

## **Competition Director's Notes 2016 Official Launch**

### **Katy Frewen-Lord**

I am honoured to be here and I look forward to continuing on in the role to which Carol Dall'Osto has dedicated many years.

I would like to welcome councillors Colleen Doyle and Sue Blom, who are here on behalf of our sponsorship partner, the Townsville City Council. I would also like to welcome all of our sponsors and members who are here today.

2015 was a big step forward, as the Australian Concerto and Vocal Competition moved to the Townsville Civic Theatre. Given the rise in prestige of the competition, it has now happily outgrown Townsville's other performance venues. Our Open Sections received a healthy number of entrants from the entire East Coast of Australia last year and this year we are working to strengthen our relationship with all states of Australia.

Our School ensemble and Young Performer's sections were well attended in 2015. My background as an instrumental music teacher raises my hopes for even greater participation in these events, not just from Townsville schools, but also regional schools of North Queensland.

Although our new venue was well suited to the performers and rehearsals of the 2015 competition, the increase in audience capacity unfortunately left us with more empty seats than we would like to see.

This year will be an exciting year, with many notable dates to mark in your diary. North Queensland's Barrier Reef Orchestra has a longstanding relationship with ACVC and provides performance opportunities for our Open Section winners.

2015 Open Vocal winner Bronwyn Douglass will be returning to Townsville to sing with Barrier Reef Orchestra at the T150 Variety performance at the Civic Theatre on April 2. Bronwyn will also give a more intimate performance at a lunch time concert at Perc Tucker Regional Gallery March 31.

2015 Open Instrumental winner Arthur Athan will perform Rachmaninoff's 2nd Piano Concerto with the Barrier Reef Orchestra July 17th. Arthur along with Townsville branch of MTAQ will present a masterclass for local piano students on July 15th. Arthur was also awarded the John Hopkin's Performance Fellowship for his performance at 2015 ACVC. This award has provided Arthur with the opportunity to perform a concerto with the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra Perth, in April 2017. This is also an exciting step towards strengthening our relationship with Western Australia.

Our 2016 competition will once again take place at the Townsville Civic Theatre. We look forward to welcoming two adjudicators of international acclaim; both of whom have prolific performance catalogues. Firstly, Ms Cheryl Barker, one of Australia's leading operatic sopranos who returns to us of a second year. Cheryl appears regularly with Opera Australia as well as performing with many companies and orchestras overseas, particularly throughout Europe. Secondly Mr Spiros Rantos, a renowned violist and conductor, born in Greece and now living in Australia. Spiros has played in many chamber groups and large ensembles throughout Australia as well as touring internationally. He has also lectured at a number of Australian Universities. Spiros is new to ACVC in 2016 and our Patron, Piers Lane, assures me that he is "experienced and great fun"!

We welcome the return of two of our resident official accompanists, Rhodri Clarke (Melbourne), and Maryleigh Hand (Sydney). We also welcome newcomer Robert Manley from Brisbane. These professional musicians take on the ominous task of filling the role of an entire orchestra, with just two hands and a piano! It also seems that having to travel to tropical north Qld in winter is somewhat of an appealing thought for the southerners.

I am curious this year to see what affect the unfortunate end to the ABC Symphony Young Performers Award may have on our entries. The ABC YPA was Australia's largest and most recognised national concerto competition but in December last year it was announced that the competition has unfortunately ceased.

I credit the ongoing success of our competition, Australian Concerto and Vocal Competition to you, our generous sponsors, donors, members, entrants and hard working committee. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you all throughout the year.