

Glenn Winslade Acceptance Speech

19 September 2024

Forty-four years ago, I was the fortunate winner of the inaugural Robert Stolz/Apex Australia Award which enabled me to study at the Konservatorium der Staat Wien during the 1980/81 academic year. This scholarship had been formed to honour the famed operetta composer's 100th Birthday which fell on August 25, 1980.

The Stolz award was an invaluable introduction for me to the tradition of opera performance and practice in this famous city of music. At the Konservatorium, I was cast as Tamino in the opera departments production of Die Zauberflöte and I sang in approximately 16 performances throughout regional Austria culminating in a performance in Vienna, at the famous Theatre and der Wien which was the theatre in which Beethoven's Fidelio was premiered. While still a student, I was fortunate enough to make my professional European debut singing the tenor solos in Mozart's Requiem Mass at the Wiener Konzerthaus. Vienna was to figure very prominently in my subsequent career, and I was to return there many times to the Staatsoper, the Konzerthaus and the Musikverein.

Winning the Stolz award was the catalyst that launched me into a career that took me to places beyond those I had ever dared to dream of.

Australia has a rich history of vocal scholarships that have enabled young singers to pursue their dreams of a career in opera and the IFAC Handa Australian Singing Competition is one of the most enduring and valuable of them all. Long may the award continue so that many more young Australians are afforded the same opportunities that I received back in 1980.

I am humbled to be selected as the 2024 recipient of this award and am thrilled to accept it this evening.