



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN MUSIC EXAMINATIONS BOARD IN NSW

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State Manager's Message

Since opening the Level 8 Clarence Street studios in September 2008 the AMEB (NSW) has examined over 7000 candidates in this new facility. Although fully utilised on Saturdays during examination periods, the studios are available for hire at all other times. Some interesting musicians have already made use of this fabulous space including international visitors to Sydney – a composer working on his next concerto while on vacation; and a businessman rehearsing for a piano recital to be given on his return to the UK. In addition, local musicians have hired the studio for practice and rehearsals, including an amateur opera ensemble preparing for a public performance.

Why not let your friends and associates know about this opportunity to rehearse, meet with colleagues and business associates, or simply relax playing a beautiful piano at lunchtime!

The AMEB, in partnership with the Music Teachers' Association of NSW, will be presenting a professional development workshop suitable for all piano teachers on the new Series 16 Piano Grade Books on Sunday

26 July at The King's School, Parramatta. This is an opportunity for teachers to familiarise themselves with Series 16 repertoire and gain an examiner's perspective on the suite of pieces that will be played in examination repertoire for many years to come. See the enclosed flyer for details and registration form. Places are filling fast so register now to avoid disappointment.

AMEB Federal Office is constantly renewing its services in response to feedback from our teachers. Please look out in this and forthcoming Newsletters for exciting news about changes and new initiatives.

It is very important to have strong representation from the AMEB community on the State Board, and elections will be held this year. Please consider becoming a Board member and forward your nomination for either teacher or examiner representative to the AMEB office by 19 October, along with a short biography as requested on the enclosed nomination form.

Shield Winners

- Private Teacher Pianoforte Category
Preliminary to Sixth Grade **Neta Maughan**
- Private Teacher Pianoforte Category
Seventh Grade to Licentiate **Paul Rickard-Ford**
- Private Teacher Instrumental/Vocal Category
Preliminary to Sixth Grade **Shu Qi Mou**
- Private Teacher Instrumental/Vocal Category
Seventh Grade to Licentiate **Jocelyn Edey Fazzone**
- Private Teacher Written Category
First to Fourth Grade **Australian Music School, Randwick**
- Private Teacher Written Category
Fifth Grade to Licentiate **Lesley Hogben**
- Private Teacher Speech Category
Preliminary to Fifth Grade **Victoria Clancy**
- Private Teacher Speech Category
Sixth Grade to Licentiate **Maira Gibson**
- Schools Category **Sydney Grammar School**



Violin teacher Shu Qi Mou receiving the Shield for the Instrumental/Vocal Teacher, Preliminary to Sixth Grade, from Ceremony Presenter, Lt Commander Anderson.

2008 Presentation Ceremony



Samuel Payne, LMusA with distinction.



Rose Gallagher, AMusA, LMusA and FMusA awardee (Flute).

Nominations open for membership of the Board of the AMEB (NSW)

The AMEB (NSW) is now calling for nominations for six elected positions on its Board, to take effect for two years from 1 May 2010. The Constitution provides for three private Music Teacher representatives, one Speech and Drama Teacher representative and two Examiner representatives to be elected as Board members.

Your representatives play a key role in music and speech and drama education in NSW, enhancing the consultative processes which assist the Board's operations, and providing wider opportunities for the music, speech and drama communities to participate in the development of policies and practices for the AMEB (NSW).

The Board members elected in 2008 and currently occupying these positions are:

- Private Music Teacher representatives – William Clark, Rita Crews, Anne Harvey
- Private Speech and Drama representative – Victoria Clancy
- Examiner representatives – Richard Morphew, Lyn Morgan

To be eligible to nominate or be nominated for election to the Board as a private Music Teacher representative or private Speech and Drama Teacher representative, you must have enrolled at least one candidate other than yourself in an AMEB (NSW) examination in 2008 and/or 2009. To be eligible to stand as an Examiner representative, you must be a current fully accredited AMEB (NSW) examiner. You may only nominate for one of these three categories.

If eligible, you are encouraged to give serious consideration to the contribution you could make as a Board member. Nominations for election, using only the form enclosed with this Newsletter, together with no more than a half-page typed biography outlining the qualities that you would bring to the Board, must be forwarded to the AMEB (NSW) by close of business on October 19, 2009.

An information package and ballot papers will be forwarded to eligible voters in the November mail out, with the *2010 Teachers' Handbook*.

Staff news

Neal Crocker has temporarily moved from his position as State Manager, AMEB (NSW) to assist in the Examinations Branch of the Office of the Board of Studies. While Neal is with the OBOS Exams Branch as the Acting Head of the Student Appeals and Support Unit, AMEB Senior Administrative Officer Maree Lucas will act as State Manager, AMEB (NSW).

The AMEB (NSW) team is small and industrious, so during our busiest months in the middle of the year, we rely on the additional support of a trained team of casuals. We make every effort to process your enrolment forms as quickly as possible. To assist us in expediting the data entry process, we would appreciate teachers checking the progress of your applications through AMEB Connect, our online system for teachers.

www.ameb.nsw.edu.au

Handy new website links

Be sure to add our website to the 'Favorites' or 'Bookmarks' list on your computer. We have a range of new links from our homepage: www.ameb.nsw.edu.au

Are you unsure about teaching from the new Piano Series Books?

- Click on our link for information about the Series 16 Workshop later in July.

Are you unsure whether you are correctly enrolling or preparing your Piano, Clarinet or Saxophone students?

- Click on our link for diagrams which help explain and compare the content for Old vs New Syllabus for these instruments – which are both examinable in 2009 and 2010.

Are you looking for a great rehearsal space in the CBD?

- Click on our link for information about AMEB Studio Hire.

Which AMEB exam is right for your piano students?

'For longer than anyone can remember, the AMEB's classical piano syllabus has identified the finest repertoire and provided a rigorous framework for graded development. It is a tried-and-true, reliable system for achieving excellence,' states AMEB examiner and CPM Syllabus Adviser, Dr Michael Barkl. 'Two new syllabuses cater for equally serious students – *Piano for Leisure* for those serious about enjoying their music, and *Contemporary Popular Music (CPM) Keyboard* for those serious about developing their musical creativity through performance.'

Many teachers prefer the *Pianoforte* grades which they themselves undertook and best understand. Others, however, will customise a path based on each student's interests, aptitudes, available practice time and musical goals. This approach will result in the best exam experience for each student.

Multi-talented AMEB (NSW) examiner and editor of *Piano for Leisure* Series Books, Dr John Terry, is unique in that he conducts exams for all three *Piano* syllabuses – *Piano for Leisure*, the classical grades (*Piano*) and *Contemporary Popular Music (CPM)*. He says, 'Many students undertaking "classical" grades would do better to take alternative AMEB keyboard exams. It is important that keyboard/piano teachers recognise appropriate examination avenues for their students.'

He adds, '*Piano for Leisure* isn't a "lesser alternative", as it allows students to pursue classical piano, contemporary repertoire, pop repertoire, jazz or any combination of these. It is also designed for students with busy schedules. Exam requirements are less than for *Pianoforte* grades. It is for students whose principal focus is not to pursue keyboard performance but who seek life-enrichment through high standard musical activity.'

AMEB examiner and 2008 Winner of the AMEB (NSW) Teaching Shield for Piano Preliminary to Sixth Grade, Neta Maughan, also embraces the *Piano for Leisure* syllabus: 'I agree: *Piano for Leisure* encourages students wanting to play at a certain level but whose examination program needs less preparation. Many of my

students will sit for a particular grade in the *Piano for Leisure* syllabus in the First Metropolitan round, focusing on their choice of Aural Tests or Sight Reading. We prepare our two *For Leisure* syllabus pieces, and choose a third piece from *Pianoforte*.

'Students can then focus on the other areas in the second half of the year, and sit for the same grade in *Pianoforte*. Their *Piano for Leisure* exam pieces provide their two extra list pieces and one piece for their Second Metro Piano exam. Then, learning the remaining *Piano* list pieces is a small matter, with either the Aural Tests or Sight Reading option that they hadn't presented in the earlier exam. The results of this approach are impressive, and a student can focus on different pieces each semester – they're less likely to become bored playing the same material all year.'

On the role of *CPM*, Dr Terry says: 'Teachers can feel secure about encouraging their students to do *CPM* as another alternative. Of course, improvising and reading from chord symbols may seem alien and daunting at first, but when teachers investigate the relevant course structure and terminologies they will be pleasantly surprised by its friendly approach.'

The three complementary syllabuses serve the needs and aspirations of piano/keyboard students of all ages in today's world. All options are to be encouraged if the style and repertoire can capture a young musician's imagination, motivating him or her to practise and maintain a lifelong passion for the piano.

The new resource *Improvising* by Dr Michael Barkl explores the skills and tools for encouraging creativity. He has kindly invited our readers to email AMEB at office@ameb.nsw.edu.au, including the subject heading 'CPM Improvising', to receive the booklet.

We would like to thank **Dr Michael Barkl, Dr John Terry, and Neta Maughan** for their contributions to this article.

The complete version of this abridged article appears on the AMEB website www.ameb.nsw.edu.au

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**Workshop on the Series 16 Piano Grade Books
26th July in conjunction with AMEB (NSW)**

General Knowledge for music teachers and students

Thoroughly researched and clearly presented notes on over 1000 musical works, including:

- The new "Context and Analysis" series: *Art Song*, *Chamber Music*, Debussy *Préludes*, and *Orchestral Music*. Suitable for theory or musicianship students, or for general musical reference.
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Federal news: Online exams are coming

The AMEB would like to advise teachers that the organisation has a new online learning partner, Web Ed Development (www.webeddev.com). This partnership will create a new program that will enable your students to sit their AMEB written exams online.

We are very excited about this new development which will allow students who have access to the internet to sit their AMEB exams at any time of the year, anywhere in Australia!

We expect that online written exams will be introduced for the 2010 academic year after extensive testing has been carried out by invitation within the AMEB community.

All teachers will be kept informed of the progress of this exciting new initiative, and a dedicated page on the Federal AMEB website (www.ameb.edu.au) will soon be available to answer any questions you might have.

Official opening of AMEB's new examination facility

The Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, visited AMEB headquarters on 20 February to unveil a plaque to mark the official opening of the Level 8 Studios at 117 Clarence Street, Sydney. She was joined by many distinguished members of the Sydney music and education sectors, including Ms Karyn Paluzzano, Parliamentary Secretary for Education; Professor Kim Walker, Dean of Sydney Conservatorium and AMEB (NSW) Chairperson; Lieutenant Commander Phillip Anderson OAM, Director of Music for the Royal Australian Navy; Dr John Bennett, Chief Executive of the Office of the Board of Studies; and Dr Rita Crews, Vice-President of the Music Teachers' Association and AMEB (NSW) Deputy Chairperson.

'This state-of-the-art facility is the first of its kind in Sydney,' Dr Crews said. 'A large venue offering multiple secure soundproofed studios with brand new pianos can do nothing but enhance candidates' performances as well as provide a much-needed CBD rehearsal space to benefit the broader music community.'

Celebrated Sydney artist Bruce Lawrence also attended the studio opening to present one of his original paintings as a gift to AMEB (NSW). Outstanding AMEB graduates such as Desmond Tan (see

article below) and performers from Sydney Grammar School, Sydney Girls High School and The King's School entertained the guests throughout the afternoon. As an 'old girl' of Sydney Girls High School, the Governor was particularly pleased to see her alma mater represented.



Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Ms Karyn Paluzzano, Professor Kim Walker and Dr John Bennett with performing students.

An extraordinary year for AMEB graduate

Our congratulations go to Desmond Tan, who has had an eventful year since receiving his LMusA with Distinction for Piano and performing at last year's AMEB Presentation Ceremony.

A man of many talents, during 2008 Desmond received the Professor Mohamed Khadra Creative Scholar Award, the Roger Woodward Scholarship and the 2MBS-FM Recording Award.

His final school year culminated with the honour of being named Dux of Sydney Technical High School. He received a most impressive UAI (99.9), and he was also placed first in New South Wales for two subjects: HSC Music 2 and Music Extension.

Desmond featured at February's official opening of the AMEB Level 8 Studios, impressing guests including Marie Bashir, Governor of New South Wales, with a remarkable performance to mark the occasion. At the event Desmond discussed the integral role that AMEB has played in his development as a musician, asserting: 'I would never have received the results I achieved in HSC music if not for my AMEB experience.'

We wish him every success for what we are sure will be a very promising future!



Desmond Tan with his teacher Neta Maughan.