



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

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SOCIETY NEWS

March 2011

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our 90th anniversary year concert program got off to a great start and it was good to see so many of you, our loyal members and friends enjoying the music and atmosphere of our new venue.

Those who attended our March concert would have noticed the banner and stands. These are part of the promotional funding provided by the City of Melbourne.

If you missed the March concert you can read the review by John Perry later in the newsletter.

The Society extends a warm welcome to our new members, Lynette Di Lazzaro, Lyn Pike, Peter McIntyre, Rob Cane, Maureen McDermott, Ena Witis and Marianne Haughton.



In keeping with our aim to increase artists' fees next year the Committee is asking members and guests to contribute a gold coin donation for programs to help us meet our target.

We are hoping that the two Special events for 2011 will also raise some money to assist the Society in increasing artists' fees. I encourage all members to book early to attend these wonderful concerts for the very small price of \$10 each. Tickets will be on sale at each concert.

Your Committee has also applied for a grant from Arts Victoria to help fund the 90th Anniversary Commission concert at St Johns Southgate. We hope to hear the result in June.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our next concert on 3 April.

Sarah Cuming

1 APRIL – TUNE INTO 3MBS 103.5FM

Christine Stevenson has been invited by 3MBS FM to give a live to air performance from their studio at Abbotsford at 1.30pm on Friday, 1 April. If you enjoy piano music tune your radio into 103.5 for this 45 minute program.

APRIL CONCERT PROGRAM

3 April – Christine Stevenson (piano)

With 2011 being the bicentenary of Liszt's birth (1811-1886), Christine has called her program for our April concert "*Liszt - Years of Pilgrimage*", it will feature:

Chopin/Liszt - 'Printemps' from Chants Polonais Op.74, No.2

Mendelssohn - Songs Without Words Op.19, No.1

Alkan – Chant Op.38, No.1

Liszt – From Années de Pèlerinage II - Italie

Sonetto 47 del Petrarca

Sonetto 104 del Petrarca

Sonetto 123 del Petrarca

Après une Lecture de Dante - Fantasia quasi Sonata

INTERVAL

Thomas Hewitt Jones - Four Piano Miniatures

Silent Moon

By the Sea

Dream

Summer Evening

Liszt - From Années de Pèlerinage I and III

Au lac de Wallenstadt

Au bord d'une source

Les jeux d'eaux à la Villa d'Este

Liszt - From Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses

Funérailles

Liszt - Mephisto Waltz No.1

Christine Stevenson enjoys a distinguished career as a piano recitalist and concerto soloist throughout the UK and abroad. Her concerts continually draw critical acclaim for her virtuosity, musicianship, and her ability to engage with audiences of all ages.

Born in Melbourne, Christine graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts with distinction, being twice awarded the Gaitskell prize for the most outstanding student. She studied with Gordon McEwan, Roy Shepherd, Stephen McIntyre and the celebrated English pianist, Ronald Smith, also participating in masterclasses given by Sergei Dorensky, Ciccolini and Perlemuter.

Winner of the prestigious Dom Polski Chopin Competition, Christine's wide experience includes the premiere CD recording of Alkan's *Rondo Brillant* with members of the London Mozart Players, live and recorded broadcasts for the ABC and BBC, a period as Musician in Residence at the Chisholm Institute, performances in a film featuring chamber music of Margaret Sutherland and Helen Gifford, and an Arts Council tour of northern Australia in collaboration with selected actors, a visual artist and a dancer in multi-arts presentations.

You can find out more about Christine Stevenson by visiting her website <http://christinestevenson.net/> Christine also has a blog about piano music, those who write it and those who play it. Her blog site can be found at <http://notesfromapianist.wordpress.com/>

MARCH CONCERT REVIEW

For our first concert we had two members of the Sutherland Trio; Caroline Almonte (piano) and Elizabeth Sellars (violin). The programme of music had been thoughtfully chosen as Margaret Sutherland (1897 - 1984) was closely associated with the British Music Society (as we were called until 2008). Elizabeth and Caroline opened their programme with Sutherland's "Nocturne for violin and piano". This piece has some beautifully smooth passages for the violin against a rippling background from the piano.

To this reviewer the highlight of the afternoon's programme was Elgar's Violin Sonata in E minor (Op.82). Each movement explores some of the plethora of possibilities of the two instruments. The unhurried, almost elegiac middle movement "Romance" was strongly affecting with its unusually haunting rhythms. Elizabeth and Caroline are to be congratulated on their authoritative account of this fine work of Elgar's.

The first half of the programme concluded with Caroline giving us Grainger's piano interpretation of 'Love's Ramble' from the second act of Richard Strauss' magnificent opera "Der Rosenkavalier".

After interval we heard Liszt's "Gondoliera e Tarantella" from his revised "Venezia e Napoli" suite. The two pieces displayed contrasting moods, which could be described as languorous and frantic!

Rebecca Clarke's "Midsummer Moon for violin and piano" featured some interesting glissando effects and was in general a pleasing work. The afternoon's music concluded with Paul Stanhope's "Agnus Dei (after the bushfires)". This began and ended with the arresting sound of a coin being scraped along one of the bass strings in the piano, accompanied by extremely high and sustained notes from the violin. Especially at the end, the effect was of an agonised accompaniment to the closing words of the Agnus Dei in a mass for the dead:

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem sempiternam (Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest eternal).

With the simple "orchestration" of violin and piano, the music has a powerful effect. One really felt privileged to hear it. Thank you Elizabeth and Caroline for that eloquent conclusion to our first concert for 2011.

WEBSITE UPDATE

Our website administrator and committee member, Dan O'Keeffe has been busy giving the website a new look. The site, www.lyrebirdmusicsociety.org.au, has been operating for just over 12 months and recently received a new logo drawn by Dan's wife Terry, and a new background colour.

The site is being increasingly visited. During February about 45 people a day accessed our website. If you haven't visited the site, these are some of its features:

- Program: the concert program for each concert along with a photo of the performers and their biographies.
- Venue: map and directions to our new venue, Wyselaskie Auditorium.
- History: a brief history of the Society and also of its founder, Louise Hanson Dyer, with several links to other sources.
- Photo Gallery: photos from previous concerts.
- Commission: information about the Lyrebird Commission including previous winners.
- Music Links: a comprehensive set of annotated web links for the ardent music lover, including:
 - What's on in Melbourne,
 - Festivals and Concert Series,
 - Competitions and Conferences,
 - Museums,
 - Listening to Music and viewing Recitals on the Internet,
 - Downloading Classical Music and FM Music,
 - Performers and Performing Companies,
 - Music Shops, Other Music Societies and Educational Institutions.
- Constitution: the constitution of the Society.
- Newsletters: previous newsletters.
- Committee: membership and contact details of Committee members.

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