



# Forte.

For family and friends of the | AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL **PIANO** AWARD |

Volume 15 – Issue 1

Winter - June 2016

## From the President



A warm welcome to 2016 - the year of the thirteenth Australian National Piano Award. We've now reached that exciting time where the names of the performers selected for ANPA 2016 have been announced (the list of names can be seen elsewhere in this edition of

Forte). Selection of performers was made following the submission of audition CDs, with each applicant's recording heard by each of the three adjudicators who will hear the live performances in Shepparton later this year. One assumes that ANPA is held in high regard by the applicants, as some performers from the 2012 and 2014 ANPA Awards are returning to take part in ANPA 2016.

We congratulate all the selected performers and we look forward to their live performances in September this year.

ANPA is recognised and supported financially by many individuals, corporations and community entities. The Board extends its thanks to all donors, for the generous financial support ANPA receives. ANPA functions principally as a result of donations and I encourage you all to consider making a donation to ANPA: in doing so, you will be enhancing Australia's cultural life by supporting great young Australians, fine music and the pursuit of excellence - all causes worthy of support. Donations to ANPA are tax-deductible and can be made on the form included within this newsletter.

Best wishes,  
**Darryl G. Coote**,  
President of the Board – Australian National Piano Award

## DATES for your DIARY

**Bernstein Junior Piano Competition**  
Saturday 4th June – Sunday 5th June  
Mechanics Institute, Wyndham St  
Shepparton

**Piano Recital - Australian Piano Duo**  
Saturday 11th June at 7pm  
St Paul's Lutheran Church,  
54 Poplar Avenue, Shepparton  
Supper provided  
Discounted tickets online -  
adults \$15, children \$10  
<https://www.trybooking.com/LKJT>  
enter promo code APDatChapel

**Goulburn Valley Concert Orchestra -  
20th Anniversary**  
Saturday 18 June 7.30pm  
Sunday 19 June 2.00pm  
Eastbank Centre  
Bookings (03) 5832 9511

**Shepparton Launch of ANPA Tuesday**  
16th August Eastbank 6pm – 8pm

**ANPA Monday**  
5th September – Saturday 10th September  
Eastbank Centre, Welsford St, Shepparton

**Gala Dinner**  
Friday 9th September  
Eastbank Shepparton

**Winners Recital**  
Sunday 30th October  
Duniera House, Mt Macedon

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# Adjudicators for ANPA 2016

The adjudicators for this year's ANPA Award – Diana Weekes, Rolf Plagge and Clemens Leske – bring considerable experience to their roles on the judging panel.



## DIANA WEEKES – AUSTRALIA

Following her graduation from the University of Melbourne with a BA (Hons) in English, German and Fine Arts, Diana Weekes has been able to combine her pianistic talents with her academic study of Musicology to pursue a career of solo performance, chamber music and pedagogy throughout her life. Winning major prizes in international competitions in Europe and performing in recitals and broadcasts, which included a Wigmore Hall Recital, a live-telecast performance of the Liszt Concerto No.1 with the Suisse Romande Orchestra in Geneva and regular recitals at Australian Embassies in Europe were early highlights.

On her return to Australia, Diana moved from Melbourne to Adelaide in 1981 as Senior Tutor and fulltime lecturer in Keyboard and supporting studies, with leadership roles in the BMus Programme, Undergraduate Studies and Co-ordinator of the Chamber Music Programme and Co-ordinator for the Honours Research seminar.

Diana's particular focus has been on the art of duo piano playing with many prestigious international partners and chamber music and accompanying programmes. In 1991, she completed an extramural course entitled "Technology in the Piano Studio" at the University of Champaigne-Illinois, which led to the radical innovation of the Musical Technology Centre at the Flinders Street School of Music in 1994 and the acquisition of a high profile computer-music laboratory through liaison with industry, which has led to various specialized degree programmes at the Elder Conservatorium.

In 1995, Diana completed a Graduate Diploma in Business Management at the University of South Australia and was awarded the medal for 'Most Outstanding Student'. In 2007, Diana's completion of a PhD in musical composition has led to performances of her choral and vocal compositions and a piano duo. Her translation of Albrecht Dümling's book, *The Vanished Musicians: Jewish Refugees in Australia* was published earlier this year.



## ROLF PLAGGE – GERMANY / AUSTRIA

After early piano lessons at home, in 1969, Rolf began studying with pedagogue Professor Peter-Jürgen Hofer at the Bremen Conservatory at the age of ten and followed him to the Musikhochschule Hamburg in 1975, where he won the first prize of Hamburg's Steinway Competition five times consecutively from 1973 to 1977 and prizes in the German national music competition Jugend musiziert.

As a recipient of long-term scholarships from the highly esteemed Oscar and Vera Ritter Foundation and the German Scholarship Foundation for his tertiary studies, Rolf continued his studies with various famous teachers, including Paul Badura-Skoda (in Vienna), Gyorgy Sandor (at the Juilliard School in New York) and finally with Karlheinz Kämmerling in Hannover.

Rolf began his career as a prizewinner at numerous national and international competitions and became the first German pianist ever to become a prizewinner at the prestigious Moscow Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in 1990. He was also awarded the special prize for the best interpretation of the obligatory Piano Concerto Rotations of Belgian composer Piet Swerts in Brussels in 1987. He has performed as a soloist and with national and international orchestras in Europe and the US and recorded the standard repertoire of Beethoven, Liszt, Scriabin, Ravel, Schubert and Schumann. Nonetheless, Rolf has always been specially devoted to unconventional music literature, including mostly unknown piano concertos of Hans Werner Henze and of Czech composer Jiri Benda; the solo works of Felix Woyrsch and, since 1995, the integral piano oeuvre of Karol Szymanowsky with three CD recordings already available and future recordings of the late works, the violin chamber music and the piano concerto *Symphonic Concertante Op. 60*.

Since 1991, Rolf Plagge has been professor and jury chairman for students of Solo curricula and pedagogy at the University of Music Mozarteum in Salzburg. He is invited regularly for masterclasses, lecture-recitals and competition juries and, at the Mozarteum, has developed teaching lessons in real time via the internet, in special collaboration with the China Music Conservatory, Tokyo Koganei University and the Kobe Music College in Japan.



## CLEMENS LESKE – AUSTRALIA

Clemens Leske, who is currently a Senior Lecturer in Piano at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, has a repertoire of thirty-five concerti and has performed with every state symphony orchestra in Australia, as well as at venues in Spain, the United Kingdom, Singapore, New Zealand, Hungary and China. He has appeared regularly with the Australian String Quartet, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Moscow Virtuosi.

For his London Royal Festival Hall debut, he performed Rachmaninoff's First Piano Concerto with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. More recent performances include Strauss's *Burlesque* and Beethoven's *Triple Concerto* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Vladimir Ashkenazy and performances with the Melbourne and Canberra Symphony Orchestras. He was also invited on a national tour in partnership with flautist Sir James Galway.

Clemens has released many discs of solo works, including Chopin, Schumann, Ligeti and Duckworth, and chamber works and has recorded extensively with ABC Classic FM and Fine Music 102.5FM. He has served on juries for national and international piano competitions in Australia and, as a former Juilliard School graduate, has recently been invited to mentor students from the piano faculty there.



Keep your eyes peeled on the road for the next 3 months. See our latest brightest pink Piano Award advertisement on the back of Shepp Transit Bus No.92 – our invitation to attend the Award. Remember to keep your diaries clear from September 5 to September 10, when young pianists from across Australia will be transported here to wow us with their fantastic performances.

## Next Australian National Piano Award 5th - 10th September 2016



# The 2016 Finalists

Hot off the press!

The adjudicators, delighted with the standard already exhibited with the applicants CD auditions, have chosen the finalists. It augurs well for September. Audiences shouldn't miss it. And here they are!

- Ben Austin – Age 25, Vic
- Berta Brozgul – Age 26, Vic
- Timothy Chiang – Age 28, Vic
- Kathy Chow – Age 22, Vic
- Peter de Jager – Age 26, NSW
- Joshua Hooke – Age 23, Vic
- Sabina Im – Age 25, NSW
- Mekhla Kumar – Age 27, SA
- Tony Dong Yi Lee – Age 24, NSW
- Michael Li – Age 22, Vic
- Aaron Liu – Age 23, QLD
- Oliver She – Age 25, UK
- Nicholas Young – Age 25, Vic



## District 9810 Rotary Conference March 2016

A request from District 9810 Rotary Conference organisers was received by the ANPA Board to provide a pianist to perform during the conference. And who better than the 2014 winner, Alex Raineri?

Since taking out the Award, Alex has played internationally as an active soloist and chamber

musician. Could he fit it into a busy schedule? Yes, Alex was delighted to accept and made room in his busy schedule to fit in a trip to Shepparton. His spirited recital on the Steinway Concert Grand piano kept the audience enthralled and has no doubt won him another group of fans. His generosity is indicative of the support past winners continue to show in supporting the ANPA.

## Please consider being a sponsor or friend of ANPA

A quality event such as the Australian National Piano Award can only survive with the help of its loyal partners and volunteers and the generosity of its private donors and friends, as it receives no Federal or State Government financial assistance.

Running the award costs \$250,000.

Why not become a Sponsor or Friend of the Award?

We must create better opportunities for audiences to hear and encourage the young Australian pianists, who participate and aspire to professional careers as musical ambassadors for Australia. As it's almost tax time and we have tax-deductible status, it is an excellent opportunity now to consider helping the Award with a generous donation that covers membership until June 2018.

### Six tiers of recognition:

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Those wishing to donate, discuss sponsorship or subscribe to Forte (\$30), can call our Secretary, Judy Longley, on 5823 2387 or donations can be made on the website by downloading the Supporters form [www.australianpianoaward.com.au](http://www.australianpianoaward.com.au)

### Yes, I want to support the Australian National Piano Award

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A receipt will be mailed to you promptly. Your donation is tax deductible.

## Next Australian National Piano Award 5th - 10th September 2016

# Playing for Pleasure

The 2016 Playing for Pleasure concert was held at the Eastbank Centre on Sunday May 31st.

Over 90 people enjoyed a varied program introduced by MC Julian Wright. Julian noted the selection of music ranged over 3 centuries, from Baroque, Handel and Scarlatti, to modern music. Stalwart supporters of the concert, Bruce and Leona Sterling entertained us with lively duets and solo pieces with Bruce playing Cyril Scott's beautifully romantic pieces, Lotus Land Op.47, No.1 and Danse Negre Op.58, No.5. Leona provided intellectual stimulus to the programme playing variations of Lili Marlene in the style of seven composers asking the audience to identify

the composers. Monica Atkins made her first appearance with pieces from Kats-Chenin and Ravel. Caleb Noller, our youngest performer, delighted us with pieces by Chopin and Scarlatti. Regular performers Celeste Cari, Carolyn Leslie, Charlotte Drinnan and Wade Gregory playing his own composition, rounded out the programme.

The next Playing for Pleasure concert will be held in 2017. We are always looking for talented musicians to perform at the concert. The minimum standard is AMEB 5th grade. If you are new to Shepparton or interested in performing please contact Carolyn Leslie on 5821 4976.



## Vale Bruce Wilson

On the fourteenth of May, ANPA lost one of our long-standing Board Members when Bruce Wilson passed away.

Bruce came to Shepparton in 1959 as a nineteen-year-old, and began a most impressive life of service to our city. As well as being a long-term Councillor and indeed Mayor, he became involved in a myriad of community groups. One of these was the ANPA. He served on the Board from 1996 until 2013, and then continued with the Associates.

His experience, his knowledge and his willingness to be 'hands on' were extraordinary. He set up our webpage, he organised the videos on launch nights and provided superb photographs.

We will miss all that, but mostly his optimism and calm, thoughtful guidance.

## Scholarship furthers William's Career

William Schmidt, a recipient of the Turnbull Travelling Scholarship, wrote to tell us of his successful completion of his Master of Arts in Vienna. He was awarded his MA degree from the Konservatorium Wien in December with his thesis "Between Classical and Romantic: A Comparison of the Large B-flat Major Sonatas of Beethoven and Schubert."

William performed both of these sonatas (Beethoven Op. 106 and Schubert D. 960) for his final piano exam. He wrote, "My time so far in Vienna has been wonderful in so many ways and I extend a big thank you to the ANPA for helping to make this possible."

### SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS



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Our website is now live... [www.australianpianoaward.com.au](http://www.australianpianoaward.com.au)