

Appreciation of Alexandra

It is an honour to have been asked by my colleagues in the Many Warringah Choir to say a few words in appreciation of Alexandra. Carlos' first appointment on his and Alexandra's arrival in Australia in 2003 was as Musical Director of our Choir, a community choir based on Sydney's Northern Beaches. With no permanent supporting orchestra, it was natural that Alexandra would be our Concertmaster, a job which she undertook magnificently for 13 years. In that time, despite her recent illness, she played in all but two concerts.

Although we were a small part of Alexandra's many-faceted life, she was a large part of ours. We came to know her in two ways: firstly, as our Conductor's beloved wife and soul-mate, and secondly as our Concertmaster.

As Concertmaster, she displayed the most wonderful technical and artistic skills. She led from the front, setting a challenging standard for other players, in works as diverse as Karl Jenkins *The Armed Man* and JS Bach's *St John Passion*. On occasions she took flight as she played solo. We will not forget her masterful playing of Prokofiev's second Violin Concerto, nor her performance of Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*, which she played with such fluency and grace that it was judged by us and our audiences to surpass all the commercial recordings.

But Alexandra, however talented, was much more than a performer in her own right. In ways which we suspect but will never fully understand, she supported Carlos in all his artistic endeavours, especially the Choir. It was a delight to see their combined pleasure and satisfaction at the conclusion of a successful concert. There was clearly a bond between them which worked to make their combined efforts more than the sum of the two parts. We will miss Alexandra's influence over our musical endeavours more than we can tell.

In common with all of us here, members of the Choir were united in sadness at Alexandra's cruel illness, and united in grief at her untimely passing. We stand alongside Carlos, Marsha and Sasha in their anguish. Through our singing and music making, we pledge to keep the memory of Alexandra alive. It has been a privilege indeed to have been associated with such a supremely talented and highly determined, yet, very gracious, lady.