

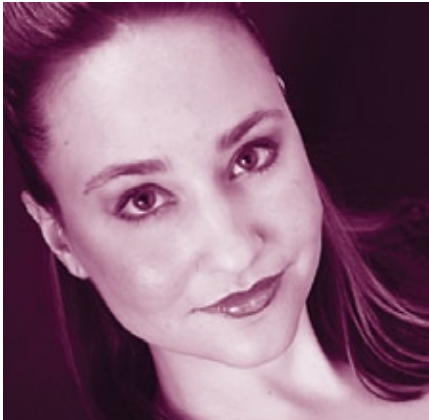
**ANNOUNCEMENT:****MARY-JEAN O'DOHERTY  
WINNER OF 2008 AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL OPERA AWARDS**

On Wednesday 5 March the Chairman of the Music Board of AIOA, soprano Nance Grant MBE, announced the winner of the Australian International Opera Awards for 2008, in the presence of tenor Dennis O'Neill CBE.

The winner is coloratura soprano Mary-Jean O'Doherty, who will spend 10 months at the acclaimed Cardiff International Academy of Voice, in Wales – a highly specialized and unique environment for a small number of exceptional singers at their early professional stage.

The Academy, directed by Dennis O'Neill, selects only 12 to 15 of the highest potential young opera singers worldwide. Its ability to attract superstars of the opera world to run its master-classes have made it widely recognized as the best postgraduate school of its type in the world.

Our congratulations to Mary-Jean O'Doherty on winning the first Australian International Opera Award – and we wish her well in Cardiff.'

**BIOGRAPHY OF MARY-JEAN O'DOHERTY**

Mary-Jean Anais O'Doherty was born in Houston, Texas and is 25. She was raised in North Carolina, and moved to Australia in 2005.

She is an Australian citizen. Her father was born in Sydney and graduated from University of Sydney, and her grandparents were also born in Australia (Wauchope and Newcastle).

She holds a Bachelors of Music in both Voice and Flute Performance from East Carolina University where she performed in the roles of 'Damon' in *Acis and Galatea* (2004), 'Donna Anna' in *Don Giovanni* (2004) and Emmie in *Albert Herring* (2003).

Mary-Jean was in the Chorus of Mabel's sisters in the Opera Australia production of *Pirates of Penzance* (2006-2007) and also performed in the Female Ensemble of *Dead Man Walking* in Sydney in 2007.


Mary-Jean was one of 20 finalists (out of 2,000) in ABC/Opera Australia Television show 'Operatunity Oz' (2006).

She was a Finalist (one of five) in the Marianne Mathy Award of the of the Australian Singing Competition (2007) winning prizes including the Guildhall School of Music and Drama Award, and Symphony Australia Young Vocalist Award.

In addition, she has placed and medalled in several events of the McDonald's Performing Arts Challenge 2007 including: First Place in the 'English Opera and Song' Award, Second Place in 'Russian Art Songs' and Third in the 'Gilbert and Sullivan Awards.' Mary-Jean was also a Quarter-Finalist in the 'Operatic Aria' award.

Mary-Jean has a strong grounding in the arts, music and languages:

- 10 years of dance training, including classical ballet
- An accomplished flute player
- Proficient in French
- Advanced study in German and Italian



Australian International Opera Awards

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