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Classical Music Awards



Photo: Tony Mott

Miriam Hyde, winner of the Award for Distinguished Services to Australian Music, receiving the Award from last year's winner, Richard Meale.

This year's Classical Music Awards illustrated the exciting potential of successful collaborations between performers and composers. As the achievements of musicians, composers and administrators were celebrated in style at Sydney Conservatorium's Verbruggen Hall, each Award seemed to reiterate the view that direct interaction between the creators and players of music is vital for the health of new music in Australia.

This is perhaps best exemplified by Miriam Hyde's life. Winner of the Award for Distinguished Services to Australian Music, Hyde, at the age of 91 has made a lifetime's contribution to Australian music as a performer, composer, teacher and examiner – in particular raising the status of composers, especially women composers, in Australia. From early on in her musical life Miriam found herself torn between composing and performing. It was not until she was studying in London that she found herself, for the first time in her life, with enough time to dedicate to practising and composing. These skills converged in the performances she gave of her two Piano Concertos with the London Symphony Orchestra and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Broadcast live to air on ABC Classic FM for the first time this year, the presentation of Awards was interspersed with performances by some of Australia's leading musicians. From Diana Doherty's theatrical interpretation of Ross Edwards's *Love Duet* from his Oboe Concerto, performed with her husband Alexandre Oguey, to the evocative patterns of Elena Kats-Chernin's piano piece written in memory of the victims of the Bali bombing, the performances exhibited the quality and diversity of music-making in Australia.

The annual APRA – Australian Music Centre Classical Music Awards, as the only awards in Australia designed specifically for contemporary classical music, pay tribute to those individuals and organisations to have made a significant contribution during the past year to music created by Australians.

This contribution is often made despite the knowledge that there will be little financial reward, no security and (except for this one night a year!) little fame and glory. However, they continue to dedicate their time, talents and energy to the creation of Australian music because they believe in its intrinsic value. As viola virtuoso Patricia Pollett, winner of an award for contribution to the presentation of Australian composition said, it is "incredibly rewarding to play music that is of my own time and my own experience".

A similar sentiment was expressed by Richard Haynes (profiled on page 13) who was awarded Best Performance of an Australian Composition



Photo: Tony Mott

Performers of Ross Edwards's *Love Duet*. From left: Rebecca Lagos, Diana Doherty with husband Alexandre Oguey, and Bernadette Balkus.

for his 'electrifying' performance of Peter Rankine's *Time and the Bell*. Jeannie Marsh who won the Victorian State Award wrote "The big question is, how can performers who *don't* perform music of their own time/place/people bear it? Don't they want to experience the thrill of working with composers? ... It provides the ultimate "buzz", the ultimate hit."

The National Keys Competition, which won for Lyn Carr an Award for the advancement of Australian music in education, encourages performers to do just this. The competition, which is entirely based on contemporary music, encourages the creation of new works and connects composers with performers.

Other winners included Queensland Biennial Festival of Music for the advancement of Australian music in a regional area, West Australian Symphony Orchestra for Presentation of Australian Composition by an Organisation, while Felix Werder won the award for Long Term Contribution.

The APRA Work of the Year Awards are given to pieces that have been premiered, or commercially released for the first time, in the past year. A shortlist of three works in each category is produced by APRA, based on the number of performances of the work. The shortlist is then assessed by the National Panel, who this year awarded Gordon Kerry, Richard Charlton and Gerard Brophy the Work of the Year Awards for orchestral, instrumental and vocal/choral works respectively. The Award for Best Composition, which is based solely on nominations, was given to Andrew Ford for his song cycle *Learning to Howl*.

State Awards were also given to the best nomination in each state: these were Jeannie Marsh (Vic.), Raffaele Marcellino, Russell Gilmour and Ian Munro (Tas.), West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WA), Bozidar Kos (SA), Queensland Biennial Festival of Music (Qld), Richard Gill and Margaret Moore, Sydney Symphony Education Program (NSW & ACT).

Annual General Meeting

The report given to the Annual General Meeting held on 31 May 2004, by the Chair of the Australian Music Centre Board, Paul Marx, can now be read online at www.amcoz.com.au



Photo: Tony Mott

Patricia Pollett who won the Award for her Contribution to the Presentation of Australian Composition

MODART 05

Submissions close 1 September 2004

Presented by The Song Company and the Australian Music Centre, MODART gives young Australian composers the opportunity to develop a short vocal work, for two to six voices, in close collaboration with The Song Company and Roland Peelman (director).

To apply, send the following information to the MODART c/o the Centre.

- A 100 to 200 word description of an idea for a short vocal work
- An example of an extant score, preferably recent and representative of current work
- A short biography

For further enquiries call Meghan FitzGerald at the Centre, (02) 9247 4677, email: mf@amcoz.com.au.

Full details are available online from the APRA and Australian Music Centre Websites. <<http://www.apra.com.au>> <<http://www.amcoz.com.au>>. ■

ABC Classic FM

In April 2004, a total of 29,212 minutes of music was broadcast with 3,056 minutes (10%) being devoted to Australian music of all genres and 10,437 minutes (36%) being devoted to Australian performance content.

In May 2004, a total of 31,386 minutes of music was broadcast with 3,237 minutes (10%) being devoted to Australian music of all genres and 10,186 minutes (32%) being devoted to Australian performance content.

In June 2004, a total of 29,089 minutes of music was broadcast with 3,072 minutes (13%) being devoted to Australian music of all genres and 10,017 minutes (34%) being devoted to Australian performance content. ■