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A new era for Percussion students
AMEB Victoria’s Confering of Diplomas Ceremony took place on 12 May at Wilson Hall, the University of Melbourne to celebrate the achievements of outstanding young musicians who, in 2013, were successful in the Licentiate in Music, Australia (LMusA) and/or the Associate in Music, Australia (AMusA).

Accomplished musician and University lecturer, Dr Joel Brennan congratulated the diplomates in his Occasional Address and spoke about where the study of music can lead to. He said: “Music has been my passport, connecting me with people from many different cultures and countries”. He encouraged the audience to appreciate that the practice and dedication needed to achieve AMEB Diploma level “will shape you even if you don’t know it yet”.

AMusA
Of the 93 candidates awarded the Associate Diploma in 2013, ten received a Distinction in Piano, Viola, Recorder, Saxophone, Trumpet or Oboe. Double Diplomate, Philip Guo received AMusA with Distinction in Piano and AMusA Cello.

LMusA
Fifteen candidates were awarded the Licentiate Diploma in 2013, of which two were also awarded the Associate Diploma: Tian Tian Lan received AMusA with Distinction in Violin and LMusA Piano; Ming Yi Wu received AMusA Cello and LMusA Piano. A further three diplomates received LMusA with Distinction and performed during the ceremony: Melinda Seaw on Piano; Luke Severn on Cello; and Kim Falconer on Flute.

Special Award Winners 2013
The following musicians were presented with special awards for outstanding achievement in 2013 AMEB exams:

Kim Falconer, LMusA Flute with Distinction
Winner of the Leslie Barklamb Flute Award.

Abigail Lee Ting Zhang
Winner of the Henri Touzeau Cello Award for the best result in Grade 8 Cello.

Daniel Shuo Gu and Xiao-Xiao Kingham
Joint winners of the Elizabeth Stainkamph Memorial Prize for the best combined result in Grade 8 Pianoforte and Grade 5 Theory exams.

Nancy Wang and Danna Yun, AMusA Cello
Joint winners of the VMTA Theory of Music Award for the best Grade 6 Theory exam result.

Winnie Yiwen Yan, AMusA Piano
Winner of the VMTA Musicianship Award for the best Grade 6 Musicianship exam result.
Percussion students entered a new era this year with the introduction of a new AMEB Percussion Syllabus. Launched at the end of 2013, the syllabus has been designed to be flexible, accessible and relevant to the needs of today’s percussionists.

It certainly ticked the boxes for Eltham High School’s Music Department who embraced the new Percussion syllabus this year, enrolling eight students for exams in Term 2.

One of those students is 18 year old Alexander Clayton who was awarded Honours in his Certificate of Performance exam.

A passionate musician who was first introduced to Percussion at the age of 10, Alexander will soon be auditioning for a place at Melbourne University’s Conservatorium of Music.

He said: "The Certificate of Performance exam is very similar to an audition so it was a very useful experience for me.”

He and his teacher Anna Camara are very enthusiastic about the improvements for both students and teachers offered by the new Percussion Syllabus.

Anna said: “The addition of higher levels of examination is a big bonus, and the fact that the new syllabus is geared to today’s concert repertoire is fantastic.”

The improved relevance to current Percussion repertoire is illustrated perfectly by the earlier introduction of four mallets, in Grade 2.

Anna explains: "When I was a student, four mallet pieces were introduced at University level, but now it is much more common among students who are in Year 9 or 10.”

"The best thing is,” she says, "that the early four mallet pieces are very straightforward in the new syllabus and some students opted for them in Grade 3, which has never happened in my experience before.”

Anna is delighted to find more pieces by Australian composers in the new syllabus.

"There are many pieces by composers living in Melbourne including Steve Falk, Eugene Ughetti, Robert Cossom, Graeme Leak, Andrián Pertout and Mark Pollard. They feel so much more relevant to the students.”

Alexander can also see improvements in the Technical Work, finding it much more interesting than before. And, the inclusion of all Technical Work in one book for Level 1 and one book for Level 2 is a boon for Anna and her student’s parents.

The transition from the old to new syllabus was made a little challenging by the fact that many more pieces are accompanied in the new syllabus.

“It was tricky finding time for all the students to practise with their accompanist, so the introduction of recorded accompaniment would be very helpful,” she said.

“Overall though, percussion is a vibrant, dynamic way to make music and the new syllabus reflects that,” Anna concluded.

**New Percussion Syllabus FAQs**

Q. How long will the “old” syllabus remain relevant and be examined?
A. In 2014 and 2015, candidates can present for examination using either the “new” Percussion syllabus as published in the current syllabus, or the “old” syllabus, last published in the 2013 Manual of Syllabuses. The syllabus chosen for examination must be presented in its entirety.

The "old" Percussion syllabus (last published in the 2013 Manual of Syllabuses) will be withdrawn from examination at the end of 2015. From 2016, only the “new” Percussion syllabus will be available for examination.

Q. When do Percussion exams take place in Victoria?
A. Percussion exams, all conducted by a specialist examiner, will be offered in the July and November Special Subject sessions. Alternatively, schools and private studios with 3 or more hours of examining time in Percussion can apply to be an examination centre, which may involve combining with another school or studio. This arrangement can be made outside the published session dates, subject to the availability of a specialist examiner.

Q. What publications has AMEB produced to support the syllabus?
A. AMEB has released a range of Percussion publications to support the new syllabus, including:

- Grade books for Preliminary to Grade 4, containing all examinable repertoire for the first five grades of the 2014 Percussion syllabus.
- Percussion Technical Work Level 1 (2013), containing all the technical work requirements from Preliminary to Grade 4.
- Percussion Technical Work Level 2 (2013), containing all the technical work requirements from Grade 5 to Grade 8.
- Percussion Sight-reading (2013), containing over 120 graded examples of sight-reading similar to that which may be encountered in an AMEB examination.

**Enrolment Deadline**

The enrolment deadline for Percussion exams in the November Special Session is 27 August 2014.
Eminent musician and renowned pedagogue, Dr McGee presents from the piano, playing excerpts from Preliminary through to Grade 4 repertoire while demonstrating the teaching of specific skills and musicianship. The workshop is ideally suited to Piano teachers and advanced students planning to teach Piano.

This series of Piano workshops, which began last year with Level 2, will not be repeated in the near future. If you have not had a chance to attend you are strongly encouraged to take the opportunity at the final workshop on 31 August at Monash University, Clayton. You can register via the AMEB Victoria website, or by calling 9882 3233.

The AMEB Victoria Piano Level 1 workshop series has been a great success this year, with seasoned teachers saying how Mark McGee’s presentation has reinvigorated their teaching and advanced students gaining invaluable insights into teaching young musicians.

“Inspiring and incredibly useful.”

“A fabulous and thought-provoking presentation, with information I can apply immediately in my teaching.”

“I am enjoying teaching so much more since attending Mark’s workshop last year, and I thoroughly enjoyed his Level 1 workshop this year. I have been using the principles he demonstrated in my teaching since the first one, and I have had great success with children and adult students. Having learnt more this time, I look forward to implementing his advice once again.”

To register for the final AMEB piano workshop, go to www.ameb.unimelb.edu.au or call 9882 3233

Sunday 31 August
10am to 1pm
Monash University, Clayton