

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL PIANO AWARD 2010

MEDIA RELEASE

12noon Wednesday 4th August 2010

AUSTRALIA'S TOP CLASSICAL PIANO AWARD: FINALISTS ANNOUNCED TODAY

One young musician is poised to win the title of best classical pianist in Australia when 13 finalists compete in the nation's most prestigious piano award next month.

The Governor of Victoria, Professor David de Kretser AC, and the Parliamentary Secretary of the Arts, Rob Hudson MP, today announced the finalists in the 10th biennial Australian National Piano Award (ANPA).

Aged between 21 and 35 years, the 13 young pianists will compete in front of live audiences for the top honour, along with national recognition, concert engagements and \$45,000 in cash and prizes in total.

The ANPA started in 1992 with a Steinway, a stage and a small but passionate arts community in the regional Victorian city of Shepparton. Held every two years, the award is now considered the nation's premier classical piano competition. It attracts musicians of the highest calibre, the services of international judges, and a dedicated group of high-profile patrons and supporters, including its main sponsor, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC, DBE.

The award continues to be staged in Shepparton, where the thriving arts culture, appreciative audiences and professional concert stage create a thrilling and emotional atmosphere for the competitors and audiences alike.

This year's finalists hail from NSW, Victoria, the ACT and Queensland:

Victoria

- Mr Tristan Lee, age 24
- Miss Jennifer McNamara, 30
- Mr Will Schmidt, 23
- Mr Chi Zhang, 24

Queensland

- *Miss Belle Chen, 21*
- *Mr Roger Cui, 21*
- *Mr John Fisher, 25*

Australian Capital Territory

- Mr Jonathan Wilson, 24

New South Wales

- Miss Ying Ho, 29
- Miss Jocelyn Ho, 28
- Mr Vatche Jambazian, 23
- Mr Jee-Yong Kim, 23
- Miss Elina Yasumoto, 29

The competition requires the musicians to perform up to four recitals, to be judged on technical mastery, style, emotional and intellectual interpretations.

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The repertoire includes works by Beethoven, Bach, Schubert and Debussy and covers Baroque, Classical, 19th Century Romantic and French Impressionist music styles, as well as contemporary works and an Australian composition.

This year, one of the finalists will perform her own composition as her choice of an Australian work.

All 13 will compete from Monday 6th through to Thursday 9th; the semi-final is contested on the Friday; the judges select three to compete in the final on Saturday 11th September, broadcast live on ABC Classic FM.

This year the judges are internationally respected pianists and adjudicators Phillip Cassard (France), Roger Lord (Canada) and Tamara Smolyar (Australia). Artistic Director for the 2010 award is Professor Max Cooke.

ANPA President, Mr Neil Werner OAM, said this internationally recognised award gave Australian pianists a unique opportunity to launch their reputation and concert career.

"This award challenges pianists to perform to their absolute best each time they take the stage," Mr Werner said.

"It's an extraordinary opportunity for them to showcase their playing under intense performance conditions, and propel them into a career on the stage."

Many past ANPA winners are performing professionally today, including the 2008 winner, 24-year-old Jayson Gillham from Queensland. Jayson has worked on stage consistently since winning the award, and is now considered a sensation in London and Europe.

- What:** Australian National Piano Award; daily piano recitals afternoon and evening
- When:** Monday 6th to Saturday 11th September, 2010
- Where:** Eastbank Centre, Shepparton, Victoria
- Tickets:** \$30 Adults, \$20 concession, \$10 students
- How:** Book tickets and packages at Riverlinks: (03) 5832 9511
- Visit:** www.australianpianoaward.com.au

For media interviews with the pianists please contact:
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