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

Volume 12 – Issue 2

Spring - November 2013



DATES for your DIARY

July, 2014: Melbourne Launch of the Australian National Piano Award TBA

Tuesday, 19th August, 2014: Shepparton Launch

8th – 13th September, 2014: Next ANPA at Eastbank

Friday, 12th September, 2014: ANPA Gala Dinner

*Piano in the Fields - Beautiful music that comes from the country.
Courtesy of Nicola Archer and Graham Denholm.*

President's report



ANPA 2014 is shaping up to be a great event!

This Award will be held at the Eastbank Centre in Shepparton over six days, from Monday September 8 till Saturday September 13 inclusive. It will be preceded by

an opening ceremony at the Centre on Sunday September 7.

The closing date for entries is Friday, April 4, 2014 and the Rules and Information booklet can be downloaded from the ANPA website.

We welcome three wonderful adjudicators for next year: Wendy Lorenz from Canberra, Murray McLachlan from Manchester, UK, and Paul Badura-Skoda from Austria. Their illustrious achievements can also be found on the site.

The date for our cocktail party launch in Shepparton has already been set for Tuesday, August 19, 2014, with the Melbourne launch likely to be held at Government House in July.

One major task, the revamp of our website, has just been completed. Firstly though, I would like to take the opportunity to thank former ANPA Board member, Bruce Wilson OAM, for his brilliant and untiring achievements as ANPA web-master over twelve years. We are most grateful for his excellent contribution and are very pleased that he remains as an Associate.

Nicola Archer, our Communications Manager, has procured Mikey McCorry to rebuild the website - a huge undertaking to rewrite and update - and I thank particularly Nicola Archer, Mikey McCorry and Judy Longley for their valued input. I think the new site is attractive and vibrant and includes all social media facilities. It also showcases an exciting film clip featuring pianists from the 2012 Award. **The site is now 'live'! Take a look - you'll be impressed! www.australianpianoaward.com.au**

A CD of highlights from the Semi-final and Grand Final recitals in 2012 has just gone to press and should be available by December. We thank ABC Classic FM for their permission to use the recordings they made at these recitals.

I take this opportunity to thank all our Friends, Associates and Sponsors, for their valued support. As always, I express my thanks to the wonderful Board members of ANPA, who work both harmoniously and diligently. Sometimes Boards of corporate entities can be "challenging" but I can truly say that it is a pleasure to be working with all the ANPA Board members.

Wishing all a safe, healthy and happy Festive Season, as well as much enjoyment of music at ANPA in 2014!

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

Proudly supported by the Greater Shepparton City Council

Regional Piano Events Mrs Julie Tracy, Organiser

Seminar for Piano Teachers

On a Saturday morning in July, a three-hour seminar for piano teachers conducted by Professor Max Cooke and Robert Chamberlain presented a range of prepared topics on piano teaching and responded to questions from teachers, who shared their experiences and swapped ideas. Enthusiastic discussion continued over lunch, when all agreed it was a great opportunity to learn about ways to overcome problems with technique and the importance of encouraging students to learn a wide repertoire of pieces and not be limited just to exam pieces.

It was also interesting to hear of a general growing trend of adults seeking piano lessons, either as beginners or simply to rekindle past keyboard skills.

Masterclasses and Bernstein Competition

Following the seminar, the annual Masterclasses for students of all ages took place in the recently refurbished Shepparton Mechanics Institute.

Twenty-seven young pianists from various parts of Victoria performed during the two-day event and received helpful advice from the two lecturers.

In previous years, some piano students were selected from the Masterclasses to perform at a later date in National Finals of the Bernstein Piano Competition. This year, all students taking part were judged on their performances at the Masterclass weekend and prizes were awarded in the various age groups.

The Junior winner was Imashi Iddawela and the Senior winner Bonnie Roe. The T.O.P. Encouragement Award went to David Leung. The Elsie Andrew Memorial Prize went to Charlie Bowmaker.

The regional winners were then invited to take part in the National Final of this Competition in Melbourne in October. We were delighted that Bernie Capicchiano from Bernie's Music Land in Ringwood, who has been the sponsor for this piano competition for the past 21 years, was able to join us during the event.

Pianist in Residence Programme

This programme, held since 2003, presents a different opportunity for pianists in our local area. The Pianist in Residence over these years has been concert pianist and educator, Grace Kim. We first met Grace when she was awarded a special prize in the Australian National Piano Award in 2002. Since then, she has achieved much during her time living in Holland, where she studied as a recipient of a Churchill Fellowship, and now in Sydney, where she is in demand as a soloist, chamber musician, adjudicator and teacher.

Each year Grace spends a week in Shepparton, giving not only lessons to each student, but also valuable advice on presentation skills for performing in public.

After this tuition and plenty of practice at home, these students show such remarkable progress, that they are able to confidently demonstrate their skills to the public in a Sunday afternoon concert, which concludes the week's activities. An inspirational highlight of the week, and always a fitting conclusion to the concert, is a performance by Grace herself.



Mr Bernie Capicchiano, Mr Robert Chamberlain and Professor Max Cooke with Event Co-ordinators Mrs Judy Longley and Mrs Julie Tracy.



James Noller at the Grace Kim Masterclass.



Imashi Iddawela performs in the National Bernstein Final, October 6th, 2013.

Playing for Pleasure

The idea for the Playing for Pleasure recital was conceived when the present Steinway Grand Piano was installed at Eastbank. As a means of sharing this magnificent asset with the community, members of the Greater Shepparton City Council requested that ANPA present free concerts for the Shepparton community to showcase, not only the instrument, but also the talents of pianists within our area – a commitment we have been able to fulfil ever since, thanks to the support of Riverlinks and the Greater Shepparton City Council.

At this year's concert, five local artists, Evangeline and Charlotte Drinnan, Bruce Sterling, Peter Garla and Julie Tracy, presented music of Bach, Mozart, Chopin, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, Gershwin and Britten to a very appreciative audience. For variety, violinist Alex Ford was our guest artist and was ably accompanied by another talented Shepparton pianist, Sharon Leppard.



Performers L-R: Alex Ford (violinist) and pianists, Julie Tracy, Sharyn Leppard, Evangeline Drinnan, Charlotte Drinnan, Bruce Sterling and Peter Garla.

The role of the Artistic Director and the origins of the award

Professor Max Cooke responds to questions from Barbara Brown.

1. You were involved in the Australian National Piano Award from the beginning. How did the originators of the idea convince you that Shepparton was the place for a National Piano Award?

- Shepparton had a very active Arts Association and the Team of Pianists had been asked several times to give masterclasses and recitals in Shepparton under the auspices of the Shepparton Performing Arts Association (SPAA). The President of SPAA, Joan Guymmer, approached Darryl Coote and me, with the idea of setting up some kind of Eisteddfod or Competition.
- We worked together with a singer from Shepparton, Maria Riccardi-Weight, to establish a suitable event. Joan had told us that there would be some funding available from the Fairley Estate through Perpetual Trustees.
- I was very keen to avoid establishing a competition that would duplicate Eisteddfod-like events in other towns such as Wangaratta, Bendigo and Albury.
- I was also aware that there was no high-level competition in Victoria for pianists of professional standard to try to become professional musicians.
- We decided on an age limit of no less than 21 years and no more than 35 years, this being the period when aspiring pianists could show their maturity and dedication and would need financial assistance.

2. You were appointed and continue to be Artistic Director. Could you describe the role of the Artistic Director?

- Once we started to design the Australian National Piano Award, it became obvious that there would be a responsibility to provide considerable challenges to the performers, to give them enough opportunity to show their abilities in a number of presentations and to ensure that there would be in-depth assessments of their talents and development.
- We decided that there would need to be three adjudicators, each chosen for their own pianistic abilities and who were known for their pedagogical experience and interest in young people.
- Each performer would have to prepare at least two recital programmes, in which they would show their skills and knowledge of a variety of styles.
- The role of the Artistic Director is to work out the details and requirements of the repertoire and to ensure that the competitors understand the musical purposes of the requirements.
- In addition to assisting the Board to source and appoint appropriate adjudicators and ensure that ANPA's adjudication procedures follow respected and reliable methods, the Artistic Director helps performers to abide by the aims and intentions of the Award.

3. How did you decide on the repertoire for the competition? How does it differ from other piano competitions in Australia?

- In Australia, there are very few competitions, which have such extensive demands as ANPA.

Whilst ANPA is a National Award, its artistic requirements are based on international competitions and standards.

- In some competitions, particular works are designated as essential choices, whereas the Australian National Piano Award allows the competitors to nominate their own works within the framework of requirements for particular styles of music from specific historic periods, which must be represented.
- This ensures that the competitors will present a variety of music and that they do understand the importance of presenting music in a manner that reflects the ideas and intentions of the composer.
- Obviously, each performer will add a certain quality of his/her own, giving himself/herself opportunity for creativity, whilst respecting the characteristics of the composer in the presentation of each work. Each work should sound different, not just an intuitive creation of the performer.

4. What are you looking for in terms of participants' skills and technique?

- In piano competitions of international standard these days, most performers have highly developed technical skills. These are to be expected in all cases, so that the attention of the adjudicators will be mainly on the performer's ability to communicate ideas and feelings and to convince listeners with their presentations; in other words, to show their own personal individuality.
- Alongside this, they need also to be able to transport the listeners into the world of each particular composer. This means that they will have studied the history and philosophies of the time, have some knowledge of the life of the composer and will show respect for the traditions of the time.
- We say their performances should be stylistic, as well as individual. Each work should sound different from the others, with its own particular sounds and characteristics.

5. How do you respond when asked why the Award is not in Melbourne? What makes the Shepparton Award special?

There is great advantage in holding the Award outside a capital city.

- Firstly, it brings music to the region and, over the years, the local people, and indeed the City Council, have become more and more respectful of classical music, so that there has been benefit to Shepparton and the surrounding region.
- Alongside this, there is great advantage to the Award itself through the dedicated support by large numbers of local people, who billet and look after the competitors.
- Because of its close association with Shepparton people, the competitors feel welcome and comfortable in the surroundings and the whole Award takes on a friendly, rather than a frighteningly competitive attitude, which occurs sometimes in competitions.

6. What feedback have you received from participants about the repertoire required for the Award?

- A few competitors have resented having to select a wide range of styles but, generally, they have realized the importance of showing their understanding of different kinds of music from various traditions. When they study the details, they find that they have a good deal of choice in the works that they must select.

7. On a personal note, do you have a favourite composer and a very favourite piece of piano music?

- As a performer and teacher over many years, I am glad to say that I have many loves in the world of music, not just any one.

(Footnote: Readers interested in the details, rules, structure and repertoire requirements for ANPA 2014 should access the ANPA website, www.australianpianoaward.com.au Ed.)



Professor Max Cooke, Artistic Director of ANPA since its inception.

Next Australian National Piano Awards 8th - 13th September 2014

News of our Sponsor: Opening of Day Procedure Unit

On Wednesday, 21st August 2013, the Member for Murray, Dr. Sharman Stone took time off from the hustings to open the new Day Procedure Unit at Shepparton Private Hospital with Senior Health Care executives, Mr Danny Simms and Mr Peter Evans from the Ramsay Hospital Group in attendance.

The need for this Unit, which has 12 beds and 10 recliners and an operating theatre, principally

designed for a variety of endoscopic procedures, is reflected in the growing reliance on the services and quality of care that the Shepparton Private Hospital offers in the Goulburn Valley.

Shepparton Private Hospital has been a wonderful supporter of ANPA and we look forward to their future involvement.



Chief Operating Officer, Ramsay, Mr Danny Simms, Dr Sharman Stone M.P., Mrs Sheryl Keir, CEO, Shepparton and Wangaratta Private Hospitals.

Additional Prize for ANPA 2014

In ANPA 2014, a new Bursary will be added to the Bursaries and the Lorna Speechley Memorial Prize for the People's Choice to further the music career development of the winners.

This new initiative is The Andreadis Family Australian Composition Commission Prize for the best performance of music written in or after 1951.

The winner will receive \$5,000 to commission a work by an Australian composer of his/her own choice, with the intention that the work be performed by the recipient. The commissioned work may be for a piano solo, for a chamber work including piano, or for a piano concerto. The score of the commissioned work will be provided to the Award within 12 months of the prize having been awarded.

We seek your email address

Receiving your newsletter and ANPA information by email is such a speedy and economical way to acquaint you with the latest news.

Please forward your name and email details to: info@australianpianoaward.com.au

Our website is now live... www.australianpianoaward.com.au

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