

Meet the “Viola Section”

Manukau Symphony Orchestra (Auckland)

Kate Candy Colbert

The Manukau Symphony Orchestra (MSO) is a community orchestra based in South Auckland and was established by Terry Spragg MNZM (Violist and Arts Administration Manager) in 1993. Uwe Grodd has been the MSO’s Musical Director for the past 28 years and conducts on average 80 musicians on stage in four varied concerts annually to patrons across Auckland at the Vodafone Events Centre in Manukau, Auckland. MSO provides a unique opportunity for youth and community musicians to work alongside and receive mentoring from professional players. MSO also provides scholarships to talented youth players which has seen a boost to the Viola section in the past two years!



Meet the Current Viola Players



Celina Reyes-Badger
Our section leader who is Argentinian and likes dark chocolate. ‘Por favor sigame!’



Francisca Carlos
A student scholarship recipient. She currently sits on the front desk and does a great job turning pages for the section leader



Kate Candy Colbert
Migrated from the first Violins to the Viola section 3.5 years ago and loves it!
New status: Violist



Tamsin Tighe-Umbers
A student scholarship recipient and a Paramedic in training! My desk buddy.



Rachael Cooper
Our friendly and fittest viola player



Helen Taber
A fantastic player and mentor. I did my apprenticeship on Viola by copying her playing!



Barbara Jackson
Barbara has played in MSO since 1995 and still enjoys it!



Andrew Gibson
He is our powerhouse violist who likes to sit on two chairs stacked on each other at the back of the viola section



Dora Tsao
Our travelling violist who plays in Auckland community orchestras and in Orchestra Wellington

Manukau Symphony Orchestra regularly performs to capacity houses (700) at the Vodafone Events Centre. Drinks are served at interval, and the regular subscribers are treated to delectable refreshments and a chance to meet the musicians after each concert.

Past leaders of the Viola Section

Bob Savigny
Michael Vidulich
Helen Taber
Owen Gordon
Sue Wedde
Wen Chan Lin
Igor Arefyer
Kate Candy
Celina Reyes-Badger (present day leader)



MSO rehearsals

MSO's rehearsal schedule for each concert typically includes two consecutive weekend workshops held at Te Tuhi Contemporary Art Trust, Pakuranga, and three dress rehearsals and concert in the concert venue at the Vodafone Events Centre, Manukau the following week. The intensity of the rehearsal schedule allows rapid cohesion among the sections and works well in lifting the overall standard of playing quickly. It's fun socially as well to enjoy good conversations with other musicians and staff over a few days at a time.

MSO Performances

In March this year MSO and New Zealand Opera gave three performances of **Ihitaï 'Avei'a STAR NAVIGATOR - an Opera written by Tim Finn (composer and Lyricist)**, with Tom McLeod as arranger and additional music, and Tahitian monologues by Celestine Hitiura Vaite, Director John Davies, and Uwe Grodd Conductor (19-20th March, 2021)...the viola part was an important thread throughout the music with plenty of beautiful viola melodic lines and C string workouts! Such a privilege to be involved in this special opportunity.

Here is a sample of repertoire MSO has performed in the last 5 years that the Viola section have enjoyed and at times been challenged by somewhat!

Piano Concerto No.5 in F Major *The Egyptian* by Saint-Saëns (especially the Andante movement with its thrilling rhythms)
Symphony No.4 in E flat *The Romantic* with lots of prominent melodic lines for the Violas, by Anton Bruckner
Symphony No.7 in D Minor by Antonín Dvořák
Symphony No.3 in F Major by Johannes Brahms
Symphony No.6 *Pathétique* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Symphony No 1. In E Minor by Jean Sibelius
Requiem by Gabriel Fauré, which needed 12 violas split into two parts written for the Violas (6+6)

MSO also commissions and premiers new works from New Zealand composers.

I appreciate the opportunity to explore fantastic symphonic music and contemporary music from the Viola perspective. It always surprises me how often the Violas and Double Basses or Violas and First Violins have the same melodic lines together.

MSO's Viola section is a great team that is diverse with a range of experience. We always manage to blend well as a section as we approach a concert which I think is partly because there is a lot of respect among the players young and older and, because of the mentoring programme. Humour helps a lot and some of the viola players enjoy bantering with Double Bass players positioned behind the Violas.





1993



2013



Manukau Symphony Orchestra 2018

