

Sam Downes becomes an ENO Harewood Artist for the 2025-26 Season

Young New Zealand-born tenor **Sam Downes** is the latest artist to join English National Opera (ENO)'s [Harewood Artists](#) programme for exceptionally talented singers.

Generously supported and funded through donations, ENO's Harewood Artists programme gives emerging British and British-trained singers performance opportunities with a major opera company, alongside specialist coaching, support and guidance over 2-3 years.

Sam Downes said of the opportunity:

'I am absolutely thrilled to be joining English National Opera as a Harewood Artist this Season. This next step in my career will be crucial in settling myself into English and European markets as a young singer. Having access to all the incredible resources at ENO, and the specialists they bring in, will be the perfect opportunity for me to thrive as a musician. I am also grateful to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation for supporting my year with the mentoring programme.'

Matthew Broom, Head of Casting and Vocal Talent Development at ENO, commented:

'We're really thrilled to be welcoming Sam Downes onto the Harewood Programme. Sam is a very promising young New Zealand-British tenor who has recently transitioned from baritone to tenor. After beginning his studies in the USA, we're delighted to be working with him and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation to continue to support this transition here in London during ENO's 2025-26 Season, giving Sam the financial, vocal and mentoring help that he needs to realize his full potential.'

Sam Downes is from Auckland, New Zealand. A student of César Ulloa, he recently graduated with his Masters and Professional Studies Certificate from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he was a regular performer in their mainstage productions. Before undertaking his studies, Sam performed with Wellington Opera in their production of *La Traviata* as Barone. He was a Dame Malvina Major New Zealand Opera Studio Artist in 2020, where he performed in New Zealand Opera productions, piloted new compositions, and toured the country as part of its musical outreach programme. He was a member of the New Zealand Opera Chorus from 2018-2021 and regularly attended the New Zealand Opera School in Whanganui.

He is currently supported by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation, the Freemason Foundation, Bernice and John Lindstrom, and the John and Margaret Hunn Trust; he is also the recipient of the 2025 Victoria League Singing Scholarship.