

Adelaide: Saturday 23 July 2011

for immediate release

THE 2011 GEOFFREY PARSONS AWARD WINNER ANNOUNCED



Earlier this evening (23 July), the Final of the Accompanists' Guild of SA's 26th Geoffrey Parsons Award, named in honour of Australia's greatest accompanist, took place in Adelaide at the Elder Conservatorium of Music, The University of Adelaide.

In keeping with the Guild's acknowledgement of the professional aspirations of their competitors, the cash-pool is a significant \$4,000.

Geoffrey Parsons was an internationally acclaimed Australian accompanist particularly for singers. He regularly accompanied, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, Victoria de los Angeles, Dame Janet Baker, Olaf Bär, and Barbara Bonney.

The three Finalists competed for a cash pool of \$4,000. They were selected from auditions earlier this week which included a performance of prepared works with their chosen associates, sight reading and a first rehearsal of the set work. Stephen Whittington's *Acid Test* for bassoon and piano received its world premiere this evening when each finalist performed it with ASO bassoonist, Mark Gaydon.

The Final was judged by a panel, chaired by the Guild's Pianist in Residence for the 2011 Accompanists' Festival, Michael Kieran Harvey. He was joined by leading SA musicians and educators, Carl Crossin OAM and Diana Harris OAM.

As well as performing the set-work with Mark Gaydon, each finalist presented works of their own choice which demanded great technical, interpretative and ensemble skills, including: Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, Chopin's Introduction and Polonaise Brilliant and Muczynski's *Time Pieces*.

In announcing the winners Chairman of the Jury, Michael Kieran Harvey said, "This evening we saw three wonderful keyboard collaborators, loving what they're doing and believing that what they're doing is something important to forge a career in. Choosing the winner wasn't easy as the standard was of such an incredibly high standard."

The 2011 winners were:

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| • FIRST PRIZE (\$3,000) | Szu Yu Chen | Roseville, NSW |
| • SECOND PRIZE (\$600) | Michael Ierace | Kidman Park, SA |
| • THIRD PRIZE (\$400) | Coady Green | London |

2011 Geoffrey Parsons Award Prizewinner, Szu Yu Chen performed Shostakovich Sonata for Cello and Piano and Rachmaninoff's virtuosic, Sonata in G minor for Piano and Cello with ASO Principal Cellist and founding cellist of the Australian String Quartet, Janis Laurs.

Szu Yu Chen is currently studying at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music as a postgraduate accompaniment student with scholarship learning from David Miller and Gerard Willems. She earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Taipei National University and completed Masters in Piano Performance at Peabody Conservatory, John Hopkins University.

ENDS

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The 2011 Festival of Accompanists is proudly supported by:

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