

On Sunday afternoon 22 July 2018, a very supportive and enthusiastic audience at Townsville Grammar School Music Centre enjoyed performances from three singers, finalists in the Open Vocal Section of the Australian Concerto & Vocal Competition. Each singer prepared contrasting and demanding programmes of four (4) arias from Opera for Voice and Orchestra.



The first performer of the afternoon was **KATE AMOS (Melbourne)** accompanied by **Maryleigh Hand**.

Kate opened her programme singing "Quando m'en vo" (Musetta's Waltz Song) from La Boheme by Puccini, which she presented well vocally. She communicated the coquettishness of this aria even if the dramatization interfered with the overall performance. In her second choice Recitative & Aria "Deh vieni non tardar" from Le Nozze di Figaro by Mozart, Kate presented better style for this character and her vocal approach was most suitable. Next Kate chose the very difficult aria "Estrato Estrato!...Sempre libera" Violetta's Aria from La Traviata by Verdi. This is a very challenging aria which she handled admirably. Unfortunately there were a few occasions when intonation was not always secure. Kate's final aria was "Je

veux vivre" from Romeo et Juliette by Gounod. In the opera this aria is performed by the young Juliette on the threshold of life and looking forward to moving into Society. Kate achieved this characterisation very well vocally.

NAOMI FLATMAN (Brisbane) was the next performer with Accompanist **Maryleigh Hand**.

Naomi's first aria was "Se Romeo t'uccise un figlio" from I Capuletti e I Montecchi by Bellini. This singer presented excellent voice control, drama, characterisation and communication in all her choices. In this aria of particular note was her control and contrast between parts A & B. Next was Handel's "Abbrucio, avvampo e fremo" from Rinaldo. In true Handellian style this aria is a test of a singer's ability to cover florid passages which Naomi handled successfully. This was followed by a very polished, contrasted and atmospheric rendition of "Qui m'aurait dit la place" (Charlotte's Aria) from Werther by Massenet. Naomi's final aria (including recitative) "Smanie implacabili" from Cosi fan Tutti by Mozart was presented with Mozartian style and flair.





The final performance was from **REBECCA CASSIDY (Brisbane)** with **Maryleigh Hand** again accompanying.

Rebecca's first Aria "Dich, teure Halle" from Tannhauser by Wagner was presented well in true Wagnerian style with a free and flowing voice coping well with top notes and drama. Next was Bizet's "Je dis querien ne m'epouvante" from Carmen sung with good control and feeling. Rebecca's third aria "Come scoglio" from Cosi fan Tutti by Mozart was a polished performance in a suitably dramatic fashion. Her final aria was "Senza mamma" from Suer Angelica by Puccini. This is a tragic aria presented with appropriate sensitivity to the characterisation. Contrasts were very well handled and communicated. A poignant performance.

At the conclusion of the performances, Adjudicator **CHERYL BARKER AO** awarded 3rd place to REBECCA CASSIDY, 2nd place to KATE AMOS with 1st place to NAOMI FLATMAN. The Adjudicator gave the Norton Challenor Award for Most Promising Vocalist to ALISON PARIS (Brisbane). The Audience Choice Award went to REBECCA CASSIDY.

All performances of the arias chosen by these very talented young ladies showed contrast, presentation and excellent voice quality which hopefully will stand them in good stead for future singing careers. Congratulations to all Singers and their Accompanist for a most entertaining and inspiring afternoon.

Of special note regarding the Open Vocal Competition, MARYLEIGH HAND accompanied all 10 singers in the Preliminaries and then again the 3 finalists. Congratulations on a marathon effort!

Reviewed by

Neil & Desley Smith

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