

Judith Clark Memorial Fellowship Report

By Isabella Moore



My Project

Attendance at the Georg Solti Accademia Summer School in Castiglione della Pescaia, Tuscany, Italy in June/July 2016.

Purpose of the Judith Clark Memorial Fellowship Grant

I was awarded NZ\$3,436 by the Judith Clark Memorial Fellowship Committee to help support my attendance at the Georg Solti Accademia 2016 Programme. All of the funds, with thanks to the committee, were used solely to cover all of my transportation costs to and from Castiglione della Pescaia.

Project Purpose and activities

The Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto offers a unique training opportunity for young opera singers at the start of their careers. Created in 2004 in memory of the great Hungarian conductor Sir Georg Solti, the annual three-week summer course takes place in the Tuscan seaside town of Castiglione della Pescaia where the Solti family still have their summer home. Places are offered to twelve outstanding international students, who are invited to immerse themselves in the language and culture of Italy while devoting focused time to mastering the art of bel canto, and benefiting from master classes given by leading opera singers and vocal coaches. The Italian vocal tradition, if properly learnt, gives singers an invaluable and sustainable technique and full access to the great repertoire works. Not all students have specialist and idiomatic training in this tradition at colleges and conservatoires.

The programme started with a welcome on the evening of Saturday 25th June and culminated with two final concerts on the evening of Friday 15th July and the evening of Saturday 16th July. The daily format consisted of a 3 hour morning session and a 3 hour afternoon session where all participants received lectures, drama sessions, and

masterclasses with course instructors and guest artists. I have attached as part of this email a copy of the 2016 Georg Solti Accademia Course Handbook and also a copy of the 2016 Georg Solti Accademia List of Attendees.

Project Conclusion

Attending the Georg Solti Accademia summer programme for 2016 is an experience I will always treasure and will never forget. I am very grateful for the opportunity and my sincere gratitude goes out to the selection committee for the Judith Clark Memorial Fellowship for the part they played in enabling this through the financial support they offered by covering the costs associated with my travel to and from Italy.

This is a prestigious program that many young opera singers from around the world apply for and only twelve are accepted. The main focus of the Solti Accademia is to reinforce the art of bel canto. The singers get to participate in master classes given by leading international opera singers and vocal coaches. At my stage of vocal development this world-class tutelage is essential and greatly beneficial. Once one masters the art of bel canto and a healthy long-lasting vocal technique, a career is almost guaranteed.

I feel extremely grateful that I experienced this opportunity earlier this year. The experience has undoubtedly lifted the level of recognition I enjoy now and going forward in my field.

I am now enrolled in a one year Post-Graduate Diploma in Vocal Performance at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and I can say unreservedly that my time and learnings at the Georg Solti Accademia has helped me immensely by way of confidence that I am enjoying now including a better insight of my vocal technique.

SUMMER 2016

MASTERCLASSES

SOPRANOS

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ISABELLA MOORE | New Zealand |
| ANUSH HOVHANNISYAN | Armenia |
| CARLY OWEN | United Kingdom |
| ELIZABETH SUTPHEN | United States of America |
| JULIETH LOZANO | Columbia |

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

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|-----------------------------|----------------|
| ALEJANDRA GÓMEZ ORDAZ | Mexico |
| GRAZIELLA DEBATTISTA BRIFFA | Malta |
| EMMA STANNARD | United Kingdom |

TENORS

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|---------------------|--------------------------|
| ALEXANDER McKISSICK | United States of America |
| MIKHAIL SHEPELENKO | Russia |
| THOBELA NTSHANYANA | South Africa |

BARITONES

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| ALEX OTTERBURN | United Kingdom |
| YANG ZHANG | China |

BASS

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| STEFAN LAMATIC | Romania |
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**ISABELLA
MOORE**

New Zealand | 25

SOPRANO

Isabella Moore is a soprano from Auckland, New Zealand. In 2014 she completed a Master's degree in Advanced Vocal Studies with Distinction at the Wales International Academy of Voice, under the tutelage of Dennis O'Neill and Nuccia Focile. Prior to that, she gained a Bachelor of Music degree and a Postgraduate Diploma in Voice Performance from the New Zealand School of Music at Victoria University.

Isabella's opera work includes the lead role of Gulnara in Verdi's *Il corsaro*. She has taken part in masterclasses with artists such as Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Montserrat Caballé. Her most recent achievements include: winning the 2015 Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngé Bel Canto Award in Sydney; second place in the 2015 Sydney Eisteddfod McDonald's Operatic Aria; winning the 2015 Sydney Eisteddfod Joan Sutherland Memorial Senior Vocal Scholarship; winning the 2014 New Zealand Aria Competition in Rotorua (NZ); winning the 2014 IFAC Australian Singing Competition (The 'Mathy') in Sydney and winning the prestigious 2014 New Zealand Lexus Song Quest Competition in Auckland (NZ). Isabella was a finalist in the 2014 ROSL Music Competition in London where she received an International Competitor's Award.



**ANUSH
HOVHANNISYAN**

Armenia | 29

Soprano Anush Hovhannisyan was a member of Jette Parker Young Artists Programme in the 2013/15 seasons. The winner of *Concours Suisse Ernst Haefliger* 2014 international Swiss competition, she made her London debut as the Princess in *El gato con botas* (Puss in Boots) at the Linbury Theatre, followed by her Royal Opera main stage debut as Fasquita in *Carmen*. She also sang the Voice of a Falcon in ROH's award-winning production of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* under Semyon Bychkov, as well as the soprano parts in *Gloria* for the Royal Ballet, Verdi's *Requiem* for the ROH Education Department and Mendelssohn's *A midsummer night's dream* for the Marinsky Ballet. Other roles for ROH include: Lucilla *La scala di seta*, Girl *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, Kate Pinkerton *Madama Butterfly*. She has also covered the roles of Musetta *La Bohème*, Madame Lidoine *Dialogue des Carmélites*, Donna Elvira *Don Giovanni* and Mathilde *Guillaume Tell*. Recent highlights include Lady in Waiting *Macbeth* (ROH Japan Tour) and Donna Elvira (Teatro Verdi, Trieste).

Anush is a graduate of the Yerevan State Conservatory and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, where she performed Helena in *A midsummer night's dream* and Clara in *Betrothal in a monastery* (RCS/Scottish Opera Collaboration), and Frau Fluth in *Die lustigen Weiber* (RCS). Other appearances include: ROH Crush Room Recitals, live on *In Tune* for BBC Radio 3, Verdi's *Requiem* in Glasgow City Halls with the orchestra of Scottish Opera, and her Royal Festival Hall debut with London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Anush has participated in masterclasses with Sir Antonio Pappano, Donald Runnicles, Malcolm Martineau and Montserrat Caballé. She is a Samling Artist, and a recipient of Bayreuth Scholarship and the Ian Smith of Stornoway Award for Opera. Other awards include the Clonter Opera Prize, Margaret Dick Award, Ye Cronies Opera Award, and the 3rd Prize in Les Azuriales International Singing Competition.



CARLY OWEN
UK | 26

Welsh soprano Carly Owen is a first-year Masters student at the Royal College of Music, London, and a graduate of the Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. She is a Soirée d'Or Scholar and is currently studying under the tutelage of Janis Kelly and Christopher Middleton. Carly won First Prize and the Audience Prize at the 2015 London Welsh Young Singer of the Year Competition, with prizes donated by the Richard Carne Trust and Gwalia Male Voice Choir. She is a graduate of the National Opera Studio 2015 Opera Intensive Summer Course, where she participated in masterclasses with Mark Shanahan and Della Jones.

Carly has also performed in masterclasses with Dame Anne Evans and Sholto Kynoch. She performed the title role in Massenet's *Cendrillon* for RCM Opera Scenes. She was a chorus member in the RCMIOS's acclaimed production of *Die Fledermaus* directed by John Copley, and this summer term performed two new roles in contemporary opera scenes.



**ELIZABETH
SUTPHEN**
USA | 25

Soprano Elizabeth Sutphen recently earned her Master's degree from The Juilliard School, where she performed La Fée in *Cendrillon*, Tigrane in *Radamisto*, and covered Konstanze in the Met+Juilliard production *Concert of Comic Operas* under the baton of James Levine. Other roles include Genevieve in *Suor Angelica*, Frasquita in *Carmen* and Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance*. Elizabeth has received a Sullivan Career Development Award, A Novick Career Advancement Grant, Second Prize in The Gerda Lissner Competition, an Encouragement Award from The George London Foundation, as well as an Encouragement Award from the McCammon Competition.

Elizabeth covered Alice B. Toklas in *Twenty-Seven* with Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, where she also performed Bianca in *La Rondine*. She returns this season as a Richard Gaddes Festival Artist to sing the role of Najade in *Ariadne auf Naxos*. She was a Resident Artist at the International Meistersinger Akademie in Neumarkt, Germany, and will join the Studio of Oper Frankfurt from the 2016 season.



**JULIETH
LOZANO**
Columbia | 24

Julieth Lozano is currently pursuing a Masters in Vocal Performance at the Royal College of Music in London, where she studies with Dinah Harris. She is an Irene Hanson Scholar and is supported by Colombia's Ministry of Culture and the Josephine Baker Trust.

Awards include First Prize in the Emmy Destinn Awards Competition 2015 held in London, and Winner of young and professional categories in Colombia's National Singing Competition (2012 and 2014). In 2014 Julieth was selected as part of the Young Talents in the International Music Festival of Cartagena held by the Salvi Foundation. She completed her Bachelors degree at the Central University Foundation with Maestros Camila Toro and Alejandro Roca in Bogotá, Colombia.

Concert repertoire includes: Pergolesi *Stabat Mater*, Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *Misa Tempori belli*, Mozart *Requiem*, Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle* and Richard Einhorn *Voices of light*. Her operatic roles include: Tonia in *le musica e poi le parole*, Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Sofia in *Il Signor Bruschino*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, Catalina in *Black el payaso*, and the Columbian premiere of Thomas Pasatieri's *Lady Macbeth*.



**ALEJANDRA
GÓMEZ ORDAZ**
Mexico | 25

MEZZO-SOPRANOS

Originally from Nuevo Leon, Mexico, mezzo-soprano Alejandra Gómez Ordaz began her studies at the Mexican Opera Studio of SIVAM, where she was awarded the Plácido Domingo Scholarship for three consecutive years.

She was selected to sing at the Juilliard Training for young singers Program in Mexico City. She earned second place in the IVAI competition *The Voice Is Right* in Canada, made her debut as L'Enfant in *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* in Teatro Telmex, Mexico City, and more recently performed Giannetta in *L'Elisir d'amore* with the Orchestra of Guadalajara. This winter she was selected to be part of the American Masters Academy of Opera in Russia with full scholarship.



**GRAZIELLA
DEBATTISTA
BRIFFA**
Malta | 30

Maltese mezzo-soprano Graziella Debattista Briffa graduated with a BA (Hons) in Music Performance from the University of Malta majoring in voice. She subsequently studied at the Conservatory Vincenzo Bellini in Palermo. She has participated in masterclasses with Laura Sarti and Ian Partridge, and took part in the Kodaly summer opera course. Graziella is currently reading for a Masters in Vocal Performance at the Royal Academy of Music in London under the tuition of Ryland Davies and Jonathan Papp. She is financially supported by the Malta Arts Scholarship.

Graziella was mentored by some of the finest voice tutors in Malta, including Professor Dion Buhagiar, Maestro Michael Laus, La Scala Soprano Ms Miriam Gauci and internationally renowned soprano and tutor Ms Juliette Bisazza. Praised by the Maltese Sunday Times for her beautiful, rich, mellow timbre and clear diction, she has been recognised as a true dramatic Verdian mezzo. She has sung in numerous events commissioned by both the Maltese president, and the Russian, German and British Ambassadors in Malta, and has performed as part of the Agrigento Christmas celebrations, as well as concerts in Hampstead and the Wimbledon International Music Festival 2015.



**EMMA
STANNARD**
UK | 26

Mezzo-soprano Emma Stannard trained at the RNCM, gaining a first class BMus (Hons) and a MMus with Distinction under the tutelage of Peter Alexander Wilson. She is now on the Opera Course at the Royal Academy of Music, where she studies with Catherine Wyn-Rogers and recently performed the roles of Hanna in *May Night* (Rimsky Korsakov) and Poppea in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. In 2015 Emma appeared with the Glyndebourne Festival Opera Chorus in performances of Bizet's *Carmen* and Donizetti's *Poliuto*. In 2014 she also performed in *Eugene Onegin*, *Don Giovanni* and *La Traviata* for GFO – joining their touring company during the winter months.

This Easter, Emma performed the role of Selene in *Berenice* for the London Handel Festival. Whilst at the RNCM, Emma won the Elizabeth Harwood Memorial Award and the Onken Song Competition. In March, Emma was awarded the Audrey Strange Award at the Royal Overseas League competition. Her studies at the RAM are generously supported by the Howard de Walden Estate and the Maria Callas Scholarship.



**ALEXANDER
McKISSICK**
USA | 24

TENORS

Alexander McKissick, tenor, is currently pursuing his Master's degree under the tutelage of Marlena Malas at the Juilliard School of Music, where he is a Toulmin Scholarship recipient. Recently, Alexander performed the roles of the Fourth Jew in *Salome* with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Monostatos in *Die Zauberflöte*, Le Journaliste in *Les marmelles de Tirésias*, and Ein Soldat in *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* at the Juilliard School.

He also spent the past summer as a soloist in the New York Festival of Song's Orient Point Residency in a concert of Latin American song and at the Aspen Music Festival where he performed the role of Benvolio and covered the role of Roméo in *Roméo et Juliette*.



**MIKHAIL
SHEPELENKO**
Russia | 27

Siberian tenor Mikhail Shepeleko completed his undergraduate studies at the Mousorgsky Conservatory in Ekaterinburg, Russia, where he sang lead roles in *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *Falstaff*, *Katerina Ismailova*, and *Igor* by Prokofiev. During these conservatory years, Mikhail also performed a number of recitals of Russian classical songs, Italian Neapolitan songs, *Die Herberge* by Robert Schumann, and the role of Mozart in Rimsky's chamber opera *Mozart and Salieri*. Mikhail received a scholarship from the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation to pursue his musical studies and was granted the honour of touring alongside the orchestra of the Central Music School of Moscow.

In 2012, Mikhail was admitted into the renowned soprano Mirella Freni's Bel Canto Academy in Modena, Italy. Since graduation, he has gone on to perform in the U.S., U.K, Ukraine, Latvia and Russia. He currently studies on the Opera Program at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he is a recipient of a full scholarship from The Future of Russia Foundation. He studies with Glenville Hargreaves and Gareth Hancock, and has participated in a masterclass with Joan Rodgers. For Royal Academy Opera he recently performed the main role of Levko, in Rimsky Korsakov's *May Night*, and Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus* for RAM opera scenes.



**THOBELA
NTSHANYANA**
South Africa | 26

Thobela Ntshanyana is studying for a Master's in Vocal Performance at the Royal College of Music in London. In 2015 he appeared as Alfredo in *La Traviata* on the stage of the Cape Town Opera – the town where he grew up.

Further operatic experience includes: Mr Owen in *Postcard of Morocco*, Le Chavalier in *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, Parpignol in *La Bohème*, an officer in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* and Zefirino in *Il viaggio a Reims*. Concert solo work includes: Mendelssohn *Elijah*, Dvorak *Stabat Mater*, Haydn *Creation*, and Mozart *Coronation mass*, *Solo Organ Mass* and *Spatzenmesse*. Thobela was awarded the 1st Prize in the Clonter Opera Competition (2016). In 2015 he won 1st prize in the Lord and Lady Lurgan Opera Bursary and in 2014 1st prize in the Schock Vocal Competition. Thobela is a HF Music Scholar at the Royal College of Music, where he is supported by a Jessie Sumner Award. He studies under Timothy Evans-Jones. Since competing in the Neue Stimmen International Competition in 2015, Thobela has been in demand from German opera studios. When not singing opera or oratorio, he has a keen interest in Neapolitan songs, zarzuelas, Lieder and French art songs.



ALEX
OTTERBURN
UK | 27

BARITONES

A 2014 winner of the International Opera Awards bursary, Alex read Economics at The University of Manchester and went on to complete his Masters at the Royal Academy of Music (Distinction, Dip RAM). In 2015 Alex made his international debuts at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw singing Curio in *Giulio Cesare*, and at the National Concert Hall, Dublin singing Schaunard in *La bohème* with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. Other operatic experience includes the title roles of *Don Giovanni* in London and *Yevgeniy Onegin* for Dartington International Festival under Russian specialist Sian Edwards. March 2016 saw the release of Alex's debut CD, the premiere recording of the cycle *Songs of Immortality*. The album features the compositions of Susanna Self, including her art songs and piano trios, performed by Alex and acclaimed tenor James Gilchrist, accompanied by Susanna Stranders. This May he sang Malatesta *Don Pasquale* with Opera Holloway, touring in Surrey and the Cotswolds, as well as Mercurio & Soldato *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with RAM Opera. His credits include work with Grange Park Opera, Opera Ireland, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival and lecture recitals with Opera Prelude at the Cadogan Hall, London. Alex supported by the Sickie Foundation, and Josephine Baker & Lucille Graham Trusts.



YANG ZHANG
China | 29

Chinese baritone Yang Zhang is a graduate of the Conservatorio di Musica Arrigo Boito in Parma where he studied under world-renowned singers such as Mirella Freni, Alessandro Corbelli, Luciana Rizzi and the pianist Giuliana Panza. He is currently a resident singer at the China National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA).

His main operatic roles for the NCPA have included Roucher in *Andrea Chenier*, Morales in *Carmen*, Piedro in *Simon Boccanegra*, Vaskov in Molchanov's *The Dawns Here are Quiet*, Hu Yi in Weidong's *Fang Zhimin* and Il Conte in *Le nozze di Figaro*. Notable competition successes include first prize at the Anita Cerquetti International Singing Competition, and at the CUBEC singing masterclass.

BASS



STEFAN
LAMATIC
Romania | 21

Stefan Lamatic, bass, was born in Bucharest, Romania in 1995. He started his musical education at the Dinu Lipatti National Art College in Bucharest, where he studied piano, and is currently a third-year vocal student at the city's prestigious Music University, under Professor Ionel Voineag. He won the first prize of the Ionel Perlea Lieder Competition for two consecutive years, and was acclaimed by some of Romania's best singing teachers. He has taken part in opera productions presented on the stage of the Music University, notably Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* and *Lisistrata*, a Romanian operetta by Gherase Dendrino. Since 2015 he has been a full-time member of the chorus of the George Enescu Philharmonic Orchestra in Bucharest, performing weekly on the stage of the Romanian Athenaeum.

Stefan Lamatic made his Bucharest National Opera House debut in the Mihanea Lamatic Anniversary Gala in April 2015, performing "La ci darem la mano" from *Don Giovanni* alongside the world-renowned soprano Angela Gheorghiu, and Fiesco's aria "A te l'estremo addio" from *Simon Boccanegra*. He is an active recitalist, both in Bucharest and across Romania, with a wide-ranging repertoire that includes lieder, opera arias and vocal symphonic pieces.