

NEWSLETTER 13

AUTUMN WINTER 2015/16



Georgina Melville, class of 2015
Jonathan Papp, Artistic Director GSA
Barbara Frittoli

GSA BRINGS BEL CANTO MASTERCLASSES TO BEIJING



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DIRECTORS REPORT

We have had a highly successful 2015, with superb voices and exceptional master coaches and staff. It was so lovely to have baritone Leo Nucci back with us after 8 years, and to welcome Silvana Bartoli Bazzoni and Barbara Frittoli, never forgetting the unique presence of Richard Bonyngé, truly part of the GSA family.

2016 promises to be an exciting year. In April, we return to our beloved Isola di San Giorgio and the Giorgio Cini Foundation for the seventh edition of the Solti Peretti Repetiteurs' course. We are so privileged to work in this inspirational location and with such a generous organization as the Fondazione Cini – long may it continue! I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Hotel Cipriani-Belmond, who look after many of our invited guests with such care and generously host the cocktail event at our closing concert.

In May 2016, we'll be launching a brand new project: GSA Bel Canto Masterclasses in collaboration with the National Centre of Performing Arts in Beijing. Jonathan Papp, our Artistic Director, and language coach Corradina Caporello will be joined by soprano Barbara Frittoli, who delighted us this summer with her inspiring masterclasses. We're very excited to be starting this project and working with the fabulous team at the NCPA, and would like to thank the Rolex Institute in Geneva for making this venture possible.

June and July will see the Bel Canto Masterclasses return to Castiglione della Pescaia with a host of fantastic guest artists to inspire our young singers: Angela Gheorghiu, returning for the second time, Massimo Giordano, and Carmen Giannattasio. The course would not be complete without Richard Bonyngé and our fabulous core faculty, Jonathan Papp, Dennis O'Neill, Jonathon Swinard, Pepi Ferrari, Corradina Caporello, Roberta Biondi and Alexander Zeldin.

My thanks go to all our supporters and sponsors and, in particular, to the Rolex Institute and the Fondazione Nando Peretti, who have supported us from our early days and helped us to develop into the leading organization we are today.

Candice Wood

Director of the Georg Solti Accademia



The standard continues to rise at the GSA. This summer we welcomed two wonderful singers from the Young Artists' Program at the Ryan Opera Center, Chicago, who will join us for the Venice Repetiteurs' course in 2016.

Richard Bonyngé returned for his sixth year of teaching. As you can read in their feedback, the young singers were hugely inspired by his insight and his conducting, minutely and beautifully shaping the music with the smallest gestures. We finally welcomed back, too, the incomparable Leo Nucci, who brought his enormous energy to the classes, filling the room and the music with drama, rigor and humor. We hope he won't be so long in returning.

Our first new visitor was Silvana Bartoli-Bazzoni, mother and mentor to Cecilia. She thought long and hard about each singer, before offering them her vocal wisdom – and even her tips on making Chinese dumplings! We were thrilled that in her thank you speech she endorsed the GSA with the highest praise, saying that she had taught masterclasses all over the world, but never with such talented young singers. A huge thank you to all the faculty who make this possible.

Our final visiting master teacher was the wonderful, warm and dynamic Barbara Frittoli. She instilled great discipline and refinement in all the singers, insisting on in-depth technical work, and releasing a passion and freedom in their music-making. Barbara even sat through their beach concert of pop songs with microphone, which gave her further insight into each of their characters and potential. We so enjoyed having her with us and look forward to working with her on our new GSA project in Beijing, an exciting series of masterclasses involving young singers from all over China. I'm delighted that the Rolex Institute is our partner for this venture, and we thank them most sincerely.

Jonathan Papp

Artistic Director of the Georg Solti Accademia



STUDENT FEEDBACK ON THE 2015 CLASS

“A WONDERFUL TEAM OF COACHES”

Twelve talented singers came together from all over the world: China, the USA, Mexico, UK, Holland, Lithuania, Italy and New Zealand. They had very different needs: while Chinese baritone Haobin Wang worked on Italian language and refinement with Leo Nucci. Italian soprano Arianna Schiavi appreciated the individually-tailored approach, recognizing ‘it offers something that can hardly be met nowadays: a group of outstanding coaches at our full disposal who care for your training and take it to heart, in order to provide you with a special opportunity and more weapons in the hard world of opera’.

A theme that comes through their comments again and again is the special intensity of the sessions with core staff, the ‘wonderful team of coaches’, as well as the inspiration of the masterclasses: American soprano Julie Miller, ‘really enjoyed working with Corradina Caporello as her understanding of the Italian language both as a native speaker and a linguist made her explanations very clear. ‘She particularly appreciated the coaching of Artistic Director Jonathan Papp, ‘his ability to pinpoint vocal issues and to fix them in a non-cerebral manner was ingenious.’ Coach Jonathan Swinard’s ‘sense of vocal style and friendly manner made my work with him a pleasure and always productive.’ If anything, the students wanted slightly longer sessions with these core teachers so that they could embed ideas more thoroughly.

An exceptional course and a uniquely enriching experience: that was the judgement of the young singers from the Class of 2015. Above, clockwise: Haobin Wang, Julie Miller, John Irvin, Arianna Schiavi.

Opposite page: Barbara Frittoli and Jonathan Papp with student Georgina Melville.

Photos © Clive Barda 2015



Haobin Wang



Arianna Schiavi

“MAKING NEW FRIENDS”

The masterclasses were universally appreciated, giving a broad spectrum of differing but never conflicting approaches from which the students could draw. They enjoyed both the taking part and listening to others, as Liza Rebecca van der Peijl noted: ‘Both ways brought me a huge enrichment of my knowledge of Bel Canto style. It was interesting to see how every teacher had a different approach to arrive at the same goal.’ UK soprano Emily Garland particularly appreciated Barbara Frittoli’s technical exercises: ‘working on vocal exercises with Barbara Frittoli has completely changed my perspective on vocal technique.’ For Haobin Wang, ‘As a baritone, of course, Leo Nucci is our hero. We were so lucky to meet this brilliant, outstanding, professional and kind singing teacher.’ Lithuanian baritone Romanas Kudriasovas found it ‘incredibly inspirational to see that successful artists base their musical decisions on honesty, truthfulness to the composer and the story line.’

They were all acutely aware of the care taken by the GSA to devise a course which maximizes learning and minimizes extraneous stresses,

“HOW TO MAKE THE BEAUTIFUL VOICE AND NOT ONLY THE LOUD VOICE”



Julie Miller

“EXPERT PLANNING AND PACING”



John Irvin

...pacing the mix of coaching, private study, masterclasses and performing opportunities – formal and informal – so as to embed good technique without tiring the voice, as soprano Georgina Melville remarked: ‘Though each coach was very demanding I found that the schedule, with its properly paced breaks, allowed me to rest and prepare for my next coaching and not once in the three weeks did I feel like I was doing harm to my voice.’

The atmosphere of cooperation and support among the singers is one of the great triumphs of the course, and many noted that they learnt as much from each other as they did from the teachers, and appreciated the positive, non-competitive ethos created at the GSA. As tenor Jonathan Abernethy put it, ‘it was a really good group on the course and everyone was extremely supportive and encouraging of each other’. Schiavi felt that they also learnt a lot from each other: ‘we exchanged ideas and helped each other overcome our limitations’. The setting, ‘blue sea, blue sky, ancient city walls, amazing food, wonderful people’ could not fail to enhance the experience, nor the hospitality at the Approdo, ‘we were treated like royalty’ and opportunities to perform both outdoors in the Piazza Solti but also in the beautiful small theatre in Scansano, completed a truly magical experience.

GSA ALUMNI RISE TO THE TOP

Jurgita Adamonyte (GSA 2007)

The Lithuanian mezzo-soprano has already enjoyed great success in principle roles at Covent Garden as well as at the Salzburg Festival, Opéra de Lille, Teatro Colón (Buenos Aires), the Ruhr-triennale and Chicago Opera Theater. Her recent performances in *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Welsh National Opera elicited great critical acclaim.

Jésus Léon GSA (2006) Jésus Léon took the role of Nadir in *Les pêcheurs de perles* this season for Korean National Opera.

Sofia Fomina (GSA 2010) The Russian soprano's career has risen rapidly. Over the last year she's performed title roles at Opera National de Paris (*Die Entführung auf dem Serail*) Royal Opera House, London (*Adriadne auf Naxos* and *Jemmy* in Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* conducted by Antonio Pappano). She's currently at the Bavarian State Opera performing Oscar in Verdi's *Ballo in Maschera*.

Luis Gomez (2012) Look out for Luis as Gaston in *La Traviata* and Amante in *Il Tabarro* at the Royal Opera House in spring 2016. In May makes his debut at Rotterdam's De Doelen in Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*.

Wallis Giunta (GSA 2011) Canadian mezzo-soprano has been signed by Intermusica. She's currently a member of the Leipzig Opera Ensemble where she made her house debut singing Cherubino *Le nozze di Figaro*. Further roles there include the title role in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and Siebel in Gounod's *Faust*, before she makes her debut for Oper Frankfurt later this season as Mercédès *Carmen*. Recent highlights include her debut at Teatro dell'Opera di Roma in John Adams' *I Was Looking at the Ceiling and Then I Saw the Sky*, Olga in a new production of *The Merry Widow* at the Metropolitan Opera, Dorabella *Così fan tutte* and Annio *La clemenza di Tito* for the Canadian Opera Company.

Christina Gansch (GSA 2012) The Austrian soprano is a member of the International Studio of the Hamburg State Opera, where her roles have included Ascagne in a new production of *Les Troyens*, Juliette *Die tote Stadt* and Gemmy in a new production of *Guillaume Tell*. Her 2015/16 season also includes a return to the Salzburger Festspiele as Barbarina *Le nozze di Figaro* and her début at the Deutsche Staatsoper as Waldvogel *Siegfried* under Barenboim.

Gulnara Shafigullina (2012) has been singing in the company of Rostock Volksoper and performing in the IVC Russian Summer School at De National Opera, Amsterdam.

Rachel Kelly (2011)

The Irish mezzo is now managed by Harrison Parrott. This November she sang Mercedes in *Carmen* at the Royal Opera House. She has sung the role of Nerone in *Agrippina* with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, and created the role of Catherine in Stuart MacRae's *The Devil Inside* for Scottish Opera which will tour Scotland and Canada.



Wallis Giunta

Photo © Dario Acosta



Takaoki Onishi

Photo © Clive Barcia



Hyesang Park

Photo © Vogue Korea

Hyesang Park (GSA 2014)

Park's fearless performing style has won her prizes in the Opera Index Competition in New York and the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Belgium. In June 2015, she took home second prize plus the Radio-Canada People's Choice Award in the Montreal International Music Competition. The following month, Park won second prize in the Operalia competition with her fluid performance of the mad scene from *Lucia di Lammermoor* and won the Zarzuela prize.

Takaoki Onishi (2014) Baritone Takaoki joined Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago as an ensemble/ young artist member. In this season, he's appears in *Wozzeck*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Romeo et Juliette*, covering and singing six roles. He makes his company debut there in the world premiere production of Jimmy Lopez's *Bel Canto* in December.

2016 DATES

January 20th and 21st

Auditions

Royal Academy of Music, London

April 7th- 16th

Solti-Peretti Repetiteurs Course

Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice

May 2nd-7th

Georg Solti Accademia Beijing

Masterclasses, National Centre of Performing Arts - Beijing, China

June 25th - July 17th

Bel Canto Masterclasses,

Castiglione della Pescaia

Concerts at L'Andana, Piazza Solti

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