

DAVID ALEXANDER BARNARD CF – Biography

David Alexander Barnard is a **British-Australian pianist, conductor and opera professional** whose career has developed across the United Kingdom, continental Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Spanning the concert platform, opera house and conservatoire, his work brings together opera, song and chamber music, conducting and chorus preparation, collaborative piano, artist development and the creation of international musical projects.

Most recently, David spent three seasons at **Landestheater Linz** in Austria, working within the German-speaking opera-house system. He joined the theatre in 2023 as **Musikalischer Assistent des Chores and Solokorrepetitor**, subsequently becoming **Stellvertretender Chordirektor and Solokorrepetitor** for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 seasons. Alongside the theatre's extensive repertoire, he took responsibility for the **Extrachor** on productions ranging from *Der Freischütz* and *Cavalleria rusticana / Pagliacci* to new works including *Die Königinnen*, *Il viaggio* and *Adam und Eva*, the latter opening the 2025 **Schwetzingen SWR Festspiele**.

His wider European work includes opera and artist development in France, Germany and Italy. In France he has worked as **Chef du Chant with Opéra de Massy**, while in Florence he has been a guest vocal coach at the **Accademia del Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino**. His European career builds upon longstanding associations with opera in Britain and Australasia, including work with **Opera Australia, New Zealand Opera, Opera North, English National Opera, British Youth Opera** and the **State Opera of South Australia**.

Before moving to Europe, David held senior musical and educational appointments in Australia and New Zealand. He was **Head of Music at the State Opera of South Australia**, and subsequently **Head of Music, Conductor and Chorus Master at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music**. From 2019 he was **Head Vocal Coach and Head Accompanist at the New Zealand School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington**, where his work encompassed opera, collaborative piano and the development of emerging professional artists.

At the centre of David's musical life is the **piano**. His musical formation includes study with distinguished Australian pianists **Diana Harris OAM** and **Michael Kieran Harvey**, establishing a pianistic foundation that has informed a career encompassing song, chamber music, opera and orchestral repertoire. His development as a conductor included study with British conductor **Fraser Goulding**, contributing to a musical practice in which conducting and collaborative piano have developed alongside one another.

As a collaborative pianist, David has performed with many distinguished singers and instrumentalists, including internationally renowned pianist and song specialist **Malcolm Martineau**, with whom he has appeared as a piano-duet partner, and pianist **Leslie Howard**, with whom he has performed four-hand repertoire. His recital and collaborative work has also brought him into partnership with leading singers including **Lesley Garrett CBE** and **Sarah Fox**, alongside numerous artists in Britain, Europe and Australasia.

David has appeared in recital series and festivals across four continents and has worked as an orchestral keyboard player with ensembles including the **BBC Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner Orchester Linz, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra** and **New Zealand Symphony Orchestra**. A particular affinity with singers, language and text has remained a defining thread throughout his work at the piano.

David has also maintained a strong commitment to **new music and the development of repertoire**. He has participated in numerous first performances as pianist, chorus master and

musical collaborator, including works by **Mike Svoboda, Reinhard Febel, Thomas Zaufke, Alois Bröder, Ernst Ludwig Leitner, Ben Hoadley, Abby Pinkerton, Stuart Greenbaum and Bryn Harrison**. In New Zealand he was a pianist for *The Call of the Huia*, a major project recovering early New Zealand art song through performance, recording and broadcast. In 2024 he conceived and curated *Connections* in Valletta, marking **60 years of diplomatic relations between Australia and Malta** through music, poetry and new work.

Alongside performance, David's career has encompassed **artist development, higher education and creative leadership**. He has developed curriculum, led training programmes and worked with emerging singers, pianists and conductors across universities, opera companies and conservatoires. In 2016 he was awarded a **50th Anniversary Winston Churchill Fellowship**, supporting professional study within major European opera institutions including **Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opéra national de Paris** and the **Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino**.

Highland piping forms a distinctive parallel strand of David's musical life. A piper since childhood, he has served as Pipe Major and Pipe Sergeant with bands in Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom and has led international pipes and drums for **André Rieu Productions**, including arena performances in Romania and the twelve-concert summer season on Maastricht's Vrijthof. He is currently **Pipe Major of the City of Sheffield Pipe Band**.

David is a member of the **Royal Society of Musicians** and the **Musicians' Union**. His independent creative activity is brought together through **DAB ||: Music**, his established platform for performance, producing and musical collaboration.

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