

GEORG  
SOLTI  
ACCADEMIA



ANGELA GHEORGHIU  
VISITING PROFESSOR  
AT GEORG SOLTI ACCADEMIA

**T**hese are exciting times for the Georg Solti Accademia. Everyone is immensely looking forward to visits from this summer's three visiting professors: Angela Gheorghiu, Richard Bonyne and Dennis O'Neill. We are particularly delighted that Angela Gheorghiu has taken the time out of her busy schedule to work with our students in this Solti centenary year. Her own encounter with Sir Georg was formative; his decision to cast her as Violetta at Covent Garden was a turning point in her international career.

This year's group of young singers embraces ten different nationalities, from the UK and Austria to Turkey and the Ukraine. We have a wide age range too, from a 19-year-old German soprano to a 29 year-old Armenian bass. You can read more about each singer on the back of this newsletter.

In April, we enjoyed the splendid settings of Villa Finaly and Villa San Michele in Florence for the fifth session of our Solti-Peretti Repetiteurs' course. We are thrilled to have begun a collaboration with the Scuola di Musica in Fiesole, and it was our special pleasure to dedicate one of our concerts to the Florentine charity FILE – an event generously hosted by Mr and Mrs Traxler and the Villa San Michele in Fiesole. The evening was unforgettable and we hope that we will continue our involvement with this charity and Villa San Michele in the future. Immense thanks are due to Elsa Peretti and the Peretti Foundation's Director Stefano Palumbo for their support of this course.

At the beginning of June, we are looking forward to two special concerts in southern Italy: the first at the Teatro della Reggia in Caserta and the second at the Palazzo Ducale in Fragnito. Under the guidance of Jonathan Papp and stage director Alexander Zeldin, five of our singers will take part in this 'awareness' weekend. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Patsy and David Maude-Roxby who have so generously supported and organized this event.

The summer will offer a particularly rich programme of music. As well as concerts on 30 June in Grosseto and on 7 July in Castiglione on the Lungomare, a particularly emotional highlight will be an evening on 13 July in Castiglione's Piazza Solti celebrating Sir Georg's hundredth birthday. Alexander Zeldin will be staging this event, with the collaboration of lighting expert Marc Williams, from London's National Theatre who will doubtless help us to make the most of our 14kw allowance of electricity! The following evening, 14 July, our annual closing concert at L'Andana will once again be graciously hosted by Vittorio Moretti and Alain Ducasse.

October will see the GSA's participation in the Solti 100 celebrations in Carnegie Hall, New York (19 October) and in Symphony Hall, Chicago (21 October, Solti's actual birthday). GSA alumni will perform the quartet from Rigoletto with the World Orchestra for Peace conducted by Valery Gergiev. We hope to see many of our existing supporters at these events and would be delighted to welcome any new ones too.

My thanks go to all those who support the GSA, in particular John and Geraldine Whittaker, The Rolex Institute and the Nando Peretti Foundation, without whose help we would be unable to offer such a variety of projects throughout the year.

**Candice Wood**

*Executive Director of the Georg Solti Accademia*





## SOLTI-PERETTI REPETITEURS'S COURSE FLORENCE APRIL 2012

This year saw the Solti-Peretti Repetiteurs' course move to Florence, in a collaboration with the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, with a separate BBC project at the end of the course.

Classes were held in the beautiful Villa Finaly, just north of Florence. The villa has a fascinating history, which includes some of the meetings of the members of the Florentine Camerata, the inventors of the operatic art form in the late sixteenth century. It proved a fantastic venue for us, where we could eat and sleep as well as work. There were many beautiful rooms to accommodate the classes, and we were fortunate that the Sorbonne allowed us to use their precious facility. Another advantage of the location was the easy ten-minute bus ride into the centre of Florence. The pianists who took part included a student from the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, who also stayed with the group at the villa, while other of his colleagues joined in as auditors in the afternoons. Two of these also took part in the final day of master classes at the Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, and they were assigned an aria and a singer with whom they performed in the final concert.



*Rehearsing the finale  
of Così Fan Tutte*

The first concert was held in benefit of the FILE charity, up at the stunning Villa San Michele, above the Villa Finaly on a hillside overlooking Florence. Five pianos were put in place for the students to conduct and perform their own multiple-piano arrangement of the *Così fan tutte* overture. Despite a cold and wet midweek night, the Villa San Michele was filled with a very appreciative audience of Florence's great and good.

As well as the core staff of Audrey Hyland, Pamela Bullock and myself, we were joined by Anthony Legge, the Assistant Music Director of Opera Australia, who is currently running Sydney Opera House. He was both thorough and rigorous, and gave the students valuable information on playing Richard Strauss, baroque music etc., and also opened up the daily life of a repetiteur. He explained what demands are placed upon you, what you should realistically expect of the job and how much hard work is involved, as well as the depth of knowledge required.

Once the two concerts were over, we stayed on for a further two days to participate in the BBC's *Maestro at the Opera* series. As part of the preparations for the competition's last round, the BBC sent a film crew and its two successful finalists, Craig Revel Horwood and Marcus du Sautoy, who worked with myself and Tony Legge, using our singers and pianists. The competitors were television personalities working in completely diverse disciplines



unconnected to classical music. The prize for the winner (Horwood) was the opportunity to conduct Act 2 of *La Bohème* at the Royal Opera House in the middle of a 'real' performance.

Helping these two finalists who had no previous conducting experience and little or no musical ability proved to be a fascinating exercise. The singers and the pianists were wonderful in their preparation and their support of this 'extra' project and both the BBC and the contestants congratulated the GSA on upholding higher standards than any other organisation they had previously encountered!

### **Jonathan Papp**

*Artistic Director of the Georg Solti Accademia*





## STUDENTS TALK ABOUT THE REPETITEURS'S COURSE

### BERRAK DYER

The SPRC was fantastic. Over the ten days, the work was really intensive I felt that every person in the group had something different to offer, and that there was so much to absorb from their individual experiences. I felt that the structure of the course was highly focused and that the general atmosphere was very informal, even though there was a lot of hard concentrated work going on. New things were presented for us to tackle every day but that I didn't feel overwhelmed or buried under the different tasks. At the end I felt completely revitalised and longing to get back to London and put into practice what I had discovered.

### EMILY SENTURIA

Each of the coaches brought a different perspective about us as musicians, but they were united in their positive energy and their enthusiastic support. I got to work on a wide variety of skills, including piano technique, vocal score/full score arranging, coaching, and conducting. Because we were isolated in the villa, away from our schools and regular teachers and regular stresses, it was a safe place to explore how we wanted to grow as musicians, and how to take musical risks. Each of my colleagues was also inspiring in different ways: working with people from different musical backgrounds was a good reminder to be open-minded. The singers were excellent and very patient with us. It was also great to review my Italian with Roberta!

### EDWIGE HERCHENRODER

Within the SPRC, I have received tuition from the most eminent professors on every aspect of the job of repetiteur. The exceptional training conditions gave us the opportunity to work with an outstanding group of singers, leaving room to experiment and improve. I now feel confident and aware of every kind of situation that a repetiteur confronts (coaching, conducting, opera rehearsals etc.). I also had the opportunity to deeper go into the features of the 'singing in Italian', which is essential for a future coach. I am sending my warmest thanks to everyone at the SPRC for their amazing work and fantastic enthusiasm.

### EVA BUDNIAK

The SPRC has been an invaluable experience. To have been looked after by such personalities was something very special and unique. Everything do to with the organisation of the course, from accommodation to food, had been laid out so smoothly that it gave us the opportunity to really concentrate on the work. The time at Villa Finaly was intense: it demanded patience, coping under pressure, working professionally, with various personalities and as a team. I have seen everyone who has taken part become braver by the day, develop creatively and musically, as

well as 'grow' through practising their different roles as repetiteurs/coaches and conductors. There really aren't many other equivalent circumstances in which it is OK to be wrong, so being pushed out of our comfort zones (on more than a few occasions) and having to deal with new situations, could have spared us from future setbacks and introduced us to work in the 'real' world. I could spend hours writing about Jonathan, Audrey, Pam and Tony - who have been incredibly generous and caring throughout.

### DARIO BONUCCELLI

Che dire di questa esperienza, se non che mi è piaciuta tantissimo e mi sono divertito da matti? In particolare sono contento del fatto che nonostante loro studino o abbiano studiato in maniera specifica da "repetiteur" a Londra e io abbia seguito un percorso abbastanza diverso, tuttavia siamo riusciti a lavorare alla pari per quanto riguarda i mezzi tecnici e musicali. Forse Lucchesini mi ha mandato anche per quello, perché conoscendomi ha pensato che il multi-tasking fosse una cosa a me abbastanza familiare. I cantanti erano bravi e simpatici e abbiamo stretto una bella amicizia, facendo subito gruppo! È stata divertente l'ultima parte del corso intercalata nel reality show, te la sei persa! Anche della professionalità degli insegnanti c'è poco da dire: gente in gabbissima che sa fare ottimamente il suo lavoro e che soprattutto lo sa trasmettere agli altri con dedizione e entusiasmo.

### GREGORY DROTT

I arrived at the SPRC not knowing quite what to expect, since it is so unusual to find a course focused on the repetiteur rather than the singer! I need not have been apprehensive since Audrey Hyland and Jonathan Papp did an excellent job of establishing how the "learning goals" of the course aligned with our own assessment of our strengths and weaknesses. Instead of adopting the strongly didactic mode of master and apprentice the SPRC seemed at all times to encourage our confidence in what skills we brought, at the same time as making pertinent suggestions about how to improve these, and offering tips about technique and other coaching matters.

Pamela Bullock and Tony Legge lent us their vast expertise in the sessions with the singers and also in one-on-one sessions. Roberta Biondi's languages classes were an ideal introduction to Italian, much appreciated by those of us who had some familiarity with the primary language of our repertoire as well as those, like me, who had little previous knowledge. This language element is a wonderful bonus to emerge from a "music" course, and I feel inspired and enabled



*Sarah-Jane Lewis, Tereza Gevorgyan rehearsing with Dario Bonuccelli*

to continue my study, in an effort to be conversant, not only for personal interest but for professional reasons: at every rehearsal it was clear that mastery of musical and textual details of the score (as demonstrated to us by the tutors) was the key to the removal of the obstacles that sometimes prevent us from using composed music in the way that is most revelatory and powerful.



*Pamela Bullock and Emily Senturia*



## STUDENTS OF THE GEORG SOLTI ACCADEMIA JUNE - JULY 2012

**FLORIAN CAFIERO** (*tenor, 26*) was born in France. He studied at the Lyric university of CNIPAL and won second prize at the Bordeaux Opera Competition. He will sing Alfredo in *La Traviata* in Neuilly in 2013.

**CHRISTINA GANSCH** (*soprano, 22*) was born in Austria. Having studied at the Mozarteum Salzburg and won a prize in the International Singing Competition in Passau in 2011, she is about to start a course at the Royal Academy of Music.

**LUIS GOMES** (*tenor, 25*) was born in Portugal. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music under Rudolf Piernay and will sing Jenik in *The Bartered Bride* for British Youth Opera later this year.

**GULBIN GUNAY** (*soprano, 29*) was born in Turkey. She studied with Aydin Ustuk and has sung Mimi in *La Bohème* in several towns in Italy. Currently, she is singing solo roles at the Istanbul State Opera.

**LUKASZ HAJDUCZENIA** (*baritone, 26*) was born in Poland. Having graduated from the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw, he is currently a student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

**ARSHAK KUZIKYAN** (*bass, 29*) was born in Armenia. Having graduated from the Yerevan State Conservatory, he joined the Spendiaryan National Opera of Armenia, where has sung several major roles. In 2011 he won First Prize in the Pavel Lisitsian/Tatevik Sazadaryan National Vocal Competition.

**SARAH-JANE LEWIS** (*mezzo-soprano, 24*) was born in the UK. She graduated from the Royal College of Music in 2009 and now studies at the Royal Academy of Music, where earlier this year she won the Jean Shanks/Richard Lewis Prize.

**ROSS RAMGOBIN** (*baritone, 26*) was born in the UK. He studies at the Royal Academy of Music, where he is a member of the song circle. In 2011 he gave a solo recital at the Oxford Lieder Festival.

**GULNARA SHAFIGULLINA** (*soprano, 27*) was born in Russia. Having graduated as a pianist from the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatoire in St Petersburg, she studied voice with Rimma Volkova and since 2009 has been based at the Conservatory of Amsterdam.

**JENNY STAFFORD** (*soprano, 24*) was born in the UK. She graduated from King's College, London and is now studying at the Royal Academy of Music, where she won the Dame Eva Turner Award

**ANNA STARUSHKEVYCH** (*mezzo-soprano, 24*) was born in the Ukraine. She is currently studying at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Earlier this year she won First Prize and Audience Prize in the London Handel Competition.

**JOHANNA WILL** (*soprano, 19*) was born in Germany. She studies at the Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt and has participated in master classes at the International Summer Academy in Salzburg.

*Final concert of the Solti Peretti Repetiteurs masterclasses at Villa San Michele Fiesole*



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## DIARY OF FORTHCOMING 2012 EVENTS

- 1 JUNE Teatro La Reggia, Caserta
- 2 JUNE Palazzo Ducale, Fragnito
- 30 JUNE Teatro degli Industri, Grosseto
- 7 JULY Piazza Stella, Lungomare Castiglione della Pescaia
- 13 JULY Piazza Solti, Castiglione della Pescaia
- 14 JULY L'Andana, Tenuta La Badiola, Castiglione della Pescaia
- 19 OCTOBER Carnegie Hall, New York
- 21 OCTOBER Symphony Hall Chicago

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