Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE0558

Austral, Florence

(1892 - 1968)

Born	18920416, Richmond Victoria Australia
Died	19680516, Mayfield New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Opera singer

Summary

Born Mary Wilson at Richmond, Victoria, she was also known by her stepfather’s name, Fawaz, before adopting the name of her country as a stage name prior to her debut in 1922 at Covent Garden. Known as one of the world’s greatest Wagnerian sopranos Florence Austral married the Australian virtuoso flautist John Amadio in 1925 and toured widely with him in America and Australia. After the Second World War she returned to Australia almost completely paralysed with multiple sclerosis. She nevertheless taught until her retirement in 1959. Austral died at a nursing home in Newcastle on 16 May 1968.

Events

1921 - 1921
Adopted the professional name of Florence Austral

1919 - 1919
After a farewell concert she left to study Italian opera in New York

1921 - 1921
Appeared at Albert Hall during a Sunday concert

1939 - 1945
Appeared for benefit concerts during the Second World War

1923 - 1923
Appeared with Dame Nellie Melba

1934 - 1935
Austral and Amadio returned to Australia for a season of concerts in capital cities and large country towns

1946 - 1946
Austral returned to Australia

1936 - 1936
Austral returned to London

1922 - 1922
Debuted as Brunnhilde in *Die Walkure* at Covent Garden under the auspices of the British National Opera Company

1930 - 1930
Gave a concert in Melbourne, Australia

1930 - 1930
Gave a concert in Sydney, Australia

1930 - 1930
Joined Berlin State Opera as principal

1925 - 1925
Married John Amadio at Hapstead, London

1954 - 1959
Teaching with the Newcastle branch of the New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music

1931 - 1931
Toured Holland

1933 - 1934
Toured Holland

1925 - 1925
Toured North America

1931 - 1932
Toured North America

1932 - 1933
Toured North America

1917 - 1917
Won an entrance exhibition to the University Conservatorium

1913 - 1913
Won first prize in the mezzo-soprano section and second prize in two others at the South Street competitions, Ballarat, Victoria

Published resources

Resource
Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Resource Section
Austral, Florence: Australian soprano, 1894 - 1968, 1999,
http://www.cantabile-subito.de/Sopranos/Austral__Florence/austral__florence.html

Austral, Florence Mary (1892 - 1968), Radic, Maureen Therese, 2006,
http://www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A070129b.htm

Edited Book
Who's Who in Australia 1962, Alexander, Joseph A, 1962

200 Australian Women: A Redress Anthology, Radi, Heather, 1988,
https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20071105022623/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/78644/20071105-1315/www.200australianwo

Book
Florence Austral : one of the wonder voices of the world, Moffat, James, 1995

When Austral Sang: the Biography of Florence Austral, Elphinstone, Michael and Wayne Hancock, 2005

CD Rom
Florence Austral: one of the wonder voices of the world, 1996

Archival resources

Melba Memorial Conservatorium of Music
Records of Melba Memorial Conservatorium of Music

National Portrait Gallery
Portrait of Florence Austral by Howard Barron

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