
ERATO

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN INTERVARSITY CHORAL SOCIETIES ASSOCIATION

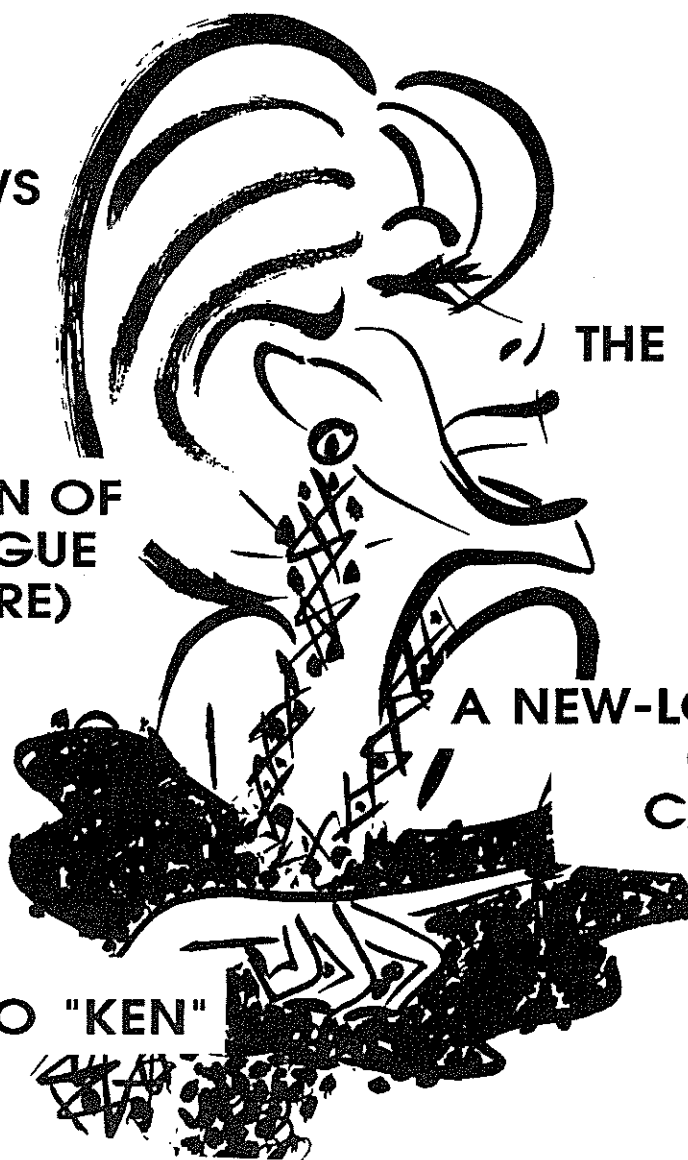
**NEWS, VIEWS
REVIEWS**

**NO MENTION OF
KYLIE MINOGUE
(EXCEPT HERE)**

**THE NEW EXECUTIVE
SPEAKS OUT!!**

**A NEW-LOOK ERATO IS
ON THE WAY--
CAN YOU HELP?**

FAREWELL TO "KEN"



WIN \$1 000 000!!!!-----SEE PAGE 17 FOR DETAILS.

AT MY DISK

It is at once my pleasant duty and an edifying opportunity as incoming Erato editor to thank my predecessor, Rob Kay, for all the work he has put into our newsletter throughout his term of editorship. Robert has set a high standard which we are keen to follow and has laid the groundwork for further developments, some of which I would like to discuss here.

As the newsletter of all AICSA-affiliated choirs Erato functions to entertain and inform, to report the plans and activities of each Society and to provide a forum for discussion of issues which we feel are important as University choristers. To date Erato has performed these functions well, but within certain limitations which are set by the form of articles contributed by correspondents from each society, the size and layout of the newsletter and, most importantly, by the constraints set by production and mailing costs. It is to Robert's credit that he has consistently produced Erato within the confines of a suffocating budget and has ensured that contributions are treated fairly and printed with a minimum of trimming.

However, many of us believe that AICSA is at a crucial stage in its history in a number of ways. Firstly, a number of University and other Tertiary institution choirs are interested in affiliating, and it is hoped that AICSA will continue to attract the interest of others making it much more broadly representative of undergraduate choirs than has previously been the case. Secondly, recent Intervarsity Festivals, have brought the Choral Intervarsity movement to the attention of national organisations such as the ABC, various bodies which coordinate the Arts Festivals in capital cities, the Aus-

tralian Bicentennial Authority (this year) and, of course, the Australia Council and various state government arts funding organisations. Intervarsity Festival choirs have a good reputation with those conductors, musicians and arts administrators with whom we have worked in the past (many of whom remember their own involvement in IV from their undergraduate days). In particular, the

ABC is keen to work with Choral Intervarsity to produce major choral works on a scale which would normally be beyond the scope of either the ABC or IV alone. Such cooperative ventures are, of course, wonderful opportunities for choristers but also entail a great deal of care on the part of IV Committees in order to present IV as reliable and well-organised, as well as ensuring the autonomy of the Intervarsity movement.

As far as Erato is concerned, these developments suggest the need to reassess the scope of our newsletter, its means of production and the standard of its contents.

We all enjoy reading about what our friends in other capital cities are organising and doing, but it seems that I am not alone in feeling that Erato can do more than simply report, in what often

appears to be an idiosyncratic jargon, "That is/was/will be the concert that is/was/will be". Although this edition will continue the present format I would like to put forward some suggestions regarding the format and content of Erato and would greatly appreciate responses, suggestions and criticisms from everyone for whom Erato is produced.

Format: I am currently working out what will be the most cost-efficient format for Erato. Now that it is being produced in Sydney it is possible that increases in production costs may be offset by relative decreases in the cost of



postage. Perhaps a newspaper-style format will allow more space without a great increase in printing costs.

Contents: What do choristers want to read? I think that it might be possible to treat what has formerly constituted the bulk of Erato's content (ie. society news) to a section of the same title and occupying about half to three-quarters of the total space of the newsletter. In addition to this I would like to be able to expand the Letters to the Editor section to provide a forum for choristers to raise issues which they believe to be important to AICSA, to discuss problems or activities which they feel relate to their own societies which may be of interest to others and, in general, to provide a forum for the exchange of views about various practical concerns. Most societies are run by committees consisting of undergraduates with much enthusiasm but perhaps little experience and such a forum could provide interesting and useful information for all.

I would also like to cover various aspects of choral life which are not yet dealt with in Erato in a series of Feature articles, written either by choristers with some experience in certain areas (such as concert managing, publicity, entertainments, to name a few) or with special interest in particular types of music, choral or otherwise, perhaps with an emphasis on aspects of music performance. These are put forward only as suggestions, as I am sure there are topics which we would all find interesting, if only someone would write on them and there were a place in which they could be read.

For instance, it would be very interesting to read about the music which is to feature in future Intervarsity Festivals, as many choristers will not be familiar with these pieces (such articles would also function as publicity for the Festivals in question). Perhaps a series of short pieces about the conductors of each society would also be relevant, or articles (with photos) covering some of the more-or less-lurid social activities which occupy us at least as much as does singing.

However, the space which can be devoted to such proposed articles is dependent upon funding, which is at present slim, to say the least. Unfortunately, this is something of a chicken-and-egg problem, as the chances of expanding and developing Erato depend on money and it is difficult to attract money (say, in the form of advertising or subscriptions) unless the newsletter is already varied in content, professional in layout and of a high journalistic standard. I am currently preparing an application to the Australia Council for funding of Erato, but the chances of receiving a grant is, to say the least, slim. It might be possible to attract some advertising from national businesses (such as music publishers, record chain stores or university co-op bookshops). If anyone has any contacts in these or other areas I would be delighted to hear from you--as soon as possible!

But it all comes down to what we want from Erato, so it is

in anticipation of a flood of replies brimming with exciting path-breaking and sensible suggestions that I conclude this editorial and welcome you to the soon-to-be-new Erato.

Stephen Schafer, EDITOR.

SOCIETY

NEWS

MUCS

Dearly beloved eratophiles,
Hello. We miss your charming faces, your hugs, your cuddles, your smiles and stimulating discussions (both in public and private languages) your harmonies and your laughter. Yet again IV causes all to curse the breadth of Australia--but never mind, you'll just all have to navigate yourselves to Melbourne Minifest!

At present, however, we are well into third term (or just starting the second half of second semester) and Melbourne has just been hit by earth tremors from MUCS AGM repercussions (syncopated, of course). The line-up has resulted thus:

President: Neils Stenstra (and to quote his acceptance speech, "sucked in!")

Vice-president and social sec., due to a constitutional amendment: Anna Gifford (ragerama!)

Secretary: Ms. Jane Q. Staley (can't type but she looks good)

Camp Off.: Robyn Starkey (she has vowed to avoid exploding ovens)

Librarian: Michael McLaughlin

Pub. Off.: Me! (Kate Gorrington-Smith)

General Ass.: Stefania Bini

I.P.P.: Eric Polli (uncontested)

and replacing the longest-running SCUM Editorship ever (vis: Gorrington-Staley-Smith) we have the three stooges: Simon Barfbag, Amanda Johnson and Eric Charles Clarence Hubert Polli! Talk about entropy!

Apart from these exciting (alarming?) changes, MUCS is rolling towards the third term concert, which will include spunky pieces like "The Seasonings" by P.D.Q. Bach, Britten's lovely "A Hymn to the Virgin", "Banquet Fugue" by John Rutter and Mozart's "The Nightingale".

We're not quite sure how they'll hold together, but it sure is fun trying! The concert will be sung without an orchestra (next year we plan to go one strap further and try experimental choral works that don't require a choir, either.)

This term's excitement for the little MUCettes includes a camp (Gosh no! Really?) and an annual dinner organised by the lovely Ms. Anna Gifford at a Turkish Restaurant, held on 8 October.

Apart from that, friends, choristers and countrypeople, if I may be so presumptuous, I would like to congratulate and thank the Sydney-ites for organising such a simply spiffing IV. I would also like to thank Rob Kay for the excellent Eratos he produced in the past and congratulate (again) Stephen Schafer on his new position (how many is that now?) as Erato editor. Remember Stephen, deadlines are a neo-fascist construct of the patriarchy to be subverted rather than perpetrated [No, they're not-ED.] (well, that is just the opinion of two humble ex-SCUM editors...)!

So, take care and see you at Minifest (maybe)!

Lots of love,

Kate Gorringer-Smith.

SCUNA

Greetings from sunny (really!) Canberra, where not a lot has happened since our last eraticle. We are still rehearsing a programme of Bach (Jesu, Meine Freude), Kodaly (Jesus and the Traders), Distler (the name of the piece escapes me but it's variations on Es Ist Eine Rose, and rather nice, too), Byrd (Haec Dies, with a very high phrase for bases that "is on no account to be given to tenors", so there) and Rubbra (It Fell on a Summer's Day and I Care Not For these Madrigals\Ladies) for performance on October 14.

The big news is that SCUNA is hosting the Post-IV Party (yay!) on October 29, an almost Halloween fancy-dress party. Come as your favourite ghoul, goblin, ghost, etc. Details will have been circulated to societies by the time you read this (given the short time involved, it'll probably be over by the time you read this. Did you have fun?).

TUMS

Greetings fellow choristers,

Four weeks post IV and it summons up all my strength to lift this pen and bring you all deep tidings from the deep south. While some of the more fortunate and rich TUMmies amongst us trooped up to Expo we lesser mortals plunged headlong into the daily grind. Needless to say, those of us with enough of the artistic spirit to drop exams, drop work and stuff our corksies into our suitcases had a bloody Mahlerious time at IV!

Many, many thanks and bravos must go to the IV Committee-not only for the years of preparation and sleepless nights that went into those two short weeks, but also for putting themselves out on the day to make our stay in Smog City comfortable, enjoyable and hassle free.

TUMS came back down to earth with a thudissimo in preparation for Handel's Solomon on September 10 at the

Stanley Burbury Theatre in conjunction with the Conservatorium Orchestra and Chorale. It was a great success and confirmed in the minds of every TUMmie that, "Yes! There is life after 'Alles Vergangliche'" By the time this goes to print we will have participated in the Salamanca Arts Festival as the support act for the Brisbane-based vocal ensemble 'Jones and Co.'

The cultural, social and ideologically unsound highlight of the TUMS calendar occurred on Friday 16 September in the form of the Annual General Meeting and Grand Dinner. This gala extravaganza was held at the Ritz at Hadleys Orient Hotel and was followed by the PAGMP incorporating a spectacular floor show at Adam Marshall's residence. The highlight of the evening was the appearance of a 'mystery woman'. [I hope the 'Big Girl' didn't cry--ED.]

The office bearers for 1989 were voted in unanimously in record-breaking speed. These are:

President: Geoffrey James

Vice-president: Charlotte McKercher

Treasurer: Simon Beswick

Secretary: Stephanie McDonald

Publicity Officer: Megan Davies

Concert Manager: Beth Coombe

Librarian: Irena Jakob

Social Secretary: Sally Leary

Archivist: Christopher McDermott

Musical Director: Paul Oxley

The last word must go to our resident IPP Chris Button who in rehearsal came out with this gem:

"That little bit under the women-we can't quite seem to get it. We've never done it before". So, it's goodbye until the next enthralling installment and lots of love to everyone-especially ex-patriot Brian Leaver, who by now will have made his impenetrable [sic] mark on SCUNA.

Bye for now and happy swotting,

Charlotte McKercher.

QUMS

G'day from Brisbane, land of fish in the sky, taxis in the sea and an incredibly busy University Musical Society. So far, 1988 has been anything but quiet and promises to get better (or worse).

the concert with the Australian Choral Conductors' Association took place on July 8 with QUMS presenting selections from its May concert programme. The ACCA's specially-formed combined schools' choir, augmented by four QUMS men, presented the Vivaldi Gloria.

The following evening (July 9) a group of QUMSians directed by Christopher Cook sang at the French Consulate's Bastille Day Ball in City Hall. Ever sung in an acoustic where the front row (of three) can't hear the back row of the choir, or the accompanist can't hear the choir and vice versa? A fascinating exercise...We must have sounded alright--they liked Michael's arrange-

ment of 'La Marseillaise' so much they asked us to do it again and paid us extra, too!

Nine days later, it was the turn of the University of California (Berkley) Alumni Chorus to join us on stage. They sang American music, we sang more excerpts from the May concert. While the audience could have been better, all concerned pronounced the event a definite success.

We had scarcely drawn breath ere the AGM was upon us. the 1988-89 Committee is as follows:

El Presidente: Noel Wilmott

Vice-president: Sue Dowrie

Secretary: Jaqui Higgins (correspondence)

John Yesberg

Treasurer: Angus Monro

Librarian: Mark Delaney

Camp Convenor: Duncan Unwin

Publicity Officer (media): Delma Hunter

Publicity Officer (posters and programmes) and Archivist: Maria Hehir

New Member Representatives: Kylie Ravenscroft, Stephen Young

After this, a few people took rec. leave in Sydney, where apparently a good time was had by all. In September, Chorale went to Stradbroke Island to sing a service in the /anglican church and have a picnic on the beach. This was also a success, broken-down water-taxis notwithstanding. [The 'fish in the sky' remain to be explained....-ED]

By the time you read this, we will have sung beneath the barrage-balloon fish at Expo[QED-ED] and at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, as part of their Sunday afternoon concert series. Subtitled "Broadway meets the English Anthem", the programme is a mixture of sacred and secular pieces.

Prior to our Christmas concert in St. John's Cathedral, we will take part in the Catholic Church's Bicentennial celebrations at Boondall Entertainment Centre on November 2. Some QUMSians are calling the gig "Catholic Capers". Suffice to say, the programme is interesting...

The big news for 1989 is a planned performance of Sfrican Sanctus with the Qld. Youth Choir in the Concert Hall in May. Plans are also afoot for a Minifest in July 1990, which would be our first such venture. We are looking forward to it.

Maria J Hehir.

PRO MUSICA (University of Queensland)

Open thanks for the delivery of the AICSA catalogue. What a beauty she is indeed. I can only see very few minor improvements. Unfortunately our entries are not in accordance with my submissions and need massive corrections; so don't trust any, especially the quantity. The 'Jim Crints' scores are no longer in the Society's possession

and are NOT AVAILABLE for loan as we hold the advice that it could seriously jeopardise us. Our acronym have been invented and should read ProMUQ, incorporating the initials University of Queensland. Even AICSA knows our longstanding address:

The Librarian ProMUQ

c/- PO Box 484

TOOWONG 4066

tel: Max Potters (07) 369 9963 after 22:00 hrs EST

Mail using the word UNIVERSITY arrives at the campus library; using PRO MUSICA in full ends up with a music store of the same name nearby. For a quick response, you may telephone me at home. In real emergencies try contacting us via QUMS, from whom we are never far away.

PRO MUSICA this year had a struggle to keep the numbers up. A recent recruitment drive has swelled our ranks to the point where we even ran out of scores (unheard of in eight years!). Currently being rehearsed are a Palestrina mass, a Tallis motet, the challenging Ode to Saint Cecilia by Britten and the customary madrigals. The choir makes good progress under the capable direction of Chris Cook and believes that this will be maintained for some time yet.

Judy Krohn, PRESIDENT

Max Potters, LIBRARIAN

MonUCS

Hi everyone,

and here we are all the way from sunny Clayton after our absence from the last edition. We held our AGM in July and the new committee is as follows:

The Godmother: Rita Battaglin

Treasurer: Merran Waterfall

Con. Man.: Jacqui Harrison

Librarians: Janet McDougal, Cameron Ernert

First Year Reps: John Hutchinson, Sophie Gordon-Clark

General Ass.: Leonie Doyle

Madame Vice: Tarja Saastamoinen

Secretary: Leanne Coombe

Publicity Officer: Sharon Vis

We are currently planning a multi-cultural extravaganza for third term and, not to be outdone by IV, will perform the concert twice (once for the Student Series Concert in Robert Blackwood Hall and once at Toorak Uniting Church). The works include pieces by Kodaly, Brahms and Ramirez Missa Creola. Then, of course, it's off to Christmas and the seemingly endless carols.

By the time this is printed the "Choral Event of the Century" will be over-and no, I don't mean the Mahler. This is in fact "Australia, Australia!". As yet another item in a long line of Bicentennial events, this concert involves a 1500 voice choir singing in the Exhibition Buildings and somewhere, lost among the hoards of black and white lookalikes were a few MonUCS. I hope lots of people

managed to catch the broadcast on ABC-TV and Stereo FM.

Finally, we look forward to seeing lots of people in Melbourne for Minifest and MUCS' 50th celebrations in January. I expect there will be another Eraticle with lots of details, so I won't bore you with another big rave—suffice to say Melbourne is THE place to be this January.

Love,
Helen Gordon-Clark

SUMS

Welcome back to the land of the living. Sydney I.V. is over but the world goes on – overdue essays, exams, lurgie and post-I.V. blues notwithstanding. I write sitting on a verandah on a farm near Cowra where we are having a SUMS recovery long weekend. We have just listened (through waves of static) to the ABC-FM broadcast of *Songs of Australia* – hope nobody missed it 'cos it was GREAT!

The second term concert of Twentieth Century Choral Music was held on Friday the 15th of July in the Wiloughby Civic Centre. Conducted by Ben Macpherson, the concert was a great success musically. Unfortunately it only attracted an audience of three hundred and fifty or so, bringing our total concert losses this year to about \$7,000. Thanks to Sydney prices and conservative audiences we now have a lot of weddings, portissimo sales and carol singing to do if we are to cover this loss. The first half of the programme was, in order, an absolutely top-class performance of Bohuslav Martinu's *Mikes z Hor* (the Australian premiere!), Debussy's *Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orleans* and Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*. The second half was a semistaged performance of *Catulli Carmina*. Soloists Rowena Cowley (Lesbia) and Patrick Togher (Catulli) were resplendent in Roman garb, Cathy Bishop showed off her underwear and the novem senes tarted it up wonderfully in their togae, especially the biggest tart (\$1.20) who made a concerted and partly successful attempt at upstaging everyone else with his purple toga, gold braid, laurel wreath and patrician arrogance. This met with a mixed reception from the critics (including one who felt we should have gone much further with the staging) but was great fun, very good musically and a worthy departure from the more traditional choral fare. Yet another memorable party followed at domus Swinbournienius.

The weekend of July the 23rd and 24th were Sydney University Open Day and SUMS put on four song-book concerts for the peoples. The same weekend saw a concert from the Royal Music Academy of Stockholm Chamber Choir, at which SUMS made up about a quarter of the audience. Musically, the choir was mindblowing, leaving *any* choir in Australia for dead.

Katrina Jenns invited them back to Ben Macpherson's house for a party (Ben was overseas at the time). Forty very drunk Swedes sightsinging the SUMS song-book better than we ever could was one highlight of a truly ruinous evening.

Next — I.V! Need I say more? (I will anyway.) Those of you who didn't come missed out severely – the Wesley-Smith *Songs of Australia*, two Mahler *Eighth* concerts, segregation, cornflake stew, parties, parties, a few more parties and a huge amount of fun (who was it that said "Bigger than Ben Macpherson Hur"?). Most of the damage at the Shepherd St. Bunker has been repaired, although it certainly feels strange not having twelve people (on average) crashed out on the living-room floor. Many thanks to Stephen Schafer and the whole I.V. Committee for a fantastic achievement.

For the remainder of the year SUMS forges on. Our (30th) Annual Carolfest will be held in the University's Great Hall on Friday the 9th of December, and on Saturday the 12th of November we will be singing the Vaughan Williams *Serenade to Music* with the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra. The SUMS Extraordinary General Meeting and Annual Dinner will be on Friday the 21st of October in Manning House, featuring the elections of the 1989 Committee and 1990 Asian Tour subcommittee, the president's, morals officer's and metamorals officer's reports. Come along if you're in Sydney.

On Saturday the 5th of November SUMS will be part of an extraordinary event in Farm Cove (right next to the Opera House and Botanic Gardens). Entitled *Sound Cloud in Sydney*, by Japanese composer Isao Tomita, this three dimensional musical experience is a Japanese gift to the Bicentenary (sponsored to the tune of \$1.4M by Fuji T.V. Corporation). Fourteen huge speaker stacks deployed around the perimeter of the Botanic Gardens, a choir of two hundred on a barge with a rock band and electronic orchestra, a Koto drum ensemble, Kabuki dancers, a vast laser show and three thousand fireworks (twenty five per minute) by Japan's leading pyrotechnician will be directed by the composer from within a hi-tech pyramid suspended by a crane. The audience is expected to number one hundred thousand or so and the event will be broadcast shortly afterwards to one hundred million Japanese homes. Bizarre or just extremely tacky? Judge for yourself, but it's all true. To cap off the weekend the Annual Vice-Regal and Presidential Garden Party will be at Bradley's Head at 2pm on Sunday the 6th of November. Dress is Black Tie, BYO caviar and champagne. Onward the decadent centenary!

Finally there is of course the Post-I.V. Hallo'ween Party in Canberra on Saturday the 29th of October. Hope to see everyone there,
love,

Ian Seppelt,
President.



FESTIVALS

FEMMEFEST

Welcome to Femmefest (a quick perusal of the committee list at the end of the article will explain this name). Please come to Melbourne to rage with Minifest and also celebrate the start of MUCS' 50th year. First things first. Dates: Friday 20 January to Monday 30 January, 1989 (NB a week later than rumoured). The major work will be Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem, performed on Sunday 29 January at the Robert Blackwood Hall, after which there will be a Mega party, though at the moment we're having trouble deciding between several wonderful possible venues.

Other highlights of Femmefest will include the first-night party (dress as your favorite woman) and the far-famed MonUCS Soprano Aria Competition for Tenors and Basses, this year to be held in the fabulous Carnegie Hall-start practicing now! There will also be a sumptuous dinner to be held in honour of MUCS' 50th anniversary.

Finally, the Femmefest committee is:

Convenor: Mari Rapp

Treasurer: Robyn Cox

Publicity: Jo Robertson

Librarian: Tarja Saastamoinen

Billetting and Transport: Rita Battaglin

Concert Manager: Michael McLaughlin

Social Secretary: Jacqui Harrison

Money? Well, unfortunately we really can't give cost estimates yet because we'd so much hate to be wrong. But rest assured that we are keeping them down as much as possible and all the details will be in the Rego form very soon.

Any enquiries should be addressed to
Box 96 The Union,
University of Melbourne,
Parkville, Vic. 3052

or you can phone Mari on (03) 531 7996 or Mandy on (03) 817 1282 Or Fax us on (03) 817 3435. We'd love to hear from you!

the Femmefest Committee.

STOP PRESS!!!!

The results of the SUMS elections, held on Friday 21 October are as follows:

President: Stephen Schafer

Secretary: Andrew Bettison

Treasurer: D. Paul Miller

Librarian: Joseph Toltz

O Vos Editor: Rachel Ormella

Concert Manager: Katy Brady

Activities Officer: Fiona Heywood

Publicity Officer: Tim Matthies

Ordinary Member: Emma Woolford

Fundraising Officer: John Kramer

Immediate Past President: Ian Seppelt

So, it looks set to be a rrrrrRage of a year for SUMS as we head towards the nineteen nineties!

Have you ever wanted
to write for a national magazine?
Here's your BIG CHANCE!

ERATO needs
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concerning undergraduate choristers.

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AND LOTS, LOTS MORE!

Send contributions to Box 150, Holme Bdg.
Sydney University, NSW 2006.

(ULTRA-SHORT) ERATICLE FROM THE 40th IVCF

There is no news on IV Grants (and therefore on our programme):

Expensive--Verdi, Four Sacred Pieces, etc, Cheap--Israel in Egypt, nor any news concerning orchestras. Fundraising continues apace, with yet another lamington drive, where we made and post-sold 600 dozen, but not before an incipient autonomous collective heart-attack.

Our Committee has again expanded. The new members are Meredith Boroky (yes, we continue to steal talent from AUCS) and Katya (that's all of her name) as Social Secretaries, and Kate Rockpool in charge of Transport and Billetting. As well, James Crawford is now Camp Officer.

So, until next time, when hopefully I'll have more news, "Let's be careful out there!"

Mark Chapman.

41st INTERVARSITY CHORAL FESTIVAL--PERTH

Imagine a sunbaked isle with broad expanses of white beaches lapped by the blue Indian Ocean. You are lying stretched out on your beach towel with a cool drink by your right hand, ready to soothe your well-worked vocal cords. By your left hand lies a large tub of sun lotion from which a companionable chorister of your choice is taking small dollops and working them into your back. You're both discussing the possibilities of either having a dip into the refreshing waters or of hopping on a bicycle and popping down to join the other choristers who are relaxing in the Parisianesque habitat of the Quokka Arms Hotel.

This could be you, come January 1990.

the main contender for the campsite for the 41st IVCF is on our own Rotnest Island, a marvelous holiday and recreation area 14 km off the coast of suburban Perth. As a recreation area it's hard to rival and, best of all, as far as the committee is concerned, PUCS members will have no need to commute every day to Camp (snicker, snicker). This is good, because our major musical idea is Tippet's latest work Mask of Time which is very challenging and could demand a lot of our available time.

If we do decide to go ahead with this idea then it will be with WA's big arts festival, the Festival of Perth, arrangements for which are going apace. Another major work we are considering is Roger Smalley's Southland, which premiered to a select audience in June this year to tremendous acclaim. In fact, there are several members of the musical fraternity who would like it to be performed very soon and think IV would be an excellent opportunity.

Lots of weird and wonderful ideas are being bandied around for fundraising and special events, but due to their nature, we feel that it would be a whole lot more pleasant for you to find out when you get here (refer to parentheses above).

Our committee stands as:

Convenor: Geoff Garside

Secretary: Nikky Lawson

Treasurer: Darral Garside

Concert Manager: Tonya Healy

Publicity Officer: Tony Deane-Shaw

Camp Officer: Ross Comstock (who has, alas, resigned because of career commitments but will be with us until November)

Transport and Billetting: Michelle Robertson

Librarian: Michael Kent

Social Secretary: Digby Hill

and Alex Scott, ex-officio member of our fundraising sub-committee.

Many thanks to our steering committee, Michelle Mearns (Possum), Mark Gummer, Anna Napier and Claire Whitaker for their able work. Gosh, with the groundwork laid out for us we should have more time to organise the social avenues and special events.

We are determined to make this Intervarsity a special one for those that come. And should you feel at all curious as to what those strange choristers from the far end of the continent are like (ie, how friendly) you are welcome to come to the week-long-plus-some PUCS annual Rottotest in the last week of November. In fact, if you do this next year you could even stay over in sunny WA until IV occurs. Perth, besides being an oversized country town, is a hell of a lot of fun in summer. We'll see you when you arrive,

Warm fuzzies,

Digby.

SYDNEY IV

Now that the dust has settled the Choral Festival Committee takes immense pleasure in announcing that the 39th IVCF was, by all accounts, a great success. This will be only a brief note, as we will be dealing with various aspects of the Festival in the Festival Reprt which I hope will be ready, along with the audited accounts, early next year.

Those choristers to come to IV will doubtless each have a different tale to tell, but it seems that such things as Nick Engelman's juggling (which won him the Revue Award), Mike Matheson's strategically-placed zippers, "When we are old and Gay", Charles Dutoit's charming accent and amazing talent, Sir Herman Black's Academic Luncheon speech, Miss Stiffy's frocks, Barbie's hearts, the laconic humour and wonderful generosity of

the Wesley-Smith brothers, the SUMS Freshers' tube kirts, the Golden Girls, Philharmonia altos and, a million others will already have been recounted to those of you who were not able to attend.

I would like to express my deepest thanks to everyone who contributed and participated in Sydney IV--the list in the Australian Choral Concert programme shows the extent of our debt to willing and able helpers--and who helped make it one of the most exciting Festivals I have ever attended (but then, isn't every IV like that in one way or another?) Feedback from the ABC, the Sydney Philharmonia Society, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, John Grundy, the Wesley-Smiths and choristers who sang or listened to the IV concerts all indicate that we achieved a very high standard of performance, tiredness and the pressures of intensive rehearsals notwithstanding. Dutoit, in particular singled out the choir for special praise in a letter which reads in part: "Please convey my congratulations to the chorus singers, with the hope that we may again make beautiful music together in the future."

We are currently working on the financial records and it seems that we may make a modest profit, which is something to sing about! Between 180 and 240 or so choristers attended the Festival, singing in one or all of the four concert programmes. I think everyone will agree that Ben and John, no less than Catherine Gibbney and Philip Mayers, deserve special thanks for the excellent work they did in rehearsing the varied programmes which made up the musical content of the Festival. Martin and Peter Wesley-Smith were both delighted with the premiere of Songs of Australia (which we learned in less than a week) and I think this piece deserves to be performed again by University choristers. It is an occasional piece, but has much relevance to Australian culture and politics which extends far beyond the Bicentennial Bash.

The highlight of the Festival, in terms of sheer musical achievement, was undoubtedly the Mahler Eighth, a difficult but incredibly rewarding piece, which made an impression on all who sang. Several people, whose word we have no reason to doubt, expressed the opinion that it was the best concert they had attended for many years. Thanks to everyone for being so understanding throughout rehearsals and performances, all that work paid off.

Thank you to all those who have sent the Committee thank you notes. After the gruelling, but almost always enjoyable, effort of organising an IV, it is indeed wonderful to receive confirmation that it has all been worth it. Choral Intervarsity is an invaluable movement in Australian musical life and deserves our full support. No one who has ever been will ever forget an IV and those who have yet to come to one will never know what they have missed until they do!

With thanks to all, and the very best wishes to those

MELBOURNE MINIFEST NEWS

It's a FULL HOUSE for FEMMEFEST as choristers head for

ACE HIGH RIDING RANCH

(two minutes from fabulous Ocean Beaches)

where sagregation is a thing of the past and the drinks pack more punch than a row of top B-flats!!!!

Enjoy the luxury of CABIN-STYLE ACCOMMODATION, with DOUBLE BEDS (No more fighting with your partner for the cool side of the pillow), ENSUITE BATHROOMS (Arrange your own shower crams) and FRIDGE.

Note in YOUR DIARY that the CAMP will be held from 21 to 24 January, 1989.

Costs will be given with the REGISTRATION FORMS which will soon appear at YOUR REHEARSAL VENUE!

FEMMEFEST: IT'S FRENCH FOR FUN!

SYDNEY IV WINDCHEATERS
AND T-SHIRTS ARE
(INCREDIBLY!) STILL
AVAILABLE IN ALL SIZES.

Didn't Make It To IV?--FAKE IT
IN YOUR OWN GENUINE IV
SOUVENIR

Just Ring (02) 516 4959 to arrange
for Delivery to Your Wardrobe.
NOW!

who are busy planning both Canberra and Perth IVs, we'll sign off in the hope of seeing everyone again very soon.

Stephen Schafer

Tim Matthies.

SUMMERFEST '88 --SOCIAL REGISTRATIONS

We are pleased to be able to say that Summerfest '88 is in full swing and Adelaide is looking forward to the influx of interstate choristers and an English organist after Christmas.

Now that all the choir places have been filled, we announce the launch of Summerfest Registration Mark II (the Social Registration Package): Come and visit Adelaide for all or part of the Festival without the bother of singing! For the bargain price of \$10 you will get luxury accommodation at one of Adelaide's finest villas, two spectacular parties (PCP and New Year's Eve) and a ticket to the concert. For the modest additional outlay of \$10 you can also attend the sumptuous Roaring Twenties Dinner Dance on 28 December at the Royal SA Yacht Squadron. Mark Dolahenty and Barbara Rennison will instruct us all in the finer points of 20's dancing at this lavish event.

The New Year's Eve party will be a massive affair at "Swank Avenue" at which an instant Vivaldi Gloria will be sung, so if you have a score please bring it with you.

To register please write to Summerfest '88, 46 Swaine Ave., Rose Park, SA 5067 before the end of November, enclosing details of your date and time of arrival, and telling us if you require billeting and which social events you wish to attend. Don't forget to enclose either \$10 or \$20, as appropriate.

Hope to see you in Adelaide,
Andrew Scott, Jennifer Jones, Norris Carter.

PARTING SHOTS

As outgoing President of AICSA I want to start my final Eraticle by thanking my colleagues, John and Angus, for their enthusiasm and work over the lengths of their terms.

Thanks are also due to Bill Abrahams, treasurer in the 1986-7 year. I also thank outgoing Erato Editor Rob Kay for the splendid job he did with Erato during his term. Thanks also to our ongoing Librarians, Katie and Vanessa--their labours have born real fruit.

I wish the new Exec and the office bearers all the best for the 1988-89 year. I also urge all affiliates to work with them for the good of all.

The winners of the AICSA Choral Competition are:

First Prize (\$400): Mike Irik, Armidale, NSW. The Jade Flute

Second Prize (\$200): Ross McLennon, Brisbane. Memories, Dreams, Reflections

Third Prize (\$100): Jon Drummond, Middlecove, NSW. Kyrie

I strongly urge societies to consider performing some of the prize-winning entries. The Competition only becomes viable through performance.

John Angus and I are going to stay on and act as a working party to complete the AICSA Manual (after exams!). We will be incorporating a number of features that should make it of use to ordinary society operations. If people have any suggestions, etc., please feel free to let me know.

My address is 415 Samford Rd., Gaythorne, Brisbane, 4051 (ph. 355 5070)

Now that IV has been confirmed as a viable choir in its own right I believe that ABC liaison is going to be beneficial in the future. Nevertheless, IV is also a unique event in the Australian musical scene and the nature of that event should be retained.

Congrats to the 39th IVCF for their fine Festival. The Mahler was really a once-in-a-lifetime experience, while Songs of Australia is an important contribution to the literature.

I must comment critically on a rather sad trend lately to call societies by the wrong name (eg. Queensland University Choral Society). Please, guys--we are all friends and it is a sign of politeness to get names right. I also wish to point out (without getting into a heavy political discussion on the distinction between IV and Minifest) that Elijah was a Minifest, not the annual IVCF for 1985. Perhaps people preparing promotional information for a festival should bear this in mind, or am I being too pernickity?

Finally, my thanks to all of you--the members of affiliate societies--for the support shown and for being INTER-VARSITY UMS AND UMS.

Noel Wilmott
Outgoing President, AICSA

[Noel refers to the Songs of Australia concert programme which contains some previously unaffiliated choirs as TUCS and QUCS, for which we offer our appologies. For what it is worth, the programme was prepared using a Mac Desktop publishing programme and the mistake was an oversight on our part. Noel is also correct to point out that Elijah was performed at a Minifest not an IV. IV in 1985 was held in Hobart during January. However, since it is university choristers who organise and attend both IV and Minifests and since more people attended Minifest 1985 than this year's IV, it did not seem inappropriate to include it in the list of major works performed by university choristers.--ED]



Australian Intersociety Choral Societies' Association: The New Executive Speaks

On Thursday August 25th this year, two dozen caffeine-crazed bureaucrats settled down in a wonderfully pretentious room at Sydney University for a five and a half hour meeting while all their friends were out raging at IV. This was the Australian Intersociety Choral Council, the annual meeting of all the society presidents and the governing body of the Association, ie the executive. There is something in the air at IV's that drives otherwise restrained people to do things they normally wouldn't even consider, and we fell victim to this power when we were elected as the Association's new Executive!

We took office on October 1st. Our job in general is to represent the interests of affiliated societies at a national level, and particularly to oversee the organisation of Intersociety Choral Festivals. Presently, Melbourne Minifest 1989, the 40th IVCF (Canberra, 1989), 41st IVCF (Perth, 1990) and 42nd IVCF (Melbourne, 1991) are all in various stages of planning. We have already received our first sets of minutes from Perth IV, (thanks Nikki), so how about it, everyone else? Without the minutes of the

festival committees, we don't know what problems you may be having (if any), and so can't help you. Societies too - we exist to represent you, so please send us your newsletters and other propaganda and let us know what is happening. Our postal address is Box 150, Holme Building, University of Sydney Union, University of Sydney NSW 2006. (Sound familiar? It's the Sydney IV box number.)

We see three roles for ourselves. Firstly, we are a contact point for organisations that want to be involved in festivals in some way. Likewise, we are your contact with these organisations, such as the Australia Council and the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust (through whom we receive donations on behalf of festivals and societies). The ABC is eager to discuss plans for future collaborations like the Mahler Symphony no. 8 project and will also, we hope, look favourably on festivals' working with visiting artists and using the symphony orchestras (as was done at Brisbane IV). The same can be said of Musica Viva and Sydney Philharmonia, who were impressed with the high musical standard and professionalism of the Sydney IV choir.

Second, we support and finance the various other activities of the Association: the archives, the library and Erota (that typo again). You will by now have seen the first edition of the Association's Library Catalogue, launched at Sydney IV, which represents a monumental achievement on the part of Katie and Vanessa and their helpers. This catalogue is a unique and valuable resource.

Finally, between the three of us there are many years' experience running festivals, societies and other arts organisations all at your disposal. We have all been SUMS' President at least one and have all served on one, if not three, festival committees. If you require any assistance or advice, we would love to hear from you.

We are:

Siobhan Lenihan (Shevva) - president
(02) 692 0555 (work), until end of October, then (02) 410 3500

(02) 660 0171 (home)
(will also advise on theatre administration, orchestral and concert management and will speak at length about Australian literature)

Hugh E. Swinbourne (Huge) - secretary
(02) 264 3990 (work)

(02) 953 6283 (home)
(will also advise about rehearsal camp management, the structure of very tall buildings and pianola restoration and maintenance)

Ian Seppelt (Bucket) - treasurer
(02) 211 5535 (home, with answering machine, but only until November 19th)

(will discuss at great length agnathan immunobiology, which wine to drink with them (with whom?), and how to decant it, and loves to hear all your medical problems)



ERATO CONCERT REVIEWS

AICSA LIBRARIANS

Bigger than Ben Hur!
More words than the Bible!
Able to leap tall buildings in a single edition!

It's the AICSA Catalogue, finally finished after many years of blood, sweat and tears. Those of you who missed Sydney IV missed out on the book launch of the century. It was a gala occasion attended by important dignitaries (Society Librarians and AICSA exec., etc.) during which the catalogue was toasted in fine wine (beer, actually). The launch took place in the open air (it was pouring with rain) and we were surrounded by panoramic views of the Sydney University Ovals.

the bright yellow catalogue covers were carefully chosen so that the catalogue would stand out in a crowd of scores, and the ring binding enables a user to keep the catalogue open at the right page whilst juggling pen and phone. Best of all, however, is that the AICSA Librarians will no longer have to be contacted at all hours, day and night, with requests for music, most of which does not appear in the catalogue anyway.

You will be aware that this is merely the first edition of this compendium and that a second edition should be available in a year. For this to happen, we require the assistance of Society Librarians and members. Each society should look through its own catalogue (provided at the front of each bound copy), fix up any mistakes and notify us of them. Each Society Librarian will be receiving a letter from us containing more data entry forms on which can be recorded any new acquisitions. Please don't forget to tell us if you have disposed of any score.

thank you to all those who made the catalogue possible and, all going well, we'll have an even better second edition in a year's time.

Vanessa Twigg, Katie Purvis.

The Macquarie University Singers

Musical Director: Margot McLaughlin

Rossini *Petite Messe Solennelle*

Macquarie Theatre, Macquarie University

Sunday 7 August 1988 at 2.30pm.

The *Petite Messe Solennelle* written at the end of his life, is probably Rossini's most significant religious composition, certainly it is his longest, and to my mind, his most sincerely felt. Of course, with Rossini, this hardly makes for a solemn occasion and, indeed, the work is a modest testament to *Bel Canto*, already out of fashion by the middle of the 19th century with the development of Verdi and the prominence of Wagner.

This type of music requires full vocal commitment and the choir seemed unduly cautious, the attacks were half-hearted and there was too much breathy singing, particularly from the women. In the few a cappella sections a drop in pitch was noticeable and although things hung together for the most part, the choir did get dangerously out of time in the two fugue sections *Cum Sancto Spiritu* and *Et Vitam Venturi Saeculi. Amen*.

This may have been partly due to the brisk tempi, occasionally approaching the very brisk, as in the opening, and in the beautiful solo for tenor, *Domine Deus*, where Paul Ferris struggled valiantly to keep pace with a piano distasteful of relaxed melismatic lines. But it was in these solo passages that the performance really came up to the level of Rossini's inspiration. There is a lot of solo singing in this work and we could hardly hope for a better *Bel Canto* quartet than Jennifer Bates, Narrelle Tapping, Paul Ferris and Grant Dickson. Individually and in ensemble the soloists were uniformly excellent. Particularly outstanding were the bass aria *Quoniam Tu Solus Sanctus* and the *Qui Tollis* duet for soprano and alto that preceded it.

But what of Rossini's choice of instruments? I would like to register an unsubstantiated conviction that when Rossini chose the harmonium and the piano for the first performance of this work he was acting simply from exigencies involved in producing a domestic performance and wanted the simplest means of having a sustaining sound and a percussive sound. While in this performance both instrumentalists acquitted themselves adequately, the tonal mixture of these two instruments left something to be desired. Rossini did write an orchestral version of this work but asked for it not to be performed in his lifetime (he had been retired for some time at this stage).

While aware of the costs involved to amateur choirs of s

taging a full orchestral performance, I feel it would have been a more satisfactory solution. It is difficult for singers to pitch from a harmonium and the sound was obtrusive and unsettling.

Leigh Swinbourne.

QUMS and U.C. Alumni Chorus Concert

Monday 18 July 1988

Mayne Hall, University of Queensland

This combined choral concert provided some surprises and plenty of variety for lovers of choral music. The first surprise was that QUMS' conductor, Michael Fulcher, overcome by this year's particularly nasty 'flu, was unable to conduct. Organist christopher Cook took the baton and reliable Brisbane organist Graeme Morton stepped into the breach. Despite some nervous looks from the choristers it soon became obvious that Michael had soundly prepared his choir.

The three excerpts from Handel's *Coronation Anthems* began with a full and well balanced rendition of *My Heart is Inditing*. As with all the Handel choruses presented, the musical phrasing was excellent and diction clear. There was a little hesitation and consequent lack of full tone from the individual part entries, perhaps due to the last minute substitutions. The most confident singing came when all parts joined in the fray, though I felt some full-bodied singing was sacrificed for careful precision. It was a joy to hear a strong tenor line as this part is so often lacking in numbers.

The audience was then treated to both Mozart's and Byrd's versions of *Ave Verum Corpus*. Again the Fulcher stamp of excellent musical phrasing and word-painting came through, but this time their careful restraint was more appropriate to the style, producing a rendition that was neat and very pleasant to listen to.

The Stanford Psalm 119, *Beata Quorum* showed a good musical understanding of the work. It was tight and very musical but a little too careful for my complete satisfaction. It is perhaps a little unfair (but true) to say that this work lacked the richness and depth of sound one could expect from a less youthful bass line.

The two Bruckner motets and Gibbon's *Hossanna to the Son of David* were the least convincing of the QUMS pieces. Although still a very pleasant sound overall, these pieces seemed to lack the confidence and finesse of the earlier presentations with musical direction not apparent.

The next surprise of the evening was the U.C. Alumni Chorus. I was expecting a geriatric version of QUMS with the youngest member a refugee from the 1950s, but the twenty-five members of this choir consisted mainly of

recent graduates. This choir sang with full conviction throughout, verging on the raucous at times, to provide an enjoyable contrast to the more refined QUMS approach. Their director, Carol Young, introduced their contribution as a musical tour of the USA from East to West. They began with some fine arrangements of Old American music by the likes of Aaron Copeland and Stephen Foster, immediately establishing understanding and mastery of their own folk song traditions. Choral tone benefited from their more mature years and this was combined with an enthusiasm so characteristic of the Californian choral tradition. It was perhaps because they knew a little of the IV choral tradition that they omitted a group of temperance songs and performed next two modern sacred pieces, *A Thanksgiving to God for His House* (Dominick Argento) and *Yom Se Le-Israel* (arr. Dudley Cohen). Both of these Songs of Praise were full of conviction although musical considerations suffered a little. Tonal balance and uniformity of choral sound are harder to achieve with smaller numbers at the best of times, but what was lacked in finesse was more than made up for with joyful singing.

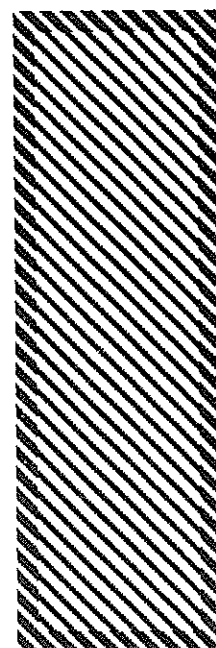
A "modern" work, *Frog Suite* by Dinerstein, provided a mood setting reminiscent of the University lake on a noisy summer's night. It was humorous and intimate and created a delightful contrast to the rest of the programme.

As Ms Young so correctly stated, no American choral concert would be complete without some Negro spirituals, and she wasn't about to disappoint us. They know their stuff here!

Steal Away, arranged by Eugene Thamon Simpson, was particularly beautiful. Finally, in a moment reminiscent of IV farewells, the U.C. Alumni chorus performed Lassus' *Your heart forget me not when I am gone*. This was quiet and restrained—a touching moment in total contrast to the body of the programme.

The climax of the evening was a combined rendition of Bruckner's *Christus Factus Est*. The combined forces of seventy voices produced a wonderful sound, rich and vibrant, that filled the hall. I thoroughly enjoyed the evening

Mark Penman.



Standing room only as Mahler's army

MUSIC

ROGER COVELL

MAHLER'S EIGHTH SYMPHONY

Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Sydney Philharmonia Choir (director: John Grundy), conducted by Charles Dutoit, with the boys of St Mary's Cathedral, Newington College trebles and the Interschool Festival Choir. Joan Carden, Amanda Thane, Jennifer Bates (soprano soloists), Elizabeth Campbell and Bernadette Cullen (mezzo-sopranos), Horst Hoffmann (tenor), Michael Lewis (baritone) and Donald Shanks (bass). ABC and Interschool Choral Festival concert in the Opera House Concert Hall, August 25 (with a second performance on August 27).

bringing this score to one of its rare fulfilments as concert-hall sound. Unlike the performances of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, which occupied Dutoit and the orchestra a few days ago in working within ultra-fine margins of precision, the Mahler Eighth has to be impelled with broader strokes. Even more of the essential work is done in rehearsal. The cueing cannot be quite so swift: it needs lots of emphatic preliminary signs to make sure that it registers with every section of the widely spaced and very diversely experienced assembly of performers.

As a whole, singers and players had many reasons to feel proud to be associated with this occasion. Despite the work's nickname as the "symphony

of a thousand", nothing like that number of performers is usually brought together for its realisation.

Something approaching half a thousand participants were collected on this occasion: and the amount and quality of the choral contribution, which is the main element in larger numbers, were more than acceptable. There were some thrilling choral sounds, both loud and soft, and much certainty and readiness, notably in the intricate changes of vocal texture in the first movement.

The orchestra, together with its instrumental allies, worked at a particularly high level of accomplishment. It was very rare to hear an instrumental solo that was not eloquent or adroitly shaped in some way. Some of the passages for individual string sections,

David Rumsey faced a closed-circuit video beat at the controls of the Ronald Sharp organ.

Such lavish and diverse forces demand a general. The one in command on this occasion, Charles Dutoit, had a complete grasp of strategy and tactics, allowed very few errors in co-ordination and knew exactly how to pace the stamina of his colleagues. The assembled music-makers leapt into full-throated attack or settled into careful reconnaissance with admirable decisiveness.

The military metaphors are not at all inapt for a performance of this choral/orchestral symphony, which sets an 1,100-year-old Latin hymn (*Veni Creator Spiritus*) as its exuberant first movement, and some closing episodes

from the second part of Goethe's *Faust* as its second. Industrial references, with analogies to assembly-line methods and the multiplication of identical behaviour, would be almost equally appropriate.

The symphony begins with a movement of such overwhelming energy that it earns the right to pursue the much more reflective or subdued music of the second movement at much greater length. The momentum of the first movement, in other words, still hangs in the air long after it is finished, and provides a continuing artistic warrant for the work's subsequent leisurely and often transparently textured journey towards sublimity.

Logistics and mass liaison are an important part of the process of

particularly the first violins, were among the most precisely co-ordinated in tuning and timing heard from the SSO in recent years.

Joan Carden (soprano) and Horst Hoffmann (tenor) were the two soloists who did most to give an air of intense commitment and quasi-ecstatic eloquence to the music for solo voices. Carden's approach to difficult soft, high phrases called on all her skill in control. Not all of Hoffmann's notes were equally satisfying in timbre or intonation, but his responsibility and reliability made his solo phrases a truly animating part of the performance.

Of the other soloists, only the bass, Donald Shanks, found himself in momentary trouble in tuning and steadiness of tone.

invades the auditorium

When simple is simplistic

MUSIC

PETER McCALLUM

INTERVARSITY CHORAL FESTIVAL

Sydney University Chamber Choir, Cafe Of The Gate Of Salvation Gospel Choir, Interschool Festival Choir. Conductors: Nicholas Routley, Tony Backhouse and Ben Macpherson. Music by Grainger, Edwards, Maclean and Wesley-Smith. Seymour Centre, August 20

EXPLORING Naivety might well have been the title of the 39th Interschool Choral Festival. Each item in one way or another marked some kind of retreat from sophistication, either deliberate, guileless, or else in the spirit which has come to be called post-modern.

Naivety was at its freshest in the two songs by Percy Grainger with which the Sydney University Cham-

ber Choir, directed by Nicholas Routley, opened the program.

Their sensitive performance of Claire Maclean's *Christ the King* revealed a richness of oral imagination combined with well-developed harmonic and contrapuntal fluency, all of them stubbornly stuck in a rather monastic time warp.

Whether you find the ingratiating repetition of Ross Edwards's *Flower Songs* soothing or cloying will depend on whether you see his particular flight from sophistication as a bold liberation or, as I do, a somewhat simple answer to the complex question of historical stylistic development.

For the *Cafe Of The Gate Of Salvation Gospel Choir*, guilelessness is an art form. Popular with the audience, their good humour and adopted accents were for me counterfeited and never rose above empty caricature.

It was only in the main work of the program: *Songs Of Australia*, by Martin and Peter Wesley-Smith (composer and librettist respectively), receiving a first performance from the full Interschool Choir conducted by Ben Macpherson, that the escape from sophistication actually sharpened focus on the work's message, the by now familiar tale of the follies of the last 200 years.

The Wesley-Smiths cultivate a cabaret style, mixing pastiche and satire, bowled along by slick popularism. In this work they avoided (narrowly) the danger of such a style, which is that its mixed bag of cultural clichés may become artistically unmanageable, turning deliberate naivety into triteness. Surviving intonation and rhythmic problems from the choir, the score is perhaps the most successful Wesley-Smith collaboration yet, carrying a strong message with unobtrusive but telling directness.

Big performance of a monumental work

BY any measure, it was a big event. Big in the sheer physical extent of its resources, for a start.

Even though the massed choristers and the expanded orchestra that filled the whole southern end of the capacious Sydney Opera House Concert Hall for this performance of Mahler's *Symphony No 8* did not equal the legendary 1000 performers directed by the composer at the first performance in 1910, they made an awesome sight and produced some overwhelming sounds.

It was also an event notable in its rarity. I think it is the second performance of the work in this city after more than 30 years.

More to the point, this was something big in musical achievement. Charles Dutoit, who had revealed his genius for handling large forces to good effect in his *Rite of Spring* performances the week before, here marshalled with assurance vastly larger forces, drawing the very best from professional and non-professional alike.

Impressive from the outset and moving in its cumulative effect, it was a rare thing — a performance of a huge, difficult and unfamiliar work where nothing faltered and no allowances were needed to be made.

The choir were well-prepared and responsive, the orchestral playing first class.

The cast of principal soloists read like a roll-call of some of the finest vocal talent available in this country: sopranos Joan Carden and Amanda Thane, mezzos Elizabeth Campbell and Bernadette Cullen, tenor Horst Hoffmann, baritone Michael Lewis and bass Donald Shanks.

There is no need to make distinctions: they all gave of their best. The clear soprano

Music

Symphony No 8
by Gustav Mahler
Sydney Symphony Orchestra
Sydney Philharmonia Choir
Interschool Festival Choir and others
Charles Dutoit, conductor
Sydney Opera House

MARTIN LONG

of Jennifer Bates, however, shining through effectively in the brief but important *Mater gloriosa* solo, deserves mention.

Although Mahler chose to number this among his symphonies, it might as accurately be called a dramatic cantata. It is a setting of the final scene from the second part of Goethe's *Faust*, preceded by a choral treatment of the medieval hymn *Veni creator spiritus*. The voices are present almost continuously.

Mahler regarded it as a crowning achievement, his supreme statement of faith, although his modern admirers seem to give a shade of preference to the earlier symphonies.

The massive waves of choral sound in the first movement are remarkable as physical phenomena but in time have a deadening effect. It is a relief to come to the second part, the *Faust* scene, where the texture is not so dense, the drama more varied and Mahler's personal voice can be heard more clearly.

Flawed or not, it deserves to be heard more often than once every 30 years.

● Owing to lack of space the review of the Seymour Group has been held over until tomorrow.

HAVE YOU ANY PRESS CUTTINGS, PHOTOS, NEWS ITEMS ABOUT YOUR SOCIETY?

KEN & THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE

The scene: KEN'S martial arts dojo. The advanced class stands before him in suitably martial poses, wearing loosely-tied academic gowns and aggressively bare feet. They glare defiantly forwards, resting lightly on the balls of their feet, hands raised in the Rachmaninoff position. Their vocal cords humming expectantly, under KEN'S watchful eye they intone a D minor chord, modulating to a shattering sforzando in A major. Around the walls automotive manuals hang metaphorically cheek by jowl with Mon Murfs concert programmes, posters, musical scores and press notices for Aneid House benefit concerts. KEN himself is resplendent in dazzling white overalls, a heavily slashed academic gown, motorcycle boots, his by now paleontological headgear and the legendary 4th-dan Fan Belt about his elegant waist.*

KEN: OK, team, let's just run through a few standard excercises. A man lurches towards you in a pub, spilling beer down his shirt. He looks as if he is about to launch into a pre-emptive strike with a discourse on the evils of chicken stock cubes.

THE CLASS: *Laudate Nomen Domini etc.* (Sops sharp, basses raucous, tenors gorgeous, altos deafening)

KEN: Yeah, that usually gets rid of them. A formation dance troupe of Jehovah's Witnesses begins to tell you everything you never wanted to know about the influence of Formula One motor racing on the early songs of George Harrison.

CLASS: *My Name is Agostino Angostelli--*

KEN: Bit too tuneful there altos. Great otherwise. What about aman who attacks you with the collected speeches of L. Ron Hubbard?

CLASS: Drop a gearbox on his foot!

KEN: Excellent! OK everyone else go into free-form combat postures. Robyn, duck into the kitchen and get a tray of Sir Galahads.**

A short pause ensues during which KEN discourses on the nature of the forthcoming tournament

KEN: (Discoursing like there's no tomorrow) Essentially, the Boat Races are an act of spiritual union with the cocmos. In this case about 2.2% spirituality. Of course, in the old days...

But a clarion call from the megaphone of the respelendently dressed CAPTAIN MONASH, looking undeniably military and official in all respects, cuts him off mid-epigram

MONASH: All teams for the Men's Fours now assemble in the combat area!

KEN: (Abruptly cutting short his discourse) OK guys! Relax and enjoy it!

*The superbly-trained Mon Murfs formation teams sweep the pool and carry off trophy after trophy (except for the predictably dazzling performance of the Amazonian ORATORIO Women's Four***). At last the contest reaches its apotheosis in the singles. Only KEN, ANTOINE MOUCHOIR and newcomer saxophonist GARIBALDI stand face to face, eye to eye, cheek to jowl and man to man, or morecorrectly, life-form to life-form.*

KEN: (in a low voice) Right, we've got this between us. Rember your sensei and go for it.

The starters' pisto; goes off with a deafening retort. (In this case about 7 fluid ounces with a low bunsen flame) There is a flurry of glasses and the merest suspicion of spillage. the judges confer! The excitement is electric!!(240 V AC) No-one breathes!!! But YES!!!! It's KEN in first place by a short half head and a lotus position!!!! The roaring crowd goes completely beserk!!!!

KEN: (To his adoring fans) Henceforth, and I do mean henceforth, I shall no longer contend in battle. But whenever there are wrongs to be righted, injustices to be alleviated, oppression to be lifted, IV port to be drunk and cylinder blocks to be rebored.....I SHALL RETURN!!!!

That was the final episode of KEN & THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE. Anyone wishing to visit some of the sacred sites mentioned in this column over the past five years should drop in at Technology house for a cup of tea and perspective, where KEN still to this very day pursues his legendary quest for choral enlightenment. Tours on the infamous starbus to nearby solar systems may be arranged with KEN for a derisory consideration, and his matchless collection of choral memorabilia is available for inspection.

NOTES ON THIS WEEK'S EPISODE

* Rachmaninoff position--hands held in front of face as if holding a vast and ridiculously bass-heavy choral score.

**Sir Galahad--A lethal cocktail known only to the MUCS Committee. It's strength is as the strength of ten.

***ORATORIO--Orgiastically Rampant Atonal Tenors Originating to the Right of the Indian Ocean. A charming and hospitable choral group from a distant galaxy usually present at festivals accompanied by their own personal fleet of starbuses.

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ERATO is published by SUMS for the Australian Intersvarsity Choral Societies Association. Editor Stephen Schafer. All correspondence should be addressed to Box 150 Holme Building, Sydney University, NSW 2006. The editor may also be contacted on (02) 516 4959 or by writing to 25 Ferndale st, Newtown, NSW 2042.

The opinions expressed in Erato are not necessarily those of AICSA or of its governing body the Australian Intersvarsity Choral Council. The editor takes all care, but no responsibility, for the accuracy of information contained in Erato. Readers should rely on their own enquiries when making any decisions touching on their interests.

The deadline for the next edition of Erato is Wednesday 31 January, 1989. Items received after this date will not be included in this issue and, depending on space, may not be held over until the following issue. Updated information or changes to any articles will be incorporated upto the deadline.

Articles for the SOCIETY NEWS section should not exceed 500 words. CONCERT REVIEWS should be concise, informative and remain within 500 words. FEATURE ARTICLES should be no more than 1000 words in length (not including any photographic material). LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are sought on any topic of relevance to readers. It may be necessary to edit items for reasons of space.

All items should include the name, postal address and telephone number of the writer. To ensure the editor's sanity, please type your articles with double spacing, or print handwritten articles clearly.

Erato 56 is set in Palatino.

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