October 11, 2026

TOSC NOTES

The Newsletter of TOSC Artists passionate to bring fine music to you.

In this issue:

- Report from *Return of the Queens - Kings Arise.*
- *Stormlight* - Coming soon!

The Queens have departed, and now our Stormlighters are ready to make their entrance.

Continue reading for a delightful report on an afternoon filled with joy presented by our Queens and their Kings, as well as updates on our next thrilling programme, ***Stormlight,*** that celebrates contemporary music, featuring compositions from our very own TOSC family and others.



www.ticketebo.com.au/stormlight

The Queens have left the building…but what a splendid afternoon they gave us!

On Sunday 27 September, TOSC opened its Stormlight series with ***Return of the Queens — Kings Arise***, bringing together kings and queens, gods and mortals, lovers, rivals — and more than one spectacularly dysfunctional marriage.

From Purcell and Handel through Donizetti, Verdi, Wagner, Saint-Saëns, Lortzing, Chabrier and Rimsky-Korsakov, it was an afternoon of wonderful music, some familiar and some rarely heard.

At the heart of it was what TOSC does best: bringing singers together to explore substantial repertoire, take artistic risks and give audiences the opportunity to encounter music they may not otherwise hear performed live.

Our warmest thanks go to our wonderful company of artists, to Simon Kenway, directing from the piano, to our production team — and particularly to the audience who came along, entered wholeheartedly into the spirit of the afternoon and made the room feel so alive.



Our Queens and Kings



Louise Keast - Soprano - as Maria Stuarda



Our Queens relaxing.





Building community - enjoying the after-show mingling











The TOSC Tasmanian Contingent - Lisa Munckton, Michael Lampard, Jill Sullivan and Maria Hemphill

Return of the Queens explored characters and music across centuries of opera.

Now in October TOSC turns deliberately towards music of our own time — including Australian composers and performers creating new work here and now.



Stormlight - Contemporary Voices

On **Sunday 25 October**, *Contemporary Voices* explores music written in our own time — including Australian composers **Tristan Entwistle, Michael Lampard, Christine Draeger, David Tunley, Ross Edwards and Nigel McDougall,** alongside **Kaija Saariaho and Thomas Pasatieri.**

www.ticketebo.com.au/stormlight

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Stormlight

An Afternoon of Contemporary Voices

A MINI FESTIVAL FEATURING WORKS BY

CHRISTINE DRAEGER | TRISTAN ENTWISTLE | MICHAEL LAMPARD | NIGEL MCDOUGALL | DAVID TUNLEY

3 pm Sunday
25 October 2026

St Lukes Anglican Church
4 Heydon St, Mosman

TOSC Artists

Singers Passionate To Bring Fine Music To You



Finnish composer

Kaija Saariaho (1952–2023)

A not so small discovery:

Meet Kaija Saariaho
~ A World of Colour and Light

Finnish composer **Kaija Saariaho** was one of the most original musical voices of our time. Internationally celebrated for her extraordinary imagination, she created sound worlds of shimmering colour, delicate textures and intense emotional expression. Her music often seems to hover between the familiar and the mysterious, drawing listeners into an almost dreamlike atmosphere.

Saariaho had a particular affinity for the human voice, exploring its expressive possibilities alongside unusual instrumental combinations.

In Saariaho's ***Changing Light,*** soprano **Leah Thomas** joins flautist and composer **Christine Draeger** in an intimate musical conversation

inspired by a Jewish evening prayer. Voice and flute intertwine, suggesting the changing light of day and the passage towards night.

Shakespeare provides the inspiration for ***Ariel's Hail***, drawn from The Tempest. Here, Leah and Christine are joined by pianist **Claire Howard**, bringing to life the magical, elusive spirit, Ariel, in music of remarkable delicacy and imagination.

These two works offer a fascinating glimpse into Saariaho's distinctive musical language — contemporary, adventurous and deeply human.

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Leah Thomas - Soprano



Christine Draeger - Flute



Claire Howard - Piano

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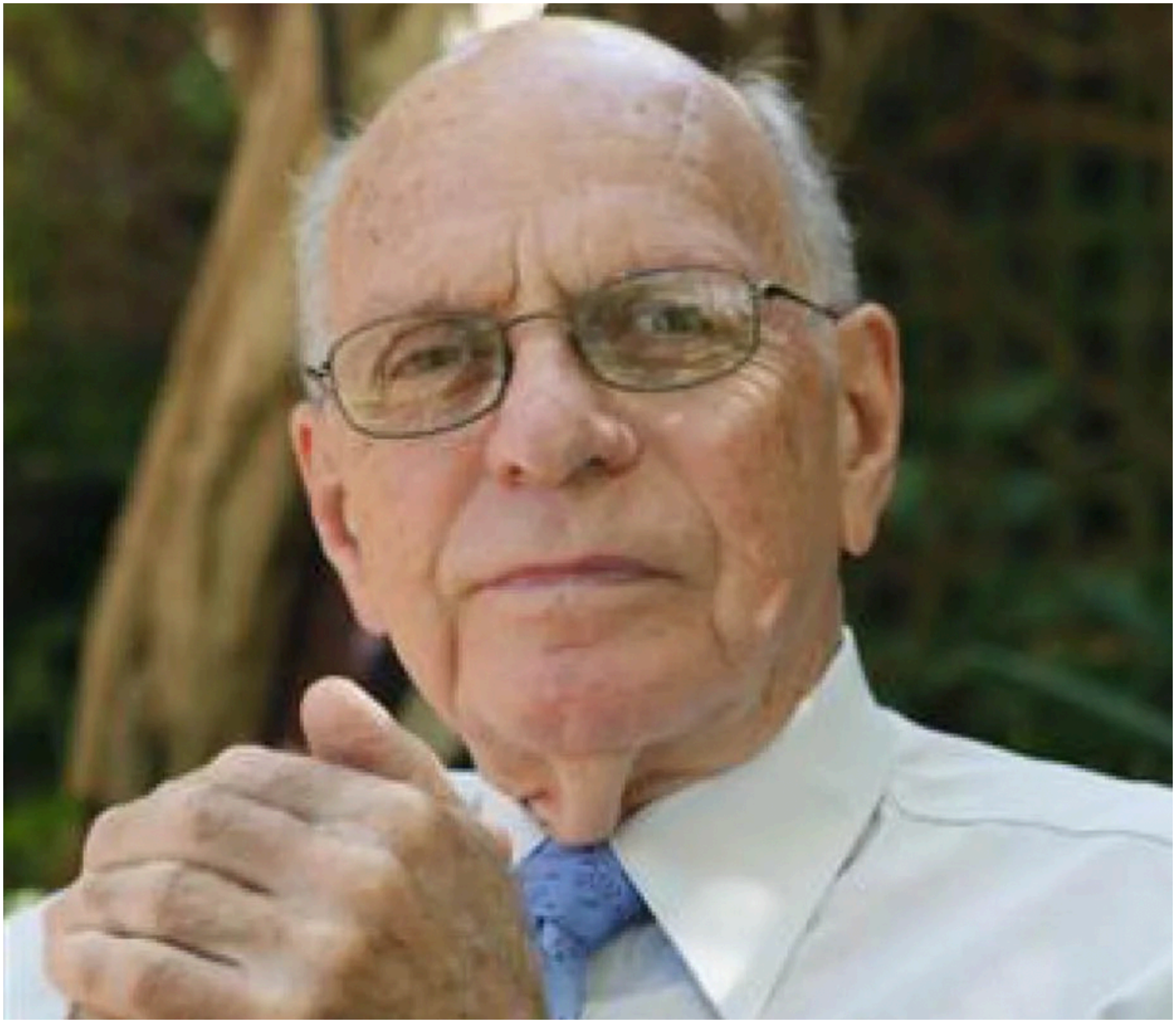
Shakespeare's Enchanted Wedding — David Tunley's *A Wedding Masque*

We remain on Prospero's enchanted island for Australian composer **David Tunley's *A Wedding Masque***, inspired by the magical celebration in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

To honour the forthcoming marriage of Ferdinand and Miranda, Prospero summons three mythological figures: **Iris**, goddess of the rainbow; **Ceres**, goddess of the harvest; and **Juno**, queen of the gods. Together they celebrate love, marriage, fertility and the promise of happiness.

Tunley's musical interpretation brings this enchanting scene to life with sopranos **Emily Turner** and **Emma Häll**, mezzo-soprano **Emmeline Booth**, flautist **Philip Murray** and pianist **Bradley Gilchrist**.

In a joyful conclusion, **all the women of the TOSC ensemble** join together for the final choral section — a fitting celebration of Shakespeare's poetry, the female voice and the enduring magic of music.



David Tunley

Composer, educator and musicologist

A Musical Connection Across the Generations

And in a truly heart-warming reminder of the close connections within our musical world, the photograph below brings together Leah's father, Bill Thomas and his former music master at Fort Street High School, composer **David Tunley,** alongside David's wife, **Paula,** to whom ***A Wedding Masque*** was dedicated.

After time in Sydney, David subsequently became Dean of the School of Music at the University of Western Australia.



The photograph was taken in Perth in 2015, when Leah was performing there with Opera Australia — a lovely connection between two generations of musicians whose paths now meet in again in TOSC's ~ ***Contemporary Voices.***

Six Years in the Making: *Much Ado About Nothing* Comes to Life - accessible, witty and endearing!

Six years ago, during Sydney's COVID lockdowns, composer and singer **Tristan Entwistle** began writing an opera inspired by his favourite **Shakespeare** play, the sparkling comedy ***Much Ado About Nothing***.

At the outset, he knew just one thing: he wanted soprano Samanta Lestavel, now his wife, to bring the character of Hero to life.

What began as a creative endeavour during lockdown is finally finding its way to the stage.

After six music rehearsals, the singers are preparing to move into staging, bringing Shakespeare's wit, romance and delightful misunderstandings vividly to life.

Tristan himself takes on the role of Benedick, alongside a talented cast including Michael Kaufmann, James Pinneri, Dale Schilling,

Michael Lampard and Emmeline Booth, with Samanta as Hero.

For **Tristan**, hearing these characters emerge from the page through the voices and personalities of his fellow artists has been an exciting journey.

With the encouragement and support of The Opera and Song Collective (TOSC), this long-nurtured musical creation will finally meet its Sydney audience on **Sunday 25 October,** as part of TOSC's ***Stormlight – Contemporary Voices*** concert.



Tristan Entwistle - Baritone & Composer
Samanta Lestavel - Soprano

Keeping the Music Alive — and Creating What Comes Next

Stories such as this remind us that music is so much more than the notes on a page. It is a living tradition, sustained by teachers, performers, composers and the friendships and collaborations that develop across generations.

But that tradition needs opportunities to flourish. New music must be written, rehearsed and performed. Emerging professional artists need opportunities to work alongside experienced colleagues, and audiences need the chance to discover music they may never have heard before.

This at the heart of what TOSC sets out to achieve. And this is where you can help.



Support *Stormlight* through the Australian Cultural Fund

We are delighted that *Stormlight — Contemporary Voices* has been approved as a fundraising project through the Australian Cultural Fund (ACF), enabling supporters to make tax-deductible donations towards bringing this ambitious programme to the stage.

Your contribution helps meet the very real costs of presenting new and rarely heard music — supporting our composers, singers, instrumentalists, rehearsal pianists and the production work that makes a concert possible.

Ticket sales are important, but they cannot cover everything. With your support, we can continue to create meaningful opportunities for artists while keeping our performances accessible to audiences.

Whether you can contribute $25, $50, $100 or more, your support will make a genuine difference.

Click below to donate:

SUPPORT STORMLIGHT — DONATE THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN CULTURAL FUND

Thank you for helping us bring Australian creativity to life.

Every contribution, large or small, helps put the music on the stage.



Stormlight

AUSTRALIAN CULTURAL FUND.ORG.AU

3 pm Sunday
October 25 2026

St Lukes Anglican Church

4 Heydon St. Mosman

The Opera & Song Collective presents

An Afternoon of Contemporary Voices,
Mystical, dramatic, vividly contemporary

Music by Kaija Saariaho, Thomas Pasatieri,
Ross Edwards, David Tunley,
Christine Draeger, Tristan Entwistle,
Michael Lampard and Nigel McDougall

Performed by Leah Thomas, Christine Draeger, Claire Howard, Samanta Lestavel, Tristan Entwistle, Michael Lampard, Bradley Gilchrist, Charlotte Merz, Maria Hemphill, Philip Murray, Emily Turner, Emma Häll. Emmeline Booth, Angelique Tot, Jill Sullivan, Michael Kaufmann, James Pinneri, Dale Schilling and the TOSC ensemble.

TOSC Artists
Singers Passionate To Bring Fine Music To You

www.ticketebo.com.au/stormlight

Now Come and Hear the Music!

Stormlight - Contemporary Voices

Sunday 25 October 2026 at 3.00 pm
St Luke's Anglican Church, Mosman

From the magical world of **Shakespeare** to the shimmering soundscapes of **Kaija Saariaho**, ***Contemporary Voices*** promises an afternoon of discovery, beauty, wit and a few surprises!

Experience scenes from **Tristan Entwistle's** delightful new opera ***Much Ado About Nothing***, and **Michael Lampard's** evocative song cycle ***At the Harbour's Edge***, inspired by the waters and landscapes of Sydney Harbour, with poetry written by the composer himself.

We are also delighted to welcome soprano **Maria Hemphill**, performing ***Nature, Love and Grief***, a moving song cycle by her father, Tasmanian composer **Nigel McDougall**, setting the poetry of John Clare.

Alongside these works, music by **David Tunley, Christine Draeger, Ross Edwards**, **Thomas Pasatieri** and **Kaija Saariaho** brings together a fascinating range of musical voices and styles.

Join our outstanding company of singers, instrumentalists and composers as they bring this remarkable programme to life.

And do stay afterwards! **Join the artists for refreshments in the courtyard,** enjoy a conversation or two, and discover more about the music and the people who create it.

Bring a friend, introduce someone new to TOSC, and help us fill St Luke's with music lovers!

BOOK YOUR TICKETS HERE:

https://www.ticketebo.com.au/stormlight

We look forward to welcoming you!

Jill Sullivan and the TOSC team

TOSC

MASTERCLASS
with

MAIJA KOVALEVSKA

International Soprano



WINNER OF
OPERALIA
PLÁCIDO DOMINGO'S
WORLD OPERA COMPETITION

SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2026
5.30 PM – 8.30 PM

SYDNEY UNITARIAN CHURCH
15 Francis St. Darlinghurst

FIVE SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SINGERS
WILL WORK WITH MAIJA IN THIS INTIMATE MASTERCLASS

OBSERVERS WELCOME
$30 PER PERSON
Light supper provided

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL
tosceal@gmail.com

NEW DATE, TIME & LOCATION!

SUNDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2026
5.30 PM – 8.30 PM

SYDNEY UNITARIAN CHURCH
15 Francis St. Darlinghurst

A rare opportunity to learn from a world-leading artist.

A special opportunity with Maija Kovalevska

TOSC is delighted to welcome internationally acclaimed Latvian soprano **Maija Kovalevska** for an intimate masterclass.

Five selected professional singers will work with Maija, whose international career has taken her from the Metropolitan Opera to Vienna, Covent Garden, La Scala and Salzburg, and whose own studies included many years with the legendary Mirella Freni.

Observers are warmly welcome — $30 per person.

Sunday 29 November 5:30 pm
Sydney Unitarian Church,
15 Francis Street, Darlinghurst

Bookings essential.

RESERVE AN OBSERVER PLACE BY EMAILING toscea1@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE -
OUR DECEMBER FINALE



SHADOW TO CHAMPAGNE

Strauss & Strauss

Sunday 20 December 3pm
St Luke's Anglican Church, Mosman

From the sumptuous, searching world of Richard Strauss to the irresistible sparkle of Johann Strauss, TOSC ends 2026 in style.

Opera and Lieder from *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Arabella*, *Capriccio* and *Die Frau ohne Schatten* give way to the wit, waltzes and effervescence of *Die Fledermaus* and *Eine Nacht in Venedig.*

Bookings Open -
www.ticketebo.com.au/strauss

Killara Music Club
presents
Willoughby Band

12October 2026,7pm

Ravenswood Auditorium



Recent 1st and 2nd place winners in the NSW State Band Championships. There'll be something for everyone, from bold and dramatic moments to lighter, more familiar tunes, showing off what a brass ensemble can do. Traditional supper served after the performance.

Tickets: $40/$20 (full/student).
On sale from September 1st on https://www.killaramusicclub.com.au
and available at the door.
Children under 12 free when accompanied by an adult.
For further information contact
secretary@killaramusicclub.com.au

TOSC ARTIST NEWS ~ WE ARE ALL

Looking forward to seeing you at *Stormlight*

3pm Sunday October 25th

St Luke's Anglican Church

4 Heydon Street

Mosman, NSW

Book now at

www.ticketebo.com.au/stormlight



www.ticketebo.com.au/stormlight

Thank you for supporting live opera and song in Sydney.

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