



# ARIA

The newsletter of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation



Welcome to the 15th edition of 'Aria' - the newsletter of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation.

*Dame Kiri comments .....*



Now in the month of July and summer has definitely arrived.

I have recently had three days here at the house with some intense work with Phillip Rhodes along with my very good friend and colleague Robin Stapleton. Phillip's progress goes from strength to strength and now he is finding more subtle sounds in his technique. His voice is impressive and he works extremely hard on all areas. . he learns well and I always hope his dreams will be right around the corner.

A few months ago I visited Dennis O'Neill's school (Cardiff International Academy of Voice) and listened to most of his singers. Once again they are all working very hard and I did hear some very nice voices - one or two were a little tired as there had been some traveling and concerts in the previous days. Some of the singers were already planning to move to opera houses in Europe in the young singers programmes and this seems to be the normal progress as they go from one opera house to the other gaining experience and languages. Dennis' Academy is more of a finishing school and not one to come to unless your next move is to auditions or one of the international young people's programmes.

Sadly I was not able to attend the Lexus Song Quest last year. I heard such good reports as the competition seemed to have a lot of very positive input. I must say it was interesting to have three boys...men ...as winners and a counter tenor in there too. Our student Kawiti Waetford was not placed and I was very relieved as I encouraged him to enter mainly for the experience of the high stress of such a wonderful competition. There is nothing like being up on that stage and looking at that audience - looking back at you ..and for a split second you wonder if you should Sing or Run...this will give Kawiti a chance to be in the Lexus Song Quest another time ..he is still very young.

The Lexus Song Quest for 2014 looks to be another good year and another very special chief judge this time. The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation was very proud to be a significant supporter of the 2012 competition and to present the Master Classes with Dennis O'Neill that followed. He is a wonderful singing teacher and I've heard the attendance was one of the best ever...I would hope this will continue. . our young students need as much information as possible from the professionals who have done the hard yards. There is nothing like hearing how it all works from those who have performed at the very highest level.

I trust you will enjoy this newsletter and the updates on our various projects being organized. Finally, may I once again acknowledge the financial support we receive from so many people and the talent and dedication of our students. It is such a pleasure to be involved with these young people who work so hard to achieve their dreams.



## OPERA IN THE HANGER ?



The trustees reacted swiftly when John & Rose Dunn (pictured) recently offered their spectacular harbor-side Auckland home for a private recital to raise funds for the Foundation. A sub-committee swung into action and the result was a very special and personal evening with Dame Kiri (on her birthday) who performed favourite arias and songs with special guests Kawiti Waetford and the Opera Factory Ensemble – all accompanied by Terence Dennis. The recital, attended by 70 guests, was staged in the Dunn's helicopter hanger and followed by a light hearted conversation on stage with broadcaster Ian Fraser and a specially designed supper accompanied by a selection of Seresin's fine wines.

Dame Kiri loved the experience saying "I've sung in many unusual places – golf courses, vineyards, viaducts, the Outback of Australia and even barns – but never in a helicopter hanger !"

The evening was very successful raising significant funds and increased awareness for the Foundation and its' work.

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## KAWITI WAETFORD CONTINUES HIS MUSICAL JOURNEY



*Photo courtesy of Jeremy Toth*

The Foundation has been an integral part of young baritone Kawiti Waetford's musical education for the past 3+ years during which time it has provided significant financial support and more importantly had a close overview of his studies with his teachers. The Foundation also assumed a 'management' role advising him about various commercial aspects of his career. Dame Kiri has kept a keen watch on his progress and regularly mentored him as well as providing unique opportunities to perform as a guest in some of her high-profile NZ concerts.

The Foundation in partnership with The Wallace Arts Trust and a group of enthusiastic donors is committed to providing ongoing financial support for his not insignificant tuition fees and cost of living expenses when he takes up a position at the International Academy of Voice in Wales. Kawiti has already embarked on a series of regional fund-raising recitals. Dame Kiri will continue her

guidance and make regular visits to the Academy to mentor and check on his progress. Obviously we have high hopes for his future. Donations in support of Kawiti would be appreciated.

Recently we received this message from Kawiti .....

~ "Iti rearea, teitei kahikatea ka taea" ~

*(Though small, the rearea bird is able to fly from branch to branch of the tall kahikatea tree to reach its top)*

I am currently in my last semester of undergraduate study at Otago University, set to graduate in mid of August. Four years have passed so quickly, and when I look back I wonder, "How did it all go so fast?"

Since being taken under the wing of Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and her Foundation, at the end of my first year at Otago University, I have had opportunities to sing at events, visit places, and meet people whom, and that, I would never have imagined possible in any other situation.

Coupled with Dame Kiri and the support she and her Foundation provide, and the unwavering guidance of Foundation trustee and Head of Performance at Otago University, Professor Terence Dennis and eminent teacher of singing, Isabel Cunningham, this collective trio has gently cultivated my progress and development to date. Last year was one of the busiest years of my life, with studying and performing two major Mozart roles, that of Figaro in Opera Otago's production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, and Guglielmo in the Auckland Opera Studio's production of *Così fan tutte*. I also entered and progressed through the three rounds of the Lexus Song Quest, my first major aria competition, and placed as one of its six finalists. Throughout my undergraduate journey I continue to be supported by the Ngarimu VC & Maori Battalion Scholarship as a recipient of their undergraduate award, and acknowledge how their support has allowed me to face and navigate these challenges placed before me.

I am thrilled to have been accepted into the Masters in Advanced Vocal Studies programme at the Wales International Academy of Voice (WIAV), to learn under acclaimed Welsh tenor and teacher of bel canto, Dennis O'Neill, for the year 2013/14. I am set to fly to the UK in September to work with Dame Kiri for two weeks. This will be an opportunity for me to benefit from some intensive one-on-one sessions with her on technique and repertoire, but also an opportunity for her to gauge where I am at technically, and identify areas for me to improve on for the coming year in Cardiff.

I am truly humbled and grateful by the breadth and depth of guidance and support which I have received from Dame Kiri and her Foundation, and for the continual support from my teachers, friends and whanau, and assisting institutions.

Hei kon mai an I roto I aku mihi m haki,  
Kawiti Waetford

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## CONCERTS AT THE PALACE



Earlier this month Dame Kiri was invited to sing the National anthem to open a series of gala concerts in the grounds of Buckingham Palace to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Queen's coronation. Dame Kiri said she was "honoured and thrilled" to be part of the coronation festival which would be a wonderful celebration of the Queen's long reign.

Louise Alder (refer UK scholarship story) and Phillip Rhodes, representing the Foundation were invited to sing a duet. Read extracts from the message subsequently received from Phillip describing the occasion.....

*"I have just returned home from one of the most exciting jobs I have sung to date. All thanks go to Dame Kiri for putting me forward and to Gillian Newson for her hard work in making sure it worked out! The job of course was participating in the*

*Coronation Festival Gala concerts featuring a wide variety of artists performing a varied programme in the gardens of Buckingham Palace - in the presence of HM the Queen and members of the royal family.*

*"I was so excited to be on the programme and the wonderful memories will live with me forever. I was fortunate enough to sing the duet La ci darem la mano, with Louise Alder, who was such a wonderful colleague (and patient as she had to tie my bow tie every night!).*

*I felt very confident leading up to the concert as Dame Kiri had made herself available over two weekends to run through the piece for the show as well as fine tune my voice production and look into some new repertoire."*

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## ALEX WILSON COULD HAVE BEEN A ROCK STAR BUT CHOSE OPERA



Earlier this year young New Zealand tenor Alexander Wilson graduated from the University of Otago with a Bachelor of Sciences majoring in geology and a Bachelor of Music in classical performance voice under the direction of Judy Bellingham.

His singing talent has also recently earned him success in a variety of competitions throughout New Zealand including a well-deserved 3rd placing in the 2012 prestigious Lexus Song Quest which he backed up by winning the Otago Daily Times Aria competition.

Now, armed with the Patricia Pratt Scholarship and tuition grants from Creative New Zealand and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation Alex's plans for the next stage of his musical journey are almost complete. In September he moves to the International Academy of Voice in Cardiff, Wales to complete a Master's qualification in advanced vocal studies under the direction of Welsh tenor Dennis O'Neill. The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation wishes him every success and will watch his progress closely.

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## ICELAND'S BRIGHTEST HOPE RECEIVES FOUNDATION SUPPORT



Nominated as the 'Brightest Hope in Classical Music' at the 2013 Icelandic Music Awards, 24-year old Icelandic bass-baritone Andri Róbertsson came to Dame Kiri's attention five years ago. He has since attended master classes with her and sung as her guest at special concerts. Dame Kiri has continued to mentor him over the past three years including his attendance at the 2009 Solti Te Kanawa Accademia di bel canto.

Since 2010 he has been studying at the Royal Academy of Music in London and received many awards and competition prizes including the first prize in the Competition of the Icelandic Symphony Orchestra and the Icelandic Academy of Arts, The Major van Someren-Godfrey Prize for English Songs, The Joan Chissell Prize for Schumann Lieder, The Marjorie Thomas Art of Song Prize, the Schubert Lieder Prize and the audience prize in the Mozart Singing Competition in London.

Andri's operatic performances include Sarastro in The Magic Flute with Garsington Opera; Don Villotto in La vera costanza with Royal Academy Opera conducted by Trevor Pinnock; Herr Buff in Der Schauspieldirektor with Royal Academy Opera; Gremin in Eugene Onegin with Royal Academy Opera conducted by Jane Glover; Arthur in The Lighthouse with Royal Academy Opera conducted by Lionel Friend. Dame Kiri believes he has outstanding talent and great potential. When Andri was recently offered an opportunity to attend the National Opera Studio (beginning in September) the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK) agreed to support the move with a scholarship to cover his tuition fees. [www.andribjornrobertsson.co.uk/biography.html](http://www.andribjornrobertsson.co.uk/biography.html)

Photo courtesy of Clive Barda

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### PASSIONATE DEPUTY CHAIR STEPS DOWN



Dame Catherine Tizard one of the original Foundation trustees recently announced she wished to step aside as Deputy Chair. Dame Cath has worked tirelessly for the Foundation since its creation in 2003 and continues to be an energetic and passionate supporter of the organisation and its objectives. The trustees are very grateful that she has agreed to retain her position as a trustee. Diana Fenwick has agreed to accept the position of Deputy Chair.

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### WADE KERNOT SHARES AN INSPIRING WEEKEND



Recently young New Zealand bass Wade Kernot was invited to spend a weekend at Dame Kiri's home to refresh his technique and vocal progression. He wrote this inspiring message to the Foundation afterwards.....

*"After 3 successful seasons at the Theater St Gallen Festival, out of the fold and in the wild, I felt I needed to reconnect with Dame Kiri and the Foundation. To seek some advice for the next phase of my career, and also have a full service check up on my technique and vocal progression from a trusted source.*

*I find I am still barraged with advice from all angles, some helpful, some not so helpful and mostly confusing! I have found over the past few years that all of Dame Kiri's past advice has rung true. I feel I am very fortunate to have someone so experienced and so giving of their advice, knowledge and her home! I felt I was in a nurturing "Kiwij" environment where I was able to express my frustrations, make mistakes and ask questions without the normal professional/political games of a working Theater.*

*During three days we worked quite intensely master class style alternating with my good friend Phillip Rhodes and accompanied by the lovely Gary Mathewman. Most of my time with Dame Kiri was spent making adjustments and adding more brilliance to the sound. We worked on a vast range of arias and styles. Dame Kiri tried to hammer out some typical nasty Bass traits I have fallen into, it turns out I swoop much more than I had realised and for some reason I am unable to sing an accurate chromatic scale! So I was sent away with some new concepts, insight and plenty of homework! But most importantly confidence in the direction I'm heading.*

*As an added bonus to this quite pivotal weekend we were joined by Deborah Sanders. Her unique perspective of the current market was fantastic, she added a lot to our working sessions. During a short walk back from watering the veggie garden she gave me some fantastic insight to the next step for my career. Invaluable!*

*This weekend was the most extraordinary and special time. I don't know anywhere in the world where a young singer can go and be so spoiled by environment, advice, raw musical professional talent and the best lamb chops I've had in years!*

*With much excitement, I thank the Foundation for their support of these important weekends. Also for continuing to support me during my career, and helping me to stay on track.*

*Also, on a personal note I would like to thank Dame Kiri for her patience, reassurance and gentle guidance. I will always remember that special time as a weekend surrounded by friends and as turning point in my career." Wade Kernot*



**ROLEX**

## NEW TRUSTEES ADD TALENT & WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE TO UK FOUNDATION

Announcing the recent appointment of 2 new trustees for the UK Foundation Dame Kiri said she was delighted to have secured such a wealth of talent and experience to further augment the existing group of trustees.

**CHRIS WELCH** is a New Zealander currently living in the UK. He is the Finance Director at the Association of British Insurers, a Fellow of the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants and a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand.



In his spare time Chris is involved in local politics in Ramsgate and is on the board of a charity seeking to raise £5.5m to renovate a historic building there. Following the 2011 Christchurch earthquake he accepted the role as Treasurer of the CAF Charitable Trust for New Zealand (a Charitable Trust established to raise and manage UK donations for the Christchurch Earthquake Appeal).

Chris has accepted the role of Deputy Chair and Treasurer of the UK Foundation.

**DEBORAH SANDERS** is an expatriate New Zealander based in London managing artists in the field of classical music worldwide. Previous positions include working for a major London promoter, coordinating American artists' tours of Europe, Theatre Manager of the West End's Duke of York's Theatre and owner of Trillion Pictures, a video production company that produced weekly rock concerts.



During a spell in the US she was appointed founding Company Manager at Santa Fe Stages, an international theatre production company that produced and presented a variety of performances during the summer festival season, alongside Santa Fe Opera.

Back in the UK she joined IMG Artists where she spent five years building and maintaining the careers of her own list of artists before joining forces with Rayfield Allied late last year. Deborah's wide experience will be a real asset for the Foundation.

The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK) is an associate Foundation established in the United Kingdom in 2004 by Dame Kiri. This foundation is a separate organisation and has no legal connection to the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation based in New Zealand. They both share similar objectives. It is an approved charitable trust registered with the Charities Commission in the UK (Registered No 1092813). Both Foundations are chaired by Dame Kiri and work very closely on many Foundation projects.

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## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ROYAL COLLEGES

Late last year the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK) announced its intention to offer an annual scholarship to students attending the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music. The 3-year arrangement offered scholarships of £10,000 to be awarded to a singer at both colleges. In consultation with Dame Kiri both colleges would establish and manage the scholarship selection process and agree on the necessary criteria. The Foundation suggested the criteria might include demonstrated financial need and evidence of progress, achievement and potential as a singer.

The first winners of the Kiri Te Kanawa Scholarship are:-

### Royal College of Music



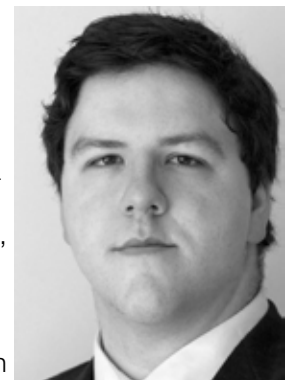
British soprano **Louise Alder** studied music at Edinburgh University and graduated with First Class Honours in 2010. Louise completed her Masters of Performance in Vocal Performance at the RCM and 2013 is her penultimate year, undertaking an Artist Diploma in Opera, at the RCM International Opera School.

In nominating Louise for the inaugural scholarship Michael Rosewell, Director of Opera at the RCM noted "Louise is among the most vocally gifted singers currently studying at the RCM. She combines some already well developed stage skills with acute musical awareness and as a result, is beginning to attract serious interest from a number of British opera companies. I believe she has many of the qualities necessary to succeed for a future career in opera"

### Royal Academy of Music

**Stuart Jackson** is a 26 year-old British tenor who is in his final year in the Royal Academy Opera Programme. He previously had two years of Vocal Studies and then two years of Opera School. He enjoyed many successes at RAM – winning the RAM Pavarotti Prize, Flora Neilsen Song Prize, Elena Gerhardt Lieder Prize, Oxford Lieder Scholarship and Chelsea Schubert Song Prize.

Stuart has extensive oratorio experience and has performed with the Academy Choir at Chapel Royal, St James' Palace, and as part of the acclaimed Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation



Bach Cantata Series. Stuart joined the Young Artists programme at Glyndebourne Festival opera this season, and appeared in the production of "Ariadne Aux Naxos".

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### PHILLIP RHODES – HARD WORK PAYING OFF



Phillip Rhodes (pictured with Rodney Macann and Robin Stapleton) recently sent updates on his progress .....

"I had a long period of work with Opera North (Leeds) covering 'Iago' (*Otello*) and singing 'Aeneas' (*Dido and Aeneas*) as well as performing an acting role in *La Vioix Humaine*. I worked long hard hours, the toughest being the *Otello* cover rehearsals consisting of two weeks of 10 hour days, running back and forth from show to show. This all culminated with a 'covers showing' of *Otello* (a run of the entire show to an audience) followed an hour later by a run of *Dido* and *La vioix* with a short dinner break only to return to rehearsal for *Dido*. I was happy with the work I achieved there, and that I went on to have

a successful season with *Dido*. I was so full of pride after the opening night of *Dido* to find that Dame Kiri had made the journey to give me a great (terrifying) surprise! I will hold on to that great memory for the rest of my days!

The hard work paid off. The company has shown a great interest in engaging me in the future beginning with the cover of *Balstrode* in their up-coming production of *Peter Grimes*. It is not a new lesson that hard work pays but I felt it a great reward that the company had offered more work for the future.

I have just had more good news that I have been engaged in the role of Marcello for Opera North's upcoming season of *La Boheme*. The show will be directed by Phyllida Lloyd who is better known for her work in cinema with 'Mama Mia' and 'The Iron Lady'. I won the role after having to participate in a series of workshops, which I would have found very difficult to afford to attend if it were not for the help of the Foundation.

I am very happy with how things have progressed over the last few months and I feel I am now right on the edge of very exciting times. I trust that Dame Kiri was right in telling me to be patient (and still is!) as I have now witnessed and met the result of those that do too much too soon and are now really struggling to sing, let alone work. I am so grateful for all you have done for me"

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### ROLEX RENEWS SUPPORT FOR THE FOUNDATION



The Foundation has enjoyed the support of Rolex for nearly 10 years. This sponsorship arrangement has enabled the Foundation to help many young singers and organize some very special fundraising occasions. The Foundation gratefully acknowledges this special relationship and was delighted when Rolex recently confirmed their intention to renew this sponsorship for another 3 years.

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### LEXUS SONG QUEST – A VIBRANT AND EXCITING EVENT



The Lexus Song Quest is New Zealand's most prestigious song contest. During its 56 year history it has provided a platform for many talented New Zealand singers including Dame Malvina Major, and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa to launch international opera careers.

The Foundation was a significant and enthusiastic supporter of the 2012 edition which attracted 56 entries from New Zealand and overseas. The young and extraordinarily talented lineup firmly established the Lexus Song Quest as the premier performance competition in New Zealand.

The Foundation also sponsored the video coverage of the finals (presenting each of the six finalists with their own edited copy) and the 4 Lexus Song Quest Masterclasses that chief judge, Welsh tenor Dennis O'Neill led in the 4 main centres. At the conclusion of the tour young baritone Kawiti Waetford was awarded the inaugural Kiri Te Kanawa Scholarship as the singer judged to have outstanding potential for an international singing career. The scholarship sponsored by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation carried a cash prize of \$15,000 for international study.

Announcing the result Dennis O'Neil commented " .....Making the decision about this award at the conclusion of the master-classes was no easy task but having considered firstly voice, then musicianship, stage charisma and the ability to connect strongly with an audience I was pleased to award the scholarship to Kawiti Waetford. I have very high hopes for this young man's development and emergence as one of New Zealand's great opera singers."

## YOUR SUPPORT IS IMPORTANT

Donations to the Foundation of any size are always welcome and very important for the continued aim of supporting our talented singers who are focused on creating international careers. Regular contributions are particularly important. The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK) are registered charitable trusts which offer a range of opportunities to support their work. Further information about how to make a donation is on the website or contact the Foundation for details. Donations can be sent to:

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Howick  
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New Zealand

Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation (UK)  
C/- 23B Prince of Wales Mansions  
Prince of Wales Drive  
London SW11 4BQ  
United Kingdom

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## JOANNA FOOTE TO ATTEND FRENCH MUSIC COURSE



In 2010 young New Zealand soprano Joanna Foote received a Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation grant which enabled her to accept the invitation to be one of 12 singers to attend the Solti Te Kanawa Accademia in Italy with Richard Bonyngue and Dame Kiri. More recently she was a finalist for the Royal Opera House Jette Parker Young Artist Program and toured with The Opera Group to the Paris Chatelet and Barcelona Liceu (where she made her debut in the lead role which she was covering). She is currently covering Musetta for Opera Project/Longborough.

Last month Joanna was advised that she had been invited to attend an intensive course in Toulouse on French music with Royal Opera House coaches Florence Daguerre de Hereaux, Caroline Dowdle and Jean-Paul Pruna. The invitation included a partial scholarship and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation were delighted to be able to support Joanna with a further grant to ensure her attendance at this important opportunity focus on French music – style and language. [www.joannafoote.com](http://www.joannafoote.com)

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## BEQUESTS – LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

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 also be directed towards a specific purpose such as a tuition scholarship for a talented singer identified by the trustees as meeting all the required criteria. Leaving a gift in your will is one way to make the type of gift that you may not be able to make during your lifetime.

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

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## ***The next issue of Aria will feature more news about the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation***

If you want 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.

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