



The British Music Society of Victoria existing as
LYREBIRD MUSIC SOCIETY INC.

ABN 94 676 630 858 & Inc. A0044099C

Founded in 1921 by Mrs Louise Dyer

Patron Marion Louise Poynter

PRESIDENT: Sarah Cuming

Tel: (03) 9380 2434

SECRETARY: Sally Hutchison

PO Box 947

ELTHAM VIC 3095

Tel: (03) 9431 0458

sec@lyrebirdmusicsociety.org.au

www.lyrebirdmusicsociety.org.au

SOCIETY NEWS

October 2011

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello fellow members,

On September 24th at St John's Southgate, Ensemble Liaison entertained us with a witty rendition of Beethoven's Clarinet Trio, followed by the premier performance of the LMS 90th Anniversary Commission *A Lyrebird in Paris* by Jane Hammond, and finished with a remarkable trio by Paul Schoenfield. Despite all three musicians being unwell and exhausted from a packed schedule of touring and concerts, they were in fine form. The whole recital was a great success, and a fitting tribute to the Society's 90 years and to Louise Hanson-Dyer.

We held our annual Lyrebird Commission recital on 2nd October. Calvin Bowman was commissioned to write a song cycle for piano and soprano and performed the work, *Now Touch the Air Softly* with Jacqueline Porter. Other works on the programme included songs by Lizst and Schumann, and a piano sonata by Beethoven. We also heard another song cycle by Calvin with words by Michael Leunig. Many people seemed to be away or busy, so we had a small audience, but everyone enjoyed the occasion, and Jacqueline and Calvin gave a beautiful performance.

The acoustics at Wyselaski Hall have been dampened by the instillation of special panels on the walls near the ceiling. Everyone I spoke to agreed that the sound in the hall is better. The management at the Centre have asked for feedback, so if you would like to comment after the next recital, please come and speak to a member of the Committee.

I look forward to seeing you at the November recital.

Sarah Cuming

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Society extends a warm welcome to our new member, **Leanda Smith**.

We have had mail returned for **Carol Watson**. If you know Carol could you please get in touch with the Secretary.

6 NOVEMBER

A Family Affair- piano for one, two, four & six hands

Igor Machlak - Olga Kharitonova - Iounna Machlak

Bach: Chaconne in D minor for violin solo

Brahms: Walzer, Opus 39 for one piano: 4 hands

Brahms: Rondo from Piano Quartet in G minor, Op.25

Glinka: Valse - Fantasia (arr. by Liapunov)

Rachmaninov: Valse and Romance: 6 hands

Tchaikovsky-Pletnev: 4 Pieces from Concert Suite after 'Sleeping Beauty' for piano solo

Gavrilin: 4 Pieces from 'Sketches for Piano Duet'

Igor Machlak was born in Belarus and introduced to piano when almost nine. He was accepted into the Academy of Music's School for gifted children in Minsk, Belarus. Igor went on to gain his degree at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory with first class honours. Together with wife, Olga Kharitonova, he completed his postgraduate study at the Conservatory.

Since arriving in Australia in 1995, Igor has established himself as one of Australia's leading performers and as a teacher and mentor of young pianists. He teaches piano, chamber music and co-ordinates the Piano Duet ensemble at the Conservatorium of Music, University of Melbourne. Igor is also an examiner for Australian Music Examination Board and a visiting teacher at the Australian National Academy of Music.

Olga Kharitonova began music training at the age of six and made her debut at the Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow at eleven. Olga gained her degree at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory with first class honours.

As both soloist and chamber music specialist, she was a multi award winner and appeared on television and radio in Russia and abroad.

Since 1998, Olga has been a member of the piano staff at the University of Melbourne. She has worked extensively throughout Asia, Australia and Russia, giving recitals, adjudicating, presenting master classes and workshops.

The **Igor and Olga Piano Duo** has won prizes at several national and international competitions, including the '*Balakirev*' in 1990, the '*Bellini*' in Italy in 1991 and a Piano Duo competition in Japan in 1994. The Duo is one of the leading ensembles in Australia, and has been broadcast on ABC and SBS radio.

Iounna Machlak was born in Russia and started piano at the age of seven. Iounna was nine when the family moved to Australia. It was only in Year 12, after visiting Moscow again, that Iounna decided she wanted to be a musician.

Iounna has completed Bachelor (Honours) and Masters Degrees in piano performance at the Conservatorium of Music, the University of Melbourne under the guidance of Professor Ian Holtham. She is currently in her first year of a Masters of Teaching degree at the University of Melbourne and teaches piano privately.

UTRECHT EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL REPORT

LMS members, Dan and Terry O'Keeffe, have been to Utrecht in the Netherlands attending the festival. Here are some of their thoughts about the experience.

Glorious music in old churches, delicious food in nearby cafes and restaurants, talking to locals while in the queue, visiting galleries to see works by artists from the region, exploring the local history and geography; these are the pleasures of festivals in Ballarat, Port Fairy, Woodend and Flinders, but with Utrecht these delights are so much richer.

The Utrecht Early Music Festival is 10 days of music from late August to Early September. Each year it features top singers and musicians from around the world, in recent years Emma Kirkby and Jordi Savall have performed at the festival. The theme of this year's festival was 'Rome: the Eternal City' with featured composers: Corelli, Palestrina, Frescobaldi and Du Fay, with Monteverdi and Handel and many others also getting an airing.

The program included orchestras, choirs, madrigal groups, ensembles, singers and instrumentalists. Each day there were about 20 events, ranging from concerts, to workshops, fringe events and carillon recitals, starting about 11am and going until after midnight. We chose to book three or four concerts each day, with one day of five concerts! By the end of that day, we were quite exhausted, but exhilarated.

The quality of the performances was something rarely seen in Australia. You could not wipe the grins off our faces as we walked out of yet another amazing concert.

The highlight for us was the quality and passion of the madrigal groups, some were quite young, but no less assured.

The venues, stunning old churches with marvellous acoustics, were within easy walking distance of each other.

Indeed one could have spent the whole week just walking from one's apartment to concerts and back again, but an excellent bus service was handy at the end of the day.

The people were very friendly, their English skills were excellent and they readily engaged in conversation. Many had some link with Australia. Most of the waiters we met had backpacked through Australia and were keen to reminisce about their experiences.

Utrecht is only about 30 minutes by train from Amsterdam, Delft and The Hague, where one can view works by their local artists, such as Rembrandt, Vermeer, Van Gogh and Escher, and still get back for an afternoon concert. Utrecht itself has some fine museums, it even has Europe's only gallery of aboriginal art, which houses a worthy collection, including some works by significant painters. The video on aboriginal history and political development of aboriginals in Australia, and the nature of the art was very comprehensive and up to date.

Utrecht is a very old city. It has been the religious centre of the Netherlands since the eighth century and many of its buildings date from the early Middle Ages. It is surrounded by a canal with a few smaller canals weaving through the city. So we found much to explore in the mornings before the concerts start. There are also plenty of picturesque places to eat at along the main canal, as well as fine restaurants elsewhere in the town.

The quality of the music, the gentle quiet pace of the city (the dominant mode of transport is the bike, it was not unusual to see an elderly couple get on their bikes after a late night concert) and the rich cultural experience on offer, encourages us to consider returning.

The theme of the 2012 festival is 'From Sweelinck to Bach', which spans the Baroque era. If you want to know more about the Utrecht Early Music Festival, we would be delighted to answer your queries.

SPONSORS

Thank you to our sponsors and supporters for their contribution to the Society's 90th anniversary year activities.

 **CITY OF MELBOURNE**



Readings® BOOKS
MUSIC
FILM
MELBOURNE'S OWN SINCE 1969

 **3MBS103.5FM**
Fine Music - Classically Melbourne