



PROJECT REPORT 2008



For the Accademia, 2008 has been a most remarkable year, commencing with a much acclaimed London Wigmore Hall concert, followed in July by a truly inspirational series of master classes by Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and Frederica von Stade. However the most exciting development has been the joining of two unique professional forces of Lady Solti and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa. Dame Kiri accepted to become an integral part of the Accademia, which will now be known as the Accademia Solti Te Kanawa. This event will bring together a dynamism to meet the growing demands of this exciting project.

As part of her commitment to the Accademia, Dame Kiri has agreed to teach on an annual basis, and to perform in concerts with the alumni of the Accademia. She will continue to be an active part of the fundraising activities of the Accademia in our attempt to create a project with long-term sustainability. The first of these concerts where she will perform alongside the alumni of the Accademia will be at the Italian Embassy in March 2009, following this in Tuscany in July, and finally in a gala performance at London's Haymarket theatre in November 2009.

I think that we can safely say that the Accademia has gone from strength to strength. This year the overall standard of the participants was especially high. With some memorable performances in the final recitals.

As a result of the successes of the Accademia, the Comune of Castiglione has made a commitment that the Accademia will have the use of Palazzo Centurione for its rehearsing purposes. Palazzo Centurione situated in the old town of Castiglione is currently undergoing major restructuring works which should be completed by summer 2010, allowing us to already use the building for rehearsals in the summer of that year. It is important that after so many years the Accademia will finally have a building that recognizes the importance of the work that it is doing in the preservation of the Bel Canto tradition in Italy and worldwide.



Te Kanawa





The best way that the Accademia can shed light on the benefits it offers those that attend are the testimonies of its students. These are just a few from those that have attended the 2008 edition:

Amy Radford, Australia



I auditioned for the Solti Accademia because I felt that the opportunity to study the bel canto repertoire in Italy, immersed in the culture and the language, as well as working with such masters of their craft as Kiri Te Kanawa and Frederica von Stade, was invaluable to my development as a singer. I hoped to refine my Italian language skills and learn from the intensive coaching schedules and the expertise of all the teachers. I've found the course to be everything I had imagined and more. In this short period of time I have developed immensely; I have uncovered technical difficulties that have previously plagued me, and developed my Italian language skills immensely. I'm extremely grateful for the opportunity to be here.

Nathan Herfindahl, United States of America

I feel that my skills in singing Italian have dramatically improved. I have brought my language skills from B house quality to A house in a short period of time. I feel that my deeper understanding of the language now allows me to be more expressive with my Italian music and create a stronger more convincing character. I brought some repertoire up to a level where I feel it will be an exceptional audition piece that well represents my abilities and potential. I haven't, as of yet, been confident placing the *Don Carlo* on my list and now feel as though it might become my strongest piece.



Adriana Festeu, Romania



Now that everything is almost finished, I can say that I achieved everything I hoped for and more. Working with Kiri and Flicka made me understand so much better what committing to such a profession means. This course made me become more mature as a singer and also as a person.

Narine Ojakhyan, Armenia

Although I already had high hopes upon arrival, I could not have imagined quite how much it is possible to learn in a mere three weeks! From the very beginning of the course, working with such legends as Kiri Te Kanawa and Federica von Stade, I discovered so many new values in singing. Each time Dame Kiri would show us how to sing phrases beautifully, I caught myself holding my breath with excitement. I had tears in my eyes. And Federica, with the warmth of her personality, would always draw the most intense emotions from my voice. I feel lucky to have had this opportunity to learn from such experienced musicians.



Each new day brought fresh inspiration. We were surrounded not only by great musicians but also by great personalities. Working with Corradina was such a joy, and proved to me afresh how beautiful music can be. My dear coach Jonathan Papp, Italian teacher Pepi (from both of whom I have already learned a lot at the RAM), Dear Maestro Paolo and acting teacher Shirley, all this great musicians gave us so much, and helped us with such dedication that I feel I have improved musically, and increased in confidence in professional matters.



Kristen Darragh, New Zealand

I feel I have begun to understand how the bel canto music needs to be sung, and I have begun to feel how I can achieve this with my voice. I have also had some exciting personal insights about technical aspects of my singing. My goal was to feel confident with my aria *Se Romeo t'uccise un figlio* by the end of the course. Working on this aria intensely has been so beneficial for me and I feel I have come a long way with it. I have so enjoyed these three weeks and am so very appreciative to have had this wonderful experience.

Stuart Haycock, Australia

Basically I couldn't have asked for a better three weeks. I have experienced truly some life-long memories in that time and it feels like I have gained in three weeks perhaps three years worth of knowledge! I auditioned for the Accademia to learn and expand my knowledge in the bel canto technique and repertoire and have the opportunity to work with the world's best singers and coaches, and I feel that now the course is complete I have gained that experience and knowledge but also so much more.



It has been my first trip to Italy and I can't say enough how I have advanced personally and professionally just by experiencing the culture, the slice of life and especially hearing the language all around and speaking it myself. I have learnt so much from this alone and my spoken and singing Italian has improved out of sight. I have been made aware and learnt so much about the language and the technique of singing in it from everyone on the course to a level which previously I really didn't know existed.

The experience of working with Kiri and Frederica was truly special, the memory of which will stay with me forever. It really is a once in a lifetime experience! Not only on singing technique and interpretation, but the session where we had an opportunity to hear their own personal experiences as singers was for me amazing to hear, I appreciated their frankness at times and for me this q&a session was especially important. And they inspired me with their generosity of spirit and genuine kindness - oh and I won't ever forget when they sang for us!

I am already missing the course and the wonderful people I have met over the past three weeks. I think the course set up is good, the public sessions were important and useful to me as I learnt by observing everyone else, hearing things and relating them to my own singing was a great re-enforcement tool and reminding tool. Then we could work privately and really nut things out, refine things, try out new rep etc. The course is a great overall package of coaching, teaching, language and acting - I think the way it is set up is very effective. I feel now much further equipped than ever before, and also I have a sense of confidence now, having completed the course and got through it, which also will add to my singing and is quite important to me. Now I look forward to taking everything I have learnt and putting it into practice!



Georgia Ginsberg, South Africa



I auditioned on the suggestion of Jonathan, my coach at RAM, hoping, due to the demands of the bel canto repertoire, to address certain technical issues of placement and support, and to improve my Italian diction and sense of style. Strong hints from Jonathan suggested that Dame Kiri might be able to help me hugely - and he was right! The course was inspirational from day one with Kiri and Frederica. And overall I feel I made huge progress, consolidating and building on the exciting discoveries of the first week with the expertise of the teaching staff and culminating with the hugely enjoyable concerts. I am now leaving college, a daunting prospect, but I really feel that the Accademia has given me a real basis from which to move forward – thank you!

Eleonora Vindau, Ukraine

It seemed almost unbelievable to take lessons from such outstanding opera singers as Kiri Te Kanawa and Frederica von Stade. I am really thankful to my destiny that I had such a possibility. I met all expectations I had in respect of Solti Summer Academy 2008. I was amazed by sincerity, understanding, kindness and willingness to share with us their incredible skills and experience. They taught us not only vocal nuances but also with many important vital things. For me, as a soprano, Kiri Te Kanawa gave me understanding of many things and provided with a lot of ideas. She is a teacher I have always dreamt about.





Next steps

In December 2008 the Accademia will release its first educational dvd, a testimony of this year's masterclasses with Kiri Te Kanawa and Frederica Von Stade. The dvd also contains brief interviews with Lady Solti, Jonathan Papp the Artistic Director and Candice Wood the Executive Director that serve to highlight the importance of the work of the Accademia, its future projects and aspirations. The dvd will be presented together with a cd of the Wigmore Hall performance from January 2008.

April 2009 will see the launch of the **Solti Peretti Repetiteurs course**. This will be the first course of its genre worldwide. We are privileged to have on the faculty: Pam Bullock from Chicago's Lyric Opera, David Syrus from the Royal Opera house Covent Garden and Jonathan Papp, Artistic Director of the Accademia Solti Te Kanawa and principal accompanist of Dame Kiri.

A testimony to our success is our new found partnership with the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Programme, this year they will be sending two students from the programme to attend the Accademia.



Alumni's progresses

The Accademia maintains regular contact with its alumni to monitor their successes. Here are a few examples of the engagements that they have over the next season, which only go to reinforce the importance of the work that is being done each year at the Accademia.

Ana James, 2004

Recently made her role and house debut as Gretel/Hansel and Gretel for New Zealand Opera, and will be singing Pamina for Glyndebourne Opera this autumn. Other plans this season include her debuts in Moscow and De Nederlandse Oper.

Clara Mouriz, 2005

Will be performing Mozart's *Missa Solemnis* with the Royal Philharmonic of Galicia in Spain, Ravel's *Scheherazade* with the City of York Guildhall Orchestra, Berlioz's *Les Nuits d'été* with the Orchestra di Padova e del Veneto conducted by Alexander Shelley in Italy and Bach's *St Matthew's Passion* for the Handel Festival conducted by Laurence Cummings.

Eliana Pretorian, 2005

Has the following engagements over the next season

Oct - Dec 2008 - Glyndebourne, *Magic Flute* (Papagena and cover Pamina) and *Hansel and Gretel* (Dew Fairy)

January 2009 - Lisbon, Portugal

Medea by Cherubini (Dirce) with the Los Angeles Gulbenkian Orchestra and Lawrence Foster conducting, two concert performances.

April - May 2009 - Garsington Opera
Cenerentola by Rossini (Clorinda)

July - Aug - Glyndebourne Festival
Elisir d'amore (Gianetta and cover Adina)

Jesus Leon, 2006

Upcoming engagements in 2008 include a recital for the American Institute of Fine Arts in Los Angeles in September, a concert with Opera del Noroeste and the Sonora Philharmonic in October and four concerts with the Orchestra of Bangkok in Thailand in November. In February 2009, Jésus will cover Don José in *Carmen* with Raymond Gubbay Ltd. at Royal Albert Hall in London and sing 6 concerts in March at the Classical Spectacular concert also in Royal Albert Hall.



Jurgita Adamonyte, 2007

Most recently she has sung Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in the Salzburg Festival production on tour to Japan under the baton of Robin Ticciati and Idamantes (*Idomeneo*) with Europa Galante and Fabio Biondi in Amsterdam, Lisbon and London. This season she makes her debut with the Royal Opera Covent Garden, returning in future seasons for both Cherubino and Dorabella.

This summer she won the 1st prize at Ottavio Ziino International Singing Competition in Rome.

Mihoko Kinoshita 2006

Has the following engagements:

April, 2008: Midland symphony Orchestra (USA), Madama Butterfly

May, 2008: Baltimore Opera (USA) title role of Madama Butterfly

July, 2008: New National Theatre Tokyo, *La Traviata* as Violetta

November, 2008: Michigan Opera Theater Detroit Opera House (USA) title role of Madama Butterfly

March, 2009: Biwako Opera Theater (Japan), *Turandot* as Liu

June / July, 2009: Nishinomiya Opera Theater (Japan). *Carmen* as Michaela

Amy Radford 2008

Following attending the Accademia this summer, Amy went onto win the Dame Sutherland traveling scholarship.

The joining of forces of Lady Solti and Dame Kiri Te Kanawa in the development of the Accademia is a milestone in its contribution to the art of Bel Canto, and for Maestro Solti's passionate belief that young talented artists thrive on lessons from great masters.

Masters who pass on their precious artistic knowledge to the students who will carry this art forward.

We are immensely grateful to the Nando Peretti Foundation for making this possible.