

NEWSLETTER EDITION 1 1 August 2010



Welcome to the first Joan Sutherland Society of Sydney Newsletter. Without a doubt the JSS has had an extraordinary year of music making to date, so you will forgive us if this Newsletter has been a little late in coming to you all. We have seen the launch of a new, comprehensive website, our first ever Masterclass, the 2010 Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonynge Vocal Schol-arship Winner announced, four Study Grants Awarded, our Annual Members Dinner, and the most ambitious event ever staged in the history of the JSS the Richard Bonynge 80th Birthday Gala Concert held at the City Recital Hall Angel Place on 18 July.

Three generations of artists came together to celebrate the life, work and extraordinary contribution Richard Bonynge has made to opera in Australia. From his first performances in the 1965 Sutherland-Williamson Grand Opera Season in which Lauris Elms (pictured) starred, to this years performances of La Sonnambula with Emma Matthews and Lorina Gore, Maestro Bonynge has been a champion for the singers of Australia. Nearly 1000 patrons attended the star studded fund raising evening, saluting the Maestro with a five minute standing ovation at interval. Sharolyn Kimmorley played magnificently, with former Opera Australia Artistic Director Moffatt Oxenbould giving the audience an in depth running commentary of Richard's life and the repertoire that has made his contribution to the world of opera so special.



Three generations of artists came together

In the audience were a number of dignitaries including: The Governor of NSW Professor Marie Bashir, Former Prime Minister Mr Bob Hawke and his wife Blanche d'Alpuget, Adam and

Helen Bonynge, Mrs Margaret Whitlam, JSS Patrons Mr Alan Jones and Mr Malcolm Donnelly and his wife Dolores, sponsors Campari and Pamela Hoskins of Brangayne of Orange Winery, Cyrus Meher-Homji of Universal Music, Maria Vandamme of Melba Records, OA Artistic Director Lyndon Terracini, Ms Virginia Braden, Mrs Diana Heath, Mr Ian Cameron, Dr Andrew Byrne, JSS Founding President Karalynne Redknap, Miss Dianne Gillespie, along with some Australian operatic royalty in the form of: Stella Axarlis, Robert Gard, Jennifer Bermingham, Paul Ferris, Graeme Ewer, Anson Austin, Megan Evans and Renee Goosens, just to name a few. The evening was recorded by ABC Classic FM and will be broadcast on the radio on Maestro Richard Bonynge's 80th birthday, 29 September at 8.00pm.



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patron Malcolm Donnelly AM

I feel incredibly privileged to have been asked by the Joan Sutherland Society to be one of the Patrons. It is an honour to be associated with this worthwhile organisation, as I have long had an interest in nurturing young talent. It always gives me great pleasure in helping and seeing the development of these young singers, giving advice when sought, and guiding them in their presentation of arias, career moves etc. Lucinda-Mirikata Deacon, James Homann, James Roser, Helen Sherman, Russell Harcourt, David Corcoran, are just a few that I have followed over the years, I would like to thank our long serving members for all the support they have given, and particularly Doug Cremer, our President, who has worked so diligently to build up this circle of members. I know that the Joan Sutherland Society is in capable hands. Doug is supported by his Committee who give tirelessly and freely of their time, volunteering in whatever capacity required.

I would like to welcome all our newest members, and feel sure that, like many of us, they will enjoy their association with the Society and hear over the coming years, the wealth of young talent we are fortunate to have here in Australia. I look forward to seeing and meeting you at our future events, and some exciting times ahead.

Regards, Malcolm Donnelly



the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonynge vocal Scholarship for 2010

On 25 July, at St Paul's Church Burwood, eight singers battled it out for the title of Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonynge Vocal Scholarship winner for 2010. The finalists were chosen from 295 contestants who took part in 11 sections of the McDonald's Sydney Eisteddfod. To qualify for thescholarship contestants had to come first, second or third in at least one of the eleven sections. This resulted in a Semi-final of 20 singers and subsequent Final of eight, adjudicated by Maestro Richard Bonynge and soprano Ms Adele Johnston. The Finalists also benefitted from a private seminar given by Ms June Dally-Watkins prior to the event to help them with the finer details of performances, dress and deportment. This vears winner of the \$5000 first prize was New Zealand born baritone, Hadleigh Adams who will head to the U.K. later in the year. The second place, Rosina Raisbeck Encouragement Award went to West Australian soprano Naomi Johns with third place going to baritone, Alexander Sefton also from W.A. The other finalists were: Claire Candy, Marcus Bortolotti, Rochelle Dew, Simon Gilkes and Claudio Sgaramella. Congratulations to all our winners and finalist for presenting another superb final.



study **Grants**

Since 2002 the JSS has awarded a number of study grants for emerging young singers. These grants can be used for voice lessons, vocal coaching, language course and/or help toward course fees. So far we have awarded thirty-nine study grants with an additional four in recent months bringing the total to forty-three. Past recipients have included José Carbó, James Roser and Dominica Matthews, all of whom starred in the Richard Bonynge 80th Birthday Gala. James has also recently won the Mietta Award, was a finalist in the New York Study Award and is a finalist in the McDonald's Aria. Recently we have changed the Grant system which we feel gives all singers of Australia the chance to apply. The next closing date for entries is 30 September 2010. For an application form and a full list of recipients please check out our website and look under the Grants section.

http://www.joansutherlandsociety.com/our-society/grants



This year's recipients include: Bass-Baritone Abraham Singer, Mezzo Sopranos Helen Sherman and Anna Yun, and Counter tenor Russell Harcourt. Abraham Singer completed the Opera Studio in Cologne then spent two years performing in Nordhausen in Germany but was recently invited by internationally acclaimed tenor Dennis O'Neill to join his Cardiff International Academy of Voice which has now sadly closed due to funding constraints. However, Mr

O'Neill has now offered Abraham an intensive course of one on one lessons, believing strongly in Abraham's future and ability as a singer. Abraham has chosen to go back to studying, saying "he has been given a wonderful opportunity to develop his voice further." Abraham took part in the Elizabeth Connell Masterclass recently.

Helen Sherman wrote saying, "Since leaving Sydney to study in Manchester at the Royal Northern College of Music I have com-pleted both a Post Graduate Diploma of Opera and an International Artists Diploma, both at the RNCM. I performed the roles of Varvara in Katya Kabanova, The Old Lady in Candide, Helene in La Belle Helene, Cyrus in Handel's Belshazzar and Sesto in La Clemenza di Tito. Upcoming performances include a summer recital in Cambridge with Roger Vignoles and recitals for the Shef-field Music Society, as well as the Tenby and Litchfield festivals. I will perform the role of Suzuki in Madama Butterfly and cover the role of Clairon in Strauss' Capriccio, both for Grange Park Opera." Russell Harcourt has been studying at the Royal Academy, recently receiving a terrific review in OPERA for his role in Semele conducted by the late Sir Charles Mackerras. "The countertenor Russell Harcourt's Athamas was exceptional fine attack, varied tone, stunning decoration, accomplished breath control, and with a clipped acting style that fitted the role like a glove. Alas, however, the character disappears after Act 1."

And our letter of the year so far......

Anna Yun is currently doing a degree at the N.S.W. Conservatorium of Music and is part of Pacific Opera's Young Artists Programme. Anna wrote to say, "I would like to thank the JSS for more than a generous contribution towards my fees. I cannot express how grateful I am for your help..... I truly think that the world is a better place because of people like you."

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ElizabethConnellmasterclass

On Sunday 8 August six young singers took part in our first Masterclass with international soprano Elizabeth Connell. Arias from William Tell, The Maid of Orleans, The Magic Flute, Lohengrin, I Capuleti e I Montecchi, and Der Wildschütz, were tweaked, dissected and refined in front of a fascinated audience filled with teachers, students and opera enthusiasts. The class was accompanied by Tahu Matheson and featured, Abraham Singer, Brad Cooper, Rachel Bate, Sarah Ann Walker, Naomi Johns and Rosa Krel. The Masterclass is relatively new to Australian audiences although not to students in our Conservatoriums. In Europe and the U.S., Masterclasses are common place for the public with singers like Marilyn Horne holding them regularly as part of the Marilyn Horne Foundation. Dame Joan, Tom Krause, Luciano Pavarotti and Ileana Cotrubas have all held famous classes but perhaps the most famous series of classes were those held by soprano, Elizabeth Schwartzkopf in Edinburgh in 1980. The STC mounted the play Master Class based on another famous Diva, Maria Callas with Robin Nevin playing Callas and former JSS winner Toni Powell singing the role of the soprano student. Toni is now a sought after teacher herself.



ourNew Website www.joansutherlandsociety.com

The JSS new website has been launched for several months now and has proved to be an extremely important data base for anyone interested in Dame Joan Sutherland, Richard Bonynge, the Society, the artists of Australia and opera in general. George Stamiris of Digital Nexus has worked tirelessly with JSS Committee members to get the site up and running for all to enjoy. Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonynge have contributed never before seen photos, more of which we're told are still to come. The site includes a Welcome letter from the Bonynge's, generously thanking the Society and all its members for their support and hard work. We at the JSS are working to provide a website that will become a data base for all people interested in opera. Not only does it have a complete detailed listing of all our events but it will contain full biographies of all our artists and award win-ners, comprehensive information about the Bonynge's, a detailed "What's On" section, photos of all our events and much more. You can also follow us on Facebook.

Richard will conduct performances of Maria Stuarda...

we**Hear**that

Richard Bonynge will conduct performances of Maria Stuarda for La Scala in Athens and Don Pasquale at Holland Park, in London for 2011. Also in 2011, our own, soon to be resident Diva, Elizabeth Connell will sing the role of Lady Macbeth in Opera Australia's production of Verdi's Macbeth in their Melbourne Autumn Season.

the NewsIn Brief

JSS Scholarship Winners Emma Moore and Angela Brun are in the Finals of the McDonald's Aria and Opera and Arts Support Group Vocal Scholarship Final being held on Sunday 15 August and Friday 20 August respectively. Emma and Angela both participated in the Bonynge Gala. Masterclass participants Rachel Bate and Naomi Johns are both in the semi-finals of the 2010 Australian Singing Competition and Sarah Ann Walker along with James Roser are also in the McDonald's Aria final. Soprano, Simone Easthope has won the 2010 New York Study Award.

Tenor, Alexander Lewis, son of baritone Michael Lewis, will be making his debut in the San Francisco Merola Programme singing the role of Nemorino. He then moves to New York to take up a position in the Lindemann Young Artist Development Programme at The Met.

Legendary Australian Contralto Lauris Elms AM OBE was given the Lifetime Achievement Award as part of Victoria's Green Room Award ceremony.

JSS Scholarship winner Lucinda-Mirikata Deacon received an excellent mention in OPERA for her role at the Guildhall in their production of L'assedio de Calais. "Donizetti's serious operas are a tough call for college performers: of the principals, only Lucinda-Mirikata Deacon's Eleonora had voice really equal to the demands of bel canto." Lucinda is about to commence studies at the London Opera School.

Richard Bonynge added another award to his long list of awards this year. In January he received the National Dance Award from Dame Beryl Grey in London and will be conducting a Ballet Festival in Cuba in the first week in November this year. In between La Sonnambula seasons he presented a series of Masterclasses at the Accademia Solti Castiglione della Pescaia.

Ian Cameron, Bonynge expert, lawyer, lecturer and former Opera Australia board member is currently writing Richard Bonynge's biography. Following his highly successful talk on The Maestro given to Northside Opera Group recently, Ian has kindly agreed to give a talk to the JSS in 2011. JSS Grant recipient and baritone Laurence Miekel, who is currently studying at the Royal Academy of Music in London, recently performed in Rossini's Loccasione fa il Ladro, winning the Opera Rara Bel Canto Prize for his performances. His upcoming performances include Aeneas in Dido and Aeneas, the title role in Handel's Saul for the Spitalfields Festival, and then roles with British Youth Opera and the Edinburgh Festival. Laurence reports, "thankfully it's been a busy time, and I'm enjoying my progress and studies at the Academy. I also love being based in London where I've had opportunities to see world class singing and arts of all kinds. It's amazing to see the progress of other Australians over here - we couldn't do it without the support of groups such as the Joan Sutherland Society, especially in these expensive times! So again, many thanks for your support and I look forward to keeping in touch."

Opera Australia choristers, baritones, Adam Player and Jonathan Alley are also heading for the U.K. to study at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester in September. They will presenting a concert in Paddington to help raise money for their tuition on 12 August.

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Moments from Richard Bonynge's 80th Birthday Gala Concert











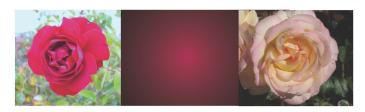




fromLastYear's scholarshipWinnerPhoebeHumphreys

Phoebe is currently in her second year at University of N.S.W. completing a Bachelor of Music degree. She intends to travel to Europe in November of this year to attend intensive vocal tuition in London and Rome. She's says, "the funding received from events sponsored by the Joan Sutherland Society has been pivotal in enabling me to undertake overseas tuition and professional development." Phoebe performed in Richard Bonynge's 80th Birthday Concert.

theRichardBonyngerose theJoanSutherlandrose



2011 sees the launch

of the MAESTRO RICHARD BONYNGE rose and a new rose for Dame Joan Sutherland. This will be the second rose named after Dame Joan, if you think you have the perfect name for this rose why not contact us with your suggestions.

Future **Events**

Join us on Sunday, 7 November at St Paul's Church, Burwood at 2.00pm to celebrate Dame Joan Sutherland's Birthday which by chance this year, happens to fall on the very day. Tickets are already selling for this special yearly concert. If you would like to join us for a delightful afternoon of song and our famous Afternoon Tea, please call Annemarie Kinnon on 9817 4919. The JSS Annual General Meeting will be held on August 29th at St Paul's Church Burwood.

membership

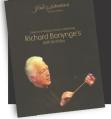
2010 has seen the expansion of The Joan Sutherland Society's Membership base. This expansion is vital in ensuring the Society's sustainability and support for future generations of artists and opera supporters. We are proud to announce that so far the Society's membership for 2010 has nearly trebled. The JSS would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new members and to thank them for their support as well thanking those members who have been with us for many years. More information can be found on the new website under Membership, including a new, downloadable Membership form for any family or friends you think would like to be involved in the Society's work. If you don't have a computer please just call us on (02) 9789 1910 and we will send you a form.

http://www.joansutherlandsociety.com/our-society/membership

sponsors

The JSS would like to thank all our sponsors for their continued support. If you would like to help the JSS either as a sponsor or as one of our valued Volunteers who help with our famous Afternoon Tea, please don't hesitate to contact us. The Joan Sutherland Society of Sydney P.O. Box 880, Leichhardt N.S.W. 2040 Tel: 61 2 9780 1910 Email: sutherlandsociety@iprimus.com.au





DON'T MISS OUT on purchasing your Richard Bonynge 80th Birthday Gala Concert Souvenir programme online or by calling the JSS on: 9817 4919