

Sunday 30 January 2022, 2.00pm

**Recital by Rebecca MacCallion,
Bronwyn Douglass and Bradley Kunda
with Lieder by composers including
Brahms, Wolf, Wagner, Berg, Marx and
Richard Strauss**

*A Wagner Society in NSW in-person event at
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.