



Media release – for immediate release

## RUFUS WAINWRIGHT

SELECTIONS FROM HIS OPERA *PRIMA DONNA: A SYMPHONIC VISUAL CONCERT* AND *RUFUS DOES JUDY*

**VENUE:** ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre

**DATES:** Wednesday 22 March, 8.00pm

### ***PRIMA DONNA: A SYMPHONIC VISUAL CONCERT***

MUSIC BY: Rufus Wainwright

LIBRETTO BY: Rufus Wainwright and Bernadette Colomine

FILM DIRECTED BY: Francesco Vezzoli

FILM ACTOR: Cindy Sherman

SOPRANOS: Madeleine Pierard and Madison Nonoa

TENOR: Cameron Barclay

ORCHESTRA: Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (APO)

CONDUCTOR: Guy Simpson

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Clo'e Floirat

### ***RUFUS DOES JUDY***

PERFORMER: Rufus Wainwright

ORCHESTRA: Members of Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (APO) and special guests

CONDUCTOR: Guy Simpson

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Vocalist, composer and songwriter Rufus Wainwright is a consummate and audacious showman who has wooed thousands across the world. In a night of musical alchemy, the magnificent maestro celebrates his 'main squeezes' – opera and orchestra – and his passion for dramatics, divas and show songs.

*Prima Donna: A Symphonic Visual Concert*, Wainwright's debut opera, is the concert's first half. Set against a beautiful film by contemporary Italian artist Francesco Vezzoli and starring Cindy Sherman, three exquisite classical singers, accompanied by the APO, tell the moving story of fictional diva Régine Saint Laurent in 1970s Paris. Once the world's most revered operatic soprano, Régine is anxiously preparing for her return to the stage after six years of silence. In doing so, she is forced to confront the ghosts of her past.

In the second half, Wainwright and the brilliant 36-piece orchestra take us back to 1961 when show business legend Judy Garland performed a concert at NYC's Carnegie Hall that reignited her career and solidified her status as an icon for the LGBTI community. He continues Garland's legacy with his signature showmanship, energy and style, delivering a selection of her most beloved hits, including *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, *Puttin' on the Ritz* and *Chicago*.



Wainwright has established himself as one of the great male vocalists and songwriters of his generation. The New York-born, Montreal-raised singer-songwriter has released eight studio albums, three DVDs and three live albums, including the Grammy nominated *Rufus Does Judy at Carnegie Hall*, and the album *Release The Stars*, which went Gold in Canada and the UK.

Wainwright has received many awards and collaborated with numerous artists, among them Elton John, David Byrne, Boy George, Joni Mitchell, Robbie Williams, Pet Shop Boys and Mark Ronson.

Contemporary artist and film maker Francesco Vezzoli's work draws on various media formats, such as advertising and film, to explore the power of contemporary popular culture. The Vezzoli film accompaniment in *Prima Donna* stars American actor, artist, photographer and filmmaker Cindy Sherman in stunning costumes, one of which was originally worn by legendary soprano Maria Callas.

Sherman's use of her own body is a signature characteristic of her artistic work, as are her portrayals of female stereotypes found in film, television and advertising. She is well-known for donning elaborate disguises, often in large-scale colour photographs.

*Prima Donna* brings together three outstanding opera singers – the established New Zealand-born international opera star Madeleine Pierard (*Nixon in China*) alongside highly talented newcomers Cameron Barclay (*Sweeney Todd*) and Madison Nonoa (Third place, Lexus Song Quest 2016).

The evening is also a showcase of the vast talent of the APO; from opulent opera to a swinging 36-piece orchestra.

This one-night-only event is Rufus Wainwright as composer, performer, collaborator and host. It's a fantastic musical journey that takes the audience from the glorious world of opera to the nostalgic comfort of old school show tunes.

## PERFORMANCE DETAILS

<b>TICKETS</b>	Premium \$139   A Res \$119   A Res Conc \$109   B Res \$89   B Res Conc \$81   C Res \$69
<b>WHEN</b>	Wednesday 22 March, 8.00pm
<b>WHERE</b>	ASB Theatre, Aotea Centre
<b>BOOKINGS</b>	Ticketmaster.co.nz   09 951 2501
<b>DURATION</b>	Part I: 1hr 5mins Interval: 20mins Part II: 1hr
<b>MORE INFO</b>	<p><b>Rufus Wainwright Facebook:</b> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/rufuswainwrightofficial">https://www.facebook.com/rufuswainwrightofficial</a></p> <p><b>Rufus Wainwright Twitter:</b> <a href="https://twitter.com/rufuswainwright">https://twitter.com/rufuswainwright</a></p> <p><b>Rufus Wainwright Instagram:</b> <a href="https://www.instagram.com/rufuswainwright/?hl=en">https://www.instagram.com/rufuswainwright/?hl=en</a></p> <p><b>Rufus Wainwright YouTube:</b> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/RufusWainwrightuk">https://www.youtube.com/user/RufusWainwrightuk</a></p> <p><b>Rufus Wainwright official website:</b></p>



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	<a href="http://rufuswainwright.com">http://rufuswainwright.com</a>
<b>FOLLOW</b>	Facebook / Twitter / Instagram: @AKLFestival #aklfest
<b>ABOUT THE AAF</b>	<p>Taking place annually in March, the Auckland Arts Festival is a globally recognised event that celebrates people and culture, and showcases the unrivalled location, cultural diversity and vibrant energy of New Zealand's largest city.</p> <p>Over 1.6 million people have attended the Festivals to date.</p> <p>Auckland Arts Festival is governed by the Auckland Festival Trust. Trustees are John Judge (Chair), Rick Carlyon, Evan Davies, Sarah Judkins, Tarun Kanji, Margaret Kāwharu MNZM, Jim Moser, Ben Taufua and Fred Ward.</p> <p>The Trust receives core funding from Auckland Council through the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act, and Creative New Zealand through the Toi Tōtara Haemata programme.</p> <p>Significant support for AAF 2017 is received from Foundation North, Pub Charity, NZ Community Trust and The Lion Foundation.</p>
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