Australian Opera. Sarah's operatic repertoire includes *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Ariodante*, *Der Vampyr*, *Fidelio*, *Arianna*, *Carmen*, *Hyperion*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *The Merry Widow*, *The Love of the Nightingale*, *Rusalka*, *Alcina*, *Werther*, *Orlando* and *The Perfect American*.

Past concert engagements include Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart *Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah* for The Queensland Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Martin's *Maria-Triptychon* and the *Stabat Mater* by Szymanowski with the Philharmonic Orchestra Freiburg.

Sarah is a Teaching Associate at The University of Queensland where she also lectures in German and French Lyric Diction and Vocal Performance. Recent performances include the inaugural Opera Queensland Bel Canto Festival, Mozart *Requiem*, Opera at Jimbour for The Brisbane Music Festival and Opera Queensland, Handel's *Israel in Egypt* as well as Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* with Brisbane Chorale, "Mozart Airborne" - a collaboration with Opera Q and Expressions



Dance Company, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the UQSO, "How Strange the Change" as part of The Brisbane Music Festival, and "A Poet's Love"- a Recital in collaboration with The Brisbane Music Festival and Opera Queensland, Opera Queensland's "The Sopranos" as well as Bach's *St John Passion* with Canticum Chamber Choir. Upcoming performances include the role of Clorinda in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* as part of Opera Queensland's 2025 Bel Canto Festival. Sarah frequently presents Vocal Masterclasses to Secondary School Music programs, is highly regarded as an adjudicator of Vocal Competitions around the State, and also maintains a busy private teaching studio.



Joel Berndt

FIGARO

Joel Berndt is an Australian baritone based in Brisbane. He graduated from the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU) with a Bachelor of Music in Performance (2021) and a Master of Music Studies in Vocal Pedagogy (2024) under the tutelage of Dr Margaret Schindler and Shelli Hulcombe.

Joel recently joined the Opera Queensland Chorus, performing in Brisbane Festival's *Eucalyptus* and in productions with Opera Australia, including Verdi's *Aida* and *Götterdämmerung* in 2023. His previous QCGU roles include Lord Mountararat in *Iolanthe* (2022), Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Le Dancaire in *Carmen*.

Joel is excited to perform the role of Figaro in The University of Queensland's production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Eline van Bruggen

SUSANNA

Eline van Bruggen is a Dutch-Australian soprano, currently studying a Bachelor of Music (Honours) and a Bachelor of Arts with majors in Linguistics and Professional Writing and Communication at The University of Queensland. Having recently completed her third year of study under the tutelage of Sarah Crane, Eline looks forward to exploring new repertoire and furthering her operatic and art song performance experience.

This year, Eline performed as soprano soloist in Mozart's *Requiem* at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre with The University of Queensland School of Music as well as soloist in the *Fauré Requiem* at Brisbane City Hall with Brisbane Chorale. She was selected as one of the 6 duos as part of the Queensland Art Song Festival, as well as performing the soprano solo in Haydn's *Mass in Time of War* with ChoirWorks and debuting the role of Galatea in Indooroopilly Chamber Orchestra's concert performances of *Acis and Galatea*.

Eline has toured to Longreach and Winton with Opera Queensland for the 2023 and 2024 Festivals of Outback Opera. Her UQ operatic roles include Ciboletta in *Eine Nacht in Venedig* and Erste Knabe in *Die Zauberflöte* in complete productions, as well as Frasquita in *Carmen*, Crobyle in *Thais*, Ida in *Die Fledermaus*, and Poppea in *L'incoronazione di Poppea* in staged concert excerpts.



Kate Woodford

SUSANNA

Kate Woodford is a first-year Bachelor of Music (Honours) student at The University of Queensland, under the tutelage of renowned soprano Sarah Crane. Hailing from Townsville, Kate's musical journey began early, with standout performances as a vocal soloist with her high school orchestras at prestigious events like the Australian Italian Festival in Ingham and the North Australian Festival of Arts.

In 2024, Kate's exceptional talent and dedication were recognised with the prestigious Paula and Tony Kinnane Music Scholarship, marking her as a rising star at the UQ School of Music. Her achievements include being a finalist in both the Ethel Osborne Prize and the Margaret Nickson Prize for Voice and Piano, in her first year, accolades that underscore her impressive vocal abilities and artistry.

Kate has already participated in numerous concerts at UQ, showcasing her versatility and passion for diverse musical genres. Notable performances include *Stories of Myths & Magic*, *Echoes of Iberia: Canciones and Canções*, and the *Early Music Concert*, where she performed the works of Orlando Gibbons. Kate was also part of the UQ Singers Ensemble that performed Mozart's *Requiem* at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre and the *Durufié Requiem* at City Hall. Kate is thrilled to be making her debut as Susanna in UQ's production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Jenson White

THE COUNT

Jenson White, a third-year Bachelor of Music (Honours) student at The University of Queensland, has been making remarkable strides in the world of classical voice under the mentorship and guidance of Dr Shaun Brown. His passion for singing began early, with performances in eisteddfods, choral events, and citizenship ceremonies during his school years. These formative experiences paved the way for his future in music, leading to significant roles in musical productions such as Fiyero in *Wicked*, Billy Crocker in *Anything Goes*, and Jerome in *South Pacific*. Jenson also distinguished himself as Big Band Captain and Senior Vocal Soloist.

At UQ, Jenson's talent and dedication have shone through in his performances. He has taken on challenging roles such as Fritz in *Die tote Stadt*, Eugene Onegin in *Eugene Onegin*, and Belcore in *L'elisir d'amore* in selected scenes. His versatility and stage presence have been further highlighted in fully staged opera productions, where he portrayed Papageno in *Die Zauberflöte* and Pappacoda in *Eine Nacht in Venedig*.

Jenson's excellence has been recognised with several prestigious awards. In 2024, he won the Ethel Osborne Prize after being a finalist the previous year. He also won the Margaret Nickson Prize for Voice and Piano in 2024, having been a finalist in 2022. His involvement with Opera Queensland has been a testament to his growing reputation, as he performed in the Festival of Outback Opera chorus in both 2023 and 2024. Additionally, he was selected for the Queensland Art Song Festival for 2 consecutive years, showcasing his passion for all genres of the classical vocal music.



Kaija Scott

THE COUNTESS

Kaija Scott is a fourth-year Bachelor of Music (Honours) voice student at The University of Queensland, where she studies under the guidance of Sarah Crane. Throughout her academic journey, Kaija has distinguished herself in numerous roles within UQ Singers productions, notably performing as Nella in Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and Erste Dame in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

Kaija's talent has earned her finalist positions for the prestigious Ethel Osborn Prize in both 2022 and 2024, as well as the Margaret Nickson Prize for Voice and Piano. Her versatility and skill have led her to perform alongside colleagues and members of Opera Queensland in the production of *Songs of Love and War* and at the Festival of Outback Opera in 2024.

In addition to her solo performances, Kaija has been a backing soloist for renowned artists such as Mirusia, Luke Kennedy, and The Angels. Her choral experience is equally impressive, having sung as a chorister in the Queensland Symphony Orchestra's performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and Verdi's *Requiem*, as well as the UQ Symphony Orchestra's presentation of Mozart's *Requiem* under the baton of Dane Lam. Kaija is excited to debuting La Contessa in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* for The University of Queensland School of Music.



Beth Allen

CHERUBINO (13 December performance)

Beth is a Meanjin-based mezzo-soprano in her fourth year of a dual degree in Music (Honours) and Science (Archaeological Science), studying voice under Sarah Crane. During her time at The University of Queensland, Beth has performed in excerpts from *Così fan tutte*, *La Cenerentola*, Offenbach's operas, and *The Merry Widow* as part of the UQ Singers' High Tea at the Opera showcases. She previously appeared as Papagena in the UQ School of Music's 2022 production of *The Magic Flute* and as Agricola in the 2023 production of Strauss's *Eine Nacht in Venedig*.

In 2023, Beth was awarded the Ethel Osborn Prize and the Margaret Nickson Prize with collaborative partner Mac Johnson. She also toured with the UQ ensemble at the Festival of Outback Opera and performed at the Queensland Art Song Festival in both 2023 and 2024. Most recently, Beth appeared as Carmen in the Cuskelly College of Music Summer School program (2024) and as the alto soloist for UQ's performance of Mozart's *Requiem* at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre under Maestro Dane Lam.



Annabelle Julien

CHERUBINO (14 December performance)

Annabelle is currently in her third year of a Bachelor of Music (Honours) degree, studying with international soprano Sarah Crane. At UQ she has actively participated in a wide array of performances that showcase her growing talent and versatility. Her singing journey has been marked by involvement in various opera scenes and operas, where she performed as Barbara in the 2023 production of *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, the opera scenes production *Stories of Myths & Magic* earlier this year, as well as singing as a soloist alongside Milijana Nikolic and Rosario La Spina in their concert *Love and Vengeance*. She was also chosen to go on incredible tours as a chorus member with Opera Queensland for the Festival of Outback Opera in 2023 and 2024.

Other choral accomplishments include performing in the choruses for both Verdi's *Requiem* and Mozart's *Requiem* at the prestigious QPAC Concert Hall. Annabelle has also distinguished herself as a soloist, performing as the mezzo-soprano soloist in Haydn's Mass and most recently in Duruflé's *Requiem* at Brisbane City Hall. With a passion for expanding her skills and embracing new opportunities, Annabelle eagerly anticipates further performing engagements throughout the remainder of her degree, as she continues to hone her craft and contribute to the vibrant UQ musical community.



Zoe Seeley

MARCELLINA (13 December performance)

Zoe is a fourth-year Bachelor of Music (Honours) student at The University of Queensland, recently completing her honours research in performance. She has performed in scenes with the UQ Singers, featuring as Juliette from *Die Tote Stadt*, Tatyana from *Eugene Onegin*, Sister Constance from *Dialogues des Carmélites*, Atalanta from *Atalanta*, Ilia from *Idomeneo* and Jou Jou from *The Merry Widow*. She also featured as a senator's wife in *Eine Nacht in Venedig* while covering the role of Annina.

An active member of the choral community, Zoe has sung with the UQ Singers, UQ Chamber Singers and Brisbane Chamber Choir, contributing to works like Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the Verdi, Mozart, and Duruflé *Requiems*. In 2023, she competed in the Ethel Osborn heats and the 4MBS Music Viva Sid Page Memorial Prize in Chamber Music.

Currently, Zoe is the President of the UQ Opera Society and has stage-managed productions like *Gianni Schicchi*, *The Magic Flute* and *Eine Nacht in Venedig*. Her diverse involvement highlights her passion for both performance and the operatic community.



Tainika Kane-Potaka

MARCELLINA (14 December performance)

Tai Kane-Potaka is a Meanjin-based multidisciplinary artist and classical vocalist, currently studying a Bachelor of Music (Honours) degree at The University of Queensland School of Music.

With a passion for combining music, movement and storytelling, Tai's work spans classical music performance, theatre, film, physical theatre and clowning. They also take on roles off the stage in writing, directing and producing.

Recent credits include playing #13 in *The Wolves* (Ad Astra), Fantasia in the clowning piece *Wait For It* (Anywhere Festival) and directing Rotterdam with Underground Theatre Company at Queensland Multicultural Centre. Tai's next project will see them performing at the Woodford Folk Festival 2024/25.



Timothy Nielson

BARTOLO

Timothy Nielson is a third-year Bachelor of Music (Honours) and Bachelor of Education (Secondary) student, majoring in voice under the tutelage of Dr Shaun Brown.

He began singing in multiple choirs and local community theatre companies across Brisbane. In the 2023 and 2024 UQ Singers annual opera scenes concert, Timothy performed the roles of The Count from *The Marriage of Figaro* (Mozart), Plumkett from *Martha* (Flotow), and Hymen from *The Fairy Queen* (Purcell).

In his first year, he was thrilled to make his opera debut, taking on the role of Speaker in *Die Zauberflöte* (Mozart). Additionally, Timothy appeared in Winton and Longreach as part of the 2023 and 2024 Festival of Outback Opera.

Timothy will perform as Bartolo in the UQ School of Music's production of *The Marriage of Figaro*. He is delighted to be a part of the UQ School of Music program and is eager to achieve many more exciting opportunities in the future.



Aarya Dath

BASILIO

Aarya Dath is a Brisbane based vocalist, composer and sound designer. Since 2022 he has been studying a Bachelor of Music (Honours) and Bachelor of Mathematics at The University of Queensland where he majors in voice and composition.

He has had the privilege to study voice with both Gregory Massingham and Dr Shaun Brown during his time at UQ and studies composition with Dr Robert Davidson. Aarya directs and sings in an 8 voice chamber vocal group called the Aura Ensemble. Recently, they won the Sid Page Memorial Chamber Music Prize performing one of Aarya's compositions, *Rain in the Mountains*. The composition itself was shortlisted to the final 4 entries of the 2024 Willgoss Choral Composition prize. Apart from this recent achievement, Aarya was a finalist in the 2023 and 2024 Ethel Osborne prizes and the 2022 and 2024 Nickson Prizes with Saxon Mills-Booth and Jacob Fowler.

Aarya has had the privilege of playing several roles for UQ and further afield in Brisbane: Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte* (2022, UQ under Dane Lam and Shaun Brown); Caramello in *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (2023, UQ under Shaun Brown); and the tenor soloist in Haydn's *Paukenmesse* (2024, ChoirWorks under Debra Shearer-Dirie), Schubert's *Mass in G Major* (2024, Amadeus Orchestra under Neil Flottmann) and Mozart *Requiem* (2024, UQ under Dane Lam).



Nic Wallace

ANTONIO

Nic Wallace is a young baritone in his second year of the Bachelor of Music (Honours) at The University of Queensland, where he studies under the guidance of Dr Shaun Brown. His time at UQ has seen him involved, in the chorus in several major productions, including Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, Strauss' *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, Verdi's and Mozart's *Requiems*, and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*.

In addition to his chorus work, Nic has excelled in various solo and ensemble roles. He has performed excerpts from Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Offenbach's *Madame l'Archiduc*, and Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. In 2024, he was the bass soloist in a performance of Haydn's *Mass in Time of War*, under the direction of Dr Debra Shearer-Dirie.

Nic has had the privilege of performing alongside principal artists from Opera Queensland in Winton and Longreach as part of the 2023 and 2024 Festival of Outback Opera. These engagements have not only broadened his performance experience but also connected him with leading professionals in the industry. Nic is excited to make his debut opera role as Antonio in *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Victoria Lee

BARBARINA (13 December performance)

Victoria Lee is a young operatic soprano with a profound dedication to classical music, a passion she has cultivated from a young age. She is currently refining her craft under the tutelage of Sarah Crane in the Bachelor of Music (Honours) at The University of Queensland.

Victoria has performed in various operatic scenes, from operas including *Boccaccio*, *L'Italiana in Algeri*, *The Fairy Queen*, and was a part of the ensemble in a complete production of *Eine Nacht in Venedig*. Her versatility extends to major choral works, where she has performed in Mozart, Verdi, Duruflé *Requiems*, showcasing her exceptional vocal abilities. Victoria is excited to debut as *Barbarina* in UQ School of Music's production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Piper Ramsey

BARBARINA (14 December performance)

Piper Ramsey is a first-year voice student in the Bachelor of Music (Honours) program, studying under Sarah Crane. During her time at UQ, Piper has performed as a chorus member in the Opera scenes production *Stories of Myths & Magic* earlier this year, as well as in the Lunchtime concert *Love and Vengeance*, alongside Milijana Nikolic and Rosario La Spina.

Additionally, she performed as a soloist in this year's final *Early Music Project*, directed by Dr Anne Levitsky. Piper is excited to make her debut as *Barbarina* in UQ School of Music's *The Marriage of Figaro*.



Jackson Eastwood

DON CURZIO

Jackson Eastwood is a young tenor currently pursuing his Bachelor of Music (Honours) at The University of Queensland, where he is honing his craft under the guidance of Dr Shaun Brown. Throughout his musical journey, Jackson has been developing his vocal prowess in a variety of operas and oratorios, including *The Magic Flute*, *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, *Mozart Requiem*, *Verdi Requiem*, and *Durufié Requiem*. At UQ, Jackson has sung in opera scenes, including the role of Lensky in *Eugene Onegin*, Alfredo in *La Traviata*, Ruggero in *La Rondine*, and Tonio in *La Fille du Régiment*.

In 2024, Jackson expanded his performance experience by participating in Opera Queensland's regional tour for the Festival of Outback Opera. He sang in the small ensemble for the OQ soloists and delivered solo performances in Longreach and Winton. He is thrilled to be debuting the role of Don Curzio in The University of Queensland School of Music production of *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Creative Team

DIRECTOR

Dr Shaun Brown

CONDUCTOR

Nathan Aspinall

VOCAL CONSULTANT / ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Sarah Crane

REPETITEUR

Šárka Budinská

CHOREOGRAPHER

Lynette Wockner

TECHNICAL ADVISOR

Alex Loh

CREATIVE CONSULTANT AND LIGHTING DESIGNER

Laura Hansford

HAIR AND MAKEUP

Evie Rounsley

Julie Chatel

Victoria Lee

Xiao Zhang

STAGE MANAGER

Cassandra Barnett

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGER

Charlotte Jones

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Jess Irwin

FRONT HOUSE MANAGER

Aimee Sheather

SURTITLES OPERATOR

Chloe Arentz

COSTUMES

Soren Reynolds

Julie Chatel

PROPS AND SCENERY

Beth Allen

Tainika Kane-Potaka

Patrick Bischoff

UNDERSTUDIES

Evie Rounsley – Marcellina

Patrick Bischoff – Antonio and Count

Riley Morton - Bartolo

UQ SINGERS ENSEMBLE

Beth Allen

Patrick Bischoff

Julie Chatel

Jackson Eastwood

Jacob Fowler

Olivia Gilmour

Jessica Irwin

Annabelle Julien

Tainika Kane-Potaka

Victoria Lee

Ziqi Liang

Zhenqi Li

Rachael McFarlane

Veronica McGovern

Scarlett Nye

Corrin Prince

Piper Ramsey

Evie Rounsley

Zoe Seeley

Eline van Bruggen

Nic Wallace

Kate Woodford

Bin Xu

Yi-Chun Yeh

Jenson White

Xiao Zhang

Beilei Zhu

UQ Figaro Orchestra

VIOLIN 1

Courtenay Cleary (Concert Master)
Cameron Howe
Monica Schwantes

VIOLIN 2

Samuel Andrews
Lachlan Leow

VIOLA

Bridget Wegner
Sophia Mackson

CELLO

Cameron Fuller
Ella O'Neill

DOUBLE BASS

Thomas van Bruggen

FLUTE

Corina Palafox

OBOE

Clint Fox

CLARINET

Alexander Lord
Ashleigh Bennett

BASSOON

Kathryn Willison

FRENCH HORN

Jess Piva
James Rourke

TRUMPET

Oliver King

HARPSICHORD

Mac Johnson

UQ ARTS

Creative connections

Since opening its doors in 1910, The University of Queensland has produced and supported deeply thoughtful work across the arts.

It's been an important feature of life at our University and we are proud of our students, staff and alumni, who have done so much to enrich our communities.

Our work in the arts is wide-ranging, including design, public art, rich museum and archive collections, publishing, teaching and learning, and cultural events. We offer specialist programs in music, drama and creative writing. Our Anthropology Museum, the UQ Art Museum and the RD Milns Antiquities Museum, as well as the Fryer Library, have stunning collections that have been built up over decades.

We know the arts foster creativity and deepen a sense of belonging. They enable and support positive social understanding.

UQ Arts will enable us to link the way we profile our activities in order to make the arts at UQ more accessible to audiences like you. Everyone is welcome to enjoy and participate in our work. The opportunity to facilitate thoughtful experiences, provoke meaningful conversations and encourage new ideas is at the heart of our goal of building creative connections.

UQ Arts is both new and omnipresent: art is everywhere, and it matters.

Professor Heather Zwicker

Executive Dean
Faculty of Humanities,
Arts and Social Sciences



We invite you to join
our UQ Arts community



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Thank you for joining us at Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

The University of Queensland School of Music looks forward to you joining us for future concerts in 2025.

music.uq.edu.au