



ARIA

The newsletter of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation

Welcome to the December 2009 edition of 'Aria' - the newsletter of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation.

In this newsletter you will read about the 2009 Te Kanawa Solti Accademia, the results of the Laurie Coon Scholarship, the 2nd 'Curtain Up' Workshops and news from Claire Egan and Phillip Rhodes as they complete their studies in Cardiff. There is also a report from Dame Kiri and an opportunity to meet a new trustee and much more....

DAME KIRI SHARES HER THOUGHTS AND SPECIAL MOMENTS WITH YOUNG ARTISTS OF THE FUTURE



Take your time

In our world of classical music all this study takes time and I would always advise students to take their time with trying to hurry their career. When I have an opportunity to talk to potential sponsors I try to explain that their investment or donation is to keep the young artist studying and to keep them from taking a singing engagement of an opera that would do more harm than good. Whenever a singer is to sing for an audition and has a cold or end of a cold, you will find most audition panels would prefer to wait to hear a healthy singer.

A marvellous experience

Earlier this year I visited the Metropolitan Opera for a number of pre-arranged engagements. I had heard some of the Linderman young artists last year, and it was very pleasing to hear that most of those singers had made very good improvement.

While in NY I managed to sit in on a workshop given by Maestro James Levine. This 3 hour session was with all the singers that I had been working with, so it was very interesting to have Maestro Levine take them through their paces. I found it fascinating and could see even more how their voices had grown. This Master Class was in a theatre and I was only working with them in a small studio. The singers were accompanied by the young coaches, also in the young artist programme, and so this was a wonderful opportunity to work at this close and intense level with such a wonderful conductor who is also a great accompanist. Then one week later Maestro gave the young singers an even greater bonus – they were treated to the same venue but this time with the Maestro conducting the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in a 3-hour on stage session. It was an extraordinary experience. What also impressed me was the orchestra who were so attentive and so concentrated on Maestro Levine – there was hardly a word spoken, other than a musical question. I did feel that this Young Artists programme is taken just as seriously as the performances that appear on the stage at the Metropolitan Opera.

I did say to a colleague that this evening's Master Class was quite special and she reminded me that when we were studying way back then we were thrown in at the deep end, and told to sing (or maybe it was swim?). I do feel that this classical world today is far more challenging for our young people and a lot more is required of them, but in the case of the Met they are given some wonderful opportunities.

Visa dilemma

Finally I would like to mention something that has been creeping into our world of music. Earlier this year one of our students flew to London only to be held at Heathrow for 5 hours and then put on the return flight. It appears her paperwork was all in order. The sadness is that we are finding it more and more difficult to be able to study here in England. It breaks my heart that these wonderful young hopeful people cannot pursue their career in one of the most important musical centres of the world. If you have an EEC passport then all is well but a New Zealand



ROLEX

passport is not enough. Equally so it is also quite difficult to obtain a New Zealand passport because we have our restrictions for people wishing to come to our country as well.

Thank you for your continued support of the Foundation which makes it possible for us to help young singers and musicians to realise their dreams.

I wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas and good health in 2010.



YOUNG BARITONE AWARDED TOP SCHOLARSHIP



Well known New Zealand baritone Phillip Rhodes, was awarded the 2009 Laurie Coon Foundation Scholarship in Singing. The scholarship which carried a cash prize of \$10,000, is sponsored by the Laurie Coon Foundation and presented by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation.

Commenting on the result the scholarship review panel said it had been a very difficult decision. "There were two outstanding candidates for the scholarship and at least one other singer with a voice of great potential. In the end the 'X' factor kicked in with Phillip being the possessor of an outstanding and rare type of voice with ample range, power and lovely dark quality – potentially Verdi baritone plus a great deal of personal charisma and musicianship.

"In addition to a voice of very special beauty and size, which has developed considerably over the past two years, Phillip also brings a powerful and charismatic emotional and dramatic commitment to his performances".

Phillip Rhodes said he was "absolutely overjoyed and honoured to be the recipient of the 2009 Laurie Coon Scholarship. It will further create the opportunity to concentrate solely on my studies at the Cardiff Academy of Voice. I realise the exceptional talent of all the applicants and I am very humbled to be the recipient".

SOLTI TE KANAWA ACCADEMIA – 6TH EDITION A GREAT SUCCESS



This report was provided by Executive Director Candice Wood Highlights from the 6th Solti Te Kanawa Accademia included an unforgettable concert at the Pellicano hotel Port Ercole with a stunning full moon over the Tuscan archipelago as a backdrop, followed by our annual concert in Piazza Solti, Castiglione, where we were thrilled to have the problem of not having enough seats for all the spectators.

This year's summer programme included a roster of teachers that would be the envy of any Bel Canto school. In addition to Dame Kiri we were honoured to have Dennis O'Neill and Jose Carreras (*pictured here with Academy Director Jonathan Papp and Dame Kiri*) working with our

students and repetiteurs. Additionally we welcomed new teachers for the first time including repetiteur Terence Dennis, Heda of Classical Performance at the University of Otago, John Ramster, Head of Drama at the Royal Academy of Music London and Fabio Cerroni, Repetiteur at the Bavarian State Opera.

To read the full Solti Te Kanawa Accademia newsletter go to the foundation website www.kiritekanawa.org

'CURTAIN UP' WORKSHOPS WELL SUPPORTED



The 2nd 'Curtain Up' workshops organized recently by The Opera Factory Trust (Auckland) and supported by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation is a programme the Trust provides for singers aged between 18 and 36 years who are in advance vocal studies and planning an opera career or are already working in the opera industry. The series included three days of intensive, professionally guided workshops, coaching and mentoring and concluded with a master class by Dame Kiri. 15 participants were selected from the 27 applications.

NATIONAL AWARD RECOGNISES WORK WITH YOUNG SINGERS & MUSICIANS



Dame Kiri recently became the first Maori woman to receive the Aotearoa New Zealand Maori Business Leader of the Year award for her talent and business acumen over a more than 40-year distinguished international career.

Announcing the award, Associate Dean of Maori and Pacific Development (Auckland University) Dr Manuka Henare, said the award recognised Dame Kiri's commitment to the development and financial support of young New Zealand singers and musicians through the establishment of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation, as well as her mentoring of this talent to global success in an extremely competitive industry.

"It also recognised Dame Kiri's artistic leadership as a Maori performer who followed the late great Inia te Wiata in achieving world status at the highest possible levels in opera and classical music," Dr Henare said.

The award was presented at a special awards dinner and accepted in Dame Kiri's absence by Gillian Deane, a good friend and supporter of many fine New Zealand singers (seen here with Dr Henare).

CARDIFF UPDATE

Aria recently caught up with 2 recipients of Foundation grants



Claire Egan is a lyric soprano from Gisborne who recently received a further Foundation grant (in partnership with the William and Lois Manchester Trust) to complete her studies at the Cardiff International Academy of Voice. Claire told Aria that "the course itself is very intensive, with a majority of the learning experiences through one-on-one sessions with singers, conductors and coaches of international repute. People who I have worked with so far include Dame Kiri, Ileana Cotrubus, Della Jones, Richard Boynyge, Ann Murray, Robert Tear, Dame Josephine Barstow and many more. This rare opportunity to work with such people who have shaped the face of Opera, as we the next generation know it, is the most amazing apprenticeship any young singer could ask for, it really provides a firsthand insight into what it takes to succeed technically, practically and psychologically in the industry. My experiences to date and the feedback which I am receiving are very positive."



Phillip Rhodes, a well known Hawkes Bay baritone, is also in his final year at the Academy of Voice. He describes a recent trip to Italy "It was a tumultuous two months in Italy, full of hard work and lots of learning. The first stop was Barga with the Academy where I rehearsed the role of Geronimo in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*. After three weeks and two performances we were on the train to Casteleone Della Pescaia to attend the Solti Te Kanawa Accademia where we were put through our paces for three weeks (*4th from left at one of the Accademia sessions*).

The next stop for me was Pereta, a very small village not far from Casteleone Della Pescaia, to work intensively with Robin Stapleton for one week which led to a wonderful concert. I must say that this was a memorable week and while it was hard work it was also the only time I felt I got to see 'real' Italians and the way they live. These people toiled in the soil all day and still had the energy to come out and support what was a great concert. Oh, and they cheered like it was the best thing they had ever seen! Then it was back to Barga for a few days to repeat the opera.

I have learnt so much in the past few months and I have had a lot of fun doing it. I'm so grateful to the Foundation for their support and with one more term on the horizon I have started the audition process and will now audition with a great deal of confidence."

Post script 1: The Foundation was very encouraged by Phillip's performance when he sang as a guest on the 'Kiri Te Kanawa at the Tower of London' concert in September. The concert which was sold out and was an opportunity for Dame Kiri to introduce her 'future stars of opera'. The Times gave him a glowing review

'...the baritone Phillip Rhodes – a good looking Maori, like Te Kanawa herself – delivered Largo al factotum with such panache (albeit at a steady pace) that a lifetime of Figaros and Papagenos seems guaranteed. His was the meatiest and most developed voice.'



NEW FOUNDATION TRUSTEE APPOINTED



Paul Brewer, currently External Relations Director at The Edge, the performing arts and Conventions Centre in Auckland, recently accepted Dame Kiri's invitation to become a Foundation trustee.

Paul has wide experience in marketing, communications and strategic planning. He was Director Marketing and Communications at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa for 11 years where he established and directed all aspects associated with the Museum's positioning including brand development, advertising, stakeholder relationships, media and international tourism marketing and communications.

Paul also headed the successful \$8.5 million fundraising project for the memorial exhibition to Sir Peter Blake, in partnership with the New Zealand National Maritime Museum.

Paul has a passion for opera, with a particular love of the baroque repertoire. He also has a great interest in 18th, 19th and early 20th century Russian political and cultural history. He is actively involved in supporting the restoration of an historic palace just outside St Petersburg, promoting this to New Zealanders through public lectures and radio interviews. He is also a passionate and competitive skier.

Other trustees are:

Dame Kiri Te Kanawa (Chair)
Dame Catherine Tizard (Deputy Chair)
Stephen Dee (UK based)
Terence Dennis
Diana Fenwick
Ian Fraser
Paul Gleeson (Administrator)
Paul Harrop
Rodney Macann

WE MARK THE PASSING OF A TRUE ARTS SUPPORTER



The Foundation was sad to learn earlier this year that Laurie Coon, a longtime 'patron' of the arts had passed away in his 99th year.

Laurie was the driving force behind the Laurie Coon Foundation Scholarship in Singing which is promoted and administered by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation. In addition to the scholarship Laurie supported a large number of causes either directly or through his Foundation. These included supporting 20 children from poor South American countries through Childfund and World Vision- in addition to supporting them financially he wrote regularly to each child in Spanish. He loved art - being an accomplished painter himself- he donated many of his own pictures to North Shore Hospital (Auckland). He also provided awards to many local drama, arts and ballet organisations. Generally his aim was

to help deserving younger people with talent to achieve their dreams.

On learning of his death Dame Kiri said "Laurie Coon was a very generous person with whom I was pleased to work in establishing the singing scholarship. He was such an enthusiastic supporter of the arts – vital work that I'm glad will be continued through the Foundation established in his name"

The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation extends its sincere sympathy to Laurie's family and friends.

May he rest in peace.

LEAVE A LEGACY

What better way to reflect your love of music than by leaving a legacy – a bequest in your will for the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation. Leaving a bequest is a simple procedure that allows you to include the Foundation as a beneficiary of your will. Bequests are usually directed to the Foundation for use at the trustee's discretion but they can be directed towards a specific need such as a music scholarship.

If you'd like to discuss this matter further or would like sample language for your lawyer please contact the Foundation office..



WADE KERNOT COMPLETES A MEMORABLE YEAR



2009 was a good year for young New Zealand Bass Wade Kernot. Highlights included attendance at the Solti Te Kanawa Accademia in Tuscany, finalist in the 2009 Lexus Song Quest and semi-finalist in the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition.

Wade was very grateful for the support he received from the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation – ‘Thank you so much to Dame Kiri and the Foundation for its continued support and interest. Especially Dame Kiri for kindly answering my update “texts” and all my questions with great advice! Without the Foundation’s help especially during my preparation for the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World, I would not have attracted such a good agent and I may not have found the work I have obtained for the next 18 months and further into the future.’

Now he has more good news to share – he successfully auditioned for a great theater in St Gallens, Switzerland and has been offered a ‘rather nice’ contract which involves 30-40 performances a year and a ‘rather plump’ monthly wage. The roles are great as well - Basilio from Barber, Frank in Fledermaus, Bonze in Butterfly etc. The Foundation wishes him well for 2010 and beyond.

YOUR DONATIONS ARE IMPORTANT

Donations to the Foundation of any size are always welcome and very important for the continued aim of supporting talented singers and musicians. New Zealanders who make donations to the Foundation can now claim a 33% tax rebate, up to a maximum equal to their annual taxable income. By way of example – Gerry donates \$2400 and receives \$800 back; Anne donates \$15,000 and receives \$5,000 back.

The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation is a registered charitable trust which offers a range of opportunities to support its work. Donations may be sent by cheque or credit card – email or phone the Foundation for details.

**Navidad Feliz, Noël Heureux, Noël Heureux,
Natale Felice, Gelukkige Kerstmis, Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année
HAPPY CHRISTMAS !!**

No matter what the language - it means the same thing – the trustees of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation extend their very best wishes to all supporters of the Foundation and their families for a very happy Christmas and hope that 2010 brings continued prosperity and good health.



THE NEXT ISSUE OF ARIA WILL FEATURE MORE NEWS ABOUT THE FOUNDATION.

If you'd like us to email you information about the Foundation please contact us. However, if you do not wish to receive further editions of Aria please advise us by sending an email.



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It is believed that the contents of this newsletter are a full and fair representation. Interested parties should make their own enquiries to satisfy themselves on all aspects.

PRIVACY POLICY:

Under the Privacy Act 1993 any address or information you supply us with will be held in secure circumstances by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation and used to communicate with you about the Foundation events, its associations and activities.

Our mailing lists are available only to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation and are not available to any third parties or organisations.