

2016 Elizabeth Connell Prize

REDACCIÓN

Kseniia Muslanova from the Russian Federation has won the 3rd annual Elizabeth Connell Prize for aspiring dramatic sopranos held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in Sydney Australia on 3 September 2016. From a field of five international sopranos, the 34year old from Moscow took out the prestigious \$20,000 first prize plus an audition at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden in London. Auditions for the competition were heard in four cities: Sydney, London, Vienna and New York. Ms Muslanova auditioned in Vienna in June for the renowned German singer Christa Ludwig and Artistic Director Fiona Janes before being chosen for the Final. A total of 54 aspiring dramatic sopranos entered from 18 countries.



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Ms Janes said “Kseniia is that rare singer who only comes along once in a while. She has an extraordinarily beautiful voice, she sings and performs with passion and heartfelt commitment to every word she is saying and the composer’s music. She has great artistry and style with a solid technique. Kseniia has that special something as a performer one cannot teach. I sincerely hope she goes on to have a long and successful career in the great opera houses of the world. I am sure Elizabeth Connell would be thrilled with the judges decision.”

The competition was held over four rounds with the final two rounds held in Sydney. Ms Muslanova competed with the following arias in the final two rounds that were held in Sydney with the winner announced last night. The judges included Maestro Richard Bonyngé AC CBE, Fiona, Janes, Marilyn Richardson, Bernadette Cullen and Rosemary Gunn.

The Elizabeth Connell Prize was created in 2014 from a legacy left by the late South African dramatic soprano to be held in conjunction with the Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé Bel Canto Award, both run by the Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé Foundation.

Preliminary Final 1 September, 2016

Pace, pace mio Dio! from *La forza del destino* by Giuseppe Verdi

Es gibt ein Reich from *Ariadne auf Naxos* by Richard Strauss

Finals Concert 3 September, 2016

Ritorna vincitor from *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi

Utzh polnoch blizitsya...Ach, istomilas ja gorem from *Pique Dame* by Peter Illyich Chaikovsky

Other Finalists

Leah Gordon (35) from Canada - \$6,000 2nd prize

Yasmine Levi-Ellentuck (33) from Israel - \$5,000 3rd prize

Anna-Louise Cole (34) from Australia - \$3,000 Finalist Prize

Mari Wyn Williams – \$3,000 Finalist prize

Kseniaa Muslanova

Born in the Russian Federation, Ksenia studied at Schnittke State Institute of Music in Moscow then at the Galina Vishnevskaya Opera Centre for two years before returning to the Schnittke Institute for a post graduate degree where she has also worked as a voice teacher. She has received numerous prizes in competition including prize winner of the IV International Competition of Chamber Singing named in honor of G. Sviridov, prize winner of the 4 Independent International Contest of the Opera Singers (Moscow), prize winner of the International Festival Contest "Musica-Classica" and Diploma of the 15th International Student Vocal Contest "Bella Voce" (Moscow). She has attended Master Classes given by Michael Polo (USA), Mauro Trombetta, artistic director of Rome Opera House, Professor Vazha Chachava, Peoples Artist of the Georgian Soviet Socialistic Republic, Honored Art Worker of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Art History, Professor of Moscow Conservatory, Professor Sally Burgess, Royal College of Music (London).

She was a soloist of Ryazan Regional Musical Theatre and is currently a soloist with the Moscow Chamber Opera where has sung Giorgetta in *Il tabarro*, Natasha in *Violiat Danilov* by A. Chaikovsky. She has also sung Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*, Cio Cio San in *Madama Butterfly*, Micaela and Mercedes in *Carmen*, *Iolanta* by Chaikovsky, Tamara in *Demon* by A Rubenstein, Countess Ceprano in *Rigoletto*, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Mozart *Mass in G*. Conductors she has worked with include Igor Gromov, Arif Dadashov, Jaroslav Tkalenko, Alexei Verishchagin Vladimir Agronsky, Vladimir Simkin, Ilmar Lapinsh, Dmitriy Kryukov, Gennadiy Roghdestvenskiy.