

The Studio

Quarterly Magazine

Vol. 29 No. 4

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November 2023

RRP \$15

THE MUSIC TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES LIMITED

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The Music Teachers' Association of NSW Ltd is administered by a skills-based Board of volunteer Directors, at least half of whom are Accredited Members. In performing its role, the Board aspires to excellence in governance standards.

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All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Arts Administrator

45 Chippen Street, Chippendale NSW 2008

Tel: 02 8000 3780 **Email:** info@mtansw.org.au **Web site:** www.mtansw.org.au

Quarterly Notes November 2023



MTA NSW is a non-profit organisation that reports its annual activity to the Australian Charities & Not for Profit Commission (ACNC). View our [ACNC Profile](https://www.acnc.org.au) by searching the charity register. www.acnc.org.au

Contact our office to make a tax- deductible donation today.



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www.facebook.com/MusicNSW



Check your email inbox each month on the 15th day for your MTA NSW Newsletter.

2023 MINIMUM RECOMMENDED FEES

The MTA of NSW has determined that the minimum recommended Teaching Fees for Members of this Association are as follows:

\$96.00 per hour (Private)
\$105.60 per hour (Private) with GST included

\$130.00 per hour (Group)
\$143.00 per hour with GST included
(Group based on 3-6 students)

Please visit our website under [Notice Board](#) for more details on recommended teaching fees



The Studio

November 2023
Quarterly Magazine

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Editor: Dr Rita Crews OAM

Editorial Panel:

Rosalind Carlson OAM and Julie Spithill

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From the MTA Chair

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

With Christmas and holidays already around the corner it's hard to resist the temptation to take stock of the year – or at least appear to be doing so!

While an official 'year-in-retrospect' will appear in the next edition of *The Studio*, we can look back and see that this was really the year in which our new Arts Administrator, Ivy, came on board and began revolutionising management processes; working alongside the board to safeguard the future prospects of this venerable and valuable Association.

On behalf of the Board and membership, a huge 'thank you' to Ivy for her tremendous efforts, which are very much ongoing as she continues to implement the MTA's new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool and oversee the final stages of the amazing new Teacher Directory.

The urgency of Ivy's work was brought to the attention of members at the AGM in June this year. You will recall that, following the adoption of the MTA's new Constitution at the end of 2021, the first action of the Board was to recommend to members the appointment of a new Auditor, Alex Hardy. Along with the standard, ongoing auditing requirements for the MTA, Alex and his team completed a retrospective audit, which recast past financial figures into the General-Purpose format expected of the regulator. Alex presented his review to the members at the AGM. What became apparent was the overstatement of revenue for a number of years, underscoring the critical nature of the reforms that had been taking place, including the relinquishment of the two office spaces at Oatley and extensive reductions in overheads.

I am now delighted to report that Ivy, assisted by Deputy Chair, Anthony van den Broek, and Audit & Risk Committee Chair, Vincent Vartuli, has presented a budget forecast for 2024 which puts the MTA comfortably in the black after many years!

With Ivy now firmly across the 'bread and butter' processes and traditional work of the MTA (which have included this year the Sydney HSC Pre-Exam Concert, Advanced Concert & Margaret Chalmers Scholarship Award, and full suite of JMFs), the foundation is set for strategic planning to commence in earnest, the fruits of which will no doubt see the piloting of new programmes and initiatives in 2024.

Before signing off with well-wishes, I would like to take this opportunity to thank on behalf of the entire organisation our wonderful volunteers who have assisted Ivy this year. Ivy and the Board look forward to planning a 'thank you' event and to welcoming at that time other members interested in volunteering or finding out about becoming more engaged in the MTA.

I also extend sincere thanks to outgoing directors, Jaime Gibson and Sarah Harden. Both directors have served important tenures, assisting the Board with the huge governance reform process. Jaime serving most recently as interim Company Secretary. Sarah has given over a decade of service at the Branch level, including as the most recent Newcastle Branch President, and two years at the Board level. We wish them both well for the future and look forward to continued engagement as treasured members of our Association.

Finally... I hope to see many of you at our Christmas events as the year comes to a successful close. Thank you for your ongoing support, without which the Association could not do its important work of supporting and advocating for you all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Holzner', with a stylized, flowing script.

Max Holzner

Chair MTA Board

Around the Region
An update from the Branches

Branch email contacts:

Illawarra: illawarra@mtansw.org.au

Newcastle: newcastle@mtansw.org.au

Please use these email addresses when contacting the Branches, unless otherwise specified.

News from the Illawarra Branch:

Our final **student concert**, prior to the JMF in November, was held in Berry on 27th August with 31 students from beginners to 6th Grade performing. The older students and their parents were grateful for this opportunity to perform their exam pieces in preparation for the September/October examinations. Many thanks to **Mark Matthews**, our wonderful MC, and to **Samantha Hobson** who accompanied many students in duet form.

The proposed **Teachers Concert** for October 8th changed somewhat in appearance. Although very enthusiastic about reinstating our teacher concerts, most of the teachers including myself, felt rather less energised when the time came, so we did what all teachers need, went to a teacher's home for brunch. Armed with enough food to feed a small army – although there was only four of us - we had the most wonderful four hours (no, not just eating) of laughter, reminiscing, planning, trying to solve the world's problems, enjoying the friendship, and renewing our energies.

We are looking forward to our final musical event for the year - **the Junior Music Festival** at Wollongong Conservatorium on 12th November.

This year, we were hopeful of having Christmas Lunch in the Southern Illawarra, however the interest wasn't there, so we have cancelled the venue for 3rd December and instead will have a get-together at Samantha's home in Nowra for those that can make it, everyone is to bring a plate to share, and we will reinstate a **Christmas Lunch** in the Northern Illawarra area **for Friday 8th December**. Venue to be advised.

Wishing everyone a Joyous Christmas and a safe and reinvigorating holiday time.

Branch President, Meryl Jackson-Kew OAM

Mobile: 0438-098-347

News from the Newcastle Branch:

Our second and third student concerts held in June and September provided an opportunity for young musicians in Newcastle to showcase their performance skills. Both concerts well subscribed with full audiences.

In June, an additional **Advanced Student Concert** was held for higher level students to perform more of their repertoire. Again, all allocated spaces were taken up by eager student performers.

The **Junior Music Festival** held in late June was a successful day seeing entrants in all categories. Trophies and printing sourced locally delivered an added benefit to the community. With thanks to Adamstown Uniting Church for venue support and Jane Robertson for fabulous adjudication.

In July we held our annual scholarships, encompassing the **Errol Collins Award for Violin** (adjudicated by Susan Collins), the **Joyce Blewitt Award** and **The Nan Price Scholarship** for piano (adjudicated by Erin Sweetman), and **The Wendy Ireland Award** for cello (also adjudicated by Susan Collins). This year we added the inaugural **Hunter Art Music Vocal Scholarship** (adjudicated by Georgina Powell). Unfortunately, we did not receive sufficient entries to award the inaugural Hunter Indigenous Vocal Scholarship, however we did invite a standout entrant, Symphony Riley, to sing an original composition to open the afternoon awards. It was a massive day across two venues, that delivered over \$3750 in scholarship monies to the award winners listed below. Thanks again to Adamstown Uniting Church, The Christ Church Cathedral, our esteemed adjudicators, and of course the performers.

Our final events for the year include a professional development session featuring pianist Andrew Chubb which will investigate technical considerations and repertoire as it relates to the AMEB Technical Workbook Grades 1-4, a final student concert in late October, and our annual Jingle and Mingle in December.

Branch President, Sarah Harden

<https://www.facebook.com/mtanewcastle/>

Who Are Our Members?



Introducing

Sister Margaret Cusack rsj

TC, ATCL (T), TMusA [Pianoforte], AMusA (Voice)

I dedicate this to the many members of the Association whom I have had the privilege of knowing over the past 40 years.

The thread throughout my life and mission has been the love of music and the belief in its unifying, uplifting, life-giving and inspiring power.

From 1965-75, my initial teaching life as a Sister of St Joseph took many turns, teaching in Catholic High Schools with training in Junior Secondary

Science/Maths. Little did I know then that opportunities for returning to Music study would evolve. I wish to acknowledge past Music Teachers and mentors (some of whom are now deceased): Srs Aloysius Farrer rsj, Patricia Mary Comerford sgs, Clotilde Evans rsj, Margaret Rose Sweeney rsj, Vianney Plummer rsj.

Ruth Richardson, Mary Greville, Anita Vagg rsj and Heather Silcock were my teachers and mentors for ATCL (T), TMusA (Pianoforte) and 8th Grade Musicianship. Ruth Richardson tutored me for Voice for Grades 6,7 and 8. Peta Blyth was my teacher for AMusA Voice, awarded to me in 2008.

My Accreditation as a teacher of piano was awarded in 1983 when teaching Piano, Musicianship and Choir work in Tamworth. It was from then onwards that I was yearly enriched with the weekly Christmas Conferences organised by Professor Warren Thomson.

My time down in the South Coast from 1986 until 1995, I consider as the most enriching and busiest time of my life as a music teacher. It was inspiring to work with other teachers in the region. I followed Sr Christine Watkinson rsj (previous President of MTA of NSW). It was very rewarding to attend the annual Music Conferences and gatherings planned by the MTA Association during those years.

From 1986 onwards, I was Music Teachers' Association Wollongong Branch Secretary and assisted in organising annual Piano Workshops at Glennifer Brae Auditorium and branch concerts and competitions. It was rewarding to work with a team of teachers of other instruments for Corrimal Music school concerts. During this time, I also taught my own piano students in the convent. For three days a week, I had the position of Music Advisor to Catholic Primary Schools in the Wollongong Diocese. With a team of primary school music teachers, I became Musical Director of Combined School Music Festivals at Wollongong Town Hall for ten years.

In 1996/97, I was given the opportunity of travelling overseas to study in Liturgy at Maynooth, Ireland and following that, had a gap from membership of the MTA of NSW for eight years in Pymble/West Pymble and Toowoomba Parish Liturgy leadership. Since returning to Moree in 2006, I resumed membership and took individual students in piano, musicianship, and voice. Richard Morphew has been a valuable mentor for students of voice and pianoforte in this region, visiting Narrabri annually. I now have the privilege of leading the Music of the Sunday Liturgy in our local country Parish of Moree.

It is my firm belief that Music ought to have a place in every child's education and that this Association should have autonomy and continue to be a voice for the private music teacher and others. The history of this Association is a treasure, and my hope is that the link with a rich past is preserved in the future.



This popular column has returned in The Studio and members are invited to submit their biography [up to 1000 words] for inclusion in an issue. This is an ideal way for members to get to know each other and to read about each other's lives and interests.

Please contact the Editor Dr Rita Crews if you are interested in submitting an entry for this column: rcrews@ozemail.com.au

VALE

Valerie Barton
1.2.1939 - 1.2.2023

Valerie Barton was a long-serving member of the MTA Council and was subsequently an Honorary Life Member. She died on 27th August at the remarkable age of 104.

For many years – well into her youthful eighties - she taught singing and piano at her home studio in Strathfield. Along with Neta Maughan, she was a Patron and Honorary Committee Member of the Inner West Eisteddfod which was founded in 1984. However, her world was much wider than music. Her husband Horrie was in Rotary, and Val (as she was known) established the Strathfield branch of Zonta, the corresponding organisation for women.

In 1960, she met Miriam Hyde, my mother, as her daughter Anna and I were in the same class at school. This was the start of a long and cherished friendship. They shared a love of nature and poetry, and the bond of having husbands who had been POWs (prisoners of war). Miriam set some of Val's poetry to music in her songs (Late June, Festival Flowers, Children at Christmas). I remember in my teens, going around the Burwood district in a truck, with school friends, singing Christmas carols, which Val had organised.

After my father died in 1995, Val and long-time music friends and MTA stalwarts Adene McInnes and Bert Coughtrey came to afternoon tea on my mother's birthday every year. Val drew a pencil portrait of Bert for his 80th birthday party held by the MTA.

Val was thrilled by the wonders of Nature, especially trees and clouds. In her "sunset" years she moved to a retirement village in Woolgoolga to be near her daughter, and she revelled in the lush environment of the north coast. Despite declining eyesight and hearing, she retained her zest for life, positive outlook, strong voice, bright eyes and smile, an interest in current affairs and great clarity of memory.

Was it just coincidence that at the time of her passing, my tree orchids which came from her garden, were flowering more profusely than before, in my big lilly pilly?

Vale, Val

Christine Edwards



VALE

George Fitzgerald 1930-2023

Born 18th December 1930 at Kogarah, George was educated at Marist Brothers Kogarah. George, the third child of a brilliant musical mother, after some home schooling, was sent to the Sydney Conservatorium at the early age of 10.

Unfortunately, at age 16 George was reduced to less than 10% vision. Despite this he continued his musical education and graduated, Diploma Sydney Conservatorium of Music with piano and percussion.

A scholarship to the Whitehall Academy of Acting exposed George's talent for acting and provided confidence in public speaking.

George taught music initially at Newington College.

In January 1961 George married Ruth Richardson, a fellow student of the Sydney Conservatorium. They became a great partnership, working together for nine years at Newington College then at St Patrick's College, Sutherland for 20 years.

Students benefited not only from music courses but also from choirs and college productions. George played drums with a number of groups and was regularly called to play at special functions.

A life, despite adversity, built on a wide contribution to the development of music in Sydney including being a member of the MTA Council along with Ruth, for many years,

John Fitzgerald



Member's Meet Up - Penrith

Members' Meet Up - Penrith, held on 14th September 2023



L-R: Joel, Amanda, Phyllis, Barry, Eika and Henny

Six of us met together at the Prairie Cafe in Penrith this morning. It was great to share stories of our teaching and encourage one another in what is sometimes a rather daunting occupation.

Thank you for organising a venue in Penrith, that was most thoughtful, because previously with the venue in the city, most of us are unable to attend. It would have been nice for some of the members who live in the city join us. Maybe another time. We can sometime feel rather isolated out here.

Thanks again,
We look forward to the next 'get together'

Phyllis Huthnance

First Thursday's

On the first Thursday of every month during school terms, MTA NSW offers free professional development sessions to its members, on a variety of topics related to music teaching.

These regular professional development sessions were originally the brainchild of MTA Member Annette Allerding, who wanted music teachers to be able to meet and share ideas. Originally named Keys, Cakes and Conversation (KCC) the group went online during Covid, and eventually reached numbers often in excess of 50 teachers, meeting each month on Zoom. The Music Teachers' Association of NSW is delighted to bring these sessions into our fold. We want the sessions to continue to be free to our members, but we also believe it is important to pay presenters for their valuable time. So, we ask you to consider a giving a donation towards the costs if you are able. You will be given the option to donate when you book your place.



Here are some thoughts from our members -

But what I can say is that these professional development courses are invaluable. They offer advice and knowledge on areas of teaching that we as teachers can sometimes struggle with such as which edition of a score to use or what to include in our teaching policy. These regular courses available through First Thursday's have given me so much information and allowed me to feel more confident in decisions I make with my students.

Belinda Eaton

The First Thursday "Which Edition Should I Choose" was incredibly informative. It really helped me to better assist my piano students. Anthony possesses a wealth of knowledge, and he effortlessly guided us on how to apply his insights in our day-to-day teaching practices.

Justin McKee

Concert and Performance Event Review

By Anthony M van den Broek, Deputy Chair MTA (NSW) Board

As part of the MTA (NSW) post-covid reset in 2023, we have been getting back to the full range of in-person activities, performances, junior musical festivals, competitions, and scholarship concerts. Here is a roundup of two fabulous and exciting recent events that were held: The HSC Preparation Performance Concert and Feedback as well as the Advanced Concert and Wendy Chalmers Scholarship Award.

HSC Preparation Performance Concert and Feedback

The first of two new additions to 2023 included an HSC Preparation Performance, where students performed their works for Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension performance examinations.

Their performances were marked and given both verbal and written feedback. Students received marks assessed against the Syllabus Objectives, indicating where the performance was currently placed with respect to the various Bands. They were also given great advice about what could be done to further enhance their performance dealing with aspects of collaboration between soloist and accompanist, dynamic and expressive variety, expressing structure and enhancing performance flair and musical insight.

The students were fortunate to have Greg Burgett as their examiner. He is a senior music teacher, conductor, teacher, and pianist who holds a Bachelor of Music Performance in Jazz Piano from Sydney Conservatorium of Music as well as Grad Dip of Teaching (Secondary) from the University of Southern Queensland. He has been regularly employed by NESA as an HSC Marker of Aural and Musicology papers, practical performance, and compositions.



Students and teachers reported back that this was a valuable experience and as we know, every performance helps our students to become more comfortable, fluent, and relaxed with their music.

Congratulations to all who participated. We will be running this concert earlier in 2024 to give greater lead time between this event and the NSW HSC Trials.

Advanced Student Concert & Margaret Chalmers Scholarship Award

Following on from the great success of this new concert in 2022, the Music Teachers' Association of NSW expanded this event offering two \$1000 Margaret Chalmers Scholarship awards for outstanding performances.

The event was held in two parts. The first concert featured Grade 7, Grade 8 and Certificate Level students. Students performed two works and there were four pianists and two violinists who participated in this section.

The standard was particularly high, with participants receiving marks in the high 80s through to the mid-90s, a strong testament to the outstanding musicianship and pedagogical processes of these student's teachers.

Congratulations to Gabrielle Wikstrom who travelled all the way down from Newcastle to attend this event. Gabrielle was the youngest competitor in this section and is a student of Rodney Wikstrom. She took out first place with a beautiful performance of the first movement of Mozart's Sonata for Violin No 19 in G major, followed by a dazzling and technically proficient rendition of Potstock's "*Souvenir de Sarasate*". The Potstock is a charming yet challenging work that requires difficult extended techniques such as harmonics and left hand pizzicato. Gabrielle demonstrated excellent mastery of these skills. In addition, she was able to project the various characters of the different themes and sections into a cohesive whole. Well done!

Congratulations also to second place winner Amelia Lee (piano), student of Elizabeth Hsu and to third place winner, Sienna Haga (piano) student of Susan Head.

The second concert was for students at the Associate Diploma and Licentiate Diploma Level, and the audience was treated to a fabulous recital featuring a wide selection of composers from all the major periods. There was one violinist in this section and nine pianists. Many of the works were well known items from the concert repertoire, with other musical gems presented that aren't heard as often.

The standard was outstanding with two individual \$1000 scholarships awarded to the outstanding performances by Massimo Russo and Caleb Mayo, both who received equal first place based on the marks of their two performances.

Massimo Russo is a student of Tanya Nguyen and played Chopin's "*Black Key*" Etude in G-flat major, Op 10 No 5 as well as Ravel's "*Le barque sur l'ocean*" from "*Miroirs*". Both works were played from memory and there was a clear engagement both the technical and musical aspects of the Chopin Etude resulting in a projection of the joyful and playful character of this work as well engaging with the romantic style with a flexible rubato and beautifully shaped phrases.

The Ravel featured an expressive range of colours and dynamics with a clear projection of both the character of the work as well as the dramatic structure. In both works, there was a clear commitment and individuality in the interpretations.

Receiving the same overall mark was Caleb Mayo, a student of Elizabeth Hsu. Caleb also played from his program from memory, which began with Boulanger's "*D'un Viex Jardin*". This was a colourful and well-timed performance with beautifully shaped phrases. The range of tone colours explored led to an expressive realisation of the work's character and style. Technical facility was outstanding.

Following this was a stirring performance of Liszt's "*Sonnetto 104 del Petrarca*". In this performance, there was a clear sense of the work's drama projected through a confident approach to dynamics, expression and technique.

Congratulations to second place winner, Leo Papa (piano), student of Ross Hamilton who played Allegro con spirito from Clementi's Sonata Op 37 No 2 and Brahms's gorgeous Intermezzo in A major Op 118 No 2.

And congratulations to third place winner, Danielle Hu (violin), student of Yong Tang, who played Lalo's Symphonie espagnole 1st movement and the first movement of Schubert's Violin Sonata in A, D 574.

All in all, this was a wonderful afternoon of music making and MTA (NSW) strongly applauds the excellent work of our member teachers. We very much look forward to continuing and expanding this event further in 2024.



Massimo began learning the piano at the age of ten, obtaining his AMusA with Distinction in 2022, and LMusA later that year. He is currently studying a Bachelor of Actuarial Studies at UNSW. He also endeavours to study piano at the Sydney Conservatorium once he finishes his degree early next year, with the help of a scholarship from the University of Sydney.

2023 Junior Music Festivals

As the new Arts Administrator for the MTA, it has been a pleasure to be a part of the 2023 Junior Music Festivals. Over the past four months we have held five festivals across Sydney and Newcastle with over 600 performances from very talented musicians. Two locations, Cherrybrook and Burwood, ran across an 8–9-hour day with 120-200 entrants at each festival. Special thanks to all the volunteers that assisted, to the teachers for their hard work in preparing their students and to the parents/carers for supporting their children in musical endeavours. These events could not exist without everyone's support.

To round off the year, the remaining locations Wollongong and Kogarah are still open for bookings if you are interested in entering your students.

To showcase the range of instruments, ages and abilities of the performers this year, below are a handful of images taken at the Junior Music Festival Killara, Cherrybrook and Chippendale.



ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is the attainment of an acceptable level of music teaching skills. An Accredited private music teacher is considered to be able to teach effectively and competently. Although Accreditation is not a condition of membership of the MTA of NSW, it is hoped that all teachers would wish to become Accredited Members of the MTA.

Requirements for Accreditation

Category A (formal qualifications)

Teachers may hold either:

(1) A degree or diploma in music/music education from a recognised tertiary institution, which must include training in musical pedagogy.

or

(2) Qualifications in each of Performance, Theory and Pedagogy. Examples of minimum qualifications include:

Performance:

Grade 8 Performance (AMEB)

Grade 8 Performance (ANZCA)

Grade 8 Performance (ATCL, Trinity)

Grade 8 Performance (ABRSM)

Theory:

Grade 6 in Music Craft, Musicianship or Theory (AMEB)

Grade 6 Theory (ANZCA)

Grade 6 Theory (Trinity)

Grade 6 Theory (ABRSM)

Pedagogy:

Certificate Teacher of Music (AMEB)

Associate Teacher Diploma (ANZCA)

Associate Diploma of Principles of Instrumental/Vocal Teaching (ATCL, Trinity)

Diploma of Instrumental/Vocal Teaching (ABRSM)

Category B (professional experience)

Teachers without formal qualifications may be considered for Accreditation if they can produce evidence of successful professional teaching. This can include references, list of students' achievements, etc.

Category C (Contemporary Teachers)

Teachers of contemporary music may be considered for accreditation if they have evidence of all or some of the following:

Be accepted as a teacher of contemporary/jazz/popular music at a tertiary institution (e.g., TAFE, Conservatoria, University etc). This could include teaching of composition via computer/electronic means and audio engineering.

Any suitable qualification e.g., Certificate 4, appropriate Music Theatre qualifications, or a graduate of appropriate courses from the Film & Television School etc.

A proven record of successful teaching in the field via references, list of students' achievements, etc.

Submission of a CV.

Bursaries

Bursaries are available to MTA Members to assist with achieving the appropriate qualifications for Accreditation. These bursaries are sponsored by the MTA Benevolent Fund. Contact the MTA office to apply.

Disclaimer

The Music Teachers' Association of New South Wales Ltd encourages the highest professional and ethical standards of teaching. It makes no representation whatever as to the standard or style of teaching available from any individual teacher, nor as to the suitability of such teaching for any particular student. To be included in the printed or online Directory, teachers must have had their qualification recognised through the process of accreditation. Whilst all care has been taken regarding the correctness of data, responsibility for same rests with those teachers entered. The Association disclaims responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Please visit our website for more information and registration forms

www.mtansw.org.au

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

ACCREDITED MEMBERSHIP

This is available to teachers who hold formal qualifications (e.g., degree or diploma) in music teaching and pedagogy, or to teachers without formal qualification but with evidence of successful professional teaching.

Teachers of contemporary music may have relevant music qualifications (i.e., Cert IV), have proven record of successful teaching in the field, or may hold a position as a contemporary/jazz/popular music teacher at a tertiary institution.

Accredited Members have voting rights at Annual General Meetings.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is available to teachers who do not yet have formal qualifications, or relevant experience for Accredited Membership. Members have voting rights at Annual General Meetings.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

Student Membership is available to full time music students enrolled in a recognised tertiary undergraduate diploma or degree course and may be held for up to four years. Student members have voting rights at Annual General Meetings.

FRIEND MEMBERSHIP

Friend Membership is for interested members of the community, (e.g., parents and family members) who are not current music teachers and who wish to support the MTA NSW community.

Please visit our website for more information and registration forms
www.mtansw.org.au

MEMBERSHIP APPROVALS

The Chair and Board of the MTA of NSW wish to welcome all new members.

ACCREDITED MEMBERS	
Name	Location
I-Mei (Meg) Li	Parramatta
Grace Carroll	Woy Woy
Liqian (Sherry) Wang	Roseville
Maria Sung	Ryde
Peter Sagar	Baulkham Hills
Simon Bartlett Reinstated	Croydon



JOIN THE CONVERSATION!!

MTA MEMBERS' FACEBOOK

We have launched the **MTA NSW Members'** Facebook group, exclusive for our members and we want you to join the conversation! This is a **private group**, a safe space for you to share ideas, resources, questions and connect with fellow teachers from your MTA community.

Just copy the link to join and start the conversation.

www.facebook.com/groups/mtanswmembers



Around the Country
Contact details for the
Music Teachers' Association in each State



West Australian Music Teachers' Association

Simone Collins, Secretary
PO Box 4385 VICTORIA PARK WA 6979
0403 541 525
admin@wamta.org.au
www.wamta.org.au



Music Teachers' Association of South Australia

Michael Thompson, Secretary
PO Box 4, RUNDLE MALL SA 5000
0402 575 219
info@mtasa.com.au
www.mtasa.com.au
www.facebook.com



Victorian Music Teachers' Association

Lynda Alexander, Administration
PO Box 1371, MITCHAM NORTH VIC 3132
03 5243 4200
vmta@vmta.org.au
www.vmta.org.au



Queensland Music Teachers' Association

Wayne Boxall, Secretary
Taringa Centre, 26/200 Moggill Road TARINGA QLD 4068
07 3870 4146
qmta@qmta.org.au
www.qmta.org.au



Tasmanian Music Teachers' Association

Emma Field, Secretary
88 Pottery Rd, LENAHA VALLEY TAS 7008
0432 175 578
emma.field7@icloud.com
www.tmta.com.au



Articles and Reviews



Analyses of Piano Works

A full list of analyses can be found on our website

www.mtansw.org.au

copies are available by contacting the office

WOODWIND WISDOM

COMING OF AGE

by Mark Walton OAM

This time yesterday I was in Melbourne sitting around a large table with some of the most stunning of Australia's clarinet players. We had all had very early mornings so as to arrive in time for a day of inspiring playing and intense talking. The group consisted of players from four of our professional orchestras, several significant freelance players and then there was me. The level of expertise gathered around that table was only matched by the high level of bonhomie. The purpose of the meeting was to join a video link to talk with the elite clarinet design team in Hamamatsu, Japan. Apart from the Japanese contingent there was also the English clarinetist Michael Collins in attendance. Michael, who is currently on a Japanese tour, is regarded as one of the world's leading international clarinet soloists. As it happens, I tutored him in the English Surrey Youth Orchestra when he was just 16 and I was 18 so when we were introduced to each other yesterday Michael tried hard to hide his surprise that his old coach was still alive!

Obviously, what we had in common was that we all played the clarinet but of much more significance was the fact that we all play the identical, beautiful, new model instrument. The Japanese wanted our feedback and suggestions on how they could produce an even finer instrument. Our clarinet nerd discussion was intensely detailed and definitely not for the faint hearted.

For me this day was very long in coming because way back in 1986, soon after I'd arrived in Australia from England, I was giving a solo recital at the Queensland Conservatorium and my then French clarinet had suddenly stopped working. I couldn't continue playing so I asked if there was anyone in the audience who had an instrument, they could loan me. Sure enough there was, and I was handed a Japanese instrument. I finished the concert, gratefully handed back the borrowed clarinet and two days later went and bought an identical clarinet. One could say it was meant to be because I loved that new clarinet and all the multitude of Japanese instruments I've subsequently owned.

Since then, I've been a lone voice in support of these fine instruments as all my colleagues remained loyally European in their choice of their instruments.

Despite my own unorthodox choice of instruments my advanced students still felt obliged to follow what the professional orchestral players were playing on. I knew they were correct in thinking that it would be frowned upon if they had the wrong equipment.

This didn't bother me in the slightest as I knew that the world's number 2 clarinet maker would be trying even harder to make a superior instrument.

So yesterday it was wonderful to see and hear so many fabulous players playing on these fine instruments but even more importantly, the quality of this generation of Australian clarinet playing is something to behold and be immensely proud of. I am not in the least surprised that the Japanese design team was so keen to pick the Australians' brains.

This article is not meant to read as an advertisement for a particular brand of instrument, but I think it demonstrates how as a country we have become more diverse and more adventurous which surely has to be a good thing.

Next time you go to the Opera House to attend an opera, or a ballet and you hear the fabulous clarinet section playing you will hear a beautiful blend of Canadian, French and Japanese instruments.

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"MISS, I DON'T WANT TO PERFORM!"

by Stacey-Louise Camilleri

This article first appeared in The Piano Teacher, September 2022 re-printed with permission from the magazine and the author.

It's that time of year again. Music teachers all over the world are frantically putting together recital lists, sending letters to parents telling them to pass on the concert details to the family, students are "umming" and "ahhing" over which piece they want to perform and on top of all of that; slowly it begins to set in: we haven't done an end of year recital in three years.

Having worked in education right through the two-year lockdown in Victoria, I can confidently say that the spike in anxiety, depression, and a host of other mental challenges in young people was incredibly high. Students suddenly became so aware of their musical abilities (read: flaws). Pre-recording performances to share in the next Zoom class (because the constantly upgrading audio options combined with dodgy internet connections did not allow for "smooth streaming" were just as terrifying as a cage-dive with sharks. I heard a lot of; "Miss, I hate watching myself, can I turn off my camera?", "Miss, I couldn't record mine, my brother/sister/parent/poodle hates the noise!", and the common, "Miss, I just don't want to perform."

By the time students were able to return to class, the vibe was notably different. Any time a performance assessment day arrived, there was a combination of nerves, tears, panic attacks and breakdowns. The idea of performing in front of anyone – after having performed in front of a computer screen for two years – was now so terrifying that many students lost their ability to enter any sort of performance head space.

So now that you're preparing your 2022 end of year recital, what can you do to ensure that your students have an enjoyable performance experience?

Keep it positive!

Sharing music should be a positive experience. It is exciting to be able to share music with an audience, aiming to create the same feelings within them as we did the first time, we heard the piece. Performing shouldn't be stressful, or something to be afraid of. Rather, it should be something we are excited to do because it is our opportunity to show the audience how fantastic this piece is.

Explaining the art of performance from this vantage point is a positive way to present the topic. Avoid reminding students that "people will be watching you, so if you don't practice enough, they will all see you fail." Instead, drive students to practice with the excitement of how thrilling it will be to share this piece to those who have never heard it before. Doing this, takes the focus off the performer, and places it onto the piece. The audience wants to hear the piece, we are merely facilitators of that. It's not about us, it's about the music.

Talk to the parents.

You only see the students for half an hour or so each week. Your students talk to the parents a whole lot more than that, so parents need to be aware of how to create a healthy and safe musical space. For instance, when students are practicing at home:

- *Avoid complaining about noise.* If it's important that you have certain 'music free' times in the house, make sure that your child is also aware of when they can make as much music as they want.
- *Always provide positive re-enforcement.* If a student is making mistakes in practice, they will know, they don't need attention drawn to it. Rather, compliment their progress and commitment (it's a great thing that they're practicing in the first place!)
- *After each lesson, ask what they covered in the lesson.* Young people generally love when adults show a genuine interest in their activities.

As the performance approaches:

- Organise family and friends to lock the date into their diaries. The more the merrier. The bigger the cheer at the end of the performance, the more elated the student will feel.
- Tell the student that you're proud of their hard work and talent not only on the day but leading up to it.
- On the day, tell them it is totally normal to feel nervous. Nerves give us adrenaline. Then try to pull their focus to the music that they should be excited to share. If they are worried about making mistakes, tell them it's okay to make mistakes, but at the same time, they have managed to play it perfectly many times before, so there's no reason to be afraid that they can't do it again.

Once the performance is done:

- Congratulate them on how hard they have worked, how difficult it must be to play piano/memorise music like they just did, how they pushed through their nerves/mistakes and kept going. All of this is much better than "well done". Acknowledge the process, not just the result.

Talk about performance anxiety.

First of all, performance anxiety is NORMAL. How hard it hits a person can vary greatly, but it is important to remind students that it is normal and there is nothing wrong with them. Particularly for young people to whom performance anxiety is new, it can be a terrifying feeling. There's no 'fix-all' solution, but there are a range of methods that work for different people. Some of the most common are:

- Drink lots of water – stay hydrated.
- Avoid caffeine and sugar the day of the performance – we want to keep that pulse rate down.
- The power of positive self-talk – focus on how hard you’ve worked, how confident you should feel, how excited you are for the sharing of music and how much support you have from those around you.
- “In through the nose, out through the mouth.” One of the first things to go when we get anxious is our breath. Slow, regulated breathing can help regulate that fluttering heart rate.

On the day of the concert, you never know what will happen. I recall once having a student get up on stage and stand frozen. I leapt to my feet and offered to play with them. They agreed. After playing perhaps two bars, I took my hands away from the piano and let them play solo for the remainder of the piece. Sometimes it’s those little assists that will make a world of difference. Really, all you want for your students is for them to have a positive experience. Don’t make it about you, or the image of your school/studio. Focus on providing the most supportive, positive, and comfortable environment you can, and be proud of the over-achievement your students make – no matter how big or small.

EVERY NOTE IS DEAR TO THE COMPOSER

by Miriam Hyde AO, OBE

First published in the Association's Quarterly Notes [the forerunner of The Studio] in February 1969, the thoughts in this article are as relevant today as when it was first written. Many of the remarks are also pertinent to melody writing as well as to performance.

I have sometimes written this very phrase on the report of candidates who have shown a laxity in reading the text of their examination works, studied, we may presume, for a good many months of the year. I am not speaking of mere technical "slips", that may happen to the best of performers, particularly when nervousness undermines the control of the fingers; but I mean **mis-readings**, that come round in repeated sections of a work, or have been found to persist when the candidate has been asked to play a few bars again.

How do these "reading" mistakes occur? Is it that the standard of aural perception is poor, and that we do not put enough emphasis on this in the granting of diplomas, Teachers' Diplomas in particular? Or is it that, with the trends of modern music **away from the keys** [tonalities], we are no longer alert to errors in simple diatonic passages. Has the **leading note** lost, for us, its pungency? I remember being impressed with the story of little Mozart, who, like most young boys, was rather tardy at getting up in the mornings. His father one day hit on the expedient of going to the piano [or harpsichord?] and slowly playing an ascending scale. He stopped at the leading note. This so offended the boy's musical nature that he came running into the room to supply the upper keynote, which of course he did unerringly, with his acute sense of pitch.

This **leading note** gets us into a lot of trouble. As an accidental, it is far too often not carried through the bar. This shows a lack not so much of the eye, or the intelligence, but of the **ear**. We should **hear** the need for it, and that means being aware of not only the main key of the composition, but any modulations through which it may pass. A major key signature, of course, contains the leading note [and, as a theoretical hint, it is well to know that the **last sharp** in a major key signature is always the **leading note** of the key]. In A minor key, the leading note is dependent on the use of an accidental.

Special vigilance is necessary in music with a big number of notes per bar. In a 4/4 time, flowing in semiquavers, for instance, there is more risk to an accidental that may appear at the second semiquaver and is still relevant at the 16th, than in a 3/3 Minuet with mostly only 3 to 6 notes in a bar. For this reason, the Bach C minor Prelude, Book 2, is a sad victim, particularly in the very modulatory second half. A white anting of accidentals can make sawdust of these tonalities [so dear to Bach].

Whenever you deal with V [dominant triad, or dominant 7th] in a harmony exercise, you will need the **leading note accidental in a minor key**. Why do students forget this repeatedly? I find those who do so have been taught to put down a string of **letter names** of those triads they expect to find useful in a harmonisation. But thinking musically is very different from playing a game of Scrabble! My pupils soon discover that it is no use telling me that the dominant triad in E minor is "B, D, F." It may take a little longer to say, but the answer I want to hear is "B, D **sharp** and F **sharp**"; then I have some hope that they are picturing those notes on the keyboard, perhaps even attempting to **hear** them, mentally, and I know that they already have remembered the raising of the **leading note**.

Reverting to misreading in the performance of musical works, perhaps we could list a few of the more common categories:

[May I say it once again?] - carelessness about the **leading note**.

Occasional non-retention of the key signature or some part of it [usually the **last** sharp or flat, with which the student has had less familiarity]

Thinking in the wrong **clef**. When this occurs, there is usually either a clash of harmonies between one hand and the other, or a sudden peculiarity of "balance", bringing the hands too close or too far apart to be musically sensible. The moment you have any suspicion that something like this is amiss, do investigate it.

Wrong notes in **chords**. This is surprisingly common. It may be a wrong middle note, and here again the error points to a lack of really discerning musicianship. If, for instance, the composer has written [in C major] a left-hand chord of three notes, from bottom up, G, D, F, it is very likely because, in the right hand, there is a completion of the dominant 7th harmony by strong use of the leading note, B. Those who carelessly play the left hand as G, B, F do not realise that, so to speak, they are putting far too much salt in Beethoven's pudding! We don't want all this "B" ingredient. On the other hand, if the left hand has been written as G, B, F, because the right hand is occupied with the note D [the missing link of the dominant 7th] and the student is allowed to play left hand G, D, F, the "salt" has been left out altogether! The same applies to 'Alberti' variants of basic harmonies. The composer puts down on paper the well-considered choice of individual notes, and it is up to us to **read carefully** to re-create his wishes.

We sometimes hear a chord played and accepted as an "obvious" harmony when in fact it contains one unexpected note that alters its whole character. In the *Pathétique* Sonata of Beethoven [1st Movement], two chords before the Development resumes the first tempo, I have not infrequently heard a dominant 7th. Beethoven here wants the sharper tang of the diminished 7th, [only a difference of one note, remember!], while his next chord **is** a dominant 7th, poised ready for the thrust of E minor.

Can you recall the sixth chord in the slow Liszt *Consolation* in D flat? I heard a very musical candidate play right hand A flat, C, E flat, B flat [and I could see his hand was large]. It sounds quite reasonable, a nice, sweet harmony; but Liszt did not want "sweetness", here; he wanted **poignancy**! Look again at those leger lines! The thumb note is **G** flat. We have the sad combination of 7th and 9th [actually, a 10th apart].

Enharmonic changes. When two harmonies **look different**, it is easy to jump to the conclusion that we are looking for a different **sound**; but this is not always so. In Debussy's *Little Shepherd*, I have sometimes heard a most peculiar sound issuing from the left hand on the first beat of bar 8. Why? What has gone wrong? We see that this **looks** different from the first beat of bar 7 and are therefore tempted to apply the new accidental to the wrong note or treat it as a flat instead of a sharp. In reality, the two intervals **sound** identical. Why are they written differently? In bar 7, we have A major tonality, F natural being the [chromatic] minor 6th which then **falls** a step, to E. In bar 8, we have the same notes, enharmonically changed to E sharp, because its natural tendency, now, is to **rise** a step [to F sharp] into what is momentarily a first inversion of the B minor triad.

There is no doubt at all that many mis-readings are oversights [or under-hearings???] They are ingrained and our minds are inured to them. The student gets used to it that way. The parents [unless they are very musically awake] get used to it that way. Then what an

ogre the examiner is, when he comes along and refers to "bar so-and-so, line so-and-so, page so-and-so", trying to take up the cudgel of those composers who may be dead and buried, or, indeed, who may be alive and in the **next room**! Sometimes a student, after much reminding's **still** plays the wrong note and when we can see the rubber still crumbling off the page, leaving a faint pencil ring, we are glad to be able to write "You are still playing C natural".

Students! - do not let your teacher down. Teachers! - do not let the composer down. Could we as a thought for 1969, take the advice of - I think it was Matthay - who said, "Always practise as though the composer is **in the room**".

That should make us more sincere, more alert, and more understanding that **EVERY NOTE IS DEAR TO THE COMPOSER.**

AN OVERVIEW OF MUSIC IN THE ROMANTIC ERA

c. 1825-1900

PART 3

by Andrew Lesser

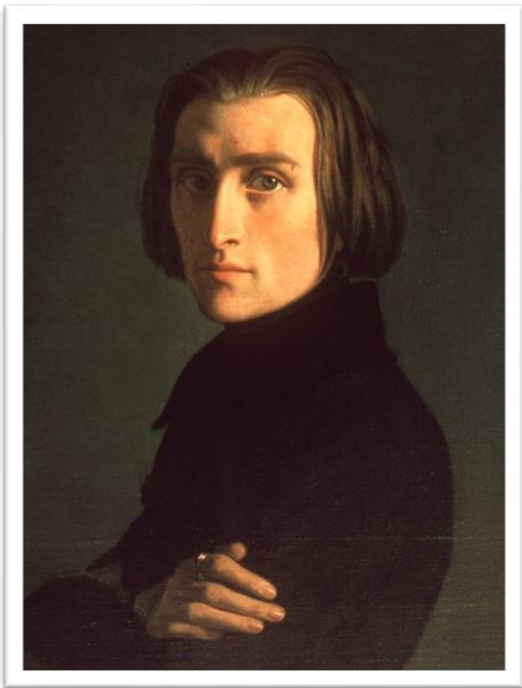
The Great Performers

The Romantic Era also gave rise to the virtuoso; performers who defied all convention with their incredible ability and musical talent. In this, they also served as the archetype for the Romantic Hero; a person whose character and mystique were equally as important as their musical genius. The Romantic Hero was mysterious, an enigma to all those who sought to understand him, yet capable of producing music full of beauty and humanity. Yet there also echoed a hint of the supernatural; musical abilities that were so advanced that it was difficult to accept them without imagining some kind of otherworldly power.

Such was the case with the famous violinist Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840). Paganini's violin ability was second to none; many still say that he was the greatest violinist in the world. His fans certainly thought so; wherever he went he was surrounded by a court of admirers. Critics and listeners marvelled at his acrobatics, pizzicatos, double and triple stops, and playing speed that it became almost legendary. In fact, many people believed that Paganini had signed a contract with the devil, giving his soul in exchange for inhuman musical prowess. Even his facial features led many to imagine a dark countenance with a hint of inhuman pleasure. In reality, he was an incredibly gifted man who in addition to his performing ability, wrote many etudes for solo violin that are used today as etudes and showpieces for professional and aspiring violinists. His most famous is the *24 Capricci* for solo violin, which are studied by any player who can seriously be called a professional violinist.



One virtuoso performer who had been mesmerized by Paganini's legend was the great pianist Franz Liszt (1811-1886). Liszt had heard Paganini at the age of 21 after moving to Paris with his family in 1832 and was immediately taken with not only his musicianship, but his persona. With hardly any private instruction, Liszt became the greatest of all pianists living in the Romantic Era. His personality matched the concept of the Romantic hero perfectly; he was tall, thin, had penetrating green eyes, and an ethereal air that added to his mystique. He had countless affairs with women (several of them married) and was known to be self-centred and arrogant. In fact, it was Liszt that is credited with creating the solo recital, doing away with any and all orchestral accompaniment in his concerts.



He became the public soloist that would continue to play a part in the development of music even through to the present day. Other concepts that Liszt would invent was the symphonic tone poem, a one-movement programmatic work present in pieces such as *Les Préludes*, and the idea of thematic transformation. Thematic transformation, which involves subjecting a primary theme to many different transmutations, including performing it in retrograde, inversion, and modulation, among other techniques, was used by Liszt to avoid the earlier, outdated Classical forms that did not suit his tastes. Liszt would perform original works or transcriptions of larger orchestral pieces including the Beethoven symphonies, the J.S. Bach masses, and other music by composers including Scarlatti, Rossini, Wagner, and Berlioz.

While Liszt's virtuosic technique was unmatched in his day, he owes much of his stylistic education to another piano prodigy, Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849). Chopin, unlike Liszt, had a more formalized musical education, studying composition and theory in his native Poland. After settling in Paris, like many of the great musicians of the day, Chopin never again visited his homeland, although his upbringing greatly influenced his writing. The mazurkas and polonaises, both Polish folk-dance forms, is highly characteristic of Chopin's style.

In another separation from Liszt, Chopin gave very few public concerts, and made most of his money through teaching and publishing pieces. His playing reflects a duality that was favoured by more Classical composers such as J.S. Bach and Mozart; a strong, steady left hand with an expressive rubato right hand. The two, as Chopin thought, would reconcile and balance the other; a stylistic feature that pianists including Liszt would absorb into their playing. The young Felix Mendelssohn would later comment: "There is . . . something entirely original in his piano playing and it is at the same time so masterly that he may be called a perfect virtuoso". While Chopin was influenced by the



great virtuosos such as Niccoló Paganini, he never immersed himself in Romanticism, preferring to write almost exclusively for the piano and in absolute form. None of his original pieces have programmatic titles; they were all added after his death in 1849. Chopin's place in music history rests with his ability to make the piano a complete instrument, capable of subtle nuances mixed with technical virtuosity; creating vast colour and delicate sensibility, all while expressing lyrical and poetic qualities in ways that had never been explored before.

Program Music and Romanticism

Before the 19th century, instrumental music consisted mostly of what is known as absolute music, or music that can be described simply from its form or structure. It is meant to exist solely for its own sake and does not conjure up specific images designed by the composer or any external source. Although composers experimented with musical imagery before Romanticism, composers had not written instrumental music to tell a definite story. Musical imagery served more to convey general impressions to the listener, such as in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* quartet, or Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*. With the emphasis on literary and highly charged emotional content, composers of the Romantic era began to write works that were based on specific literary references, specifically from the writings of Shakespeare and Goethe.

Programmatic music, also known as program music, is labelled specifically as instrumental works without vocals that tell a definite story that goes beyond mere musical impressions or imagery. Over the course of the century, composers from all over Europe would write programmatic works, mostly based on literary or folk tales of a nationalistic idiom. Among them would include Edvard Grieg (*Peer Gynt Suite*), Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (*The Nutcracker Suite*), Modest Mussorgsky (*Pictures at an Exhibition* and *Night on Bald Mountain*), and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (*Scheherazade*), to name a few. However, the first composer to bring program music to the forefront of the Romantic movement was the French composer, conductor, and writer Hector Berlioz (1803-1869).

Berlioz became the leading symbol for French Romanticism after rising to the forefront of orchestral music in the 1840's. Though he was not a prodigy or instrumental virtuoso, his love of composition and unique imagination produced works that inspired a generation of composers, including Wagner, Debussy, and Richard Strauss. Inspired by the music of composers such as Beethoven and Gluck, and the literary writings of Shakespeare and Goethe, Berlioz's music adds a completely original dimension to orchestral music with his innovative orchestration, use of tone colour, and instrumental devices to associate the music with the storyline. Unlike Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony*, which merely demonstrates images and feeling through the title of each movement, it is impossible to fully appreciate Berlioz's music without understanding the literary subtext to each of his works. This is particularly evident in his first major symphony, the *Symphonie Fantastique*, Op. 14.

During this time, Berlioz was deeply in love with the Irish actress Harriet Smithson, who became his muse for the *idée fixe*, or main idea that pervades the piece. The story of the symphony is inspired from multiple literary sources, including Thomas De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* and Goethe's *Faust*. In the symphony, the artist (Berlioz) is in the throngs of "hopeless love" and poisons himself with opium. The resulting hallucinations result in the five movements of the piece: 1). Reveries, where the artist's beloved is introduced by the *idée fixe*; 2). A Ball, where he sees the beloved at a festive occasion, yet the artist is still tortured by the sight of her; 3). Scene in the Fields, where the artist broods on his loneliness in the meadow while listening to the shepherds' calls; 4). March to the Scaffold, where the artist dreams that he has killed his love and is now sent to be executed, and 5). Dreams of the Witches' Sabbath, where the beloved joins in a cacophony of monsters and demons while the *idée fixe* is parodied. The *Symphonie*, premiering only three years after Beethoven's death, has become a staple of the orchestral repertoire, and is performed often with every major orchestra in the world.

Almost every piece by Berlioz has some kind of programmatic material. His second and third symphonies, entitled *Harold in Italy* and *Romeo et Juliette*, respectively, were referred to by the composer as “dramatic legend(s)”, completely separating them from any previous notion as conventional symphonic works. They firmly establish Berlioz as the head of a more “radical” branch of Romanticism, which would be echoed with the tone poems of Richard Strauss, who would also edit Berlioz’s *Treatise on Instrumentation*, one of the most influential orchestration texts ever written.

Part 4 begins with the Great Romantic Tradition including more opera.

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Mark Walton OAM is a highly respected and popular figure in the Australian and New Zealand musical scene and widely acknowledged as a leading clarinet and saxophone performer, inspiring teacher and charismatic musician. After nearly 20 years at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Mark now shares his time, musical talents and energy between Australia and New Zealand. He travels continuously, building strong community music programmes in regional and outback Australia, while at the same time he is the Musical Director of the Christchurch School of Music. Mark is also regarded as a leading authority and pioneer in Distance Instrumental Music Education and has led many ground-breaking international projects in this area. Mark has written over 200 music publications, recorded many albums and in recent times has become a popular composer. In 2005 Mark was awarded the Order of Australia medal for his contribution to Music Education in Australia.

Stacey-Louise Camilleri is a Greenroom Award nominated actress who is a seasoned musical theatre and cabaret performer. She is currently a member of the Australian cast of *Stranger Sings - The Parody Musical*, playing the role of Barb Holland. Prior to this, recently she performed the role of Elizabeth in *If/Then* at Chapel off Chapel and completed a season of 'Life According to the Mouse' at The Butterfly Club.

As a teacher Stacey-Louise has worked as a private tutor of voice and piano for nearly 15 years. She has worked in many schools around metropolitan Melbourne and also teaches from her home studio, specialising in teaching beginner to intermediate piano, and beginner to advanced voice. She has also formally worked as a secondary classroom teacher, where she taught composition, music performance and theory from Year 7 through to VCE.

She is also a musical director, a pianist, a flautist, and the co-host of the popular podcast 'Dissecting Disney Ditties'. She works as an audition coach and has run workshops on writing cabarets. She has written syllabi for two musical theatre diploma courses and led ensemble voice classes. Her most recent creative credits include musically directing productions of *The Wizard of Oz*, *West Side Story*, *Rent* and *Spring Awakening*.

In 2021, Stacey-Louise produced the online concert "I'd Like to Propose a Toast" which raised \$5,000 for the Victorian Cancer Council. She also works in video and sound editing for various side projects including *Musical Mugwumps* and *Live in the Saddle*.

Dr Miriam Hyde AO OBE (1913-2005) was one of Australia's foremost composers and pianists of the twentieth century. Although best known by music students for her piano solos from miniatures to concert pieces, her output included much chamber music, about 50 art songs, two piano concertos and several other works for orchestra. Her compositions are mainly romantic-impressionistic in style, often inspired by Nature.

Dr Hyde served the AMEB as an examiner and member of the Advisory Board. She wrote books of teaching materials such as aural tests, tutors for young and adult students, and a series of Sight-Reading Adventures (6 books from 1st Grade to diploma). She was in demand for giving workshops in the city and regional towns, masterclasses of her own compositions, demonstrations of pieces in piano grade books and lectures for summer schools of music teachers' associations. She wrote numerous articles for music magazines, including analyses of her own and other composers' works. Her major literary opus was her autobiography, *Complete Accord* (Currency Press, 1991). She wrote almost 500 poems of which 15 were used in her songs.

As a pianist, Dr Hyde gave recitals and broadcasts throughout her long career, and performed her Piano Concerto no. 2 with orchestra, from memory, aged 89. The majority of her compositions have been published by Wirripang, including new editions of her earlier publications. Wirripang has also released CDs of Hyde's own performances of her piano solos - *Valley of Rocks, Reflected Reeds* (including the Piano Sonata), *Piano Imagery* (with spoken introductions) and the *Piano Concertos*. *Fire in My Heart* is a selection of her songs (Wendy Dixon, soprano, with David Miller, piano). All her works for flute and piano were recorded for Cala Records by Bridget Bolliger, flute, and Andrew West, piano.

Dr Hyde was Patron of the Music Teachers' Associations of NSW and SA and was revered as a person and musician.

Dr. Andrew Lesser is a Southern New Jersey [USA] based music educator with nearly twenty years of experience teaching in areas including General Music, Instrumental Music, Vocal Music, Music Technology, and Jazz Studies. He currently serves on the board of the New Jersey Music Educators' Association, as the Chairman of the New Jersey Young Composers' Competition, and as the Liaison of Arts Ed NJ. Dr. Lesser received his Ed.D. in Music Education at Teacher's College, Columbia University with the dissertation "Video Game Instruction and Learning in the Music Classroom", now available on ProQuest. Dr. Lesser has presented seminars on a variety of topics in music education throughout the state and national level and has published articles in peer-refereed journals such as *General Music Today*, *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, *Teaching Music*, *TEMPO Magazine*, and the *Journal of Sound and Music in Games*. His musical works have been published by Kjos, Musica Propria, and Grand Mesa Music, and is featured in the 10th volume of *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band*. Dr. Lesser's YouTube channel, "Professor Lesser", focuses on the link between gaming, learning, and music. In 2018, Dr. Lesser was named a Quarterfinalist for the Grammy Music Educator Award. He currently resides in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey; further information can be found at his website at www.andrewlessermusic.com.

REVIEWS

CD: *Incantations*

Piano Music by John Peterson
Jeanell Carrigan [piano]

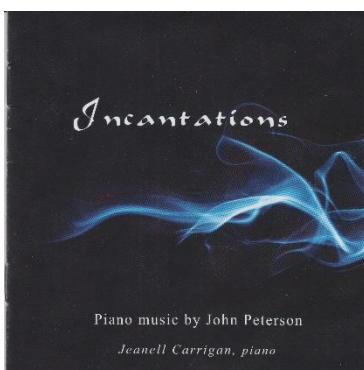
Review by Rita Crews

Composer John Peterson has created a musical description of five separate islands situated off the coast of Port Kembla in the southern part of NSW. Three of the islands were named for the explorers Bass, Flinders and Martin. Also on the disc are *Moon-Struck* with three movements, *Pacific Ocean Blue* and *Incantations* consisting of 10 pieces. All these works can be viewed as miniature tone poems

As the liner notes explain, "*Incantations* is a set of..evocative piano pieces that are intended to be musical representations of a variety of experiences from everyday life." To do this, Peterson has drawn on his own experiences and the works are based on "quite small amounts of melodic material that is not only repeated but is also constantly varied....". Each piece has a title that explains the aim of the work from the chordal opening of the majestic "Performing a Solemn Ritual" to the aptly named "Rush Hour" a speedy piece with constantly changing time signatures that was inspired "by the frustrating chaos often associated travelling through peak-hour traffic" a scenario many of us can relate to!

With the direction "Agitated, mysterious", the constant quaver flow of *Flinders Island* contrasts dramatically with the chordal structure of *Rocky Island* which evokes a sense of grandeur and loneliness. *Bass Island* has the unusual time signature of 13/8 and moves along at a lively pace whereas *Martin Island* is a gently flowing piece with a repeated bass line. *Parkyns Island* also has a flowing treble line supported by a sparse bass. This set is dedicated to Peter Sculthorpe, and around grades 7 to 8 in difficulty.

Peterson has an affinity to the ocean and *Pacific Ocean Blue* was inspired by the constant movement of water represented musically by the rushing semiquaver figures that dominate the work supported by an ostinato bass and steady treble motif. Although not included in this collection the flute work *Across the Oceans Deep and Blue* is another work inspired by the ocean.



The three-movement work *Moon-Struck* [subtitled 'Three Lunar Preludes'] was originally a song cycle for soprano that included three piano solos between the songs represented here as stand-alone works. Small, repeated motives dominate the first movement "New Moon" whilst "The Dark Side of the Moon" has an eerie quality to it in keeping with one's perception of that particular phenomenon. The last movement "Full Moon" is a constantly moving wash of musical colour provided by repeated semiquaver figures.

As usual Jeanell Carrigan AM with her innate skill to interpret the composer's wishes, gives an outstanding performance of these works which will greatly encourage students to interpret and perform them at concerts and music festivals.

Incantations is a Wirripang release W116, available from australiancomposers.com.au

CD: *Hearing*

Mike Nock

Review by Patrick O'Donnell

Synchronicity can be unexpected and a little spooky at times. Just a week before I reviewed this CD, I was privileged to attend an MTA First Thursday's session on Improvisation and Creative Learning conducted by Andrea Keller. During the session where she demonstrated and explained various methods of improvisation and how to apply spontaneous creativity to a music lesson, she also launched into several delightful improvs based on... who knows where creativity suddenly springs from?

This CD from renowned New Zealand jazz maestro Mike Nocking brings to mind exactly the same conundrum... where does improvisation actually come from? From the opening chord of the Prologue that introduces this set, it becomes immediately clear that improvisation is an intimate and personal evocation of moods, feelings and responses to the world around us. And probably a whole lot more.

This set of diverse moods and melodic musings is full of warmth and enthusiasm. The pieces spotlight Mike's considerable career – spanning over 50 years – and showcase his easy, fluidic approach to playing, often delivering an intimacy that is almost tangible. As with all good piano performances, there is a clear indication that the tonal contribution of every note has been carefully weighed and its part in the whole story an essential ingredient. The varying moods have been carefully crafted and gauged with emotional footprints that lead the listener into reflective and thoughtful spaces.

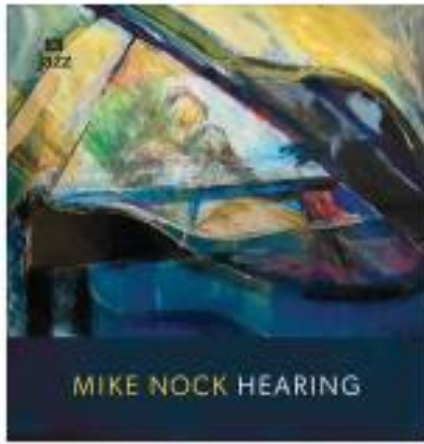
The CD is his first solo release in thirty years, and it comprises set pieces from his repertoire, but even more fascinatingly, moments of insight through his improvisations created during the recording process.

The solos are comfortable, yet dazzling in their understanding of the jazz idiom, displaying an astuteness that can only come from so many years of ensemble and solo work. This is a pianist who could turn his hand(s) to anything and give it a life that takes the listener on a journey to far away emotions and reflections.

The improvisations are full of wit and charm – very personable in their variety and natural flow. Here is an experienced jazzman who is very comfortable at his instrument and happy to explore where an idea will take him, while not compromising the freshness of his spontaneity. Tasteful placing of *rubato* and shifts in timbre ensure the playing is always presenting something new.

Perhaps my favourite aspect of the set is that, while there is a coherence to the playing, there is enough variety in the styles of jazz explored. From the clashing discords of *Prologue*, we have the almost pop stylings of *Sunrise*, quickly moving to the ostinato approach of *Conundrum*. The intensity and sadness of *Vale John* never moves into the maudlin, remaining respectfully sombre, warm and tuneful.

The homage to Baroque masters in the opening of *Re-Affirmation* provides a welcome contrast again before the thoughtful *And in the Night Comes Rain*. Some further improv with the humour of *Jacaroni* and the appropriately named *Accessing the Flow* takes us into the second half of the set. Here is presented my favourite of the set, the mercurial *Journey Through an Imaginary Landscape*, which has something interesting to



contemplate in each melodic meander, chord progression, embellishment, counter melody etc... there's so much to enjoy in this constantly changing musical landscape.

This has been an enjoyable task, *hearing* such delightful jazz (I don't profess to having a deep understanding), but the piano work is so charming and entertaining I don't feel the need to be encumbered with a full analysis. I can sit and hear what I would like, and each subsequent hearing affords me the opportunity to hear something new: that's the mark of a strong musical performance. Thank you, Mike Nock, for allowing me to enjoy and savour something new in my *Hearing*.

Hearing is an ABC Jazz release ABCJ0015.

CD: Geoffrey Allen: Complete Piano Sonatas

Murray McLachlan [piano]

Review by Alan Cooper

Reproduced with permission from *British News*, the journal of the British Music Society
August 2023

As a tagline at the head of his bountiful programme notes, pianist Murray McLachlan asks us a question, 'Geoffrey Allen – The Pianist's Havergal Brian?'

Two things could suggest that query. Like Havergal Brian, Geoffrey Allen (1927 – 2021) wrote much of his music towards the latter part of his long life. His first Sonata was begun in 1959 when Allen was 32 years old. It was revised in 1995 when he was 68. Three of the Sonatas were completed when Allen was in his sixties, ten in his seventies, four in his eighties. The final Sonata was composed when he was 92 years old. Allen, like Havergal Brian, at least as a composer, was largely self-taught.

Born in Essex, Geoffrey Allen read Geography at Oxford University. After graduating, he moved to Western Australia in 1952. He worked as a University Librarian until his retirement in 1992. That was when his career as a composer really took off.

This five-disc set contains what is a lifetime's work for Allen as a composer for piano. There are in all 17 Sonatas. Most are of a similar length, averaging about 22 minutes in duration. Even with fewer movements, the overall length is mostly much the same. At an initial listening, a line from Sir Arthur Sullivan's song *The Lost Chord* came to mind. 'My fingers wandered idly over the noisy keys'. Actually, that is not entirely fair, but why should I think of those words? The secret behind the challenging structural features of many of Allen's Sonatas was revealed by Murray McLachlan's words concerning the final *Sonata, Number 17, Op. 97*. Regarding the first movement *Moderato*, he mentions Allen's 'improvisatory spirit'. Regarding the Scherzo, the third movement, he writes, 'taking the music in surprising directions – which only in hindsight can be seen as logical'. Of course, in preparation for the recording, Murray has studied the music in depth and has therefore gained a sympathetic understanding which does not come as easily to a first-time listener. However, some of the sonatas seem to have more of a structural backbone than others. Those sell themselves more immediately to the listener.

Piano Sonata No.2, 'Sonata Espanola' has four movements, each with a thoroughly Spanish title very much matched by the music itself. *Salamanca* is the name of a Spanish town and apparently the word has associations with magic. Melody, harmonies, and rhythm certainly suggest Spanish dancing. *Lagrimas de Sangre* (Tears of Blood) suggests a feature of tragedy common in Spanish folk music and dance. It starts in a melancholy mood, slower but rhythmically expressive. *Los Tres Encinas* (The Three Oak Trees) suggests throbbing flamenco guitar music with marvellous left-hand work. The finale, *Danzas Sevillanas* is self-explanatory. It has the turns, stamps and twists of Spanish dance music.

Allen is a convinced pacifist. His *Piano Sonata No.6, Op.39* is dedicated to the people of Kosovo and East Timor who were under torment in 1999. The final movement *Presto* is full of anger along with intimations of violence and war. A Sonata with a similar background of pacifist inspiration is *Sonata No. 10, Op. 52* where Allen adds his voice to the Australian protest movement against the Iraq War.

Piano Sonata No. 8, Op.46 is more unusual than any other in print. The opening movement is marked *Tempo di valzer*. It is in waltz time as are all three other movements exploring the idea of the waltz in several contrasting tempi. It works particularly well.

Several of the faster movements stand out. The second movement of *Piano Sonata No.10, Op. 52* marked *Allegro giocoso* delights with its playful light touch. In *Piano Sonata No.11 Op.55*, the movement marked *Vivo come il buffone* lives brilliantly up to its title.

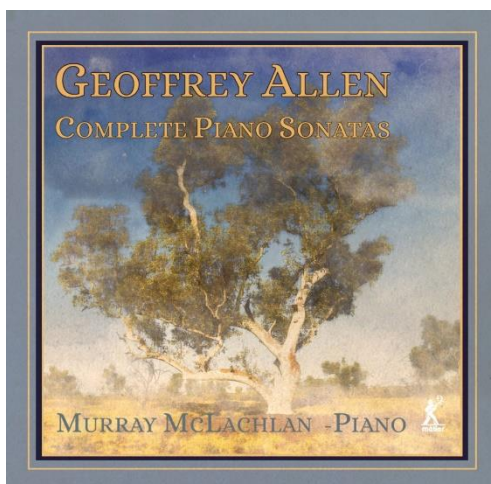
Another very unusual Sonata is *Piano Sonata No.16, Op.86*. It is in one single movement but with several named sections. The composer himself names seven or eight as being important but the programme note lists nine or ten and these do stand out clearly.

Along with the 17 numbered Sonatas, there is a three-movement composition *Rapzonata, Op.51*. It boasts three colourful titles fully expressed in the music. It begins with *Rhapsody (over the Moon)*. It has filmic changes of mood which Murray refers to as 'closely related stylistically to the cycle'.

The word 'exploratory' comes to mind both here and in many of the other Sonatas. The second movement *Canzonetta 'In a Perfumed Garden'* opens simply. It is tantalisingly atmospheric, leading us through the garden with simple waltz music. The final movement is *Toccata 'Only on Wednesday'* (What on earth does that mean?). At least the word 'toccata' makes sense. This movement is referred to by Murray as 'pianistic fireworks. That is absolutely true.

I have not really mentioned the performances. Do I need to? Murray McLachlan is a wizard of technical piano prowess. More importantly, he reveals an amazing depth of understanding regarding music which though thoroughly attractive, poses multiple questions regarding its formal structures. Still, Geoffrey Allen could not have found a better evangelist of the piano than Murray McLachlan.

Geoffrey Allen: Complete Piano Sonatas is a Divine Art Recordings métier MSV 77502



Keys Press publications and business was purchased by Wirripang in 2016.

CD Set: *Classic 100: Your Favourite Instrument*

Review by Rita Crews

Over the years the ABC have released a series of compact disc sets with a particular theme. This particular set has come about after the ABC invited listeners to nominate their favourite instrument, the survey resulting in a very passionate outpouring of interest for all kinds of instruments from those that responded.

As a result, this six CD set is a magnificent teaching tool with a wonderful choice of instruments and works that cover the entire instrumental field from traditional orchestral instruments to the more outrageous. The works also range from well-known such as Handel's *Ombra mai fu* from *Xerxes* to Saint-Saens *Carnival of the Animals*.

First on the list is the Adagio from Elgar's *Cello Concerto* featuring that instrument whilst Mozart's *Adagio for Glass Harmonica* comes in at No. 98; the Native American flute features in the *Solstice Prayer* by R. Carlos Nakai that fills the number 96 spot and the djembe features in *Soly* by Nahini Doumbia. A quirky work is *The Typewriter* by Leroy Anderson, whilst Bach's *Air on a G String* for kazoo is one of the more unusual works as is Gumleaves accompanying *Click go the Shears*. I'm pleased to see William Barton's *7/8 Not too late* for didgeridoo coming in at No.15.



Other featured instruments include cow bells, gongs, carillon, steel pan drum, in all 100 different instruments feature in 100 different works in this set. Overall, this set is not about particular performers but about particular instruments that feature in a variety of works.

This will be an invaluable resource not only for students studying the AMEB's Music Craft course where recognition of various instruments is a requirement but for all students studying history of music where examples of various works are an asset to their studies.

Highly recommended for all studios.

Classic 100- Your Favourite Instrument is an ABC release L0066

MTA 2023 Quick-Glance Calendar



JANUARY

1 Happy New Year

FEBRUARY

2 First Thursdays - Vocal Health for Studio Music Teachers with Meryl Jackson-Kew

MARCH

2 First Thursdays - Teaching Theory in the Practical Lesson with Dr Brett McKern

APRIL

30 The Multi-Genre Singer (Newcastle) - with Sue Carson

30 Patron's Afternoon Tea

MAY

4 First Thursdays - The life, times and music of Roy Agnew with Rita Crews

21 MTA Illawarra Berry Student Concert

25 MTA Members' Meet Up - Summer Hill

28 Piano Masterclass & PD (Newcastle) - with Natalia Ricci

JUNE

1 First Thursdays - What Edition Should I Choose?

3 MTA Newcastle Advanced Student Concert

18 Illawarra Wollongong Student Concert

22 MTA Newcastle Student Concert

25 Junior Music Festival Newcastle

29 MTANSW Annual General Meeting

JULY

29 MTA Newcastle Scholarships 2023

30 Sydney HSC Pre-Exam Concert and Feedback Opportunity

AUGUST

6 Junior Music Festival Northern Beaches

13 Advanced Student Concert and the Margaret Chalmers Scholarship Award

27 MTA Illawarra Berry Student Concert

20 Junior Music Festival Killara

SEPTEMBER

7 First Thursdays - Improvisation and Creative Learning

7 MTA Newcastle Student Concert (Sept)

10 Junior Music Festival Hills District

14 MTA Members' Meet Up - Penrith

OCTOBER

15 Junior Music Festival Chippendale

15 Technical Foundations For The Piano - With Andrew Chubb (Newcastle)

19 MTA Members' Meet Up - West Ryde

26 MTA Newcastle Student Concert (Oct)

29 Junior Music Festival Burwood

NOVEMBER

2 First Thursdays - Music Performance Anxiety

12 Junior Music Festival Wollongong

26 Junior Music Festival Kogarah

DECEMBER

10 MTA Christmas lunch

13 Newcastle Jingle & Mingle

PLEASE REFER TO THE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES ON ALL EVENTS



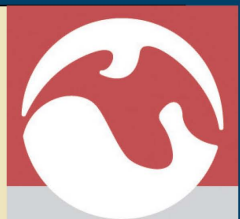
Fandango

A Biography of Ann Carr-Boyd, AM

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