

Flinders Quartet Newsletter

August 2007



Work

Play

Hello again!

Party: It was lovely to chat to so many of you at the Flinders Friends' party a few weeks ago. It is really great for us to get to know our supporters better and to hear your feedback, hopefully building better relationships along the way, building on our mutual love of chamber music. Vivienne Ritchie (Delatite Winery) was, as ever, a generous hostess, and the four of us thank her most gratefully.

Awards: So much has happened, both professionally and personally, since our last Newsletter we hardly know where to begin. We were so thrilled to receive our 2006 Limelight Award in December, as runners up to the Australian Chamber Orchestra in the "Best Chamber Music Performance" category. This award we won jointly with Halcyon's Alison Morgan and Jenny Duck-Chong, our collaborators on the "Star Clusters" program. And now a work on that program, Gillian Whitehead's "Bright Forms Returned", which we presented in both Melbourne and Sydney has been nominated for Best Performance of an Australian Composition at APRA's 2007 Classical Music Awards. We hope to work with Halcyon again in the future when their and our schedules permit.

Travels to and from the Opera House: Another collaboration we think the audience loved as much as we did was with Duo Sol at the March 2007 inaugural Melba Festival in the glorious Yarra Valley. Well, the weather wasn't glorious, but we kept warm playing with Mikki Tsunoda and Caroline Almonte in the Riddling Room at Domain Chandon. In a repeat of our Port Fairy collaboration, we played the wildly expansive Chausson Concerto for Piano, Violin and String Quartet. What a show piece! We also took the opportunity for our first public performance of the Schubert Quartetsatz which we have now added to our repertoire.

Our subscription season opener featured a Richard Mills world premier and Ligeti, followed, for good measure, by Brahms. We took the Mills and Brahms to Flinders' first ever Sydney Opera House performance, as part of the new Utzon Room series. The renovated Utzon Room is a lovely intimate space for a chamber performance with the most fantastic view for the audience out over Sydney harbour. We had to work hard to keep their attention!

After a quick visit to Bateman's Bay we returned home and were proud to present a fund raising concert on behalf of the Jacob's Well organisation. Jacob's Well provides support for desperately poor children in India. In bringing the joy of Beethoven to our neighbours in Kyneton we hope to have played a role in bringing comfort to children living in poverty.

As we write we are returning home from beautiful Bangalow, just a few kilometres west of Byron Bay in the northern New South Wales “Sea Change” belt. We took part in the festival there at the invitation of Artistic Director, Paul Dean, (clarinettist with the Southern Cross Soloists). Paul and Erica recently toured together with the ACO. We played two evening concerts and then joined in a Sunday chamber orchestra presentation. We were really pleased that our performance of the Ligeti Quartet No. 1 seemed to go down very well with the audience.



Europe Beckons: After this (and we can hardly wait), it is the countdown to our European tour, with only three more concerts, all in Victoria, before departure. We first spend some time with our mentor, Gabor Takacs-Nagy, then to Sweden for three concerts, followed by four concerts in the UK. We travel from Skipton in North Yorkshire (Skipton Music Society), up north to Glasgow for the Kilmardinny Music Club, and then back down to Hayward’s Heath in Sussex, for the Music Society there. Finally, we present a contemporary program for the Cheltenham Music Society. We hope to

have a BLOG going during the tour. Watch this space! But should all else fail, we will let you know how it all went as soon as we return. Our plan is, hopefully, to return to Europe in 2009.

Personal: On a more personal note, December 2006 saw Erica wed Cam at a delightful ceremony. Erica’s (perhaps we should say “their”) house was completed in time, but the happy couple had to bow to difficult schedules, so it wasn’t until July that they managed time for a honeymoon. Erica and Cam recently returned from Europe, where, amongst many highlights they had to suffer 40 degree heat while walking the sights of Florence.

Zoe’s new house was also completed. Domestic bliss, it seems, is having the right effect, since she subsequently got a lovely review for her solo cello performance at an evening of Bach and Britten. And then another invitation turned up from Melbourne Musicians to perform the Pleyel Cello Concerto!

Helen continues her Feldenkreis studies while Matt is working hard, as ever, both in his MSO role and on his golf swing.

We look forward to seeing you all again soon!

Erica, Matt, Helen & Zoe

