

# THE WINSTON CHURCHILL MEMORIAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA

**Report by -- CONSTANTINE KOUKIAS -- 2004 Churchill Fellow**

**To establish links and foster potential collaborative ventures with cultural organisations and individual artists overseas in the field of contemporary music theatre and opera**

I understand that the Churchill Trust may publish this Report, either in hard copy or on the internet or both, and consent to such publication.

I indemnify the Churchill Trust against any loss, costs or damages it may suffer arising out of any claim or proceedings made against the Trust in respect of or arising out of the publication of any Report submitted to the Trust and which the Trust places on a website for access over the internet.

I also warrant that my Final Report is original and does not infringe the copyright of any person, or contain anything which is, or the incorporation of which into the Final Report is, actionable for defamation, a breach of any privacy law or obligation, breach of confidence, contempt of court, passing-off or contravention of any other private right or of any law.

Signed

Dated



.....  
Constantine Koukias

.....  
September 2005

**Report by -- CONSTANTINE KOUKIAS -- 2004 Churchill Fellow**

**To establish links and foster potential collaborative ventures with cultural organisations and individual artists overseas in the field of contemporary music theatre and opera**

**CONTENTS**

Page

1. Précis and Acknowledgments	3
2. Executive Summary	4
3. Programme	6
4. Introduction	9
5. The Journey	11
6. Conclusions	18
7. Recommendations	18

## **1. PRECIS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This report details the findings from a 2005 Churchill Fellowship visit to Europe and the USA, the aim of which was four pronged:

1. To establish links with professional arts organisations abroad in order to facilitate international touring opportunities for Tasmanian singers and creative/technical personnel.
2. To foster co-productions and artistic associations between Tasmanian artists and contemporary opera companies abroad.
3. To create mentorships and exchange programmes with contemporary opera companies for local singers.
4. To identify training opportunities for young Tasmanian singers.

The valuable experiences I gained from my overseas visit would not have been possible without the assistance of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust. I am glad to have the opportunity to express my gratitude, not only for the financial assistance of the Trust, but also for the advantages in making contacts that have accrued from my status as a Churchill Fellow.

I would also like to acknowledge the support and commitment I have received from the staff and Board of IHOS and to thank them for the faith they have shown in me.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the very large number of inspiring artists and arts professionals, too numerous to list here, with whom I was able to make contact during my overseas visit. Many are mentioned in the main body of the report. Without exception, I was met with an unstinting willingness to share experiences, ideas and information.

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Name: Constantine Koukias  
Occupation: Composer; Music Theatre & Opera Director  
Position: Artistic Director  
IHOS Music Theatre and Opera  
Address: 1/165 Elizabeth Street, HOBART TAS 7000  
Contact: Telephone 03 6234 1130 (home), 03 62312219 (work)  
0439 11 3232 (mobile), 03 6234 4445 (facsimile)  
E-mail: [info@ihosopera.com](mailto:info@ihosopera.com)

### Fellowship Objective

The aim of the project was to establish links with contemporary opera companies and other professional arts organisations and individuals abroad with a view to exploring international touring opportunities, fostering co-productions and creating mentorship and exchange programmes. The itinerary included Singapore, London, Vienna, Berlin, Amsterdam, Zurich, Brussels, Paris, Chicago and New York.

### Fellowship Highlights

Of all the stimulating productions of new work I had the privilege of viewing during my trip, the world premiere of H K Gruber's 'Der Herr Northwind' for the Zurich Opera Company was exceptional, as was the innovative music theatre showcased in Amsterdam during the Holland Festival, which successfully combined opera with video in an unusual and effective way. Singapore also offered a raft of outstanding venues, artists and technicians.

The Hellenic Foundation for Culture in Manhattan and the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center in Chicago both provide philanthropic support for new work produced or developed by artists of Greek heritage. The relationship I was able to form with them will be of ongoing benefit to IHOS.

Tim Walker, CEO of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, offered a fund of advice on how regional music festivals operate in the UK, whilst Carmen de Munich, European Agent for Artsense, introduced me to a large number of valuable contacts in the Netherlands.

The use of video and digital media to express narrative is an exciting new development in music theatre. The Design School of Technology in Zurich, which specializes in interdisciplinary work in design, has state-of-the-art facilities for digital media arts and I have been invited to be an artist in residence there in 2006/7.

Without doubt, the Fellowship allowed me the wonderful opportunity to meet with many experienced and established artists and arts professionals from other countries who are enthusiastic and interested in collaborating with IHOS and the IHOS Laboratory to develop work here in Tasmania.

## Outcomes

The Fellowship is already bearing fruit in the form of a number of exciting projects now in the pipeline:

- Based on international interest, IHOS plans to tour a production of the opera 'Prayer Bells' throughout Europe during August and September in 2006.
- A collaboration with Thodos Dance Company in Chicago, which is run by a Greek artistic director. We plan to create a unique production with dance, opera and specially composed music for a production there during Easter next year.
- We are preparing a detailed technical overview for the opera 'Tesla – Lightning in His Hands' to propose to the director of the Singapore Arts Festival.
- We are negotiating with the renowned musician Thomas Bloch, an Ondes-Martenot and rare Instrument specialist, for an Australian programme early in 2007.
- We are negotiating with Walter Kobera, Artistic Director of Neue Oper Wien in Vienna for a co-production with the IHOS Laboratory.
- Further into the future we hope to co-produce 'Metropolis' with French composer, Martin Matalon.

### 3. PROGRAMME

#### SINGAPORE 29 MAY – 1 JUNE

Singapore Dance Theatre  
Singapore Symphony Orchestra  
National Arts Council  
Theatreworks (Singapore) Ltd  
The Victoria Chorale

Goh Soo Khim, Co-founder, Artistic Director  
Chang Kai Jin, General Manager  
GOH Ching Lee, Director, Singapore Arts Festival  
Tay Tong, Managing Director  
Nelson Kwei, Artistic Director

#### LONDON 2 JUNE – 6 JUNE

Sunday Times Magazine  
London Philharmonic Orchestra  
Tyrone Landau  
School for Social Entrepreneurs  
Lakeside Arts Centre

Stephanie Clark, Commissioning Editor  
Tim Walker, CEO and Artistic Director  
Freelance tenor  
Alistair Wilson, CEO  
Catherine Hocking, Music Officer

#### VIENNA 6 JUNE – 11 JUNE

Lucerne Opera  
Volk Opera  
MICA (Music Center Austria)

Warwick Stengards, Conductor  
Barry Kosky, Co-artistic Director  
(Music promotion agency exporting Austrian music)  
Ulrike Kuner, Managing Director  
Wolfgang Schaufler, Fachreferent Neue Musik  
Freelance tenor  
(Vienna State Opera) Young Opera Program  
Walter Kobera, Intendant, Artistic Director

Steve Dsavislim,  
Wiener Staatsoper  
Neue Oper Wien

#### BERLIN 11 JUNE – 17 JUNE

Shirley Apthorp,  
Literaturwerkstatt  
  
Intern Music Theatre Committee  
Carrousel Theater an der parkaue  
Ruhr-Triennale  
Tanz Theater Musik

Art and Opera Critic  
(New media festival) Dr Thomas Wohlfahrt,  
Director  
Prof Dr Hellmuth Matiasek, President  
Stephen Hoffman, Artistic Director  
Jurgen Flimm, Festival Director  
Dance Co-ordinator

**AMSTERDAM 17 JUNE – 25 JUNE**

Art Sense  
Jacob Plooij,  
Netherlands Liaison  
Josie Ryan  
Willem Bruls,  
Nationale Reisopera

Carmen de Munnik, European Agent  
Violinist, Zepher Quartet  
Richard Keldoulis, Director  
Baroque soprano  
Dramaturg & Opera Advisor  
Guus Mostart, Intendant

**ZURICH 25 JUNE – 1 JULY**

Zurich Opera  
Zurcher Theater Spektakel

Tonhalle Society  
Tesla Society Switzerland  
Franziska Ammer

Alexander Pereira, Artistic Director  
(Theatre and Dance Festival, Zurich)  
Maria Magdalena Swagermann, Artistic Director  
Trygve Nordwall, Managing Director  
Peter Stojanovic, Director  
Cellist

**BRUSSELS 2 JULY – 4 JULY**

Musiktheater Transparant  
Australian Embassy in Brussels  
And Mission to the European Union

Guy Coolen, Artistic Director  
Gilberte van Mulder, Events and Cultural  
Co-ordinator  
Isabelle Draux, Public Affairs Manager

**PARIS 4 JULY – 11 JULY**

Thomas Bloch, Musician,  
Martin Matalon  
Bastien Forestier  
Paris Conservatorium  
The Foundation for Hellenic Culture

Ondes –Martenot and rare instrument specialist  
Composer of Metropolos  
Tour guide  
Bernard Cavana, Composer  
Constantinos Georgoulis, Program Manager

**CHICAGO 11 JULY – 16 JULY**

Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society  
Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center

Museum of Contemporary Art  
Ravinia Festival  
Harris Theater for Music and Dance  
Thodos Dance Chicago  
Athenaeum Theater  
Ruth Page Center for the Arts  
Skyline Stage (Navy Pier)  
Pritzker Pavilion

Yiannis Eceoomou,  
Maria D Constantinides, Executive Director  
Elaine Kollintzas Drikakis, Publicity Officer  
Janine Weiss  
Vocal Ensemble - 'Chanticleer'  
Kristy Kambanis, Theater Rental Administrator  
Melissa Thodos, Artistic Director  
Venue Manager  
Venue manager  
Venue manager  
Venue manager

## **CHICAGO - continued**

Cindy Pritzker Auditorium (Harold Washington Library)	Sound and Lighting technicians
Betty Rymer Gallery	Venue manager
Trevor Martin	Managing Director
Texas Ballroom – loft space	Venue Manager
Merl Ruskin Theatre (De Paul University)	Venue Manager
Randolph Street Gallery	Venue Manager
Links Hall – Dance Venue	Venue Manager
Professionally Speaking (Public Speaking Consultancy)	Maria Boundas Bakalis, Communications Consultant, Director, Actor
Lyric Opera Center for American Artists	Lorian Stein-Schwaber, Head of Voice/Music

## **NEW YORK 16 JULY – 30 JULY**

Hellenic Foundation for Culture	Monica Caritazas , Programme Director
Philanthropic Start-ups	Kate Robinson, Marketing Manager
Greek American Folklore Society	Vaia Ginis Allagianis, Artistic Director
Walker International Communications	Donna Walker-Kuhne, Marketing Manager
Music Institute of New York	Roger Davidson, Director

## 4. INTRODUCTION

### Background

As a composer and director of contemporary music theatre and opera in Tasmania whose family migrated from Greece five decades ago I have become increasingly committed to the development of training and showcase opportunities for the many talented musicians and artists in my field who reside in this highly creative community. Having a foot in each culture (Greek and Australian), I am keenly aware of the rich potential that the meeting of different cultural traditions and forms of expression can offer to arts practitioners and their audiences.

### IHOS

In 1990, with Werner Ihlenfeld, I founded IHOS ('Ihos' is the Greek word for "sound"). IHOS Music Theatre and Opera is a Hobart based performing arts company which has gained an increasing reputation for its critically acclaimed, original music-theatre and operatic works. It creates contemporary music theatre and opera that blends voice, dance and sound with installation art.

Over the past three years, IHOS has made the transition from a singular project based company to a production and presentation house with a comprehensive programme of events each year. IHOS is the Tasmanian member of the 'kultour' network, the national body set up by the Australia Council in 2001 dedicated to touring Australian multicultural arts.

### Works of IHOS

Music theatre and operatic works of IHOS include:

*Days and Nights with Christ* 1990 and 1997

*To Traverse Water* 1992, 1995 and 1996

*MIKROVION; Small Life 36 Images in a Phantom Flux of Life* 1994,

*PULP: An Industrial Opera* 1996,

*Rapture: a Sonic Taxi Installation* 1997

*The Divine Kiss* 1998 and 1999,

*Spirits of the Hoist* 2000,

*Schwa – The Neutral Vowel* 2002

*Tesla – Lightning in His Hand* 2003

*PENTEKOSTARION – Prayer Bells* 2001 and 2005.

I am currently working on my next opera which looks at the artistry and experience of *Olegas Truchanas*, the eminent wilderness photographer and tireless conservationist who came from Lithuania in 1948 to make Tasmania his home. His legacy still resonates today.

### **IHOS Music Theatre Laboratory**

In 1999 IHOS founded a laboratory to train young singers. In addition to the training provided in vocal practice and movement, the IHOS Music Theatre Laboratory is developing a new area through designing pieces specifically for screen and film. In 2006, Screen Lab will enable singers and musicians to engage in a medium rarely utilised in the development of new music theatre works. *The Death of Chatterton*, a chamber opera created by Matthew Dewey, a singer from the IMTL, is one of three world premieres to be presented by IHOS in 2005. The next Laboratory production piece, is *The Da Ponte Project*, working with singers and composers from the Lab and Collegiate School for Girls.

### **Music Theatre and Opera Overseas**

The time is now ripe for IHOS to be forming links with like-minded artists and professional arts organisations abroad. The Churchill Fellowship has provided an exceptional opportunity to explore the latest developments overseas in music theatre and opera and to make personal contact with key personnel in ways that should augur well for our future creative output.

Without this opportunity IHOS would not be able to look to the future as it is now able to do: To create partnerships, to showcase our work, to expose the local audiences to overseas expertise and to enter the international world of music theatre and opera.

I have personally been overwhelmed by the positive 'can-do' attitude in both Europe and the USA, which bodes well for our future plans.

## 5. THE JOURNEY

### Singapore

The first city on the itinerary of my overseas tour was Singapore. I was there for three days during the Singapore Arts Festival and during that time I saw a number of interesting works that were at the technical rehearsal stage, by Singaporean artists. One particular artist, Boon Tah, impressed me as having the potential to make a valuable contribution to the IHOS Music Theatre Laboratory in the future. The Singaporean Government is promoting its artists very strongly and I have been told that Government subsidy for a project such as this would be considered most favourably.

I met with the director in charge of the Festival, GOH Ching Lee. I have been fortunate to meet Ms Ching Lee in Australia several times now. She has heard glowing reports about IHOS and its achievements from numerous people including Robyn Archer, Leo Schofield and Foti Kapetopoulos (Director of CAPE, a multicultural arts broker n Melbourne). She is very interested in developing links with IHOS and she likes the idea of presenting our larger works such as the opera, 'Tesla – Lightning in His Hand'.

The Festival is quite a wealthy one. The venues are impressive and are generally better than those in Australia, as they are very new. Companies that are doing large scale productions internationally, such as Robert La Page and Hotel Pro Proma, are having their Asian Premieres in the Singapore Arts Festival now with Ms Ching Lee as Artistic Director.

I proposed my opera, 'Prayer Bells', as a first production, since it is easy to mount and I believe it would be a good start for developing a relationship with the Festival and with Ms Ching Lee. We discussed co-production possibilities using local and Tasmanian artists. I feel that 'Tesla' will need more time to be adapted for the Proscenium Arch. Producing the work for the Australian Performing Arts Market involved a huge amount of work and more time is needed for Marianne Fisher, the librettist, and myself to develop the libretto and music. In addition to this, the design for the work is still not resolved and it needs someone very special to do it. A staging solely for Singapore is not out of the question but this would depend not only on allowing sufficient time for development but also on sufficient finance. It would need to be determined how much of the budget that Ms Ching Lee is prepared to contribute and how much might be forthcoming from Oz Co, Arts Tasmania and other potential sources such as 'kultour', (the national network established by the Australia Council and dedicated to touring Australian multicultural arts).

I met with the General Manager of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Chang Kai Jin. He agreed that once we have a date set for 'Prayer Bells' in the Singapore Arts Festival, the Orchestra will assist the production by providing eight male voices from their Chorale. Chang Kai Jin also very kindly offered his help with local costing for the production. He introduced me to four interesting new composers, Leong Yoon Pin, Phoon Yen Tian, John Sharpley and Bernard Tan.

While I was in Singapore I saw a logo for an initiative that I had not heard of before, called 'Ozmosis'. Apparently it is a program initiated by Alexander Downer that has been designed to assist Australian artists to tour abroad. There are, no doubt, other possible sources of funding worth investigating including the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Pathways of the Australia Council.

## London

I was very fortunate to meet with Tim Walker, who is now the Artistic Director and CEO of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He is a Tasmanian who played a large part in establishing the excellent international reputation of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. He was extremely generous with his time and provided me with access to a vast network of contacts involved in the Regional Contemporary Music Festivals in the UK and to contacts in the huge Jewish and Greek communities in the UK.

The UK boasts a large number of Regional Arts Festivals, many of them run now by Australian directors. A regional tour of 'Prayer Bells' in the UK is a more than reasonable proposition. IHOS is already negotiating with Bath, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and the City of London. Tyrone Landau, a tenor who has performed in 'Tesla', is now living in London and is very happy to help with finding the chorus for a UK production of 'Prayer Bells' and to sing the Latin role.

'Prayer Bells' requires the use of a set of handcrafted, quarter tone brass bells. I will be asking the Museum of Victoria to allow IHOS to mind, on semi-permanent loan, half of the quarter tone brass bells originally commissioned for the 2001 Melbourne Federation Festival and used in previous productions of the opera.. Under this arrangement half of the bells would continue to be available to be borrowed by others. Given permission from the Museum, I will then re-work the piece for half the bells only. This will have an added advantage of reducing the freight for the bells for touring purposes. The weight would be reduced from 222 kilos to approximately 122 kilos. This should also facilitate a faster turn around between one performance and another.

I am working on contracting a 'name' to sing the Hebrew part in 'Prayer Bells'. A singer such as Andreas Scholl, who is quite famous in the UK, would open a lot of doors for the production there. Famous performers are usually heavily committed, but even one or two performances featuring a famous name would lend prestige to the tour and other singers can be used elsewhere.

The most economical way to travel the show in the UK would be with the airline Easyjet, which is similar to Jetstar in Australia but even cheaper if booked well in advance, which would be possible to do. The production would only require subsidy in the form of a contract fee from one of the UK festivals to cover all travel costs in that country. This would then make the production attractive to other festivals. I discovered that traveling a production in Europe is a much cheaper enterprise than a similar endeavor in Australia as distances are so much shorter.

Publicity and promotion for the tour will be greatly aided by a very good friend of mine, Stephanie Clark, who is the commissioning editor for the Sunday Times Magazine. She has an excellent network in the UK and she has committed her enthusiastic support for the tour. She has already put me in contact with the music writer of the London Times.

In relation to 'Tesla – Lightning in His Hands', there was a most interesting event that occurred in the UK soon after I left. Stephanie Clark will be posting detailed information about the event to IHOS. Apparently two scientists who have been experimenting with Tesla coils have made a Faraday Cage, have acquired permission to fire it up indoors and have also acquired insurance for the demonstration/performance. I will be starting a

dialogue with these two scientists as soon as possible to explore ways in which they may be able to collaborate in any future productions of the opera.

## **Vienna**

Vienna is an easy city to travel around in. During my time there I visited a large number of venues, many with excellent acoustics and many performing Mozart, as one might expect.

I also managed to meet a large number of contacts there, each new person introducing me to another. Feedback was generally very positive.

I was fortunate to have an apartment provided for me by Warwick Stengards, a conductor who is now working in Lucerne, Switzerland. He is an old friend and conducted 'MIKROVION' for IHOS in 1994. He is keen to help with a venue for a tour of 'Prayer Bells' and will speak to the summer festival people in Lucerne about the possibility of taking 'Prayer Bells' there.

I also met with Bartolo Musil, a baritone with a tremendous amount of contemporary experience who has agreed to sing the Latin part in 'Prayer Bells'. He knows a Jewish cantor in London who reads western notation and who could come over by train and perform the Hebrew part if Scholl is not available. Bartolo was very helpful and has offered to do a costing for using top students for the chorus for the Vienna leg of the tour.

The most promising contact for future collaborations in Vienna is with the opera company, Oper Neue Wien. Mr. Walter Kobéra, the Conductor and Intendant of the company, and I are having extended discussions about the possibility of future co-productions. Oper Neue Wien is the only fully established contemporary opera company in Vienna with secured four year funding. There is a feeling of natural synergy between Oper Neue Wien and IHOS, which augurs well for future association.

I also met with members of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Department is very interested in paying for a Viennese composer to work with IHOS.

The International Composers Forum met in Vienna during my time there and I was able to attend. The winning composition of the 2005 competition is a beautiful, lyrical work by a Latvian composer. I believe that the piece would be well received in Australia. Circumstances precluded a meeting with the composer but I hope to make contact in the near future.

I was guest at a luncheon held by 'MICA', an organisation that promotes music in Austria and promotes Viennese composers in particular. This was another opportunity to make some useful contacts.

Having a network of contacts in Vienna proved to be very valuable in the European cities that I visited subsequently. It was as my musical advisers in Vienna had said. Contacts in this key city can open doors in other European centres. For this reason it is now clear that Vienna needs to be included in any European tour that IHOS may consider.

## **Berlin**

In Berlin I stayed with Shirley Apthorp, an extremely well connected theatre and music critic who was a Churchill Fellow in 1994. Shirley was enormously helpful to me during my stay. Among many other helpful actions, she introduced me to the most influential dramaturg and opera critic in Amsterdam, Willem Bruls, who has been a source of valuable advice.

Shirley took me to the major houses in Berlin. We saw a beautiful boutique opera in a Palace in Potsdam which seats only 220 people and is similar to but smaller and rather more ornate than the Theatre Royal in Hobart. We visited the Magazin, which is where the Berlin State Opera stores all its sets and is a most impressive space.

I was most fortunate to have Shirley take me to the press conference for the New Ring Cycle in Berlin and also to the Latvian National Opera Festival where I met the Director of the Latvian National Opera, Andrejs Zagars. The Company produces really large works and has three spaces, the smallest of which Andrejs suggests would be perfect for a production of 'Touchwood' (the piece that is being performed by the IHOS Theatre Laboratory in Adelaide In November this year).

Andrejs is organizing for a large number of the Latvian National Opera's DVDs and examples of the Company's excellent publicity material to be sent to IHOS. I believe that we would do well to emulate some of this material.

Berlin is perhaps too huge a city to consider as an initial centre for any prospective European tour for IHOS. The advice that I received from Shirley, Willem and Andrejs is that we should start with either 'Tesla' or the new Olegas Truchanas opera in Latvia and Lithuania. The opera houses in these two countries are starting to rival those of Vienna and Berlin in terms of new work. It is very close then for the intendants of opera companies in these other centres to come and see our work. They will not come to Australia. In their opinion the acoustics in the Opera House in Sydney are inferior to the acoustics in the spaces they have in Europe. Having now experienced many of them myself, I am inclined to agree.

Carmen de Munnik, the highly respected and knowledgeable agent for the production and management company, 'Artsense', whom I met later in Amsterdam, supports this view. If five companies agreed to a co-production tour plan in 2007 or 2008, a combination of European and Australian subsidies could make it all possible.

IHOS is now considering a plan for two chamber opera works to be developed bilaterally with artists and production personnel from the Baltic States, Vienna and Tasmania.

## **Amsterdam**

Carmen de Munnik was a most helpful contact in the Netherlands. She put me in touch with a number of new opera companies and contacts there and she organized a visit with Guus Mostart, Director of Nationale Reisopera, the regional touring company of the

Netherlands. He was most helpful in outlining the networks for touring provincial opera throughout Europe.

Carmen will be visiting Aberdeen in the near future and will see the Director of the Aberdeen Arts Festival regarding the possible inclusion of 'Prayer Bells'.

I was fortunate to be in the Netherlands while the major arts festival of the country, the Holland Festival, was taking place. The Dutch government's policy of presenting new work by Dutch composers in the major houses of the Netherlands is most impressive. This policy has been in place for 15 years and has generated some outstanding work. The government fully funds arts organizations across all fields on condition that there is an 80% Dutch content in their productions. This policy is providing for the development of Dutch stories and artists in innovative ways. This was most evident in new music theatre work where the use of video and new media in the piece, 'Rage d'Amour' was dramaturgically impressive. The use of the medium of video to express narrative is a new and exciting.

Willem Bruls, who had been introduced to me by Shirley Apthorp in Berlin, assisted me greatly in identifying Dutch composers, directors and designers in Amsterdam. One outstanding work titled 'One' was written by Michel van der Aa for the famous contemporary soprano, Barbara Hannigan.

Willem Bruls has been conducting libretto workshops in Spain and France and IHOS will be inviting him to conduct a national libretto workshop in Australia in 2007.

Willem also outlined the exciting companies creating new music theatre in the Baltic States. I intend to visit Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in the future. Many of the companies in these countries have chamber opera festivals and I hope to forge links with them for our Laboratory work.

## **Zurich**

In Zurich I had the lucky opportunity to attend the premiere of a new opera 'Der Herr Northwind' by the Viennese composer, H K Gruber, and commissioned by the Zurich Opera. The work employs quirky and non-conventional elements, among them an extraordinary use of languages other than German. The librettist employed dialect Swedish and unusual phrases in Viennese dialect. The Zurich Opera has a most impressive young artists programme and I was so taken with this work that I saw it twice and was fortunate to meet many of the singers involved.

I stayed with Franzika Ammer, a cellist from Australia who is now based in Zurich. She introduced me to a wonderful Swiss-Columbian composer, Arturo Guiella. Arturo is an international art dealer and part-time composer and we are currently in discussions about developing a collaboration on Graham Green's screenplay for the film, 'Our Man in Havana' for the English National Opera.

I also met with the Assistant Programme Director of the Design School for Technology who gave me a tour of the school, which specializes in interdisciplinary work in design. The school has the most wonderful facilities for digital media arts that I saw on my trip. I have been invited to be an artist-in-residence to create a digital work in this magnificent space in 2006/7.

My meeting with Peter Stojanovic, Director of the Tesla Society Switzerland, was fruitful. Peter was able to offer valuable advice about upcoming Tesla events in Switzerland and will be assisting IHOS greatly in negotiations for a re-mount of the opera in Europe.

## **Brussels**

At the Australian Embassy in Brussels I met with Gilberte van Mulder, Events and Cultural Co-ordinator, and Isabelle Draux, Public Affairs Manager, at the Australian Embassy and Mission to the European Union. They were most helpful in explaining the festival circuit in Belgium. Many of the directors and designers in this city are working in interesting ways and are presenting works throughout the Netherlands as well as in Belgium. The Belgium system of funding is complex and fragmented. The country has no nationally funded projects. The main communities in Belgium are Flemish, French and those of smaller German municipalities, depending on each artist's origin. Funding needs to be sought from individual municipalities. I am very interested in working with artists from these areas and will seek advice from the Belgium Embassy on funding.

## **Paris**

Jean Louis Forestier is a Parisian who has worked with IHOS as a music director since 2003 when he came to us to direct 'Tesla'. I was fortunate to have Jean Louis introduce me to a number of artists in Paris including Thomas Bloch, the well known Ondes-Martenot player and rare instrument specialist, Bernard Cavana, a composer at the Paris Conservatorium and Constantinos Georgoulis, the Program Manager for The Foundation for Hellenic Culture in Paris.

Jean Louis also introduced me to Martin Matalon at the International Research Center of Music (IRCAM). This institution was established for the purpose of scientific and acoustic research in the field of modern music. Martin gave me an extensive tour of the laboratories and scientific studios. IRCAM has been responsible for the creation of new technology for the development and presentation of experimental music. Martin was resident at this institution for one year and created a wonderful score for the classic Fritz Lang movie, 'Metropolis'. Since this meeting I have been having detailed discussions with Martin regarding the technical requirements for this work to be presented in Australia in 2008.

## **Chicago**

I was most fortunate to meet with Melissa Thodos, Artistic Director of the Thodos Dance Company, and we viewed an enormous amount of work from her Company. What a small world it is that Melissa and I met from opposite sides of the planet to discover that we have mothers from the same village – an added bonus to our meeting! We are very excited about collaborating on a new work in 2006 and are currently negotiating a creative outline for the work.

Melissa was extremely generous and her administrative assistant helped me greatly by introducing me to the venue managers at the Athenaeum Theater, the Ruth Page Center for the Arts, the Skyline Stage (Navy Pier), the Pritzker Pavilion, the Betty Rymer Gallery, the Texas Ballroom loft space, the Merl Ruskin Theatre at De Paul University, the Randolph Street Gallery, the Links Hall dance Venue, the Museum of Contemporary Art,

the Harris Theater for Music and Dance and the Cindy Pritzker Auditorium at the Harold Washington Library

I visited the Hellenic Museum and Cultural Center where I met the Executive Director, Maria D Constantinides, who told me much about the history of Greek culture in Chicago. The Center will be opening in a wonderful new multi-use venue in 2008 and is very interested in forging ties with other Greek companies throughout the world.

The American model of funding is basically that of private philanthropy. Very little government subsidy exists and 99% of production money is raised independently. Nevertheless the city of Chicago offers a vast range of music, from the popular to the highly academic and within a diverse range of venues. Music is well supported by its residents. The dance program in particular attracts companies from all over the world.

While I was in Chicago I also met Yiannis Eceoomou from the Orpheus Hellenic Folklore Society and Lorian Stein-Schwaber, Head of voice/Music at the Music Institute of Chicago, as well as managing to see a beautiful performance by the all male Vocal Ensemble from San Francisco, 'Chanticleer, at the Ravinia Festival (Chicago's summer festival.).

## **New York**

In New York I made an important contact with Monica Caritsas, Program Director of the Foundation for Hellenic Culture in Manhattan. Monica was extremely supportive and helpful with regard to Greek Philanthropic support from Athens and the USA. She was also instrumental in assisting me with the location of venues, artists and music bodies to support a possible tour of 'Prayer Bells'. We met with numerous artists and presenters over the two weeks that I was in Manhattan.

Funding for the arts in New York depends primarily on organizations such as 'The Center for Philanthropic Support'. Centers such as these specialize in matching non-profit organizations across the board with financial assistance from a range of affiliated philanthropic bodies. Kate Robinson, Development Manager for one of these affiliated bodies, Philanthropic Startups, assisted me with advice on the process of funding which is so different from that in Australia and almost entirely dependent on the private sector. The primary difference is that the American tax system awards greater benefits to donors.

Donna Walker-Kuhne from Walker International Communications met with me and was most helpful with the identification of artists working in greater New York. She will be assisting me with targeting unusual and cross-cultural artists for future collaborations in Tasmania.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Opportunities abound for the creative development of Tasmanian artists in the field of music theatre through the establishment of an international network of contacts. The overseas links that have been made possible through this Fellowship are already bearing fruit in a number of exciting ways, as discussed in this report. It is now essential that we build on these links.

With this new focus, we will be looking to a variety of organizations and funding bodies for support in the local, national and international marketplace.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The development of an international touring and exchange programme for Tasmanian artists.
2. The formation of an advisory group to identify and facilitate international networks, which would provide overseas links for Tasmanian artists. The advisory board would ideally include representatives from bodies such as Tourism Tasmania, Austrade and the Department of Foreign Affairs as well as some targeted agents working in complimentary cities of export.
3. An approach to the Tasmanian Government to consider creating up to three annual scholarships for artists working in the performing arts field to travel to Europe and/or the US. There are many scholarships of this kind available in Tasmania for artists in other fields. Because we are so geographically isolated from the major world centres for the performing arts, these scholarships would be an efficient and effective way to enable the further development of new work and partnerships in Tasmania for singers and composers.