

Simon O'Neill ONZM

New Zealand tenor, Simon O'Neill is celebrated as one of the leading heldentenors of his generation. He is a frequent performer at the world's premier opera houses and festivals, including the Metropolitan Opera, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Wiener Staatsoper, Bayerische Staatsoper, Hamburg Staatsoper, Staatsoper Berlin, Opéra National de Paris, Teatro alla Scala, and the Bayreuth, Salzburg, Glyndebourne, Edinburgh, and BBC Proms Festivals.

O'Neill is renowned for his interpretations of Wagner's heroic tenor roles, collaborating with distinguished conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Sir Simon Rattle, Riccardo Muti, Sir Antonio Pappano, James Levine, Pierre Boulez, Fabio Luisi, Kent Nagano, Christian Thielemann, Andris Nelsons, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Gustavo Dudamel, Jaap van Zweden, Pietari Inkinen, and Simone Young. His signature role, Siegmund in *Die Walküre*, has earned him the title "the Wagnerian tenor of his generation." He has performed Siegmund at Covent Garden with Pappano, the Metropolitan Opera with Runnicles and Luisi, La Scala and Staatsoper Berlin with Barenboim, and Deutsche Oper Berlin with Rattle. His Wagnerian repertoire also includes *Tristan*, *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*, *Walther von Stolzing*, *Siegfried*, and *Loge*. His Bayreuth debut as *Lohengrin* in Hans Neuenfels' striking production with Andris Nelsons was followed by *Parsifal* in Stefan Herheim's acclaimed staging with Daniele Gatti.

Beyond Wagner, O'Neill's versatile repertoire encompasses Beethoven's Florestan (*Fidelio*), Strauss's Emperor (*Die Frau ohne Schatten*), Shostakovich's Sergei (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*), and Berg's Tambourmajor (*Wozzeck*). His acclaimed portrayal of Verdi's *Otello* began with a concert performance on short notice with Sir Colin Davis and the London Symphony Orchestra, later reprised in Houston, Boston, Auckland, and Sydney. He has

also excelled as Chairman Mao (*Nixon in China*) and Boris (*Katya Kabanova*), demonstrating his range across operatic styles.

Recent highlights include *Tristan* in Hamburg and San Francisco, Loge in Paris and Los Angeles, *Parsifal* in Munich and Paris, *Siegfried* with the Sydney Symphony, and *Götterdämmerung* with the Hangzhou Philharmonic. His concert performances include Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* in Sydney, Munich, Luzern, and Hamburg; Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* in Lyon, Zurich, Sydney, Parma, and Strasbourg; Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* in Reykjavik and Helsinki and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* in Sydney.

O'Neill's discography includes *Father and Son* (EMI) and *Distant Beloved* (Decca), both Best Classical Tui Award winners; Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with Dudamel (Grammy Award); and multiple *Siegfried* recordings with Rattle, Elder, and van Zweden. He appears on DVD/Blu-ray in *Parsifal* (Royal Opera), *Otello* (LSO Live), *Die Walküre* (La Scala), *Der Freischütz* (LSO), and *Die Zauberflöte* (Salzburg).

Appointed an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2017, O'Neill is a Fulbright Scholar with a Doctor of Music (Honoris Causa) from Victoria University of Wellington. He studied at the University of Otago, Manhattan School of Music, and Juilliard Opera Centre, and was a 2002 Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions finalist. Named a New Zealand Arts Laureate in 2005, he was featured on a 1998 performing arts postage stamp.