

## **Hobart Baroque reception Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014.**

Well good evening everybody and welcome to Government House to this reception being held on the eve of Hobart Baroque. We are so privileged that this incredible musical event is being held here in Hobart for the second year running. The inaugural Hobart Baroque, held last year, was a huge success and there is every indication that this one is going to be even better than the first one.

This evening's reception is being held to welcome and thank Artistic Director, Leo Schofield and Executive Director, Jarrod Carland, for bringing this musical feast here again. It is also being held to welcome from overseas and interstate all the artists who will make the most beautiful music for our enjoyment. From New York there are the opera singers who will perform Handel's Orlando and there is Julia Lezhneva, the Russian coloratura who will perform with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. There will be five recitals at the Hobart Town Hall each preceded by a mini-recital by Tasmanian soloists and ensembles. The day after tomorrow a Barcelona-born counter tenor will add the Federation Concert Hall Hobart to the Barbican, Teatro Real in Madrid, Le Théâtre de Champs Elysees, and the New York Lincoln Centre to the list of venues in which he has sung Handel's arias. It will be an incredible week concluding with a brilliant collaboration with MONA, "An Ottoman Feast" – an evening of Exotic Food and music.

Hobart Baroque is attracting people from all over Australia and overseas as well. We are honoured by the presence here at Government House of the Governor of New South Wales,

Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, who like many others has travelled south especially to attend Hobart Baroque. And a week today a Master Class for young Australian singers will be held here in this ballroom.

As it says in the programme, "Throughout the western world hundreds of musicians have turned to the baroque to satisfy and ever growing audience demand for this opulent and exotic form of artistic expression." We are so very fortunate that they have turned their attention to Tasmania.

We are also very fortunate that so many people and businesses as well as the State Government have recognised the cultural and musical value of Hobart Baroque and have given generously to provide financial support to make it happen.

**MU** I would like to add my very warm welcome to that of my husband's. Hobart Baroque 2013 is still fresh in my memory. For me it was an unforgettable feast of delectable music performed by superb artists. As an opera loving teenager, growing up in Hobart in the 60's I spent many hours on what my father called the *hard bum benches* in the Gods at the Theatre Royal because in those days Opera Australia periodically came to Hobart. When Opera Australia stopped coming here I set my sights on the cheap seats at Covent Garden on rare trips home to visit family in England. But never in my wildest dreams did I think that one day I would attend a Royal Opera House, Covent Garden production at the Theatre Royal; a first for Australia and for me the world had truly come

to Hobart; as it has again this year; from Russia, from Spain and from New York's Glimmerglass. It is difficult to adequately thank Leo Schofield and Jarrad Carland and all those involved for bringing us this unique festival.

Here at Government House we like to offer our guests a musical treat at receptions, as a celebration and promotion of the wealth of creative talent we have on the Island. The fabulous acoustic in this beautiful Ballroom makes it a treat to listen to music and to perform here because the sound you make comes back to you enveloping you in your own performance. It is enormously encouraging.

Tonight as a pre-taste of Hobart Baroque 2014 we have a very special artist - Jennifer Marten -Smith. Jennifer grew up in Tasmania and at age 12 was invited to study with Professor Gediga-Glombitza at the Musikhochschule in Cologne. She made her public debut with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra at age 16 and at age 18 was the youngest graduate of the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music being awarded a high distinction as a double major in piano performance and accompanying. From 1997 -2001 she was repetiteur at the Staatsoper Hanover and from 2001 – 2012 a full time member of the music staff with Opera Australia. We are fortunate that Jennifer is now living in Hobart and of course is in great demand.

As a fitting toast to Hobart Baroque 2014 Jennifer will play for you a short selection from Bach's Goldberg Variations. Written eight years before Bach's death in 1750, it perhaps outshone

his other works for keyboard as far as contrapuntal complexity and performing technique is concerned. Its monothematic and contrapuntal conception set the scene for Bach's final keyboard works *The Musical Offering* and the *Art of Fugue*.

So ladies and gentlemen your full attention please for just ten minutes as we listen to Jennifer Marten-Smith play from Bach's Goldberg Variations.