

Sunday 30 January 2022, 2.00pm
Recital by sopranos Rebecca MacCallion
and Bronwyn Douglass,
and Bradley Kunda (pianist)
with Lieder by composers including
Brahms, Wolf, Wagner, Berg, Marx and
Richard Strauss

Mosman Art Gallery



Bronwyn Douglass, Bradley Kunda, Rebecca MacCallion and Leona Geeves

Report by Leona Geeves

Late last year I took advantage of the homecoming of two of our supported artists from Berlin, accompanist **Bradley Kunda** and his wife, soprano, **Rebecca MacCallion** who had retreated from Covid ravaged Berlin to ask if they could perform for us. They had returned to family in regional NSW to await the arrival of their firstborn child, a son. They had entertained us in a very beautiful and funny Christmas concert a few years ago along with their friend baritone Daniel Macey, who had won the Sydney Song Prize, which we supported. For January 30th, Bradley and Rebecca organised a melodic and nicely-arranged recital of Lieder by Richard Strauss, Hugo Wolf, Robert Schumann, Franz Schubert, Alban Berg and the rarely-heard, Joseph Marx. What a treat! It was to be held in the St Columba Centre at Woollahra.

Well Covid restrictions meant the church who owns the centre, would no longer allow us to use the church for singing on the 30th January, the day after was fine apparently!! Some very fast work by Vice President, Mike Day meant that fortunately we could transfer the concert to the **Mosman Art Gallery**. Then early this year Bradley flagged that the rigours of motherhood were preventing Rebecca from devoting the amount of time she wanted to learn the new repertoire for a solo recital. They asked if they could bring in their dear friend, **Bronwyn Douglass**, who had been long on my radar. She was turning from a warm voiced mezzo into a dramatic soprano and was offering to sing some of the *Wesendonck Lieder*. How lovely to have some Wagner sung by an up and coming singer. Bronwyn has won many prizes including **The Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngel Bel Canto Award** and **The Opera Foundation for young Australians Lady Fairfax New York Scholarship**.

Having a choice of voices meant Bronwyn opened the concert with two songs by Brahms followed by Rebecca with Hugo Wolf, and Bronwyn singing three of Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder*. Wagner himself called two of the songs "studies" for *Tristan und Isolde*, using for the first time certain musical ideas that are later developed in the opera. In "*Träume*" can be heard the themes of the love duet in Act 2, while "*Im Treibhaus*" (the last of the five to be composed) uses music later developed extensively for the prelude to Act 3 of *Tristan*.

Rebecca sang Austrian composer Joseph Marx's *Nachtgebet* and *Selige Nacht*. (Marx wasn't completely new to us, as Emily Turner had sung *Selige Nacht* at the Jane Mathews Memorial concert in 2020, and Bradley Cooper had sung both Lieder in our **Faeries & Vampyres** concert in 2013). Personally I was thrilled to have more Richard Strauss in the program, and we look forward to hearing more from them in the future and wish them all well in their careers.

I feel we need to add that a change in venue is totally out of our hands, particularly during Covid, as is a change in artists (which happens more

often than you would think for a range of reasons) and a change in repertoire. Our Webmaster had sent three ENews reminders flagging these changes, but not everyone had noted them. Please **always check on the website for venue locations**. The year's program listed in *The Wagner Quarterly* is a very rough guide, as it goes to press months before the events.

Revised program:

<p>JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833 – 1897) Von ewiger Liebe, Op. 43, No. 1 O kühler Wald, Op. 72, No. 3 Bronwyn Douglass</p>
<p>HUGO WOLF (1860 – 1903) Das verlassene Mägdlein (Mörke-Lieder) In dem Schatten meiner Lokken (Mörke-Lieder) Die Bekehrte (Goethe-Lieder) Rebecca MacCallion</p>
<p>RICHARD WAGNER (1813 – 1883) from Fünf Gedichte von Mathilde Wesendonck: Der Engel Im Treibhaus Träume Bronwyn Douglass</p>
<p>JOSEPH MARX (1882 - 1964) Nachtgebet Selige Nacht Rebecca MacCallion</p>
<p>ALBAN BERG (1885 – 1935) Die Nachtgall (Sieben frühe Lieder) Rebecca MacCallion</p>
<p>RICHARD STRAUSS (1864 - 1949) Cécilie, Op. 27, No. 2 Die Nacht, Op. 10, No. 3 Morgent, Op. 27, No. 4 Zueignung, Op. 10, No. 1 Bronwyn Douglass and Rebecca MacCallion</p>

About Rebecca MacCallion

Rebecca MacCallion holds a Bachelor of Music from the Australian National University, and is an alumna of the Pacific Opera Young Artist Program. She has performed the roles of Zerlina in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* for the Berlin summer Opernfest, Dido in Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and La Sorella Infermiera in Puccini's *Sour Angelica* with Pacific Opera. In 2018, Rebecca appeared in various supporting roles in the Sydney Philharmonic Choirs' 2018 production of *Candide* at the Sydney Opera House (directed by Mitchell Butel). Rebecca's recital credits include a solo concert in the Art Gallery of NSW's esteemed Resonate series, nationwide broadcasts in ABC Classic FM's Sunday Live series, and a recital for the Project Canción Español (Spain). Rebecca is a recipient of The Australia-Britain Society Award for Voice, and grants from the **Wagner Society in NSW** and the Friends of the ANU School of Music. She holds a Master's degree in speech and language pathology from the University of Sydney.

About Bronwyn Douglass

Bronwyn holds a Bachelor of Music from the Australian National University School of Music and a Masters of Music from the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. She also attended the Lisa Gasteen National Opera School for three consecutive years from 2013-2015 and the

Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto in 2018 on scholarship. Bronwyn is the proud winner of some of Australia's most prestigious awards including the Joan Sutherland and Richard Bonyngel Bel Canto Award and The Opera Foundation for Young Australians *Lady Fairfax New York Scholarship*. She was also the Amelia Joscelyne Memorial Scholar with the Melba Opera Trust from 2016-2017 which allowed her to work in masterclass with many internationally acclaimed artists including Dame Felicity Lott, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Stuart Skelton, and Yvonne Kenny AM. In 2019, Bronwyn performed in Opera Australia's *Don Giovanni*, study covered the role of Adalgisa in Melbourne Opera's *Norma* and sang in concert with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs in Chorus Oz: Ode to Joy (broadcast on ABC) and with Teddy Tahu Rhodes in *Opera Under the Stars*. In 2018, Bronwyn debuted as Rosina in Co-Opera's regional tour of *The Barber of Seville*. She then proceeded to undertake significant overseas study thanks to substantial awards won in 2017, including two months in London working with teachers and coaches from The Royal Opera and three months in New York working with teachers and coaches from The Juilliard School and The Metropolitan Opera. In 2021, Bronwyn had the pleasure of working with Opera Australia in their productions of *Ernani*, *Tosca* and Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour *La Traviata*. She was set to perform in Opera Australia's winter season of *Attila*, *Otello* and *The Tales of Hoffman* and the Brisbane season, performing in *Aida*, *Götterdämmerung* and covering Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. These productions, unfortunately, had to be postponed due to Covid-19.

About Bradley Kunda

Bradley Kunda is a unique musical talent whose career has seen him specialise in both classical guitar and collaborative piano performance, working across chamber music, opera, art song, and contemporary classical music. Bradley started his career as a classical guitarist, and for ten years was a member of Australia's premier guitar quartet Guitar Trek. His commercial recordings on the Naxos, ABC Classics and Soundset Recordings labels have earned him critical acclaim. Following nearly two years of study with the late conductor and educator Richard Gill OA, Bradley turned to his second instrument, the piano. He has since enjoyed collaborations with several outstanding Australian singers including Christine Douglas, Green-Room award winner Nicholas Jones, and numerous talented singers within the Pacific Opera Young Artist Program. Bradley has served as répétiteur for the North Sea Vocal Academy (Denmark), the New Zealand Singing School, and the Berlin Opera Academy, the latter for which his attendance was supported financially by the **Wagner Society in NSW**. In 2020 Bradley relocated to Berlin, where he continued his studies in collaborative piano and operatic Korrepetition with Ara Khachaturian and Philip Mayers. Bradley holds a PhD in classical guitar performance from the Australian National University (ANU), and a Master's of Performance in collaborative piano from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He has held teaching positions at the ANU School of Music, and the University of

Newcastle School of Creative Arts. Bradley is also a designer and currently works as a Senior Designer for MuseScore, a music notation program used by over 5 million people.