

# 27 February 2020

## The Hon Jane Mathews AO Memorial Concert

7.30pm, Thursday 27 February 2020  
St Columba Community Centre  
53A Ocean Street (cnr Forth Street), Woollahra

Refreshments provided  
General admission entry - \$40  
Members of the public welcome

A memorial concert for The Hon Jane Mathews AO with British Wagnerian conductor Maestro Anthony Negus and singers was held at 7.30pm on Thursday 27 February 2020 at St Columba Community Centre, Woollahra. Maestro Negus had very generously offered to contribute a musical evening in honour of his close friend and the Wagner Society's late President Jane Mathews.

He accompanied singers Laura Scandizzo, Eleanor Greenwood, Emily Turner (who replaced Pamela Andrews, who was unwell), Hamish James and Timothy Nunn in a program of works by Wagner, Weber, Beethoven and Richard Strauss.

The Society is grateful to Leona Geeves for organising the event.

.....

### JANE MATHEWS



**Jane Mathews** (19.12.1940 - 31.8.2019) was a passionate music lover, a great Australian, and a trailblazer for women in the legal profession: she was one of the first 10 women to study law at the University of Sydney and be admitted to the NSW Bar in the 1960's, the first woman to be appointed Crown Solicitor in 1978, the first woman to be appointed Judge in NSW, in 1980, and the first woman to be appointed Judge to the NSW Supreme Court, in 1987. Throughout her career, she was a champion of anti-discrimination legislation and a universally respected jurist throughout Australian legal circles.

Jane discovered Wagner and his music several decades ago and was keen to share her enthusiasm for his operas amongst her numerous friends. She had a number of records, particularly of the Ring, and held many parties which would feature sessions listening to Wagner's music. Guests would provide contributions of food and of course there was also wine to increase their enjoyment.

She enjoyed going to Bayreuth to meet other enthusiasts in the network of Wagner-lovers. She was elected President of the NSW Wagner Society (2010 - 2017) in recognition of her commitment. Her contacts in Australia and around the world were always encouraged to come and talk to our Society. Jane had been ill for a period and her death is a relief from pain. We will remember her as a great enthusiast for music, a long-

term supporter of organisations such as the Sydney Symphony and Opera Australia, an extremely generous donor to music in Australia and a committed lover of Wagner's operas.

(from the September Wagner Quarterly)

.....

### MAESTRO ANTHONY NEGUS



**Anthony Negus** studied clarinet and piano at the Royal College of Music London, and gained a music degree at Oxford University. He has worked with many opera companies and has a wide opera and concert repertoire. Working with the legendary Wagnerian conductor and coach Sir Reginald Goodall in the 1970s and 80s was a formative and highly influential period which led to his conducting *Parsifal* and *Tristan und Isolde*; and then assisting Sir Richard Armstrong, *Das Rheingold*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. He has conducted *Parsifal* for the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra in Wellington, and in Lübeck, Germany; after working with Vladimir Jurowski, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for Glyndebourne. Over many years as Music Director of Longborough Festival Opera, he has established himself as one of the most perceptive and original conductors of the Wagner repertoire, culminating in the highly acclaimed Ring Cycle in 2013, followed by *Tristan und Isolde*, *Tannhäuser*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. The 2017 revival of *Tristan und Isolde* prompted unprecedented critical and audience acclaim.

In Melbourne, Anthony Negus conducted Melbourne Opera's *Tristan und Isolde* in 2018 and *The Flying Dutchman* in 2019. He was the Society's first guest in 2019.

.....

### THE SINGERS



**Laura Scandizzo's** operatic roles include Ariadne in *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Land of Enchantment Opera in New Mexico, USA and Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni* at the **Varna International Opera Academy, Bulgaria**. Laura is an alumna of the **Pacific Opera Young Artist program** and she has performed with the **Opera Australia** chorus in *King Roger*, Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour's *Carmen*, *The Nixon Tapes*, *Verdi Requiem*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, and she joins them again for *La Juive*, *Roberto Devereux*, *Aida*, and *Eugene Onegin* in the 2020 Winter Season. She is also honoured to be the 2020 recipient of the **Prue Kennard Career Development Scholarship**.

**The Wagner Society in NSW** is proud to have sponsored Laura at the **Varna International Opera Academy, Bulgaria**.



Award-winning singer **Eleanor Greenwood** has sung on stage and on radio, in London, in the UK, in Europe, in Australia, and throughout China. A graduate of London's **Royal Academy of Music Opera School**, and of the **Australian National University**, she has performed various roles and concerts, and is a winner of the **Sydney Eisteddfod** Opera Scholarship Competition. In opera productions Eleanor has been broadcast on **BBC Radio 3**, **Schweizer Radio DRS**, **RTE Radio**, Ireland and **ABC Classic FM** Australia.

**The Wagner Society in NSW** sponsored Eleanor for Wagner coaching in Berlin several years ago.



**Pamela Andrews** is an experienced performer and has appeared as a soloist with **The Metropolitan Orchestra**, **Willoughby Symphony Orchestra**, **Penrith Symphony Orchestra**, **SCUNA/National Capital Orchestra**, **Hobart Chamber Orchestra**, **Derwent Symphony Orchestra**, **Hobart Orpheus Choir**, **Tasmania University Musical Society**, **Hobart Festival of Voices Choir** and **City of Launceston Carols by Candlelight**. Repertoire performed includes Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Mozart's *Requiem*, Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*, Handel's *Messiah* and Dvorak's *Stabat Mater*. Pamela enjoys performing new works, and has premiered new repertoire by several Australian composers.

Unfortunately, Pamela was unwell and unable to sing at the concert. She was replaced by **Emily Turner**.



**Emily Turner**, who replaced Pamela Andrews at the concert, has performed as a soloist in Opera Queensland's production of *Mozart Airborne*, and in the chorus for *Don Giovanni*, *Madama Butterfly*, *La Traviata* and *The Perfect American*. Her operatic roles include Gretel & The Dew Fairy (*Hänsel und Gretel*), Barbarina (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Yum Yum (*The Mikado*), Suor Dolcina (*Suor Angelica*) and Harry (*Albert Herring*). Emily was a Young Artist for the Pacific Opera Program in 2019, 2018 and 2017 and an Emerging Artist for Coast Opera Australia in 2019. Emily holds a Graduate Diploma of Music Studies (Opera) from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music.



**Hamish James** recently graduated from the **Sydney Conservatorium of Music** with a Bachelor of Music (Performance) where he was awarded the Bud Brown Memorial Scholarship for opera studies. In 2019 Hamish was a member of the Associate Artist Program with **Pacific Opera**. Singing as a boy soprano at a young age, Hamish discovered his passion for singing through the **St Andrew's Cathedral choir** where he was also appointed head chorister and performed frequently as a soloist. Hamish is looking forward to commencing his postgraduate studies later this year as a scholarship holder at the **Guildhall School of Music and Drama** in London.



Baritone **Timothy Nunn** is a Young Artist with **Pacific Opera** and an Emerging Artist with **Coast Opera Australia**. His performances include the title role in the **Phoenix Choir's** production of Mendelssohn's Oratorio *Elijah*, the role of The Leader in Pacific Opera's Production of Kurt Weill's *Down in the Valley*, and Pangloss in a concert celebrating 100 years of Leonard Bernstein at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He also performed in the Ensemble for Patti LuPone's concert *Don't Monkey with Broadway* at the Sydney Opera House. In 2020 Timothy will be performing in Verdi's *La Traviata* on Sydney Harbour with **Opera Australia** and will be a soloist in **Willoughby Symphony Orchestra's** "Star-Spangled" Gala.

.....

### THE CONCERT

In late 2019 Maestro **Anthony Negus** had very generously offered to contribute a musical evening in honour of his recently deceased close friend and the Society's Past President **Jane Mathews** and it came to fruition in a remarkable concert on 27 February. Anthony was greatly assisted by his wife **Carmen Jakobi** and the programme was selflessly organised by the Wagner Society's past Vice president and recently appointed Artists' Liaison **Leona Geeves**, who recruited five exceptional singers. Anthony's commitment to nurturing young voices is very admirable and the Wagner Society in NSW is proud of the sponsorship and support it continues to give to young dramatic singers.



From left: Maestro Anthony Negus, Emily Turner, Hamish James, Eleanor Greenwood, Timothy Nunn and Laura Scandizzo

**Eleanor Greenwood** is now well established and we were honoured by her participation. She demonstrated her solid technique, beauty of tone and commitment to bringing out the full meaning of her characters' emotions.

**Laura Scandizzo** was one of Jane's favourite singers and she never disappoints with her strong stage presence and confidence. She brought the concert to an ecstatic conclusion with Isolde's *Liebestod*. This had followed on without a break from the Schubert Adagio played by Anthony – a fascinating and unexpected combination.

**Emily Turner** stepped in to perform at very short notice when Pamela Andrews was indisposed. Emily has a delightful bright and fresh voice and performed Marx's paeon to post-coital bliss with aplomb.

**Hamish James** is a real treasure – barely into his twenties he broke our hearts with his deeply felt interpretations of the Strauss lieder.

**Timothy Nunn** took control of the hall, equally at home with the passion of the Song to the Evening Star and the song by inebriated Father from *Hänsel und Gretel*

**In conclusion;** Nearly 100 members and friends were treated to a concert that would have greatly pleased Jane – sharing wonderful music and encouraging the next generation. Thanks again to Anthony, Carmen, Leona, Eleanor, Laura, Emily, Hamish and Timothy.

**Mike Day**



Event organiser Leona Geeves