

MEDIA INFORMATION

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QUEENSLAND SOPRANO WINS 2009 MBS YOUNG PERFORMER OF THE YEAR AWARD AND \$10,000 TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

The winner of the 2009 MBS National Young Performers' Award, was soprano, **Milica Ilic**, 25, Queensland. The competition took place on Saturday 28 November in Pilgrim Church, Adelaide. Other competitors were: Michael Byrne, piano Victoria, Robert Macfarlane, tenor South Australia and Emma Moore, soprano, NSW.

Milica's prize winning performance included three operatic arias, "Ch'i bel sogno" (Puccini *La Rondine*), "Bel raggio lusinghier" (Rossini *Semiramide*) and "Dis-moi que je suis" (Massenet *Thaïs*).

The judges were Warwick D. Ross (Chair) – General Manager of the Elizabethan Theatre Trust - and distinguished South Australian musicians, Timothy Sexton and Dr Jula Szuster. The \$10,000 Travelling Scholarship was donated by the Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

On behalf of the judges, Warwick Ross, praised all the contestants for their fine performances. The panel believed that at a future time with continued experience and exposure, any of the four finalists could be the winner. He looked forward to the possibility of seeing all three singers on the same operatic stage in the not too distant future.

Serbian born, Milica Ilic, migrated to New Zealand in 1996. She began singing lessons with Professor David Griffiths. As a member of the Young Friends of Opera New Zealand, she performed as a soloist and in the chorus. Whilst appearing on the television series *Dreams Come True*, Milica met Dame Kiri Te Kanawa and subsequently attended a weekend workshop hosted by the renowned soprano.

Milica is presently undertaking studies in a Bachelor of Music Degree at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU). She also studied German at the Goethe-Institut in Berlin (2005) and voice with Leandra Overmann (Professor of Singing at the Academy of Music in Würzburg in Germany).

She has won the 2008 Australian National Eisteddfod, the Dame Joan Sutherland Vocal Competition (at the youngest recorded age of 19), the Elwyn Barber Memorial Encouragement Trophy, as well as a two-time winner of both the Margaret Nixon Vocal Competition and the South East Queensland Aria and Concerto Competition (2006 and 2008). She was also a three-time semi-finalist at the Australian Singing Competition (2002, 2003 and 2005).

Her performances include the roles of Papagena in *Die Zauberflöte*, Cupid in *Semele* and Nannetta in *Falstaff* (for QCGU). This year, Milica will perform the role of Emma in the youth opera *Dirty Apple* and perform in the chorus of *La traviata* (for Opera Queensland).

For more information about the 2009 MBS Young Performer of the Year Award contact: the convenor Diana Harris on 0407 818 838. For information about future Awards consult 5MBS on 8323 6566 or check the website www.5mbs.com. The South Australian selection of performers for the state Final of the Young Performer of the Year Award is conducted by the Adelaide Eisteddfod Society.