



The central newsletter of The United Music Teachers of NSW Inc.



2010 Diary

Sunday 14th March, 2pm

Annual General Meeting

2 Loch Awe Cresc, Carlingford
Phone Alma Wilson on 9871-6667

Sunday 28th March, 2 - 4pm

Effective Technique Explained

A workshop with Jerard Heffernan
East Killara Uniting Church

Sunday 25th April, 2-5pm

Recital and Masterclass with Dorian Leljak

Sunday 6th June, from 1.30pm

Performance Day

for everyone to have a go!
72 Erskine Street Wynyard

Sunday 20th June

UMT Awards, 11.45am

Roger Woodward 2.45pm

East Killara Uniting Church

Sunday 5th September

President's Award

for students 18+
East Killara Uniting Church

Sunday 8th August 2 – 4.30pm

Masterclass with Dr Christine Logan

East Killara Uniting Church

Sunday 12th September

Annual Concert

for students selected by each group
Pitt Street Uniting Church

Committee Meetings – all welcome!

- **Sunday 14th March** after AGM
- **Sunday 25th July, 2.30pm**
26 Harold Street Newtown
Phone Judy Fisher on 9557 1310
- **Sunday 7th November, 2.30pm**
71 Flers Ave Earlwood
Phone Fotini Stavridis 9558 9023

A Word from the President . . .

Welcome to 2010!

This year the Central Committee is presenting two stimulating professional development opportunities for teachers and their students. Later in the year on 8th August we are fortunate to have Dr Christine Logan who will focus on *Piano works of the Classical Era*. This is highly recommended, so put it in your diary!

Coming up soon, on 28th March, is a workshop by Jerard Heffernan on *Effective and Efficient Technique*. It is based on the work of Dorothy Taubman from the U.S., who specialised for many years in the field of healthy pianism – piano technique without injuries.

Taubman, now in her eighties, began her career as a New York piano teacher, soon becoming aware of the pain and injury afflicting many performers. Initially influenced by Tobias Matthay whose theories on technique were based on muscular relaxation, she then studied the movements of long-term pianists, comparing those who had experienced no physical trauma with those who had.

Her conclusions were that our *natural* alignment is the most suitable for playing the instrument. Taubman's main areas of focus are balance, alignment and movement. She deals with specific situations such as playing octaves, arpeggios and leaps, and considers the important aspects of the human form at the piano, including the height of the chair.

Some of her conclusions have been controversial as they challenge some accepted methods used by many teachers. Although her approach is not well known in Australia, her work has been influential in the U.S. Over the years she assisted many injured pianists to recovery by retraining their movements. Her approach to movement, consistent with the Alexander Technique and the work of Feldenkrais, can benefit all performers.

Presenter Jerard Heffernan is highly regarded as a performer and pedagogue. He trained at the S.C.M. and then obtained a Master of Music in piano performance at the prestigious Peabody Institute. He has taught piano at all levels, held posts at Newcastle Conservatorium and A.I.M. and is a senior examiner in piano for the A.M.E.B. He is an enthusiast of the Taubman approach and has recently studied some of the techniques in the U.S.A.

– Elizabeth Thomas

For your Professional Development

UMT

is currently negotiating with
Serbian pianist and teacher

Dorian Lejak

Lecture/Recital & Masterclass

Russian Piano Music

Sunday 25th April 2010
East Killara Uniting Church
Commencing at 1.00pm

Dr. Dorian Lejak teaches piano at the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad, the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade (Serbia) and also at the Royal College of Music in London.

He has won several international piano competitions (e.g. the Belgrade Rachmaninov Competition) and has been awarded numerous prizes, including the Yale University Mary Clapp Howell, Irving Gilmore and Parisot Prizes. He has appeared in recital and with orchestras around the world, and is a member of the jury at many international piano competitions including the Cleveland International Piano Competition (USA), Rome International Piano Competition (Italy), etc.

Enquiries & Bookings:

Elizabeth Thomas 9328 7628
Erica Booker 9416 1798

Annual General Meeting

The UMT Annual General Meeting will be held from 2pm on Sunday 14th March at the home of Ron and Alma Wilson, 2 Loch Awe Crescent Carlingford.

All members are invited to attend both the AGM and the following committee meeting, to meet the committee members, hear about what we do and participate in any discussions. If you would like any matter put on the agenda, please phone Elizabeth Thomas on 9328 7628.

Performance Day

All performers welcome!

Date: Sunday 6th June
Venue: 72 Erskine Street
Wynyard



Schedule of concerts:

1.30 & 2.15pm: shorter concerts for the younger children
3pm: intermediate to advanced standard
4pm: young adults and older students

Cost: \$5 for all – performers and audience

Book your students' places by sending your information to:

Elizabeth Thomas
P.O. Box Edgecliff 2027 or
email: edgecliff2027@yahoo.co.uk

- Make sure you give your contact details (phone number and email address) as well as full information about performers & pieces.
- Include accurate timing of each work and its grade level.
- Minimum standard is a confident Preliminary Grade level.

Supporting you and your studio

The Carlingford Music team is devoted to serving your needs as a studio teacher.

- ✓ Carlingford Music is Australia's largest independent KAWAI piano dealer
- ✓ Large range of selected and pre-serviced modern and older pianos
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Roger Woodward Awards Competition

Finals: 2.45pm, Sunday 5th July 2009

East Killara Uniting Church

cnr Wentworth and Fairbairn Avenues

Audience entry: \$10, Children under 12: \$5

Families: \$20

Awards

- One main award covering all categories of piano, vocal and instrumental..... \$400
- 2MBS-FM Award of 1 hr recording session (up to 45 minutes of material)
- Logans Pianos Award:..... \$250 gift voucher
- Carlingford Music Centre Award..... \$150
- UMT Encouragement Award..... \$150
- **Best performance of a Baroque work. \$100**
(New award!- thanks for all your donations!)
- Carlingford Music Centre Encouragement Award..... \$100

Please note that these awards may be varied at the adjudicator's discretion.

Rules of competition

1. Two works are to be presented, with a strong contrast in period, mood and style.
2. An advanced standard of performance is required (8th grade or more).
3. Total performance time should not exceed 12 minutes.
4. Pianists and other instrumentalists should be 18 years or under at 20th June 2010.
5. There is no age restriction for singers.
6. Pianists and singers must perform from memory. For instrumentalists, memory is encouraged, but optional.
7. No winner of Roger Woodward award of over \$300 from previous years may enter again.
8. Those currently holding music scholarships of \$5000 or more are ineligible.
9. If the adjudicators feel that the standard is not high enough, then they may withhold an award.
10. All decisions of the adjudicators are **final**.

Preliminary Audition

Entrants will audition in their own area, where 3 entries will be chosen to proceed to the finals.

There is an entry fee of \$10, which will be paid at the time of this audition.

For information about the auditions in your area, contact your Group Representative.

Group representatives only!

For both the Roger Woodward Scholarships and the UMT Awards, please give full details of entries:

- Name of Group with contact phone number
- Name of performer(s) including accompanists
- Category (Piano/Instrument/Voice)
- Contact phone number of performer
- Title and composer of each item(s)
- Timed duration of performance(s)

Please make sure that teachers are financial members of UMT before auditioning students.

Entries must be received by Tuesday 8th June. LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!

For Roger Woodward Scholarships:

Group Representatives please send entries (**with fees**)

to: Felicity Martin, 301/357 Glenmore Rd

Paddington 2021 phone 9357 4203

For UMT Awards:

Group representatives please send entries to:

Mrs Alma Wilson, 2 Loch Awe Crescent,

Carlingford 2118 phone 9871-6667

The United Music Teachers Awards

Finals: 11.45, Sunday 20th June 2010

East Killara Uniting Church (Fairbairn Ave)

Door entry: \$5 including performers

Awards: Up to six successful performers are each awarded a United Music Teachers' Award certificate together with a cheque for \$60. In addition, there is a special Musicianship Award of \$60 for the most musical performance.

Contact your Group Rep about preliminary auditions

Rules of Awards

1. Pianists and other instrumentalists should be 14 years or under at 20th June 2010.
2. Singers should be 21 years or under.
3. Each performer or group of performers should perform one or two works with a maximum of 6 minutes and a minimum of 3 minutes of performance time. Please do not perform repeats (but *da capo* returns are obligatory).
4. **Winners of UMT Awards from previous years may not compete again.**

Effective and Efficient Piano Technique



An interactive workshop with
Jerard Heffernan

based on the principles of Dorothy Taubman and Tobias Matthay

A different concept from the traditional master class, this exploration of effective and efficient technique will be a stimulating four-way conversation between master-teacher Jerard Heffernan, students, audience and moderator Dr Judy Fisher.

Jerard will be working with students at various levels – advanced/diploma level, intermediate level and elementary level – to demonstrate how the principles of efficient technique can be applied at different stages of pianistic development.

Date: Sunday 28th March, 2 - 4.30pm

Venue: East Killara Uniting Church (corner of Fairbairn and Wentworth Avenues)

Cost:

\$25 UMT members and performers

\$30 non-members

\$15 students

Enquiries: Judy Fisher on 9557 1310



BOOKING FORM

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Email address _____

I would like to book for the **Effective and Efficient Piano Technique** workshop with **Jerard Heffernan**:

UMT Member @ \$25 _____

Non-member @ \$30 _____

Student/s @ \$15 _____

Total _____

Please enclose a cheque/money order for the total amount, made out to **United Music Teachers of NSW**.

Post to Dr Judy Fisher, 26 Harold Street Newtown 2042, by Monday 22nd March.

How to bicycle along the keys...

The young woman who came to me was frustrated. She had been having piano lessons with another teacher, but was finding playing difficult. Yet she knew in her heart that music was something special for her!

As soon as she put her hands on the piano and began to play, I could diagnose the problem. "You are starting with each finger placed rigidly on a note in a hand position. This makes your hand stiff and unable to move", I told her. "Just start with your hand relaxed and balanced over the first note you play and then move to the next note as it comes."

"But my old teacher told me I had to play with my fingers in position like that!" she protested. "How can I find the notes if all my fingers are not in position?"

"Did you ever ride a bicycle? ...It is a question of balance. When you ride you have to take your feet off the ground. In order to take your feet off the ground you have to trust that you can do it."

Playing the piano is like that. You need to keep your balance on each note, trusting that you will then move accurately to the next one. Sometimes when you are learning to ride you fall off, just as you might play a wrong note. At least a couple of wrong notes are not as painful as falling off a bike!"

The "Meditation" exercise I then taught her is about centering the hand in a relaxed way over each successive note. We started by drawing an ink line down the middle of her hand, and placed that line above the thumb note of her C position. She then played her thumb near its tip, under her hand.

To play finger 2, the hand and arm had to move along just a little, so that the ink line was now over the D. For every new note there was a corresponding sideways movement of the arm. When she played G with finger 5, the thumb needed to be relaxed and lying naturally under the index finger, in order to line up the centre of the hand with the note. I explained that her hand should always look soft and relaxed.

She played the exercise very slowly for a couple of weeks, experiencing the sensation of centering the weight of her hand over each finger as she played it, and listening to the lovely sound this produced. The notes were being played more by the weight of her hand moving onto each key than by the striking movements of her fingers.

Gradually the speed of the exercise was increased so that it began to flow. And very soon this technique transferred to her pieces, enabling her to vary her hand position easily and to play with a beautiful legato sound.

Young children will naturally move their hands and arms along the keyboard to adjust to different notes – as long as nobody tells them not to!

Judy Fisher

2MBS-FM Young Performers Award

2MBS-FM actively supports Australia's young performers through the 2MBS-FM 102.5 *Young Performers Award* (YPA). The award is a valuable learning experience for young performers and excellent preparation for those aspiring to a career in music. Past Young Performers include Richard Tognetti, William Chen, Duncan Gifford, Asmira Woodward-Page, Natalie Chee, Tamara Anna Cisłowska, Philip Arkinstall, Andrea Lam, Domenica Matthews, Caroline Wenbourne and Gorknur Ray.

This is an annual event, where the major component is the live-to-air broadcast of the semifinalists' recitals from Studio C at 2MBS-FM 102.5. Selected by audition, the performers prepare a recital of around 45 minutes in duration, which must include at least one Australian work.

These performances are broadcast on Wednesdays between midday and 1pm.

For more informations about the Young Performers Award, please contact:

Judy Deacon
YPA Coordinator
T: (+61 2) 9439 4777
musiced@2mbs.com

U.M.T. Committee Members

Elizabeth Thomas (President).....9328 7628
Fotini Stavridis (Vice-President).....9558 9023
Judy Fisher (Newsletter Editor). 9557 1310
Ron Wilson (Treasurer &
Membership Secretary)9871 6667

Regional Representatives

South Western

Fotini Stavridis.....9558 9023
Marjorie Docherty..... 9558 6795

North Western

Alma Wilson.....9871 6667

North Shore

Sheila Warby.....9144 3958
Felicity Martin.....9357 4203
Shirley Yim.....8850 5992

Greater Western

Pauline Wong.....9802 6833

City Group

Elizabeth Thomas.....9328 7628

Australia Day Honours Award

Our congratulations go to Neta Maughan who has been awarded an AM for “service to music education as a teacher of piano, voice and music theory, to professional organisations and as mentor of young performers.” Neta is well known to most of us and her outstanding contribution to the music education field is well deserving of this public recognition.

She studied at the Sydney Conservatorium under Alexander Sverjensky and was to teach at the Con for 40 years. She also taught at the former Newcastle Conservatorium, as well as running her own music studio where she still works today. For each of the past 27 years, she has been awarded an AMEB NSW Shield as an outstanding piano teacher, and several of her students have gone on to successful careers as concert pianists – Michael Kieren Harvey, Bernadette Balkus, Tamara Anna Cislowska, Simon Tedeschi.

Neta is a well known adjudicator and examiner, working with the AMEB for 43 years. She has long been a council member of the MTA of NSW and has been a supporter of our own association, UMT of NSW, since its inception. She was a founding member of the Inner West Eisteddfod, a patron since 1987 and a past president, sponsoring the Neta Maughan Bach Award.

It is very pleasing that someone who has contributed so much to the musical community has finally been officially recognised!

New Award for Performance of Baroque Work

At the Roger Woodward Awards on 20th June, there will be a new award of \$100 presented for an outstanding performance of a Baroque work.

The term *Baroque*, according to Groves, derives from the Portuguese, meaning “*a pearl of irregular shape . . . to imply strangeness, irregularity and extravagance.*” .

We aim to encourage teachers to continue introducing these ‘irregular



and extravagant pearls’ of the period to their students. Now that the current AMEB syllabus enables works of other periods to replace those of the Baroque era, many students are unwilling to make the effort to understand the musical language of the 17th and early 18th century. The technical, intellectual and musical benefits of studying works of the period, however, are many.

We would also like to thank those members who have made donations for prize money which have made this new award possible.