

NEWSLETTER

of

The Sydney International Piano Competition of Australia and the Friends of the Sydney International Piano Competition of Australia

Editor: Daniel Mitterdorfer

September 2011



The September 2011 issue of the
Newsletter of the Sydney International Piano
Competition of Australia is sponsored by



A.C.N. 001 467 536
A.B.N. 15 001 467 536

Inside:

- Page 2
 - From the President
 - What they are doing now
- Page 3
 - Vale Dr Peter Calvo
 - News from the Competition
- Page 4
 - SIPCA Auditions in New York
 - Friends' Helpers
- Page 5
 - Sofitel Sydney Wentworth
- Page 6
 - 25 Years of T&V Piano Services

From the President...



By the 1st August, 2012 we will have finished the Tenth Competition and three Prize-Winners will be away on tours of recitals throughout all states and territories. People in all states and territories welcome the pianists that they have heard on ABC Classic FM during the whole time of the Competition. It is not only people in Australia who can listen to ABC Classic FM but all stages of the Competition are broadcast worldwide via the internet. Music is now a major force in our lives and with so much trouble around the world today, it is music that can take our minds away from many tragic situations.

It doesn't seem that thirty four years have passed since the First Piano Competition took place in July 1977. Do you notice how time goes faster and it seems such a short time between birthdays now? We are very pleased to announce that we already have ten more concerts planned for three Prize-Winners of the 2012 Competition than the 56 concerts after the Competition in 2008. We hope that we can get to 70 concerts like the Return Prize-Winner's Concerts by Konstantin Shamray and Tatiana Kolesova in 2010.

We expect to have live audiences from all states and territories around Australia to assist in getting capacity audiences from the Opening Recital. We also have a number of overseas visitors to enjoy such a feast of outstanding music – an event that they will keep with them for many years to come.

Claire Dan AM, OBE

What they are doing now

Arta Arnican has recently won the Second Prize (No First Prize given) in the 63rd Prague Spring International Music Competition.



Alina Kabanova has appeared as soloist with renowned orchestras such as the Berliner Symphoniker, the Orchestra of the Lyon



Opera and the Crimean State Philharmonic Orchestra. She has given solo concerts in Germany and in Europe since 1999. She formed the Beethoven Duo with cellist Fyodor Elesin and ever since the duo's debut at Carnegie Hall in New York in April 2008, they have become a Chamber Music Unity – the chamber music ensembles in the top league and is used by the press and the public as the "Glamour pair of celebrated classic music". Fyodor Elesin, the cellist, has made a transcription of Tchaikovsky "The Seasons" which has been put on disc as well as another disc of works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Debussy.

Jayson Gillham has been awarded the First Prize of the Brandt International Piano Competition held in Birmingham. Jayson is very excited that his new CD has just been manufactured. You are able to purchase the CD via his website and if you are in Australia, you can arrange to purchase one from his mother, Yvonne at: (07) 4662 4936 as she has copies for sale.



He will be having only a short visit to Australia this year and he will do two recitals, one at St Margaret's Anglican Girls School in Ascot, Brisbane on the 5th August, 2011. This recital is a fund-raising concert for Hearts for Africa Foundation. The second concert is on the 13th August, 2011 with works by Liszt and Grainger in the Bangalow Festival. This Festival lasts from 12th to 14th August.



The Melbourne Piano Trio is a young, exciting new piano trio that brings together three of Australia's leading emerging musicians. ABC Young Performer of the Year Ji Won Kim combines with chamber musician specialist Chris Howlett and internationally acclaimed prize winning Australian pianist, **Hoang Pham**, who this year adds Melbourne Chamber Orchestra to the list with which he has performed. Melbourne Piano Trio presents its debut recital season in New York this April, before returning to Australia to give its national launch around the major capital cities of Australia.

continued on page 3

What they are doing now

continued from page 2

The trio already has engagements that include two national tours, recitals for Melbourne Recital Centre and the Australian National Academy of Music as well as appearing at the Bangalow Music Festival. In 2012 they will expand their subscription series, tour America and also give concerts in Singapore and Dubai. In addition 2012 will see the trio begin its Educational Program giving school workshops throughout regional Australia and Singapore.

The Trio will be performing for the Friends of the Competition on Sunday 27th May, 2012 at 3.00pm. Details will be provided with the Newsletter in March next year.

Alice Demske Hansen

is currently a Professor of Piano at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah. She continues to perform regularly in the United States, recently completing a series of concerts playing the Fauré *Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor*. Alice is happily married to Kurt Hansen, a Utah native, and has two children - Charlie (3 in October) and Edward (turned 1 in June).



Vale Dr Peter Calvo

Dr. Peter Calvo, the Founder of the Australian Institute of Music passed away on Friday 17th June, 2011 in Cooma Hospital. Dr. Calvo was very kind to the Friends of SIPCA in allowing them to have their Monthly Meetings at the Institute. Also sponsored a Prize on several occasions. There was a memorial service at All Saints' Anglican Church in Woollahra on Tuesday 28th June at 2.00pm.

News from the Competition

As many people are asking about the time when they can purchase tickets for the 2012 Competition, we are pleased to advise that the following:

Priority Subscription Bookings for the Seymour Centre and the Sydney Opera House - for Financial Members of the Friends, Pensioners and Students Only - may purchase tickets with the current card for each from 1st February to 29th February, 2012. Updated Financial Membership will be advised to the Seymour Centre Box Office and the Sydney Opera House Box Office.

Seymour Centre: Box Office (02) 9351 7940

Sydney Opera House: Box Office (02) 9250 7777

Other Subscription Bookings from 1st March, 2012 – Seymour Centre Box Office and the Sydney Opera House Box Office

Single Ticket Bookings from 1st April 2012 – Seymour Centre Box office and the Sydney Opera House Box Office

Booking Brochures will be posted to Friends SIPCA in January, 2012. In addition to purchasing tickets, you may book parking at a special reduced price for the Seymour Centre for the sessions that you will be attending. This information will be included on the Booking Brochure.

Accommodation: a list of suggested Hotels will also be included on the Booking Brochure for people coming from the rural areas or from overseas.

SIPCA Auditions in New York

17-26 February 2012 (10 days)

Australian Dollar Saving for 'SIPCA Auditions in New York' Tour!

Thanks to the strength of the AUD, the tour cost has reduced by 5% (saving of \$335 on twin-share and \$75 on single supplement). Led by **Damien Beaumont**, the tour will take place from 17 to 26 February, 2012 and includes 9 nights accommodation, some meals, access to the auditions, visits to a selection of New York's most unique museums, and concerts by the New York Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, British Chamber Orchestra Britten Sinfonia, and a performance of Verdi's *Aida* by the Metropolitan Opera, with Violeta Urmana, Marcelo Álvarez and Stephanie Blythe. For detailed information please call Renaissance Tours on 1300 727 095 or visit www.renaissancetours.com.au/sipca-auditions-in-new-york/ For Australian and international music-lovers the year 2012 means one major musical event above all others – the 10th Sydney International Piano Competition of Australia. World-wide auditions will be held in January, February and March 2012 in the following venues: SINGAPORE – Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, ITALY – ROME: Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, AUSTRIA – VIENNA: Steinway in Austria, GERMANY – HAMBURG: Steinway & Sons, FRANCE – PARIS: Yamaha Artist Services Europe, RUSSIA – MOSCOW: Steinway Russia, ENGLAND – LONDON: Steinway Hall, USA – NEW YORK: Yamaha Artist Services, USA – LOS ANGELES: Kawai America Corp., JAPAN – TOKYO: Artist Services Tokyo Yamaha Building, PR CHINA – SHANGHAI: Shanghai Conservatory of Music, AUSTRALIA – SYDNEY: The Music School, The Scots College. New York, being the home of some of the world's top music schools, means that the standard of the contestants in the New York Auditions is the highest in the world and applicants from many parts of USA and Canada travel here to audition. New York has a special magic in mid-winter, especially snow-covered Central Park.



New York had a mind-boggling array of performing venues and companies, art galleries, museums and other cultural institutions. Join Damien Beaumont and the Friends of SIPCA for the New York Auditions to take place over five days (20-24 February, 2012). Also enjoy visits to a selection of New York's most unique museums and attend concerts by the New York Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, British Chamber Orchestra Britten Sinfonia and a performance of *Aida* at the Metropolitan Opera.



Photo: Paul Masck

Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center



Photo: Tomás Fano

Central Park Ice Rink

Friends' Helpers

For Friends who wish to help in the 2012 Competition on one or more of the Teams – a Brochure will go out with the March 2012 Newsletter which indicates the following Teams that you may like to be involved with: **Meet & Greet, Program Sellers, Bringing Food to the Seymour Centre for Jurors and/or Competitors, the Green Room, Back-Stage, Taking Care of the Two Conductors for the Competition and Billeting.**



MAGNIFIQUE WOMEN



SOFITEL SYDNEY WENTWORTH

OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF THE AUSTRALIAN WORLD ORCHESTRA CONCERTS.
FLEE THE ROUTINE AND SPOIL YOURSELF WITH SOME EARTHLY PLEASURES. SPEND A MORNING SHOPPING, AN AFTERNOON ENJOYING LUSCIOUS SPA TREATMENTS. SAMPLE CREATIVE COCKTAILS IN A CHARMING BAR AND THEN DINE DIVINELY ON YOUR FAVOURITE CUISINE. RETIRE TO YOUR ELEGANTLY APPOINTED GUEST ROOM WITH INIMITABLE FRENCH FLAIR.

FREE UPGRADE. \$50 VOUCHER TO SPEND IN THE HOTEL.
COCKTAILS FOR 2 IN THE SOFITEL LOUNGE.
IN ROOM BREAKFAST EACH MORNING.
LATE CHECK OUT.

61 - 101 PHILLIP STREET - SYDNEY - NSW 2000
RESERVATIONS 02 9228 9104
SOFITELSYDNEY.COM.AU - SOFITEL.COM

SOFITEL
LUXURY HOTELS

Life is Magnifique

Introducing the new Yamaha

CFX

Setting a new benchmark for concert grand pianos.

The culmination of 19 years of research and development, Yamaha's new CFX concert grand piano draws upon the inspiration, talent and experience of many of the world's greatest pianists in pursuit of perfection.

The goal? Not to imitate, but rather to go beyond existing instruments and offer musicians a new realm of almost unimaginable artistic possibilities.

At the 2009 Hamamatsu International Piano Competition, 15-year old acclaimed Korean pianist Cho Seong-Jin selected the new CFX for his performances of which he was awarded first prize honours.

Soon afterwards, the new CFX took centre stage in the United States at the prestigious National Chopin Piano Competition. The piano of choice for three out of four prize winners, the new CFX triumphed in the gifted hands of first prize winner Claire Huangci.

More recently starring at one of the world's most prestigious piano festivals, the International Chopin Festival in Poland, the new CFX was selected by the majority of the soloists demonstrating that this new concert grand piano is now considered to be the greatest piano to be produced in Yamaha's celebrated 108-year history.

www.yamahapremiumpianos.com



YAMAHA
PREMIUM
PIANOS



25 Years of Theme & Variations Piano Services

In 1974, the Sydney Conservatorium of Music started a Piano Technician's Course. Newspaper advertisements resulted in 56 applications – the course was to be run by a Senior Technician, Mr Suzuki from the Yamaha Technical Course in Hamamatsu. There were only six students to be selected to undertake the course and apart from interviews, there were a number of written tests to find out the character of the applicant and their ability to work under pressure and their perseverance.

Each student was given a room with a new piano on the first floor of the Conservatorium which would be their home for most of the year apart from the piano technician's room in the Conservatorium. A few years later in 1978, Ara Vartoukian was one of the six chosen to participate in the course, despite his young age. At the end of the course he was the top student and was invited by Yamaha to undertake a year at the Yamaha Factory in Hamamatsu, Japan.

In 1981, Ara was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Scholarship which enabled him to study at Steinway & Sons New York and Hamburg, Bösendorfer, Grotrian Steinweg and Baldwin. Later he also studied at C. Bechstein and Young Chang.

In 1980 Ara was the lecturer for the Piano Tuning Course at the Conservatorium. In 1985 he opened Theme & Variations Piano Services in Artarmon. Later he moved the showroom to a larger premises in Greenwich. Most recently in 2009, Theme & Variations moved to its current location in Willoughby which is able to hold over 50 pianos and 100 people for private recitals.



Caroline Lee, Ara & Nyree Vartoukian, Prof Warren Thomson

Apart from developing Theme & Variations as a business, Ara is the exclusive Steinway Agent in NSW and Queensland, where he maintains concert and private pianos. Ara and his staff have been of great assistance to many people and events including: The Sydney International Piano Competition and Friends of the Competition, Sydney Symphony, Tyalgum Festival, the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville and Musica Viva.

On 11th March 2011, Theme & Variations celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a party attended by over 90 people at its Willoughby showroom. At the beginning of the function, Professor Warren Thomson, on behalf of the Sydney International Piano Competition of Australia and Friends of the Competition, presented Ara and his wife Nyree with a Certificate of Continued Outstanding Support in appreciation for their work and dedication.

- Prof Warren Thomson OAM