



AGSA NEWSLETTER March 2015

AGSA 2014:

PIANO with PERCUSSION provided the main focus for our 2014 activities and what a hectic undertaking it was. As one might expect a lot of sound and activity resulting in some inspirational music making for our:

JEMs (Junior Ensemble Musicians) and their preparations for a class with percussionist, **Jamie Adam**, who generously provided some of the instruments needed for the JEM's 12.10 Festival Concert in the Flinders Street Baptist Church on Wednesday September 17. Their lovely concert was expertly prepared by convenor **Monika Laczofy**, followed for the first time by a special lunch for the JEM's which kept them happy and satisfied before the exciting concert especially arranged for the JEMs and their families by Vibes Virtuoso, **Nick Parnell** with Council Member pianist **Julie Sargeant**. (It's great to see they have continued to work together on tour and more recently in the 2015 Fringe)

YAS (Young Accompanists' Showcase) convened by Gina Macri and involving professional soloists also included percussion again with **Jamie Adam** as well as instrumental soloists **Anna Coleman** /clarinet and **Christopher Handley**/ cello and soprano, **Lynette Harris**. AGSA Secretary and experienced accompanist and teacher, **Frances Wood**, conducted their masterclass helping them prepare for their Conference Concert on September 20.

The Geoffrey Parsons Award (convened by **Frances Wood**) also involved Nick Parnell as percussionist for the set work- a new piece by Italian composer Fabrizio Festa. For the first time in the history of AGSA Awards (Accompanist, Associate Artist and Geoffrey Parsons Awards) the panel (Assoc Prof Vanessa Tomlinson/Qld Con, Rodney Smith/Elder Con and Julie Sargeant / AGSA) was able to offer only one prize. The Award went to **Andrew Georg**. While it was disappointing for some, the decision to award only one prize led to a review of the Parsons Regulations & requirements by the Council in order to make it clear that this is an award for pianists either on the cusp of a professional career with professional aspirations or already working as a collaborative pianist. Considering the value of the Award (\$5000/1st, \$1,500/2nd, \$1000/3rd) and the status and acumen the Award gives to its recipients the Guild Council was grateful to the panel for their decision. It also gave rise to concern about the training of pianists at Tertiary level in terms of collaborative experience.

The 2014 Festival of Accompanists PIANO with PERCUSSION (convened by Diana Harris) What an experience it was to be involved with such dynamic personalities and performers as husband & wife duo pianists **Michael Kieran Harvey & Arabella Tenniswood-Harvey** and Australia's two brilliant percussionists **Claire Edwardes** and **Vanessa Tomlinson**. Not only did they inject incredible excitement, controversy and wisdom into their contributions to the Conference but they performed with unbridled passion and right on the edge in their Elder Perspectives recital. This included works by Bartok, Bernstein and two works by Australian composers – Richard Vella (composed for Michael & Arabella) and young South Australian composition student **Jakub Jankowski**—the latter receiving a special prize financed by two members of the AGSA Council as a result of the players indicating their joint passion in supporting new Australian music (in this case for the Bartók combination). Four new works were forwarded to the performers. They were all worthy of performance but since the players were in Adelaide for such a short time this was not possible. The concert was a great success – recorded by ABC Classic FM and broadcast the very next week (an amazing achievement for a concert from Adelaide) it was mentioned with great approval by Senior Advertiser critic, **Elizabeth Silsbury** as “...a concert that was generally judged to be right smashing.....” and “.... The place for us on Saturday night was surely Elder Hall.”

I am indebted to **Aldis Sils**, **Leonie Hempton** and the Marryatville High School Music Department for making so much of the 2014 Festival viable. Their cooperation meant we had an alternate space and instruments for rehearsals for the Bartok concert as well as for the Conference. (I understand MHS students enjoyed their access to the rehearsals). It was also significant to have the recital as part of the Elder Perspectives Series with **Claire Oremland's** organisation generating audience numbers we might not have attracted.

As Convenor for this amazing Festival, I now have a greater understanding of the plight of percussionists --before, during and after performances. Much as I loved convening the 2014 Festival I don't relish the idea of another Festival involving so many instruments! Thank goodness Marryatville HS and Head of Percussion at the Con **Amanda Grigg** were so supportive. I look forward to the 2015 Festival THE PIANO IN ART SONG when our associates bring their voices with them!!

Supporting AGSA Financially Our thanks go to Berenice Harrison for once again hosting the annual fundraising dinner. We had a delightful evening with fine home cooked food, fascinating raffles and much laughter. We raised almost \$2000 for the Geoffrey Parsons Award. This with the very generous \$3000 support we receive for our Educational projects (JEM, YAS & Parsons) from the Royal Commonwealth Society and the considerable donations by Friends and Members is very much appreciated. Unfortunately have had no support from the Government Funding bodies -- Arts SA and the Australia Council. We consequently rely heavily on Members' subscriptions and box office from the Festival events including the Conference.

Spreading Guild News Overseas On June 30th --- as President of AGSA-- I had the pleasure of presenting a paper at the World Piano Teachers' Conference in Novi Sad Serbia on “Educating and Supporting Pianists Who Play with

Others". It provided an ideal opportunity to outline the rise and fall of vocational courses for the accompanist at the Flinders Street School of Music with many delegates asking for the course outlines. More importantly from AGSA's viewpoint the presentation outlined how the programs run by the Guild have a strong education component involving pianists at Primary (JEMs), Secondary (YAS), and advanced Tertiary students plus young professionals (Geoffrey Parsons Award) as well as supporting our profession with our annual Conferences and Registers. Delegates in Novi Sad showed great interest in what we – as a volunteer group- are doing both educationally and in terms of supporting collaborative pianists.

AGSA 2015: Focus on Piano in Art Song

2015 plans for AGSA well and truly on the drawing board in the latter half of 2014. We are lucky to have the recently appointed Head of Music at State Opera, **David Barnard**, on the AGSA Council. He has arranged for State Opera to host the 2015 visit of one of the world's finest vocal accompanists, **Malcolm Martineau**, and we are the extremely fortunate collaborators with SOSA in having Malcolm as our Musician in Residence for the Festival - Piano in Art Song. The collaboration includes the use of the State Opera Studio at Netley for several events in the Festival – including the Geoffrey Parsons Award Auditions, rehearsals and Final, the YAS class with Malcolm and the Saturday Conference. The Guild could not exist at our current level of activity without fantastic collaborations such as this.

We are also thrilled that the major recital is once again included in the Elder Perspectives Series. Malcolm Martineau will be joined by Austrian baritone, Florian Boesch in Schubert's Song Cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin*. He will also join David Barnard (pianos duet) and SOSA Singers in Schumann's *Spanische Liebeslieder*.

Now- March 2015- the [Festival Brochure is available on the website](#) and has already been distributed to Members. **Early Bird Applications** received by May 8 will go in to the draw for a double pass to State Opera's production of *Faust*.

Geoffrey Parsons Award 2015 – entries close on Friday June 12 - [Application Form](#).

AMEB Recorded Accompaniments

Many of you will already know that the AMEB has recently produced recorded accompaniments for early AMEB grades. The Guild Council is holding a special meeting to discuss the issue and decide on action. The form this will take will be announced at the AGM.

2015 Calendar Dates

- March 29, 3pm Annual General Meeting , 35A Orlando Ave, Hampstead Gardens
- April 12, 2.30 JEM Introductory Session Bishop Hall
- May 8 Early Bird Applications for Festival/Conference due
- May 31 2.30 YAS Masterclass with David Barnard Marryatville High School
- June 7, 2.30 JEM Masterclass Bishop Hall
- June 12 Geoffrey Parsons Award Applications Due
- June 21, 2.30 YAS Concert Marryatville High School
- June 25 Conference Applications including lunch due
- June 27, 2.30 JEM Final Rehearsal Bishop Hall
- June 29/30 5.30 Parsons Award Auditions State Opera Studio 216 Marion Road Netley
- July 1, 12.10 JEM Concert , Pilgrim Church
- July 1 , 1.10 Fun Songs for JEMS David Barnard and State Opera Artists
- July 2, 4.30 YAS Class with Malcolm Martineau State Opera Studio
- July 4, 7.30 Elder Perspectives Recital – Malcolm Martineau, Florian Boesch/baritone, David Barnard & SOSA Young & Emerging Artists Elder Hall
- July 5, 9.15 Conference, State Opera Studio
- July 5, 1.30 YAS Concert (in the Conference) State Opera Studio
- July 5, 7pm Geoffrey Parsons Award Final
- August 30,6pm Fundraising Dinner , 35A Orlando Ave , Hampstead Gardens, phone 8266 4936

Later events to be announced

Memberships, Sponsorships and Donations [Application Form](#) are all needed to keep AGSA viable. Help us to support Accompanists & Collaborative pianists. This year we have support from the Royal Commonwealth Society and Winston Music as well as several anonymous donors

AGM I look forward to seeing members at the AGM on Sunday March 29 at 3pm. This will be my last AGM as President of the Guild. The next President will be announced at the meeting.

My best wishes to all who might read this Newsletter

Please continue to SUPPORT ACCOMPANISTS!

Diana Harris OAM, President, AGSA, 0407 818 838, diana.harris@museco.id.au
19/03/2015

Secretary **Frances Wood**, can be contacted on 8379 1298, 0410 512 414, fdwood@adam.com.au

<http://www.accompanist.org.au>