

The Friends

NEWSLETTER

of the State Opera of South Australia Inc

Patron: His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC
Governor of South Australia

February 2018

Welcome from the President

... to an exciting year ahead

Welcome to a new era at State Opera South Australia with the announcement of the new leadership team with the appointment of Ms Yarmila Alfonzetti as the new Executive Director and Mr Stuart Maunder AM the new Artistic Director. Both come with years of experience in Arts Companies and on behalf of the Friends I wish them both a very warm welcome.

Of great importance to the future of State Opera and The Friends is the recently established State Opera SA Emerging & Associate Artists program. Details on the singers participating in the program this year are on page 3. We look forward to working with these talented singers through our events this year and seeing them in Opera Studio productions.

New things are also happening with The Friends as we move to the booking system Trybooking for some of our events. Watch for this option on up and coming event information.

This month we are also introducing an electronic newsletter to our members who have opted to receive information by email. We will continue to send a print copy of our Newsletter to those members preferring this option.

This year we are proud to be the production sponsors of **The Pearl Fishers**, by Georges Bizet to be performed at The Adelaide Festival Theatre on 12, 15, 17 and 19 May at 7.30pm. It is wonderful to see State Opera SA Young Artist Program alumni Desiree Frahn, Grant Doyle and Pelham Andrews in the leading roles.

I look forward to seeing you at our events this year.

Robina Weir

THE FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER IS GOING ELECTRONIC

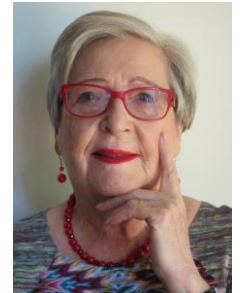
All members who have given us an email address will receive their newsletter by email from February onwards.

For the February edition only, we will send an email and print edition to those members to help with the change.

Please watch for the newsletter in your email.

We will continue to send a print edition to members who did not nominate to receive information by email.

If you have not given us an email address but wish to do so, please ring the Secretary on 0439 981 517 or send a message to friendssaopera@gmail.com



Mark Sandon with the Emerging Artists

Key Diary Dates 2018

- March** 2nd @ 7.30pm, 4th @ 5pm, 6th @ 6pm – **Hamlet**, Adelaide Festival Theatre
- April** 8th @ 2.30pm – The Friends of State Opera **AGM**, Opera Studio
- 24th @ 7pm – The Friends Opera Voices Introduction to **The Pearl Fishers**, Opera Studio
- May** 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th @ 7.30pm – **The Pearl Fishers**, Adelaide Festival Theatre

Booking for Friends' events: Tickets are not issued – attendance list at the door.

Voices of Summer From hills to vines, singing the landscapes

From the Adelaide Hills to the vineyards of McLaren Vale, 2018 opened with a summer of glorious singing and music making that enabled audiences to enjoy the gift and sounds of music amongst some of Adelaide's most beautiful landscapes.

A unique opportunity to experience Rodgers & Hammerstein's wonderful *Oklahoma*, as you have never done before, was provided by Emma Knights Productions, at Four Oaks Farm, Littlehampton, at the beginning of January.

Literally set on a farm, with cows lowing and with the opening lines sung by Curly riding in on a horse, this magical production featured an extraordinary cast of young professionals that could have easily graced the London West End stage. Both Charlie Smith as Curly and Rebecca Raymond as Laurey were outstanding as was State Opera's well known and loved Andrew Turner as Ali Hakim.



The energy of the whole cast and band, the beauty and magic of the music, and the setting made this an unforgettable experience and one not to be missed in the future. As a dear friend and colleague observed 'Once you have seen *Oklahoma* on a farm you'll never want to see it in a theatre again!'

Renowned for its dedication to the arts, **Coriole** held the first **Opera in the Vines** on 13th January. Mark Lloyd, well known Coriole owner and arts lover, welcomed the audience to a program instigated and organised by State Opera Soloist, mezzo-soprano Catriona Barr. In the beautiful setting of Coriole's courtyard, on an unexpectedly chilly evening, the audience nevertheless enjoyed a wonderful concert from singers Desiree Frahn (soprano), Joshua Rowe (baritone) and Catriona Barr (mezzo-soprano), accompanied by Michael Ierace (keyboard) and Ashleigh Geiger (cello).



Catriona Barr,
Coriole Opera in the Vines

The first half consisted of arias by Monteverdi, Mozart and Handel while the second, following a picnic break, featured a broader range. From Offenbach's beautiful *Barcarolle* and Puccini's *O Mio babbino caro* sung by Desiree, Gremin's aria from *Eugene Onegin* by Tchaikovsky sung by Joshua, and the *Habanera* from *Carmen* sung by Catriona, the program moved on to the lighter, lyrical music of Rodgers & Hammerstein, Arlen & Harburg (*Somewhere over the Rainbow*), a spicy *'Tennis Duet'* from *City of Angels* by Coleman & Gelbart from Catriona and Joshua, to a finale of Gershwin's *Summertime* arranged beautifully as a trio.

Congratulations and thanks to all involved for this original and sparkling night and it is hoped there will be another 'vintage' of **Opera in the Vines** next year!

'Let us make the most brilliant music' was the title of a unique and innovative recital created by Various People Inc and presented in the Great Hall at Carrick Hill as part of this year's French Festival on 14th January.

Well known for their creative and innovative work (their most recent production was *Orpheus Underground*, a retelling of the Orpheus myth in the tunnels beneath the old Treasury Building in central Adelaide), Various People Artistic Director, Cheryl Pickering wove together the music from a succession of legendary composers appointed to Le Roi Francois. The brilliance of Louis XIV court was enhanced by composers, from François Couperin, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, and Jean-Phillipe Rameau to Louis-Claude Daquin, Jean-François Dandrieu and André Campra, to name a few, all highly influential in the development of the grand French baroque style. The program's vocal works, sung superbly by the beautifully gowned sopranos Kate Louise Macfarlane and Bethany Hill were interspersed with pieces from the French Harpsichord school, played by renowned harpsichordist, Anne Whelan. As well as singing the highly challenging arias, both Kate and Bethany held the audience spell bound with their fascinating and delightful recounting of a 'day in the life' of the Sun King.



Kate Macfarlane & Bethany Hill,
with Anne Whelan on harpsichord

From the regal setting of the Great Hall in Carrick Hill, to the innovative and original program with the singing and playing of these talented artists, they did indeed **'make the most brilliant music'**.

Pauline Brooks OAM



New Executive Team to lead State Opera

Congratulations to Executive Director **Ms Yarmila Alfonzetti** and Artistic Director **Stuart Maunder AM** who have just been announced to lead State Opera SA into a new era. Yarmila will join the company on 1 March and Stuart on 1 July.



Yarmila has a long history in the Arts, as CEO of the Sydney Youth Orchestras and Head of Classical Music at the Sydney Opera House. Yarmila said, *'I am positively overwhelmed with excitement by this wonderful opportunity to join State Opera SA; a company whose work has a proud history and one which arts aficionados regularly reference in discussions about opera, invention and achievement in the performing arts. This company has a great legacy upon which we can build an exciting future'*.



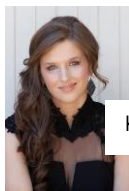
Stuart has been directing operas and musicals for the last thirty years including here at State Opera SA, Opera Australia and New Zealand Opera. His significant achievements in the field of opera were recognised in 2012 when he was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) Stuart commented, *'This is a great challenge for me – joining a company embarking on a new chapter, whose boldness in programming I have long admired and in a city I have always loved. I look forward immensely to working with the SOSA team to scale new artistic heights and develop audiences across the state. Opera in Australia needs a vibrant, forward thinking company to celebrate the unique possibilities on offer, and SOSA is just that company'*.

The Friends of State Opera look forward to working with them to support and promote State Opera SA. We hope that you will meet them at FOSO events in the future.

2018 State Opera Emerging Artists and Associate Artists

The Friends congratulate the following singers on their appointments to State Opera SA's 2018 EA & AA program:

Emerging Artists



Karina Bligh, soprano



Alex Roose, baritone



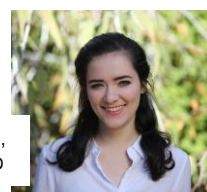
Katrina Mackenzie, soprano



Bethany Hill, soprano



Victoria Coxhill, soprano



Charlotte Kelso, mezzo-soprano

Associate Artists

Naomi Hede soprano

Norbert Hohl tenor

Joshua Rowe baritone

Samantha Rubenhold soprano

Beau Sandford tenor

"Emerging Artists will receive intensive training during the year, including vocal coaching, language coaching, stagecraft and audition preparation. They will also participate in masterclasses and training with visiting teachers.

The Associates to the program are a group of slightly more mature singers who will be offered the opportunity, where appropriate, to join group training sessions with the Emerging Artists (thus widening the reach of these development sessions), and who will be offered performance opportunities alongside the Emerging Artists should the repertoire permit" **Cheryl Pickering**



Out and About with State Opera Artists

Beau Sandford

Beau applied for a grant from The Friends to receive intensive training from Liane Keegan in Melbourne last year. Taken from his report, Beau said "...we began working and can I say that over the next few weeks, singing has never felt like so much work. It was incredible. I was using my body in a way I hadn't before and after each session came out exhausted. I'll be doing my best to implement as much of what I learned as possible so that I can be on my way to developing a proper formed and consistent technique". After this training Beau delighted us as Alfredo in *Die Fledermaus*.

Karina Bligh (nee Jay)

Karina has been accepted into the International Lyric Academy in Vincenza, Italy, in July where she will be performing Pamina in *The Magic Flute* in a fully staged production with orchestra. She will also receive regular lessons and coaching, masterclasses and language training. The Friends' grant will part pay her tuition and accommodation. We wish Karina well in this great opportunity to further her career. We look forward to hearing about her experience on her return.

Nicholas Braithwaite - Autobiography

Shameless self-promotion



I have had the temerity to write an autobiography titled **So what does a conductor do?** Maybe one or two of you will find it of interest. If so it can be ordered at the address below. All things being equal (i.e. postage cost), and if you are feeling generous, I get the best royalties (still not wonderful!) from the UK site. You can order it from the UK at www.amazon.co.uk or the U.S.A at www.amazon.com, or by calling State Opera SA on 8226 4790.

It's a book about my professional life of course, but also about the people I've met and the places I have been in what is now quite a long life. Some of it I, at least, found quite interesting.

You may care to visit my website: nicholasbraithwaite.com.au

Nicholas Braithwaite

Walk of Fame Artists

Congratulations to the following artists recently named in the Festival Centre's Walk of Fame.

Thomas Edmonds
Brian Gilbertson

Gale Edwards
Elizabeth Campbell

Marilyn Richardson
Nicholas Braithwaite

Douglas McNicol
Greta Bradman



Welcome New Members

Elizabeth French
Janet Muecke
Richard Bloomfield
Nicholas Charles
David Kromek

Elizabeth Healey
Judie Cox
Silvija Footner
Ron Seidel



For any enquiries or further information on **The Friends** please contact **0439 981 517**

Layout of **The Friends' Newsletter** by Karen Peterson

The Friends Committee gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the **staff of State Opera SA**