

## **ASRA Lifetime Achievement Award 2011**



Figure 1

**To Belinda Webster OAM for outstanding contribution to the recording and publication of Australian music and culture.**

Each year the ASRA Board deliberates who, among the many worthwhile Australians that fit our remit, has made a significant impact upon sound recording in Australian and New Zealand.

Some months after ASRA had decided to give Belinda Webster a lifetime achievement award, the Australia Council awarded her the 2011 Don Banks Music Award for her outstanding contribution to Australian music. Undaunted, we we're delighted to offer our own award to this remarkable woman for her endeavours.

In a world where the music most talked about is that which makes money for the 'music industry', many other musiks are either ignored or marginalised. Classical Music (to use that broad

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descriptor) is arguably the most significant of these to suffer under an avalanche of commercial music. So when Belinda established the Tall Poppies label in 1991, specialising in chamber and instrumental music, it was a first in Australia. Her not-for-profit recording company has produced over 200 CDs that regularly feature many of the musicians who enrich our musical life.

Composers range from the old to the new. From Arthur Benjamin and Margaret Sutherland to Nigel Westlake, Anne Boyd and Ross Edwards.

The complete recordings of Peter Sculthorpe's String Quartets, performed by the Goldner String Quartet, are an example of the depth within the catalogue.

Vocal ensembles of distinction such as The Sydney Chamber Choir and The Song Company are represented. Rita Hunter, the late, great opera soprano, is heard on an eclectic CD of music from Giuseppe Verdi to Ivor Novello.

The catalogue also reaches into ballet with a tribute to Graeme Murphy's commissions for the Sydney Dance Company. Included are works by Carl Vine, Grahame Koehne and Barry Conyngham.

The label ranges well beyond conventional music. For example, David Lumsdaine's remarkable sound recordings and David Malouf's readings of his own poetry.

Tall Poppies continues to release around 10 new recordings a year, and over the past 20 years has commissioned 47 new works. It is a grand body of work, and all down to the remarkable Belinda Webster. \*\*\*

**Figures:**

1. Belinda Webster sits in front of a painting of her by Myriam Kin-Yee, ABC website, 6 May 2011, image supplied by Belinda Webster