

GEORG
SOLTI
ACCADEMIA

DAME KIRI TE KANAWA
BECOMES EMERITUS PROFESSOR
AT GEORG SOLTI ACCADEMIA



The Georg Solti Accademia is happy to announce that with effect from July 2012, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa ONZ, DBE, AC will assume the honorary position of Emeritus Professor - and will return as her schedule allows to work with the Georg Solti Accademia's young singers. Dame Kiri writes: "Apart from the unique opportunity it has to nurture and mentor the next generation of outstanding young classical singers, the Georg Solti Accademia is a visible legacy of Sir Georg Solti – a very dear colleague whom I greatly admired. He was always driven to achieve perfection and through the Georg Solti Accademia, he is still able to influence talented young singers from around the world. Lady Solti's continuing involvement is also an inspiration as she passes on the philosophy of the great maestro.

If he could experience the passion and determination I've seen and felt there, he would be very proud indeed. I'm sure his spiritual presence and the professionalism of those organising the Georg Solti Accademia will ensure that it goes from strength to strength for many years to come.

One of the bonuses of my international concert schedule has been the chance to identify some very special young singers from all over the world, and particularly from New Zealand. These New Zealanders even included a young pianist, who attended for three years, gaining invaluable experience in this repertoire. The Accademia has always offered, and will continue to offer, singers the opportunity not to sing simply as they have been taught to sing, but to find out how they want to sing – a philosophy close to Solti's heart and one that the Accademia adheres to, as it continues to foster self-discovery in support of the next generation's talent.

I will always be indebted to Sir Georg. His passion for music, dedication and determination were inspirational to me as a young singer - the same passion, dedication and determination I see in the young singers who attend the Georg Solti Accademia."

I am delighted to report on a very successful period of activity for the Accademia, both with the singers in Castiglione and the repetiteurs' course in Ladispoli.

The Georg Solti Accademia has become something of a family, with the same core of staff returning year after year. This summer we welcomed back Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and the director Alexander Zeldin, both of them offering a combination of expertise and experience which the students again found inspiring. A newcomer was the great baritone Sir Thomas Allen: we immediately felt at home with this marvellous singer and teacher, and we are delighted that he is so enthusiastic to return as soon as possible.

Dame Kiri has now assumed a new Emeritus role in the Georg Solti Accademia. We are very proud to have been able to assist Dame Kiri in the launching of a new stage in her extraordinary career, and we look forward to a new era with her as professor emeritus in the Accademia.

Anyone fortunate enough to have been present at the concert in Castiglione's Piazza Solti, honouring 150 years of the Italian republic, will have sensed the warm feeling of appreciation which the Georg Solti Accademia gives the townspeople. We feel that it is vital that Castiglione regards the Accademia as an integral part of its annual calendar. We have recently had the welcome news that, from 2012, the *Comune* has granted us our first teaching rooms in Palazzo Centurione, and that we will finally have a building to call our own. We have also been given an office in the comune of Castiglione.

Next year will be the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sir Georg Solti. We are preparing many exciting events, including a recording by Accademia alumni of "Italian Song".

We are delighted that Richard Bonyngé is part of this project directed by our Artistic Director, Jonathan Papp. We would like to thank Rolex Italia and the Mirolli family of Castiglione for their support in the realization of this project.

Finally, on behalf of all at the Georg Solti Accademia, I would like to renew my heartfelt thanks to all our supporters, and in particular John and Geraldine Whittaker and the Rolex Institute Geneva. Without them, the Accademia would not have been able to achieve and sustain its high reputation in the musical world that it currently enjoys.

Candice Wood

Executive Director of the Georg Solti Accademia



REPORT ON OUR ACTIVITIES FROM JONATHAN PAPP, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The basic structure of the Georg Solti Accademia's course remained the same as in previous years. The programme began with four inspirational days with Dame Kiri. Her work challenged the students technically, as she insisted upon two key issues: breathing and correct positioning of the voice throughout each phrase. Extra classes on breathing were incorporated into an already full schedule, with all the students eager to participate and make the most of her presence. Pepi Ferrari ensured that Italian diction was always of a high level, and my role in accompanying the classes was to ensure that music and text ultimately agreed.

After Dame Kiri's departure, the core faculty of Jonathan Papp, Corradina Caporello and Paolo Specca began their work, which was as rigorous as ever. All three continued from where Pepi Ferrari had left off, developing principles of integrating language and music-making, and trying to incorporate and translate the thoughts that Dame Kiri had already implanted in the students, while enabling them to new thinking about their music and how to communicate it.

Sir Thomas Allen arrived, as this year's star guest teacher, and a new level of work began, based upon the previous weeks of successful preparation. While very much concentrated on the text and the drama, Sir Thomas was still insistent on the highest vocal and musical standards, and the students couldn't believe their luck in being able to learn from one of the greatest interpreters of Don Giovanni and Count Almaviva.

Work with Sir Thomas was always imaginative and inspiring, and even though the classes were demanding, they were conducted in a lovely, relaxed atmosphere which produced excellent results. Sir Thomas proved to be a colleague that we would all very much wish to see again at the Georg Solti Accademia, and happily, he feels the same way about us!

During this period, Alexander Zeldin arrived and started preparing the dramatic aspects of the programme for the final concerts. His inaugural workshop was hugely appreciated by the students, and his sessions with individuals immediately informed their performances and helped them to release their own ideas. His co-ordination of these concerts was a huge

factor in their success, preventing them from being yet another set of "bleeding chunk" extracts in which the singers would merely stand and deliver their pieces. Our valued photographer and friend, Clive Barda, was here to document the work and provide portraits for all the students.

This year more timetabling and repertoire choices were fixed ahead of the beginning of the course, enabling scheduling of the extra outside concerts at the Colle Massari and the Roman amphitheatre in Fiesole, as well as the final concerts in Castiglione and the Andana, to take place with minimum disruption and maximum preparation.

We viewed the 150th Anniversary year of Italian Unification as an opportunity to increase the integration of the Accademia with the comune. The local music school and chorus were invited to take part, and 'Va pensiero', the famous chorus from Verdi's Nabucco, which is virtually Italy's national anthem, was chosen as a climax to the programme.

Again, the direction of Alexander Zeldin was a key element in rehearsing this special event. Paolo Specca conducted, maintaining the musical ensemble and shape of the chorus, and leading a very fine performance in which the public was encouraged to join, with the help of text projected on to the back wall of the piazza. The piazza concert had an added popular appeal, including songs like 'Funiculi, Funiculà', also with audience participation.

This year's roster of students proved the most cohesive group we have ever had; they did everything together, and strongly supported each other throughout the course. All of them made full use of the opportunities presented by the course: their level of achievement was very high, and their attitude in class and rehearsal first-rate.



Richard Bonyng and Jonathan Papp discuss details of the Accademia's Centennial recording



Sir Thomas Allen teaches Kawiti Waetford and Rachel Kelly



THE STUDENTS TALK ABOUT THE 2011 ACCADEMIA



ALBERTO SOUSA

Singers like myself starting out in the profession need to become more independent and efficient in preparing new repertoire: we just can't afford the good regular coaching we had in college. This is one reason why this course was so important to me.

Any clever young singer who participates in the Accademia will be able to understand sung Italian much more deeply than before and will gather tools that will serve him or her throughout his whole career.

I also found the immersion in Italian culture and language extremely helpful. Having everyone around you speaking Italian gives you a more intimate understanding of the language and suddenly you start to notice in everyday life the subtleties and details your vocal coach only mentioned in the classroom.

A moment comes to mind that perfectly illustrates this. While resting after a long day of classes, I heard a four-year-old child pointing to the sea and saying to his mother: "Mamma, guarda che bello". Impeccable double consonants, textbook example of open and closed vowels, virtually innate "syntactic gemination". This child had by nature what honest non-Italian singers search for years!

BETTINA SCHWEIGER

Without any exaggeration this program was the best thing ever happened in my whole life.

What I learned in three weeks is so much more than I ever expected. Everyone gave their best and made the most of it, and the whole group motivated each other – I never found anything like this anywhere else.

NICOLAS DARMANIN

Castiglione is the perfect place to relax and concentrate on perfecting one's bel canto technique. I have gained a lot more confidence in my craft, and I have learnt a great deal with regards to interpretation and technique. I now understand better the refining differences that make an international Opera Singer.

IOANA MITU

The 2011 Solti Te Kanawa Accademia represented for me one of the most beneficial experiences in my professional development. During these 3 weeks I had the opportunity to work with great coaches and two of the most famous opera singers. This experience changed my perspective about the path of the professional working process; beginning with the most precise details of the text articulation, until the huge amount of energy that even the shortest performance of one aria should carry.

It's amazing how a suggestion from a great coach can improve, in a moment, the technique you worked on for years, and how a different idea about the character can change the entire development of the performance, filling it with energy.

KAWITI WAETFORD

These three weeks at the Accademia have taught me invaluable skills in interpretation, vocal technique, performance, and has given me a better understanding and feel for the Italian language. The contacts I have made on this course have also been invaluable. I now have clear and achievable vocal goals that I wish to pursue in the next five years. This has truly been one of the most wonderful experiences of my life, and I thank the many people who worked tirelessly to create this exceptional programme – tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa. Nga mihi nui, nga mihi mahaki. Naku noa.

RACHEL KELLY

I would like to thank the Accademia from the bottom of my heart for this amazing opportunity. This is an experience that I will carry with me forever and a period of happiness and excitement that I will never forget. The generosity of everyone involved is quite astonishing and I hope I can make those who believe in me proud one day. I will work hard on everything that I have learnt here and hopefully continue to improve as much as I did over these past three weeks.

RALPH JAARSMAN

At the dinner with the sponsors, I was asked what the most important lesson I learnt on the course. I realized it was a lesson I had with Sir Thomas Allen: he sat me down and I had to talk through the text of "Questo amor" by Puccini as a real Italian and then sing it in the same open way. Afterwards it all became incredibly natural without any artificial blabla. That felt really really good!

SHUNA SCOTT SENDALL

The weeks I spent at the Accademia have been truly inspirational and life enhancing. The opportunity to learn from such wonderful and talented people through such an intensive and focused programme doesn't come along very often and is an experience that will stay with me for many years to come. It has left me with numerous new tools with which to approach my singing and my use of the Italian language as well as a new understanding of the rigours and rewards of my chosen career. It has also afforded me the opportunity to work alongside my peers in a genuinely giving and caring environment, where you are able to feel the support and trust that enable you to take risks and cross new boundaries within your chosen field. I only wish we could all come back every year for a refresher course!

TEREZA GEVORGYAN

The Accademia Solti was fantastic. Through the course, I have climbed another rung of the ladder which I hope will bring me to an international career. I have no doubts in saying that I owe it to you.

WALLIS GIUNTA

It's amazing how the Solti Accademia has been able to bring together such a group of mentors, teachers and coaches. The pacing of the course, and introduction to each of the faculty was very well planned. We were able to experience the culture and language, spend time together, and reflect on what we absorbed in our session I am so grateful for this opportunity. It has really changed the way I use my instrument, and the sung Italian language. My performing artistry has made great leaps while here, and at a very timely point in my development.

EVA FIECHTER

I spent three amazing weeks in Castiglione! I have learned so much about Italian music and how to properly pronounce Italian. I found the teaching level incredibly high and the work environment great, I felt "like a fish in water".

The atmosphere was very friendly and professional, I have got a lot of tools and clues out of the teaching. This helped me improve the building of my instrument, understand the bel canto style and increase my sensibility about the music and the score. Meeting such great artists and being in contact with them was a deep and rich experience for me. I hoped that this could last longer. Thank you so much.





NEWS FROM ALUMNI

Jung Soo Yun (2010) has won this year's Montserrat Caballé international singing competition from a field of 368 candidates. The prize for this Korean tenor includes a joint recital with Montserrat Caballé at the Kölner Philharmonie, and recitals in Rheims, Taormina and Zaragoza.

Julia Sporsen (2006) has just performed Gilda/Rigoletto for Opera Holland Park, and is currently singing Katya/The Passenger at ENO. In March 2012 she will make her Swedish debut at Royal Swedish Opera as Michaela/*Carmen* together with Matilda Paulsson who also attended the Accademia in 2006.

Chris White (Repetiteurs 2010) worked this summer at the Munich Opera Festival as assistant to Ivor Bolton on Mozart's *Mitridate*. Chris is currently in Zurich on the Opernhaus's Young Artists Programme, and will be taking up a permanent position on the music staff of English National Opera from April 2012.

Christopher Hopkins (Repetiteurs 2011) has completed his Shinn Fellowship at the Royal Academy, and since August has been working at Welsh National Opera as a member of the music staff. This autumn he has been working mainly on *The Barber of Seville*, conducted by Alexander Polianichko, with a cast that includes Christine Rice and Andrew Kennedy.

Joan Sutherland Richard Bonynges
Opera Foundation

Edinburgh-born tenor *John Longmuir* is the first winner of the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonynges Bel Canto award, following a competition held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in September. An important element of his prize is a scholarship to attend the Solti Accademia in 2013. John will also be singing Almaviva in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* and Nadir in *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* for Opera Australia in 2012.

THE ACCADEMIA ENTERS A NEW ERA

On the occasion of the Solti Centennial in 2012, there will be three exciting new developments.

- There will be a greater collaboration between the Bel Canto course and the Repetiteurs course.
- We are also delighted to announce that Dame Kiri

Te Kanawa will become the Professor Emeritus of the Bel Canto master classes and Sir Richard Bonynges Professor Emeritus of the Repetiteurs course. Both groups will continue with their independent classes but will join together for performances.

- The umbrella organisation will be known in the future as The Georg Solti Accademia and will have a new visual identity. We look forward to you being with us once again in Castiglione next summer.

GEORG SOLT ACCADEMIA



EVENTS

23-26 October 2011 | Solti @100 recording at Henry Wood Hall, London SE1. A tribute to Italian song performed by alumni of the Solti Accademia 2004-2011

25-27 January 2012 | Auditions for the 2012 Georg Solti Accademia at the Royal Academy of Music, London

6-15 April 2012 | Solti Peretti Repetiteurs course, Fiesole, Florence

1-3 June 2012 | Fundraising event for the Georg Solti Accademia at La Reggia, the Royal Palace in Caserta. For more information about this event please contact Rosita Stanfield, rositajelp@aol.com

24 June -15 July | Georg Solti Accademia 2012 with guest teachers Angela Gheorghiu, Dennis O'Neill and Richard Bonynges

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