

The Magazine of the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust

da capo

EDITION 5 SPRING 2011

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF
OUR FOUNDING PATRON AND DEAR FRIEND

PAMELA, LADY VESTEY

12.09.1918 – 02.09.2011

MELBA SCHOLAR,
ANGELA BRUN

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A NOTE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER



PAMELA, LADY VESTEY
 12.09.1918 – 02.09.2011

THIS ISSUE OF DA CAPO IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF OUR FOUNDING PATRON AND DEAR FRIEND.

THE MELBA HONOURS ITS BELOVED PATRON

It is with great sadness that we dedicate the fifth edition of our magazine, *Da Capo*, to the memory of our Founding Patron and dear friend Pamela, Lady Vestey.

The Opera Trust was privileged to have this remarkable woman as Patron of the Conservatorium from 1993, and later, as Founding Patron of the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust. Pamela's long and close relationship with the Melba continued a family tradition. Nellie Melba herself acted as Patron for the Conservatorium as did Lady Vestey's mother.

Pamela was a generous ambassador for the organisation and supported the Dame Nellie Melba Scholarship that her grandmother had endowed in 1931. Her legendary fundraising garden parties at Coombe Cottage featured performances by students of the Conservatorium staged in various locations around the grounds of Coombe. Such occasions were reminiscent of those Nellie Melba herself had organised which Pamela had attended as a child.

In 1997, the Melba proudly awarded its Patron a degree of Master of Arts *honoris causa* "in recognition of her lifelong commitment to both work for the community and Melba Conservatorium". Pamela extended

her kindness and generosity beyond the Melba. She was actively involved in the Lilydale community, was a great animal lover and supporter of the RSPCA and championed the legacy of her grandmother wherever possible.

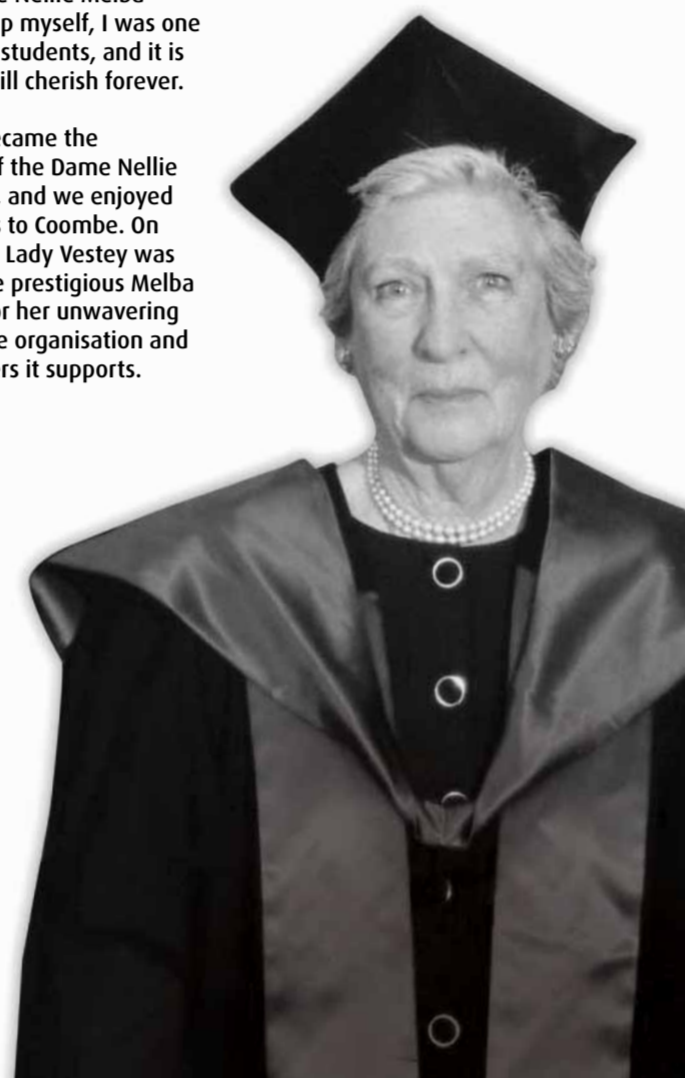
Over the years, Conservatorium students and Trust scholars have had the great privilege of visiting Lady Vestey at Coombe, and performing for her in the music room accompanied on Melba's own piano. As an alumnus of the Conservatorium and previous holder of the Dame Nellie Melba Reserve Scholarship myself, I was one of those fortunate students, and it is a memory that I will cherish forever.

In 2008 Pamela became the Founding Patron of the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust, and we enjoyed several more visits to Coombe. On one such occasion, Lady Vestey was presented with the prestigious Melba Medal, awarded for her unwavering commitment to the organisation and to the young singers it supports.

Pamela, Lady Vestey will be greatly missed by the entire Melba community, particularly the many young singers whose lives she touched. Our thoughts are with the Vestey family and our friends at Coombe.

AMY MCPARTLAN

PAMELA, LADY VESTEY RECEIVING HER HONOURARY MASTER OF ARTS FROM THE MELBA CONSERVATORIUM



PREPARING FOR 2012

2011 MELBA SCHOLARS

SOME NEW AND FAMILIAR FACES MAKE UP THIS YEAR'S TALENTED GROUP OF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS:

Lauren Fagan (soprano)
 Dame Nellie Melba Scholarship
 Patrick & Vivian Gordon Award

Siobhan Stagg (soprano)
 Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship

Samuel Sakker (tenor)
 Margaret Schofield Opera Scholarship

Janet Todd (soprano)
 Beleura-Tallis Opera Scholarship

Nathan Lay (baritone)
 John & Elizabeth Wright-Smith Scholarship
 Mel & Nina Waters Award

Hannah Dahlenburg (soprano)
 Melba Opera Trust Scholarship

Angela Brun (soprano)
 Melba Opera Trust Scholarship

Applications for 2012 scholarships are now in process with scholarship packages of up to \$25,000 on offer for Australia's most promising young singers.

The 2012 scholarship panel will again be led by Trust Artistic Advisor, Sharolyn Kimmorley AM. Sharolyn will be joined by the esteemed Australian baritone, John Pringle OAM and international conductor Marko Letonja. Applicants are required to submit a DVD application to the panel. Following this, a shortlist of candidates will be invited to present for a live audition and interview in Melbourne in mid-November.

John Pringle OAM – Now retired, John had a distinguished solo career with Opera Australia for 40 years, including performing title roles in *The Barber of Seville* (Rossini), *Don Giovanni* (Mozart), *Falstaff* (Verdi), *Gianni Schicchi* (Puccini) and *Eugene Onegin* (Tchaikovsky). In 2004 he won the Helpmann Award for Best Male Performer in a Supporting Role in an Opera (Alban Berg's *Lulu*) and in 2007 he won a Green Room Award for his performance of Leporello in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

John has also enjoyed an international career, performing at Glyndebourne, the Teatro Regio in Turin, San Diego Opera; the Paris Autumn Festival and the Paris Théâtre Musical; in Cologne and Brussels, John brings to the panel a wealth of performance and teaching experience.

Marko Letonja – After studying piano and conducting at the Vienna Academy of Music, Marko became the Musical Director of the Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra. He has conducted orchestras including the Wiener Symphoniker, Münchner and Bremen Philharmoniker, Staatsorchester Stuttgart, the Hamburg Symphony Orchestra, the Melbourne and Monterey Symphony Orchestras, the Orchestra Sinfonica "Giuseppe Verdi" Milan on tour and the opera orchestras of Cagliari and Stockholm (with Nina Stemme).

From 2003 to 2006, he was Music Director and Chief Conductor of both the Symphony Orchestra and the Opera in Basel and made multiple recordings with the Basel Symphony Orchestra. He has led *Pique Dame* at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, *Roméo et Juliette* at the Teatro dell'Opera of Rome, *Nabucco* at Semperoper

Dresden, *Il dissoluto assolto/Sancta Susanna* and *The Makropoulos Case* at La Scala Milan, *La Cenerentola* at the Opéra National de Montpellier, *Rigoletto* at the West Australian Opera in Perth, *Madama Butterfly* at the Staatsoper Berlin and *Die Walküre* at Opéra du Rhin, *Pagliacci*, *Cavalleria rusticana* and *Flying Dutchman* at the Teatro Lirico in Cagliari, *Carmen* in concert with the Munich Rundfunkorchester, *La Traviata* at Deutsche Oper Berlin.

Marko has conducted the Auckland Philharmonia, the Orchestra Victoria and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, is designated Music Director of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg and has been appointed Chief conductor and Artistic Director of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

Marko's exceptional musicianship, expertise and international insight will be of great value to the 2012 selection panel.

A MAN ON A MISSION

INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT LOGIE-SMITH CHAIRMAN OF THE DAME NELLIE MELBA OPERA TRUST

ROBERT LOGIE-SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF THE DAME NELLIE MELBA OPERA TRUST, IS A MAN ON A MISSION: TO BUILD THE TRUST INTO A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE THAT PUTS TALENTED AUSTRALIAN OPERA SINGERS ON THE STAGES OF THE WORLD.

"I'M CONVINCED THAT IN TEN YEARS' TIME THE TRUST WILL HAVE DEVELOPED A POTENTIAL SUTHERLAND, HAMMOND, BRONHILL, AND EVEN A PAVAROTTI," HE SAYS. "WE WILL HAVE SOMEONE PLAYING A LEAD IN AN OPERA AUSTRALIA PRODUCTION. WE WILL HAVE ANOTHER [BASS-BARITONE LIKE] JOSHUA BLOOM IN NEW YORK, AND SOMEONE AT THE ROYAL OPERA IN COVENT GARDEN. WE WILL DO ALL THIS WITHOUT GOVERNMENT FUNDING, RATHER WITH THE HELP OF ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORTERS ALL OVER AUSTRALIA."

Some history

Logie-Smith joined the board of the Melba Conservatorium in 2005 and became chairman in 2006. After the Conservatorium ceased its affiliation with Victoria University, the board decided to continue the mission of finding 'another Melba' by providing scholarships and development programs to talented young opera singers.

A few years on, Logie-Smith believes the Melba Trust's early achievements have been "sensational".

"We've exceeded our expectations in very difficult financial times. We have the building blocks in place – an exceptional leader in Peter Garnick, a talented management and administration team and a number of significant donors.

"We have put a lot of work into creating a robust foundation for the Trust with good governance and a sound investment strategy with Equity Trustees. We are independent, we control our own destiny and we deliver the goods."

The Trust program

Logie-Smith firmly believes that young people in many disciplines, not just singing, need guidance after they complete their university studies. That's where the Melba Opera Trust comes in.

"The unique thing about us is that our scholarships deliver in the interim between tertiary studies and a professional career – the bridging part. The singers need an environment that nurtures the direction they want to go in. Then those who go on to win scholarships overseas multiply their chance of success.

"There are some extraordinary, talented young singers who, when they finish their studies, need to earn a living. They have very delicate instruments which they could quickly ruin if they don't look after them. So we enable people to continue their studies, let their voices develop, and give them the tools to become young professionals. At a performance last week two of our scholars stood up and sang and I saw tears running down the cheeks of audience members. That's a powerful performance!"

Even in the relatively short time that the Trust has been operating, there are some remarkable individual results.

"When you watch our students now, compared with where they were a year ago, the improvements are dramatic. Take Siobhan Stagg. When she started on scholarship with us three years ago she had a pretty voice, was a talented musician and showed potential. Now she is winning international competitions in Austria and singing with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra. Janet Todd is another."

"Not everyone fits into the structure of an organised program. Our singers can continue studying with the specialists that he or she chooses (provided they meet our quality control), but they don't have to go to a particular university or find a new teacher in order to be supported by us.

Mentoring

Logie-Smith is proud of the calibre of industry professionals keen to be involved with the program. These include Cheryl Barker, Yvonne Kenny, Lyndon Terracini, Peter Coleman-Wright, Richard Mills and Deborah Cheetham.

"The history of opera shows that people do not succeed without mentors and supporters; Dame Joan Sutherland wouldn't have had such success without Richard Bonyng and Melba had Madame Marchesi. We help our singers to develop similar relationships. We have our own coaching and mentoring program so young people have someone to teach them about recording, financial affairs and marketing, how to find an agent and to learn about make-up and styling. You can't get that anywhere else.

"And it doesn't all finish after the scholarship funding stops. Our alumni are included in all of our mentor sessions and we connect all of our singers with people who can be mentors and advisers for as long as necessary."

Pianist and conductor George Logie-Smith, Robert Logie-Smith's father, had a huge influence on several generations of young musicians. He set up choirs and musical ensembles at Melbourne University, Geelong College, Scotch College, Genazzano and several other schools. Robert has clearly inherited his father's love of music and desire to develop the talents of the young.

"When I was young, my first experience of serious music was Isaac Stern playing Brahms' violin concerto, and it made my hair stand on end. When I listen to Siobhan, Janet or any of our other scholarship holders in the last three years, that same thing happens."

The future

Logie-Smith is convinced that the Trust has demonstrated its unique value. But for the programs to continue and grow, more financial support is needed.

"We have \$3.5 million in our corpus, commitments for an additional \$2.3 million and we need at least \$7 million by 2014. Once we reach that point we will be self-sustaining and will have full control. Until then we are utilising philanthropic organisations to help us underwrite our programs."

Currently the Trust pays out around \$150K per annum in scholarships which includes funding for training and access to the Mentor and Melba Artists program. In three years, Logie-Smith believes, it will be close to \$300K.

"Our challenge is to engage the benefactors now so that we can continue. In the short term, we have to find at least ten additional significant donors who are enthusiastic, committed, devoted to developing young talent and prepared to invest by making donations and bequests. If we do this, then finding another Sutherland or Pavarotti – even, perhaps, a Melba – will really become a reality."

To discuss what role you can play in securing a strong future for the Trust please call Amy McPartlan on (03) 9867 4833



DAME NELLIE MELBA OPERA TRUST CHAIRMAN ROBERT LOGIE-SMITH

REFLECTIONS OF A SCHOLAR ...



LAUREN FAGAN

WE ASKED THIS YEAR'S MELBA TRUST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FOR A REFLECTION ON THEIR JOURNEY AND THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PROGRAM.

Dame Nellie Melba Scholarship

Receiving a Melba Trust Scholarship has changed the direction of my life. I have always loved singing, but never considered that I could realistically pursue it as a career.

The first half of this year was based around creating a repertoire list of 20 new songs and arias. I took intensive lessons with my singing teacher to get them technically correct and worked with language and stagecraft coaches to put the finishing touches to these pieces for competitions.

The main changes I have experienced this year include a stronger vocal technique, increased confidence and more awareness of the process I must go through before standing up

to perform. I hope to use the second half of this year to focus on languages and stagecraft. I would also like to engage in more performing, as I have found that getting up and singing has been the best way to learn and develop confidence.

I have come to realise that I want to become a professional opera singer. The program has opened my eyes to the different areas I need to develop, and the scholarship funding has opened up opportunities to work with professionals I never imagined I would have the chance to work with.



NATHAN LAY

**John & Elizabeth Wright-Smith Scholarship
Mel & Nina Waters Award**

It has been great to have singing lessons without the worry of finding the money for them. Singing lessons are expensive, and because I am not working and am currently full time at the Opera Studio, there would be no other way for me to afford them.

I have really appreciated the mentoring program that the Melba Trust has made available to me as a scholarship recipient. I have had the opportunity to work with people at the top of their craft in all aspects of preparation and performance. Some of these sessions have included stagecraft and movement, performance attire, vocal health, time management, legal issues, vocal technique and performance.

The mentors have offered invaluable advice as I pursue my career as an opera singer, and the program has helped me to build a support network of useful contacts for which I am very grateful.



ANGELA BRUN

Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust Scholarship

Since last December, when I received the wonderful news that I would be a Melba trust recipient I have had a very busy time. As the recipient of the Opera Foundation Vienna State Opera Award, I spent four months in Vienna understudying and performing roles and absorbing everything I could. When I returned to Australia I began to work on consolidating all of the new vocal ideas I had been exposed to, with the help of the Melba Trust. This has involved singing lessons, musical coachings, masterclasses and workshops. This support has made a great difference and I feel I have truly developed. Since May this year I have made my role debut as the Queen of the Night from Mozart's *The Magic Flute* for Pacific Opera, my Opera Australia singing debut as Rose from Delibes' *Lakmé* and I understudied the title role in the same opera. I am also very excited to say that I will be performing the Queen of the Night in Opera Australia's 2012 production of *The Magic Flute*. To perform this role for a professional company is literally a dream come true. In October I will travel to Jesi, Italy where I will be performing Adina in Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore*.

I would like send my sincere thanks to all who have made this award possible.

I would like send my sincere thanks to all who have made this award possible.



SIOBHAN STAGG

Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship

The Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship is making a world of difference to me as a singer and emerging young artist. The intensity and breadth of training it is providing for gives me innumerable tools to transform my dreams of an international performance career into a reality. The Trust program itself is second to none in Australia, and my recent experience in Europe illustrates that the training the Trust offers is world-class.

The scholarship gives me extra credibility when I approach the top coaches and then funds the invaluable tuition I seek. The support network the Trust provides is enriching and adds so much to my life, personally and professionally.



SAMUEL SAKKER

Margaret Schofield Opera Scholarship

There is no comparison between the way that I perform now and the way that I did when I first auditioned for the Trust. I've focussed my studies on building my voice, a time consuming but rewarding process that is facilitating some really great singing. I am finding that once I get the hang of one new approach, I become aware of another thing to work on! It's easy to get frustrated, but I'm focusing on building step by step, and when I look back I can see there is a clear path of progression.

I'm incredibly grateful to the Trust for its patronage. Without its support I would never be able to continue the level of development I need, whilst also accepting the performance opportunities that I have been lucky to be offered.

To me, the most beneficial aspect of being a Melba scholar is the support network that I can rely on when my own contacts are limited.

The wonderful aspect of the program is that it creates an environment where this type of discussion, and the sharing of knowledge, is encouraged alongside the practical/technical side of performance. As I take the first steps in forging my career, it is this knowledge that gives me much more confidence and assurance.

The Mentor Program has exceeded my expectations in providing an outlet to consolidate my skills with a group of like-minded peers. As well as the encouraging staff team, I really enjoy the support of Mary-Jane Joscelyne and the Trustees – this whole musical family means so much, especially since my real family lives 550km away in Mildura.

I am on a life-long journey of artistic apprenticeship, and I will be forever grateful for all the Melba Trust has done for me in these formative years.

The Trust would like to congratulate Siobhan on her recent success in Graz, Austria where she triumphed in the international Meistersinger competition and was also awarded the Orchestra and Audience Choice prize. With three international agents on the judging panel, we hope this is the beginning of an illustrious career!



ARTISTIC

ADVISOR

SHAROLYN KIMMORLEY AM

THIS YEAR THE TRUST ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF SHAROLYN KIMMORLEY AS ARTISTIC ADVISOR AND CHAIR OF THE SELECTION PANEL.

Sharolyn, one of Australia's finest coaches and accompanists, counts herself fortunate to have started her career during a golden age of Australian opera.

"The '70s and '80s were a great era, when many Australians came back home," she recalls. "I was very lucky to be guided by a host of exceptional people: Sir Edward Downes, Musical Director of The Australian Opera; Carlo-Felice Cillario – the great maestro who had conducted Callas and worked with Toscanini – taught me every opera.

"Dame Joan Sutherland used to perform two or three operas here every year, conducted by her husband Richard Bonynge. By working with the Bonnynges and helping them prepare, I learned a lot about Bel Canto opera and what constitutes great singing."

Sharolyn joined The Australian Opera in 1975, and went on to a succession of senior positions including Principal Répétiteur, Head of Music Staff, Artistic Administrator and Director of Music Administration.

After learning from, and being inspired by the greats of the operatic world, Sharolyn is well placed to help the next generation of singers with the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust.

She and General Manager, Amy McPartlan, are developing the Trust's Mentor, Scholarship and Melba Artist programs to ensure every aspect of professional singing is addressed.

"It's not enough to have a good voice; you have to be the total package," Sharolyn explains.

"When studying music, the focus is on vocal technique. Languages are an integral part of being a singer, an area to which not enough attention is paid in tertiary training. Then there is stagecraft. The fourth area is personal development, which covers style, dress, makeup and the qualities you need to make a good first impression and secure a job at audition."

Sharolyn will also work closely with the singers, coaching and mentoring them to support their practical development and artistic decisions.

"This is an extraordinary group of young singers – each one has some very special qualities. We are able to focus on the specific needs they have and make sure they work with the best coaches to address that need."

The Trust's Mentor Program is designed to equip scholars with particular skills that are not necessarily covered in University

degrees. "Teaching institutions are about mass production – they don't allow for individuality. This is where the Trust program is so valuable.

"To make it in the music world, you've got to have sincerity and passion, an individual voice and you have to be able to make people sit up and really listen. The moment you hear Dame Joan Sutherland, Pavarotti, or Callas, you recognise their vocal timbre. You get shivers down your spine! That's what music is about and that's what our young singers have to be aiming for."

Sharolyn urges her young charges to seek international experience. "I think it's essential for young singers to go overseas. They need to go and see what is out there, look at the art, eat the food, walk the paths where Mozart lived and where Puccini wrote his scores. You get inspiration from understanding the culture and it enriches your performance when you're singing in the language."

She knows firsthand the benefits, having spent a year in Italy during the 1980s at the invitation of Maestro Cillario, who introduced her to the great baritone Tiito Gobbi.

"I was very lucky to go to Italy for a year where I was invited by Gobbi to be the accompanist for the Concorso

Internazionale per Cantanti [singing competition] at Bassano del Grappa and coach for [Gobbi's summer school] the Studio dell'Opera Italiana in a monastery at Asolo. I lived in a tiny village, and I knew everyone in the community."

At the same time, Sharolyn cautions against rushing abroad too soon. "Young singers need to give themselves the best chance of success by being ready: vocally, technically and in maturity. They need to make sure they are sufficiently prepared and understand the industry."

When asked her thoughts on the essential ingredient in a successful musical career, Sharolyn replied "I think you've got to love it – every day I think, 'Aren't I lucky?' I think we are blessed to make music our career and do something that gives people such pleasure."

Reflections

THE MENTOR PROGRAM



LEGAL FOR PERFORMERS

Shane Simpson

Shane Simpson SC is one of Australia's most experienced lawyers specialising in the music business. His firm represents some of the country's biggest international stars and Shane has published several books including "The Business of Music" and "Music: The Business and the Law".

Shane's session focused on the legal aspects of being a freelance artist: contracts, copyright, what to look out for and what to expect of the industry.

"Shane Simpson's legal workshop really got us thinking about how to best protect our 'personal brand'. It was interesting to have a glimpse into the 'white collar' side of our career path and I left with renewed motivation and ideas." *Siobhan Stagg, Melba Scholar*



STAGECRAFT AND MOVEMENT

Anna Sweeney

Originally from the UK but now residing in Queensland, Anna Sweeney, is one of this country's most acclaimed movement and drama coaches with considerable experience in working with emerging opera singers.

Singers participated in a four day workshop focused intensively on stage movement, gesture and the artistic interpretation of arias derived from the objective of the text.

"Anna demonstrated how connected the body is to your voice. She has given me lots of exercises which are able to relax and strengthen the areas in my body that hold tension. Learning simple skills such as walking, falling and bowing have added to my confidence in performance." *Lauren Fagan, Melba Scholar*



ACCOUNTING FOR PERFORMERS

Richard Thomas & Wes Mudge

Richard is a partner in leading accountancy firm Jeffrey Thomas & Partners, specialising in taxation consulting, compliance and management accounting services. Wes is a director with Jeffrey Thomas & Partners with expertise in accounting system implementation, bookkeeping and taxation advisory and compliance.

Together they presented a professional seminar on the taxation requirements and accounting processes associated with life as a freelance artist, a voice teacher and operating a teaching studio.

"The session on accounting was useful for me. I find the clerical and business side of things difficult to manage (and to be honest - a little boring), but I know it is essential and it gave me a good 'shove' to learn more about it and to put it into practice." *Janet Todd, Melba Scholar*



AUDITION PREPARATION

Cameron Menzies

Currently Head of Direction at the Opera Studio Melbourne, Cameron Menzies is in great demand, both in Australia and overseas, for his operatic direction and stagecraft character coaching.

Cameron presented a full day session workshopping the singers' audition arias. He focused on how to bring the character of a piece to life and some practical advice on presenting a successful audition.

"I believe Cameron Menzies' auditioning workshop is essential for young singers. Cameron challenged our 'bad' habits, constantly made us aware of the connection to text and highlighted the range of dramatic choices we have. Asking me to sing "like you're a car salesman" forced me to perform in a completely different way than I am used to and from that polarization I had a range of choices to draw from in my performance. We also addressed the risk of internalizing and indulging in our own performance. It's amazing that once you're being engaging and not worrying about vocal technique everything starts to just fall into place with your performance." *Sam Sakker, Melba Scholar*



VOCAL HEALTH

Debbie Phyland

Debbie Phyland is a singer and speech pathologist who, in addition to working in private practice, lectures at university and is a consultant to drama, music theatre and opera companies.

Debbie gave a seminar on what vocal health means, signs of vocal fatigue, exercises to promote vocal stamina, how to protect and take care of the voice, when to rest, symptoms of vocal distress and dispelling the myths!

"It was great to have someone speak candidly about vocal health. It's a very important, yet rarely talked about topic. It is good to know that there are people in speech pathology who are also singers and understand our particular issues." *Nathan Lay, Melba Scholar*



INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES

Mairi Nicolson

Mairi Nicolson is a broadcaster with over three decades experience at the ABC and BBC and, through her passion for classical music, has become one of Australia's most respected radio hosts presenting musicians and singers to Classic FM audiences.

Hosted at the ABC studios in Southbank, Mairi presented a session about the modern media and its relationship to classical singers, exploring the advantages of having contact with journalists and cautioning against the disadvantages. The singers then moved into a studio and, after chatting about the sort of questions singers could expect, Mairi coached them through some mock interviews - even getting the singers to interview each other for practice.

"Normally, being in a studio for an interview can leave you struggling to answer even basic questions about the weather as you desperately attempt to appear intelligent and funny and confident without coming across as pompous, rude and aloof. Mairi gave us some new perspectives on how to achieve this, making my first time in an ABC Broadcast Studio still full of hairy questions but it was us doing the asking!" *Hannah Dahlenburg, Melba Scholar*



AUDITIONING FOR AN AGENT

Graham Pushee

A counter tenor of international repute, Graham Pushee is now one of Australia's leading agents for classical musicians.

Recipients presented a simulated audition for Graham after which they received individual and group feedback including discussion on repertoire choice, singing within your fach, industry news and general do's and don'ts for auditions.

"It was a great experience to do a mock audition for Graham Pushee. He gave me detailed and honest feedback about my performance and outlined to me, in a positive way, what he saw as my strengths and weaknesses. I learnt a lot about the expectations of an agent." *Nathan Lay, Melba Scholar*



THE ART OF NEGOTIATION

Peter Garnick

As a prominent photographic artist with a long history as a senior executive in the arts, Peter Garnick brings considerable insight into the art of negotiating, from both the freelance artist and arts organisation perspective.

Peter shared some practical tips on how to best manage engagement, contract and fee negotiations. These tips were then put into action with some light hearted role playing exercises and group feedback.

"Negotiating is such a big part to secure professional work in the opera world, particularly if you are a young singer and do not yet have an agent. In Peter's session we spoke about the different situations we all find ourselves in and then were 'put on the spot' with different scenarios, role playing how we would handle them under pressure. Two things I took away: never say yes at the 1st meeting or phone call and make sure you get all the information so that you can make an informed decision." *Fiona Jopson, Melba Alumna*

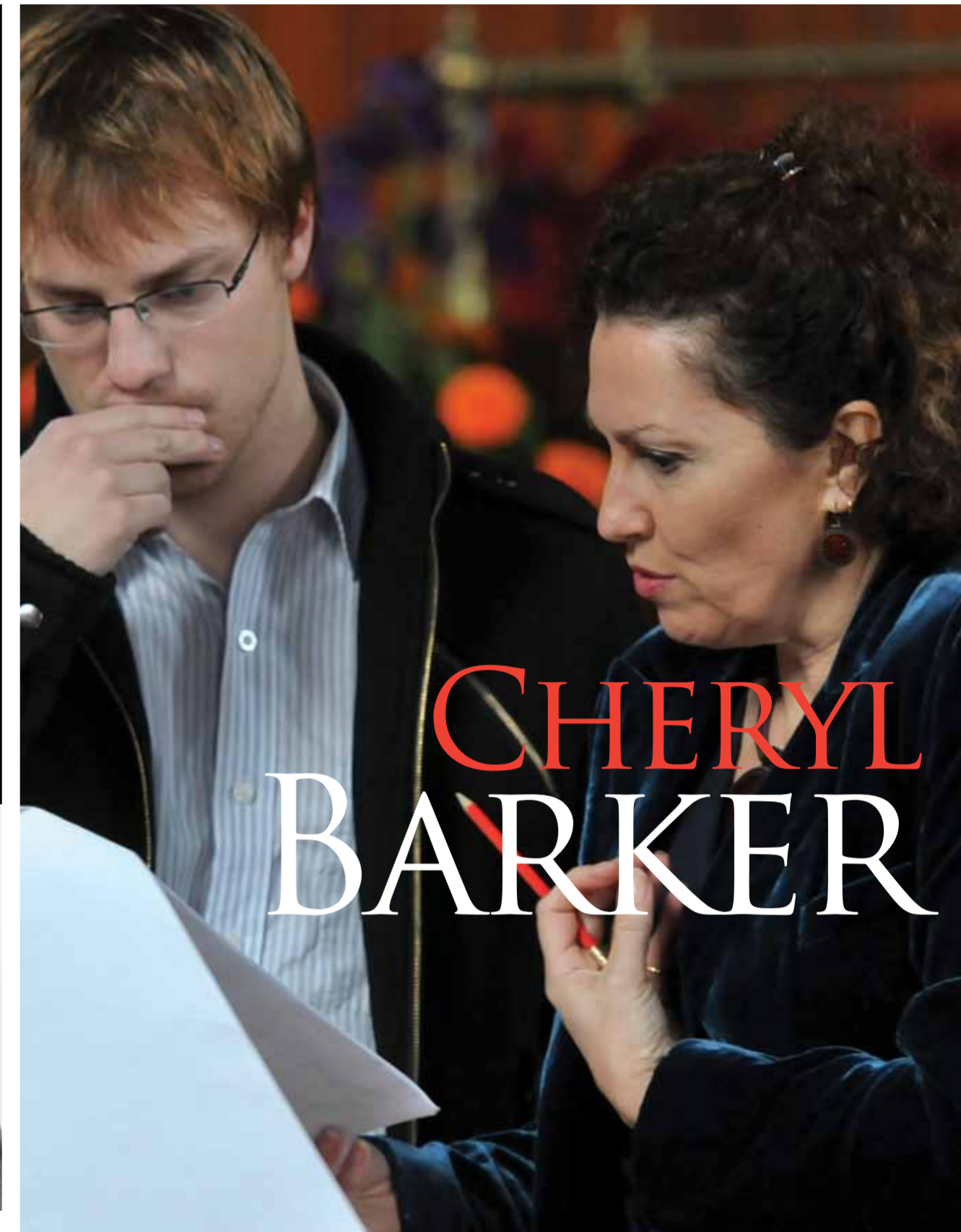


PERFORMANCE ATTIRE

Linda Britten

Linda Britten has been a celebrated presence in Australia's couture scene since the 1970s. Linda has several designer labels but also specialises in opera and performance gowns. A session focused on the importance of choosing the right attire for a performance, how to take care of performance attire, how to move with a full gown and tricks of the trade when posing for professional photos.

"Linda showed us a range of her designs and demonstrated how to care for our performance gowns. Afterwards we each had the opportunity to wear one of her designs, practiced how to walk and negotiate a long train - and still look beautiful on stage!" *Lauren Fagan, Melba Scholar*



CHERYL BARKER

STILL TO COME...

AS PART OF THE 2011 MENTOR PROGRAM THE FOLLOWING WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS ARE YET TO COME:

Singing in English -

Eilene Hannan

Grant Writing and Philanthropy -

Wendy Brooks, The Trust Company

Mock Audition -

Sharolyn Kimmorley, Roxane Hislop, Ken Mackenzie-Forbes

Being ready to record -

Peter Taplin

Masterclass -

Richard Mills

Professional Seminar -

Lyndon Terracini

VISITS OUR 'FINISHING SCHOOL'

CURRENT AND FORMER MELBA TRUST SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS JOINED CHERYL BARKER, ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S FINEST SOPRANOS, FOR A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES IN AUGUST AS PART OF THE TRUST'S MENTOR PROGRAM.

Cheryl gave a full day masterclass and worked intensively with each singer on the interpretation and presentation of arias and provided expert advice based on her extensive experience with companies including the English National Opera, Welsh National Opera and all the major Australian opera companies. The singers then joined Cheryl for a private luncheon to learn about her career, seek guidance and ask candid questions about the industry in Australia and overseas. The following day the singers consolidated Cheryl's feedback in the masterclass with a private lesson.

"Often there is a gap after music degrees, where people disappear," Cheryl said. "This program gives people the opportunity to participate in masterclasses and gain experience before they go on to a professional career - it's like a finishing school. The program is unique and amazing." Cheryl knows the value of mentoring, having benefited in her early career from the advice and support of Dame Joan Hammond, head of the voice faculty at the Victorian College of the Arts from 1975-92.

"I really enjoyed having a casual chat with Cheryl Barker over lunch. It was interesting to hear about some of the challenges she has faced throughout her singing career and how she dealt with them. It was also fantastic to be able to work with her on an aria which she knew so much about. She really understood the piece and helped me to read further into what I was singing about." *Nathan Lay, Melba Scholar*

"This weekend granted us Melba pups some insight into creating poised, elegant and classy performances; with a focus that shifted beyond the mechanics of singing to the grey area of music meeting dramatic intent. Watching Cheryl Barker on stage has always been a guilty pleasure of mine not just for the voice but for her holistic approach to performance. In a day-long workshop on Saturday and private lessons on Sunday, Cheryl opened our eyes to the opportunities for dramatic development within a piece by analyzing the composer's intent on the page, exploring vocal colour and use of text." *Samuel Sakker, Melba Scholar*

YVONNE KENNY

MASTERCLASS

Trust scholars were fortunate to have the opportunity to attend a full day masterclass with one of Australia's premier sopranos, Yvonne Kenny. Current and past recipients presented in the masterclass and received an intensive 35 minute session with Yvonne focusing on vocal production, vocal colour and interpretation. This was then followed up with individual lessons with Yvonne the following day.

"Yvonne is absolutely a master at what she does. The way she connected with the singers, was able to immediately identify and address their challenges was remarkable. And the improvement to the singing was immediate. She is a great asset to this program." Amy McPartlan

"Yvonne Kenny is a singer of great artistry and is someone I have always admired and looked up to. I was particularly thrilled to have the opportunity to work with her, both in the masterclass and in a private lesson, as she is of a similar voice type to me. I was keen to hear her advice on how to approach the repertoire — how to manage the roles and achieving the correct placement of tone. She was very generous with her time and her knowledge and I certainly benefited hugely from the experience." Jacqueline Porter, Melba Alumna



David Aronson & Sylvia Greenberg

Vienna-based conductor, accompanist and vocal coach, David Aronson has worked with many leading singers like Domingo, Pavarotti, Fleming and Netrebko and his master classes are esteemed world-wide.

Born in Israel, soprano Sylvia Greenberg has had a prestigious career as a leading exponent of coloratura roles like the Queen of the Night, Zerbinetta and Koltanze in Vienna, Berlin and Zurich which she now combines with teaching and master classes.

Straight from Vienna, this dynamic duo worked intensively with Trust singers at a Sunday afternoon masterclass in Melba Hall. Sylvia concentrated on the technical aspects of vocal production and David

highlighted the phrasing, musicality and importance of text. Together, they made for a formidable team and their international perspective was invaluable. David also took the time to share his coaching expertise with accompanist, Jennifer McNamara, who said it was "great to have a 'lesson' again, especially from someone of David's calibre".

The breadth of their expertise, attention to detail and their comments about the industry abroad left our singers wide eyed but determined. An extraordinary session that we hope to replicate in 2012. "The masterclass with David Aronson and Sylvia Greenberg was encouraging and incredibly inspiring! I found David's musical direction so clear, communicating his ideas in a way that I could really take hold of and apply. Sylvia's technical advice was incredible. A couple of basic concepts explained to me made sense immediately. I noticed a real change in my voice and felt like I was singing with such ease by the end. David and Sylvia worked so well with each other, the cohesion between what each of them taught was remarkable. It was wonderfully useful for us to have some international coaches involved in the Trust's Mentor Sessions. I truly gained a great deal from their masterclass; it was definitely the highlight session for me this year." Janet Todd, Melba Scholar



JANET TODD

upclose

COFFEE, BALLET DANCERS AND KISMET!

2011 HAS BEEN AN EXCITING YEAR FOR JANET TODD, TWO TIMES RECIPIENT OF THE BELEURA-TALLIS OPERA SCHOLARSHIP OFFERED BY THE DAME NELLIE MELBA OPERA TRUST. JANET HAS FEATURED IN SEVERAL HIGH-PROFILE PRODUCTIONS THIS YEAR, EARNING CRITICAL ACCLAIM IN THE MEDIA AND MAKING HERSELF A HOUSEHOLD NAME IN MELBOURNE MUSIC CIRCLES. EACH PRODUCTION HAS BROUGHT WITH IT NEW CHALLENGES – FROM ROLES HEAVY WITH DIALOGUE TO SINGING WITH COFFEE MACHINES AND BALLET DANCERS.

The extent of her success can be gauged from comments like *The Sunday Herald Sun's* review of Victorian Opera's *The Magic Flute*: "The standout performance is Janet Todd's Pamina ... It is hard to convey in words how talented this soprano is. This was one of those times in the theatre when a jaded middle-aged audience gets a jolt of electricity as it is struck by a great new talent for the first time."

Janet is certainly a 22 year old on the road to success. So, what is it like to be achieving this recognition so young?

"It's very rewarding to be well received," Janet says. "It was daunting to be at that level at first, but Victorian Opera is such a nurturing place which made it really easy to perform at my best – it was a confidence builder. All the other cast members were so supportive and willing to help as much as they could."

The Magic Flute was the start of a succession of performances by Janet, who went on to sing in Fauré's *Requiem* with The Australian Ballet, *Baroque Triple Bill* with Victorian Opera, and *Kismet* with The Production Company.

"I had sung the soprano role in Fauré's *Requiem* before, but it was a new experience to be working with dancers," Janet says. "What they can do with their bodies is really breathtaking!"

"I had always thought of it as a religious work, but it was choreographed as something much more human and emotional, which influenced the way I sang. We [the singers] were an image behind a screen – we could only half-see the audience. It was an interesting way to make my first appearance on the stage of the State Theatre."

Janet went on to perform in Bach's *Coffee Cantata* as part of Victorian Opera's *Baroque Triple Bill*. In this very contemporary-sounding work, she played Lieschen, a coffee-addicted teenager whose habit is driving her dad crazy.

"It was great fun! Her father refuses to allow her to marry unless she gives up coffee – so she marries a barista! It was written in the 1700s but we staged it in a Melbourne café of the present day, complete with a coffee machine on stage."

Baroque Triple Bill was conducted by Paul Dyer, director of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra. "I learned a huge amount from Paul Dyer – he is a very inspiring and encouraging person, with so much to give. His musical brilliance is great to be around, and his coaching was really valuable."

Most recently, Janet appeared in *Kismet* as Marsinah, the daughter of the main character. "The process was very fast and intense – we had to put the whole musical together in two weeks. I haven't performed in a musical since high school, so playing Marsinah took me out of my comfort zone, especially the dialogue aspect. But I was able to draw on many of the things I had learned in the Melba Trust's mentoring sessions, particularly those on spoken voice and public speaking which were very useful."

Janet won more plaudits for her work in *Kismet*, with *The Age* critic writing: "Janet Todd is a vision of innocence as Marsinah, the purity and operatic strength of her voice a thing of wonder."

The experience of being a hard-working professional singer has been a joyful challenge for Janet.

"I feel so lucky to be given these opportunities. I have a lot of support from my teacher and I have a lot of people through the Trust who give me advice.

"It's been hard work and I look forward to having a bit of time off – I think I'll need it! I don't want to burn out. I love every minute of rehearsing and performing, and I want to do it for the rest of my life."

Asked for one reflection on her experiences this year, Janet says: "The most wonderful thing that I've learned is that after all the hard work, once you are on stage, you just have to let go, be generous and give the audience everything you can."

LYNDON TERRACINI

A MOMENT WITH A MELBA MENTOR

LYNDON TERRACINI HAS ENJOYED A SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL OPERATIC CAREER FOR MANY YEARS. APPOINTED ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF OPERA AUSTRALIA IN 2009, LYNDON IS ONE OF THE MENTORS WORKING WITH THE DAME NELLIE MELBA OPERA TRUST'S SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS. DA CAPO CAUGHT UP WITH LYNDON TERRACINI TO TALK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING YOUNG SINGERS.



Lyndon began by sharing his own experience with mentors early on in his career. "It is extremely beneficial when you are starting out to have mentors that have been in the business – they can suggest things to you and point you in the right direction."

"In my case, Ronald Dowd [the great Australian tenor who sang at the opening of the Sydney Opera House] took an interest in me – he would come to shows and make suggestions. He was pretty direct and called it exactly as he saw it, with no flowery speech.

"He once said: 'If I had my time again, I would try to make every sound I made the most beautiful sound I could produce.' That's one of the things I will be passing on to the young singers at the Melba Opera Trust."

Terracini emphasizes that the path to a successful operatic career is long and competitive, requiring not just an excellent voice but dedication comparable to that of an Olympic athlete.

"If you see the way that athletes prepare to win a gold medal at the Olympics, you realise that the amount of preparation is vital. Likewise, singers must prepare, put in the work and discipline themselves to perform at their best.

"Having the vocal equipment is God-given. If you are given an exceptional instrument, you have a great start. But natural ability isn't enough,

in this or the sporting field – just look at Steve Waugh. When he was dropped from the Australian cricket team he went away and really worked on his technique. Through hard work allied with natural ability, he became one of our most successful players and captains."

Terracini plans to advise on the importance of choosing the correct repertoire – having seen some talented singers ruin their careers through bad choices. "Young singers can sometimes take on too much. If you have a light, soubrette voice, it could be suicide to sing the big, heavy roles in Puccini. You have to take advice from experienced people and understand your voice."

Comparing the situation today with his younger days, Terracini sees grounds for optimism. "There are many more, very talented young people now, and the operatic art is more popular. When I was growing up I'd never seen an opera. There were few opera companies, certainly not one in every state.

"Today, young people know that a career in opera is possible. These days a young singer can begin with Opera Australia or a state company, and if they are talented and work hard they will get roles and begin to build a career. Today you can also live in Australia and work internationally. We have a lot of wonderful young singers coming through.

"But sometimes young people don't understand just how much they need to sacrifice in terms of a social life, to secure their goal and the sacrifice continues their entire working life."

Lyndon speaks passionately about supporting the next generation and believes that the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust plays a vital role in encouraging and developing young singers.

But he stresses that, ultimately, it is up to the singers themselves.

"It's vital for young people that they try their absolute hardest. Do the very best you can and don't take short cuts because in the end you only get one shot. Grasp the opportunity and give it everything. If it doesn't work out, at least then you know you've given it your best shot.

"The worst thing would be to look back and think that you could have tried harder."

Looking back on his own career, Terracini observes: "It's a wonderful life as an opera singer, working all over the world. Singing releases endorphins – even just singing in the shower! – and when you sing professionally, on a night when it works there's nothing better. So it's well worth striving for."

Opera Australia is a Venue Partner of the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust and provides generous support by hosting Mentor Program sessions and rehearsals at the Opera Centre in Melbourne. Its support is continued through the involvement of key members of staff and by providing scholarship recipients with the opportunity to access performances and Opera Australia insights.

AN ALUMNI UPDATE



JACQUELINE PORTER

DA CAPO CAUGHT UP WITH PAST RECIPIENTS JACQUELINE PORTER AND FIONA JOPSON TO HEAR WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN UP TO...

I've just got back from nine months in Europe where my husband has been doing a masters degree. Whilst there I spent time working on repertoire and technique with a fantastic singing coach in Venice, Sherman Lowe, and I had the opportunity to work with Barbara Bonney in Salzburg.

In late February I returned briefly to Australia to perform in Grieg's *Peer Gynt* with the Sydney Symphony, conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy. At the same time I recorded a recital of Schumann Lieder with John Martin for ABC Classic FM, which should be broadcast later this year.

In June I returned permanently to perform 'A Celebration of Mahler

and Liszt' on 3 July at the Melbourne Recital Centre. I then went on to perform the roles of Clorinda and Momus in Victorian Opera's *Baroque Triple Bill*.

On 2 October I will perform a new song cycle by Calvin Bowman and on 13 November a concert at Melbourne Town Hall titled 'Organ and Soprano' with visiting German organist Joachim Neugart.

I have some lovely engagements lined up for next year. However, I will have to wait until the seasons are launched before I can announce them! In the meantime, I am making the most of the Trust masterclasses and mentor sessions.



FIONA JOPSON

Since moving back to Scone, NSW I have been working full time to save as much money as possible, and travelling backwards and forwards to Melbourne and Sydney for lessons with Raymond Connell and coaching with Sharolyn Kimmorley.

I have entered some of the big competitions, including Sydney Eisteddfod, Bel Canto Award and Herald Sun Aria and enjoyed some success at Sydney Eisteddfod with a 2nd place in the Intermediate Female Voices section. I also qualified for the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyne Vocal Scholarship final and made it to the quarter-finals of the McDonalds Aria (part of Sydney Eisteddfod). It was tough competition this year!

I have also been taking part in the Mentor Program offered by the Trust and have found the sessions so valuable. Particularly the Cheryl Barker and Yvonne Kenny sessions – AMAZING!

On 16 October I have organised a fundraising concert with Sharolyn Kimmorley in my home town of Scone, NSW. I hope the recital will raise enough money for me to go overseas for further vocal studies. I'm also really excited to have been offered a contract by Opera Australia to join the chorus for the 2012 production of *Turandot* in Melbourne. Rehearsals start in October.

update

150TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATIONS
DAME
NELLIE MELBA
BORN 1861



Melba
THE TRUST ANNOUNCES PATRONS-IN-CHIEF -
A BIRTHDAY SUPRISE

ON NELLIE'S BIRTHDAY, 19TH MAY, RELATIVES AND SUPPORTERS OF THE TRUST GATHERED FOR A SPECIAL RECEPTION AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE TO COMMEMORATE THE MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY. THE EVENING PREMIERED THE PROGRAM 'NELLIE IN HER OWN WRITE', CREATED BY STEPHEN MCINTYRE. THIS RESPECTFUL AND AT TIMES LIGHT-HEARTED NARRATION OF MELBA'S LIFE TOLD IN HER OWN WORDS WAS DRAWN FROM HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY 'MELODIES AND MEMORIES' AND WAS INTERWOVEN WITH SIGNATURE MUSICAL PIECES FROM TRUST RECIPIENTS SIOBHAN STAGG AND JANET TODD.

The evening also celebrated the announcement that the Governor of Victoria, The Honourable Alex Chernov, AO, QC and Mrs Elizabeth Chernov, have become the Patrons-in-chief of the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust. This was an apt birthday present for the organisation charged with keeping Melba's legacy alive.

As Ambassadors for the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust, our Patrons-in-Chief will raise the profile of the Trust and help support our work to carry forward Dame Nellie Melba's vision.

The Trust's Chairman, Robert Logie-Smith, commented:

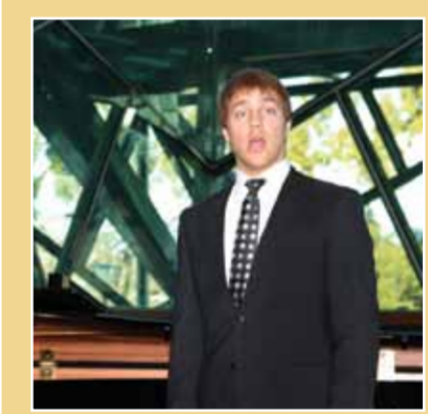
"To have the Governor of Victoria and his wife announce their official patronage of the Trust, whose very essence revolves around the scholarship that Dame Nellie Melba endowed us in 1931, is a wonderful 150th birthday present!"

The venue for the announcement was especially significant since it was Lady Loch, the then Governor's wife, who encouraged Nellie to travel abroad and pursue her career after one of her regular performances at Government House. We have come full circle on her 150th anniversary!



MELBA FOR THE PEOPLE

In June, the Trust shared Dame Nellie's story with the people of Melbourne at a free concert sponsored by Federation Square in their BMW Edge theatre. An audience of over 300 enjoyed the performance of *Nellie in Her Own Write* which featured Trust Scholars Angela Brun, Janet Todd, Nathan Lay and Hannah Dahlenburg. Stephen McIntyre AM was the narrator and the Trust's Artistic Advisor Sharolyn Kimmorley was accompanist.



DAME NELLIE GOES BACK TO KINDER

During the Anniversary week, Trust scholarship recipient Lauren Fagan and Artistic Advisor Sharolyn Kimmorley gave a special operatic performance at Richmond's Dame Nellie Melba Kindergarten. Melba adored children and was instrumental in creating in 1915 the kindergarten for the mission children. In addition to providing funding Melba would visit the kinder and helped to run the program.

The children celebrated their Patron's birthday with high tea and were dressed in opera attire complete with top hats and opera glasses. At the end of the performance, children joined Lauren in their own operatic rendition of *Twinkle Twinkle...* in the hope that another Melba may arise!



MELBA IN PORTRAITURE

An exhibition of works by various artists interpreting Melba's image was mounted at the Victorian Artists' Society for the month of May, curated and organized by Andrew Mackenzie. The Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust presented a musical evening of *Nellie in Her Own Write* featuring Siobhan Stagg, Sam Sakker, and Angela Brun, accompanied by Amir Farid on piano and Stephen McIntyre as narrator. Once again, the venue presented a fitting tribute as the Artists' Society was the original home of the Melba Conservatorium and the location where Melba taught her students all those years ago.



150TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATIONS
DAME
NELLIE MELBA
BORN 1861

HOME SWEET HOME

The Lilydale community celebrated the life of its favourite daughter with a series of activities throughout May. The festivities culminated in a special afternoon on 19 May at the Athenaeum Theatre entitled *Memories of Melba*. The event featured a performance by the 2009-2010 recipient of the Dame Nellie Melba Scholarship, Stephanie Gibson, and a reading by Professor Mel Waters from Lady Vestey's biography *Melba A Family Memoir*.

GENERATIONS OF SONG FOR THE JOSCELYNE

On Friday 19th August, friends and supporters of the Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship gathered at Kooyong Tennis Club for an exquisite evening of music with two Amelia recipients, Helena Dix and Siobhan Stagg.

Helena studied at the Melba Conservatorium on the scholarship from 1997 to 2000 and is now living in London, establishing herself as a professional operatic artist. She has recently toured as Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and has been performing in London's leading opera houses.

Siobhan has been studying on the 'Amelia' with the Trust since 2008 and is enjoying success after success. Her recent win of the Meistersinger competition in Graz, Austria, her solo appearances with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and her recent tour to Alice Springs have been

an exciting challenge for the young soprano. "I wouldn't have achieved any of this without the support of the Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship and the Melba Opera Trust programs. The 'Amelia' and the 'Melba' have laid the groundwork in my training and nurtured my professional development."

Together they performed some of their favourite arias (and some lighter party pieces for good measure) and beguiled audiences with tales from abroad, quirky performance stories and life as emerging opera stars. The atmosphere was typical of a Joscelyne event: warm, encouraging and inclusive.

To see both Helena and Siobhan, representatives of two generations of scholars performing side by side, was a powerful demonstration of the impact this scholarship has had on the lives of countless young singers.

Many in the room were involved in establishing the scholarship over twenty years ago, and have continued to generously support the fund over the years. To see the tangible benefit of that support through exceptional performances from Helena and Siobhan, it becomes clear how important this scholarship continues to be.

Over the next three years, the Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship endowment needs to grow to \$500,000 to ensure that the 'Amelia' can continue its support in perpetuity. Currently sitting at \$268,000, our aim is to raise an additional \$232,000 over the next three years so that we have many more future generations of singers - and concerts - to enjoy!



If you would like to show your support for the Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholarship, donations can be made through our website www.melbaoperatrust.com.au or over the phone (03) 9867 4833.

Come and see our singers at the following upcoming events:

SWISS ITALIAN FESTA
DAYLESFORD CONVENT 23RD OCTOBER

Featuring: Janet Todd, Lauren Fagan, Carlos Barcenas and Stephen McIntyre
Tickets — www.moshtix.com.au

OPERA IN THE GARDEN
BELEURA HOUSE & GARDEN, MORNINGTON
25TH, 26TH AND 27TH NOVEMBER

Featuring: Siobhan Stagg, Lauren Fagan, Hannah Dahlenburg, Nick Jones and Stephen McIntyre
Tickets: (03) 5975 2027

For more information on other events visit our website www.melbaoperatrust.com.au

upcoming events

MELBA IN RHAPSODY...

The Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust is thrilled to announce Mint Rhapsody Melbourne as its exclusive accommodation partner. Mint Group has recently launched Mint Rhapsody Melbourne apartments at 568 St Kilda Road.

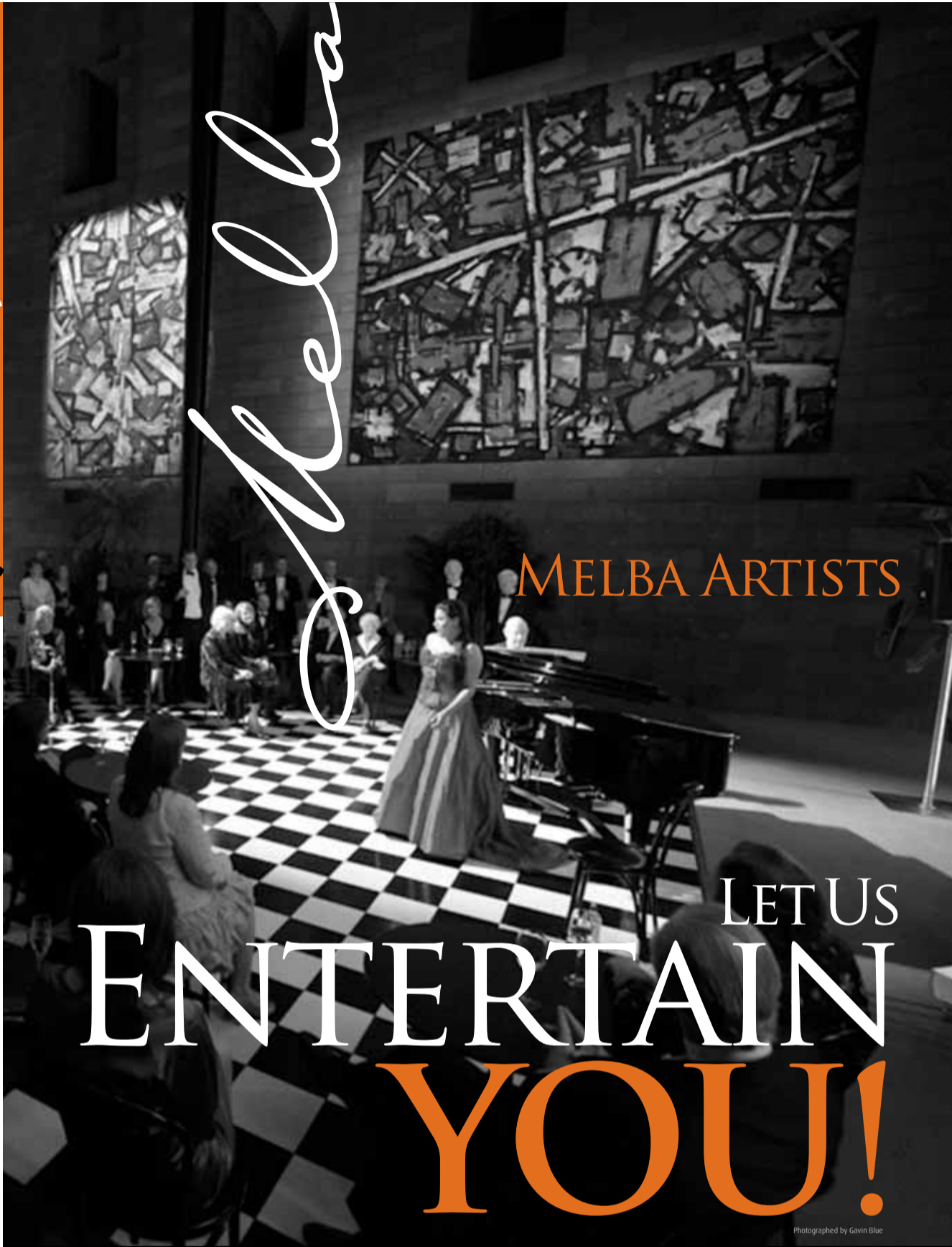
Designed by renowned architect Karl Fender, and located just a tram ride from the heart of the Arts precinct, Mint Rhapsody Melbourne offers luxury accommodation that has been musically inspired from its outset. With each of the 145 apartments themed to reflect the glamour of music and dance, the guest experience is reminiscent of an opening night as they walk the red carpet entry in the foyer to access the luxuriously appointed, fully self-contained apartments. Stunning artwork and an ever changing selection of background music that will suit even the most discerning listener's taste sees Mint Rhapsody Melbourne establish a new level in accommodation service provision in the city that Dame Nellie Melba loved more than any other.

The accommodation partnership will provide in kind support for Trust interstate scholarship recipients, visiting mentors and offer exclusive specials to Melba Opera Trust supporters.

Michelle McAuliffe, Director of Sales for Mint Rhapsody Melbourne believes the evolving partnership is positive in several ways. "The word "rhapsody" conjures up images of strong ecstatic emotions and enthusiasm as does the concept of opera and the performing arts. Therefore there is a strong association between the two organisations, even at the naming level. This partnership will also provide more tangible benefits as members, guests, mentors and performers associated with the Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust will gain access, for short or long term stay, in unique accommodation that reflects their artistic style and provides access to Melbourne's cultural heart.

"Mint Rhapsody Melbourne is looking forward to an enduring relationship with the iconic Dame Nellie Melba Opera Trust and we will enjoy welcoming their guests and hopefully arrange for some of their emerging stars to perform for our guests in the future. That would certainly make for a memorable stay!"

For more information on Mint Melbourne Rhapsody and to secure your special opening rates, visit www.staymint.com



Melba Artists is our performance stream and gives our singers the opportunity to put what they are learning into practice. Are you looking for some musical entertainment to liven up your exclusive function, business event, or private party?

Already this year our scholars have performed at high profile fashion parades, corporate functions, as soloists for a range of concerts, have been broadcast across the airwaves, entranced guests at intimate private gatherings, been involved in festivals and have entertained some of the most prestigious private clubs in Melbourne.

We would love to work with you to create an unforgettable event and give your guests the chance to see one of our rising stars in action.

To find out more, call Melba Artists Manager, Jo Beaumont, on (03) 9867 4833, or email artist@melbaoperatrust.com.au.



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