



The newsletter of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation



Issue 8 - NEW ZEALAND SINGERS TAKING FLIGHT REPORT RELEASED

Welcome to the April 2008 edition of 'Aria' - the newsletter of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation.

In this newsletter you will read about the launch of the Jenny Wollerman research report, the Foundation's latest grant and a fund raising concert in the UK, There is also news about the seminars to promote the report findings and the chance to view a recent television interview Dame Kiri gave about the Foundation and its work and much more....

'NEW ZEALAND SINGERS TAKING FLIGHT' REPORT IDENTIFIES KEY AREAS FOR SUPPORT AND CHANGE

The much anticipated research project report initiated and funded by the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation was released recently.

The project was undertaken by highly respected New Zealand professional opera singer and teacher Jenny Wollerman who spent 3 months based in London visiting the major UK music colleges and institutions, observing classes and lessons and attending student and professional concerts and interviewing teachers.

The major findings of the research are contained in the 112 page report entitled 'New Zealand Singers Taking Flight' in which Jenny Wollerman identifies the need for enhanced vocal repertoire coaching, ongoing monitoring of overseas tuition and training standards, and the importance of building a performance profile as the key areas affecting young people seeking to further their singing careers.

"There is a need for ongoing monitoring of the standard of tuition and training available in the UK and for a service providing up to date and objective information and advice for young New Zealand singers who are considering travelling abroad to advance their studies," she said.

"While the general level of technical vocal training in New Zealand is comparable to that available in the UK, there is a shortage in New Zealand of coaching skills in vocal repertoire, languages and diction. Investment in this area will improve overall standards and ensure that



New Zealanders are better prepared when they head overseas.”

Jenny Wollerman points out that New Zealand students often have more performing experience than UK students but this counts for little in the UK. “It is vital to build a performing profile in the UK and to be seen performing there by potential employers.

“Some of the best singers struggle in the UK, even though most traditionally go there and are only now branching out into other countries. Although a number of Kiwis have done well at the Royal College of Music in the past few years its important to stress that not everyone can expect the same success”

“It follows that New Zealanders need to be ready on arrival in the UK to compete with their international rivals for those precious performing opportunities, and that the easiest way to gain this profile is through study in an institution or advanced level programme.”



Dame Kiri Te Kanawa welcomed the findings of the research project saying they gave a clear picture of the areas which needed enhancing for young New Zealand singers in the UK.

“This project was the Foundation’s biggest investment to date and we are delighted with the results. Jenny has given us an understanding of what is required to enhance support for our young singers. Her report will prove to be a vital blueprint for our future planning, and for directing further assistance from the Foundation”..

The report and a summary of the key conclusions and recommendations can be found on the Foundation’s website www.kiritekanawa.org.

KRISTEN DARRAGH RECEIVES MAJOR BOOST



Young Auckland-born mezzo soprano Kristen Darragh has received a major boost for her musical career being named as the fourth recipient of a Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation grant which will enable her to attend the 2008 Summer Academy of the Solti Accademia di Bel Canto in Italy .

Kristen, who is currently completing her final year of the Opera Course at the Royal Academy of Music studying with Joy Mammen and Audrey Hyland has been accepted on this prestigious course which will enable her to work intensely on Italian repertoire and language in Italy.

Kristen said “I am absolutely thrilled and honoured that the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation has agreed to help me attend the Summer Academy and am excited about this opportunity which comes at the perfect time in my development. My Italian language skills, interpretation of the Bel Canto repertoire and vocal technique will, without doubt, improve significantly in such an environment”.

Dame Kiri, as Chair of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation said that the Foundation admired Kristen’s focus and the sacrifices she had made to reach this stage of her career and agreed that her attendance at the Summer Academy would help her enormously.



STARS SHINE FOR AUTISM

Later this month (April 29) Dame Kiri will perform in recital accompanied by Jonathan Papp and 5 young singers to raise funds for the National Autistic Society in the UK and the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation. The 'Stars Shine for Autism Gala Evening' is being held at the Gladstone Library in London and will include a dinner and celebrity auction.

TAX RELIEF FOR DONATIONS HAVE CHANGED

The tax cap on donations has been lifted (for New Zealanders) so that from April 1, 2008 individuals who make donations to the Foundation can now claim a 33% tax rebate for their donations, up to a maximum equal to their annual taxable income.

Some examples – Jerry donates \$2400 and now receives \$800 back; Anne donates \$15,000 and now receives \$5,000 back.

The Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation is a registered charitable trust which offers a range of opportunities to support its work. The Foundation welcomes donations of any size and these may be sent by cheque (to the address shown at the end of this newsletter) or by credit card – email or phone the Foundation for details.

BACKSTAGE WITH JENNY WOLLERMAN



As a follow-up to the release of the 'Kiwi Singers Taking Flight' report the Foundation recently hosted a number of seminars around New Zealand in which Jenny Wollerman presented the findings from the report and answered questions about its content. The seminars were attended by singing teachers and students studying music at the university schools of music.

(l) Jenny Wollerman with Foundation's Deputy Chair, Dame Cath Tizard at the Auckland seminar

'Aria' caught up with Jenny when she was in Auckland and asked her about the project:

Q: How did you go about collecting all this valuable information ?

A: During the 3 months I spent in the UK (based in London) I visited each of the 5 major UK music colleges at least twice as well as spending time at the 3 advanced training programmes:

- Royal College of Music, London
- Royal Academy of Music, London
- Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London
- Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester
- Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow
- Cardiff International Academy of Voice, Cardiff
- National Opera Studio, London
- Jette Parker Young Artists Programme, Royal Opera, London

During this time I did 28 formal interviews for the project, which included 10 singing teachers and staff of the institutions, 12 young NZ singers (current or former students in the UK colleges), and 6 other professionals in the field (casting consultants, conductors etc).

I also had 22 lessons or short sessions with 12 different singing teachers and coaches, and observed a total of 24 hours of singing teaching and coaching within the institutions.



Q: This must have involved a great deal of travel and organization ?

A: I've estimated that I traveled over 4000km whilst I was in the UK – attending 7 master classes, 3 competitions, 12 student opera and concerts and 11 professional concerts. My Email address book expanded from 200 addresses to nearly 350 addresses, with 130 new contacts relating to the project, including staff, teachers, professionals and students I contacted.

Q: Did you enjoy the experience ?

A: For me the whole project was inspiring. I came back from the UK full of ideas, information, and fundamentally inspired by the contact with so many experts and highly skilled artists, and uplifted by the 'buzz' one catches in a city such as London, with its vibrant opera and classical music scene.

Undertaking this project was an amazing experience: it was challenging, inspiring, uplifting, exciting, heart-warming, encouraging, intriguing, demanding hard work that was a joy to do. Knowing I had the support of Dame Kiri and the Foundation trustees behind me was an enormous benefit in taking that journey, and Dame Kiri's personal interest and support during that time was particularly welcome and boosted my confidence and moral during the intensive work.

I was also surprised by the extent of people's generosity. Before leaving for the UK I had some concerns about how easy it was going to be to convince these expert professionals to take time out of their busy schedules for an interview with me. In the event, I found it was often more of a problem to work out how to fit all the appointments in, as the response from those I contacted for an interview or meeting was almost always positive and immediate.

Q: You must have wished all this information was available when you were a young student ?

A: A number of times during interviews I did find myself wishing I had had this information when I was a student and young singer. Problems and issues I encountered then were clarified and I could see the mistakes I had made myself. So I am so very glad to now be in a position to pass on this information and guidance to the next generation of young New Zealand singers and I look forward to following their success.

Q: What sort of feedback have you received since the report was published ?

A: I have been contacted by quite a number of young NZ singers with study and career questions or for advice on difficult choices to be made as they start on this path. It's been a pleasure to be able to make use of the knowledge gained in this way and to feel that it can really make a difference. I look forward to continuing this aspect of the work, and I am encouraging young singers and their teachers to email me with any questions they may have: if I don't know the answer, I can make use of the contacts I have in order to find it out, or direct them to others for more advice.

NELSON CONCERT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE FOUNDATION



Earlier this year Dame Kiri performed at the 10th anniversary Sealord Opera in the Park concert in Nelson (New Zealand) and was joined for the occasion by 3 of New Zealand's best known singers (Helen Medlyn, Jonathan Lemalu and Simon O'Neill) and a group of young singers from Opera Factory. The concert was recorded for television and will be broadcast on Maori Television in New Zealand on Sunday April 27 at 9pm. The broadcast includes an interview with Dame Kiri in which she talks about her work with the Foundation.

You can view the interview by clicking here >>>



We will keep in touch and keep you in touch about the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation and its activities....

Your next issue of Aria will feature more exciting news and views about the Foundation.

And we can keep others up to date too. . .

- If you would like us to mail material about the Foundation to you, please ask. Be sure to include your contact details in your email to the Foundation.
- To add members of your family or friends to our e-mail database please let us know
- However, if you do not wish to receive further editions of this newsletter, please let us know.



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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.

If you do not wish to receive further newsletters from the Foundation please advise us by sending an email to foundation@kiritekanawa.org

For more information please visit our website at www.kiritekanawa.org

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