

2019 Adjudicators – West Gippsland Performing Arts Competition

Luke Carbon – Woodwind & Brass Adjudicator



Luke Carbon is a woodwind multi-instrumentalist and educator based in Melbourne. An orchestral musician, chamber player, and fluent improviser, he attended the Australian National Academy of Music on clarinet during 2015-2016 and was awarded a Master of Music Research, the Musica Viva Chamber Music Prize, and a programming award for his exploration of third stream music, including compositions by Gunther Schuller and William Russo. Luke has appeared with the Melbourne and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras on clarinets and saxophones, Orchestra Victoria, ELISION, Ensemble Offspring, Rubiks Collective, and has attended the Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival. He is co-founder of the woodwind/percussion ensemble Enyato Duo with Thea Rossen, which has commissioned works by Paul Dean, Samantha Wolf, and Tim Hansen. He has played close to a dozen professional musical theatre productions and is a current member of the Musica Viva in Schools group *Water, Water Everywhere*, which played to over 12,000

students in 2018.

Nathan Byrne – Drums & Guitar Adjudicator



Nathan Byrne is a passionate and experienced music educator, collaborative pianist, conductor and musical director, with over a decade of comprehensive experience in directing and rehearsing amateur/community choirs and musical theatre productions as conductor, rehearsal pianist and vocal coach across both Melbourne and Gippsland. He has been an active member of the local Gippsland music scene since 2015 through his active involvement in Latrobe Theatre Company as Musical Director for 'The Little Mermaid' (2016), 'Oliver!' (2017) and most recently, 'Sweet Charity' (2018). Nathan is extremely passionate about introducing students of all ages to music, especially those who have not yet experienced the power and potential of music. Through his work as an accompanist, he continues to support musicians in both a stylistic and sensitive manner to achieve a unified musical vision. Nathan's musical

philosophy is centred around the strong belief that every child has the right to a music education, as well as to be provided the opportunity to appreciate all aspects of music through active participation.

Nathan holds a Bachelor of Music (Instrumental Teaching) on Classical Piano and a Master of Teaching (Secondary) from the University of Melbourne. Nathan has been fortunate to have had experience studying from such teachers as the late Professor John Hopkins AM OBE, Benjamin Northey, Mark McGee, and Monte Mumford. As a piano teacher, Nathan has taught at a variety of schools, both public and independent across Melbourne. As a secondary music teacher, Nathan has a wealth of experience teaching music from years 7 through to 12.

Nathan is currently Head of Performing Arts at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School in Traralgon, a position he has held since 2017.

Dovi Hanner – Orchestral Strings Adjudicator



Violinist and Violist Dovi Hanner is a recent graduate of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, having studied violin with Mark Mogilevski, Janet Davies and Sally Thomas. A specialist in the field of Historical Performance Practice, Dovi has studied baroque and classical viola with Bernadette Verhagen at the Academy of Early Music Summer School in Brunico, Italy and frequently performs with the Melbourne Baroque Orchestra as principal viola. Dovi is also a sought after string educator, teaching primary and secondary students across various schools in Melbourne in addition to a private studio practice. As a chamber musician, Dovi was a founding member of the Nightingale Trio and the HIP string quartet 'Unwound'.

Julia Hastings - Piano Adjudicator (*junior sections*)



Julia Hastings is a Melbourne-based pianist who defies stereotypes by being equally at home on stage as an actor. Julia's extensive piano studies, culminating with the Professional Performance Program at the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), have equipped the synthesis of her multi-disciplinary talents in pushing the boundaries of classical music performance and enabling her goal of guiding audiences through a narrative,

musical world where stories matter. Her first work, *Fame, Fortune & Lies: The Life and Music of Eileen Joyce*, combining live music performance and drama has been performed to critical acclaim nationally. Julia's passion for telling a story has now led to her current research interest in the ability of live classical music performance to develop character and narrative in contemporary music theatre.

Known for expressive pianism and virtuosity, Julia is in demand as a soloist, chamber musician, collaborative artist and educator. Julia's solo performances have been praised as "breathtaking," "delicious," and "simply wonderful" by reviewers, while her collaborative work has been recognised for its empathy, intelligence and synchronistic partnering. Collaborative partners have included pianists, Lisa Moore, Kathryn Stott and Penelope Thwaites as well as singers, Sara Macliver and Christopher Watson. Orchestral stints have seen Julia performing with the UK-based Aurora Orchestra as well as under the baton of Australian conductors, such as Brett Dean and Simone Young.

As a musician of the 21st century, Julia combines her performance work with that of music educator in which she tutors in tertiary music subjects at Trinity College, University of Melbourne as well as teaching piano privately and eisteddfod adjudicating. She is also a staff pianist at the Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, University of Melbourne. Through her work as an educator, Julia inspires her students to embrace and energetically explore the narrative qualities of music which have informed her own musical practice.

Kristian Chong - Piano Adjudicator (*senior sections*)



One of Australia's leading pianists, Kristian Chong has performed throughout Australia and the UK, and in China, France, New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, USA, and Zimbabwe. His wide-ranging performance schedule finds him equally at home as concerto soloist, chamber musician and recitalist.

As concerto soloist he has appeared with the Adelaide, Melbourne, Queensland, Sydney and Tasmanian Symphony

Orchestras, and orchestras in the UK, New Zealand and China with conductors such as Werner Andreas Albert, Andrey Boreyko, Nicholas Braithwaite, Jessica Cottis, Fabian Russell, Roy Goodman, Sebastian Lang-Lessing, Nicholas Milton, Benjamin Northey, Tuomas Hannikainen, Marcus Stenz, Arvo Volmer and Marco Zuccarini. Highlights have included Rachmaninoff 3rd with the Sydney Symphony, Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini in Beijing and Canberra, and Britten with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. More recent concerto highlights include Shostakovich 2nd, Chopin 2nd, Rachmaninoff 3rd, Beethoven's Emperor in Melbourne, Ravel's Left Hand concerto in Melbourne (Australian Youth Orchestra) and Dunedin (Dunedin Symphony Orchestra) and Saint-Saëns 2nd and Rachmaninoff with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Described by *The Age* as 'a true chamber musician at work', Kristian is highly sought after with extensive collaborations with ensembles such as the Tinalley and Australian String Quartets, violinists Sophie Rowell, Natsuko Yoshimoto, cellist Li-Wei Qin, flautist Megan Sterling and baritone Teddy Tahu Rhodes, with whom he has recorded with ABC-Classics. His festival appearances include the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Adelaide Festival, Huntington Estate Music Festival, Mimir Chamber Music Festival and the Bangalow Festival.

Other recent solo and chamber highlights include the Xing Hai Festival in Guangzhou, Australian Music Week on Gulangyu Island (Xiamen) with the Melbourne Symphony, the Port Fairy Spring Music Festival, where Kristian performed the complete Rachmaninoff Preludes, piano trios and the Beethoven Triple Concerto with Yoshimoto and Qin, the complete Beethoven Piano & Violin Sonatas as part of the 'Kristian Chong and Friends' series at the Melbourne Recital Centre, which is in its sixth year.

Kristian studied at the Royal Academy of Music (London) with Piers Lane and Christopher Elton, and earlier with Stephen McIntyre at the University of Melbourne where Kristian currently teaches piano and chamber music. His competition successes include the Symphony Australia Young Performers Award (keyboard) and the Australian National Piano Award.

Kirk Skinner - Instrumental Ensembles & Rock Bands and Choral Contest Adjudicator



Kirk is the Director of Music at Newhaven College with experience as a national and international Musical Director on the professional Musical Theatre circuit and an experienced music educator. He studied conducting at Covent Garden and music performance at the Victorian College of Arts and holds multiple graduate and post graduate qualifications in music. He is a woodwind and voice examiner for both the Australian Music Examination Board and the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Board.

Kirk was Musical Director for the Victorian State Schools Performing Arts Unit JOINING the CHORUS from 2003 – 2011. He was Musical Director for the ***Pacific Schools Games Opening Ceremony*** held at Optus Oval in November 2005. He was also the Musical Director and conductor for the closing ceremony at the Sydney Myer Music Bowl.

Kirk has musically directed many award winning productions including ***Mack & Mabel, Candide, Oklahoma, La Cage Aux Folles, On The Twentieth Century, Follies, City of Angels, West Side Story, Barnum***. He has also conducted for the touring productions of ***Cats*** and ***Les Miserables***.

Kirk has received four Music Theatre Guild Awards for Best Musical Director from the Musical Theatre Guild of Victoria. He has received numerous provincial and community awards for his commitment and passion in the pursuance of excellence in musical education and the development of young musicians in Victoria. In 2007 Kirk was awarded a Citation of Excellence by the Victorian Branch of the Australian Band and Orchestra's National Association for his contributions to music performance education in Australia.

With over 40 years of experience in education, Kirk has taught classroom and instrumental music to primary, secondary and tertiary students. He still finds time in a very busy schedule to run workshops and concerts for schools, community bands and orchestras. He is regularly found adjudicating many of the festivals and eisteddfods around the country.

Taylah Bordonaro – Speech & Drama Adjudicator



Born and raised in Gippsland, Victoria, Taylah began acting at an early age, first appearing on stage when she was five years old. Throughout her primary and secondary schooling she competed in Eisteddfods all across Victoria including Latrobe Valley Eisteddfod (Traralgon), City of Sale Eisteddfod, Yarram Eisteddfod, West Gippsland Music & Drama Eisteddfod (Warragul), and Royal South Street Competition (Ballarat). After ten years of travelling around the state competing, countless monologues and hundreds of costume changes later, Taylah found her passion and was determined to continue acting. She was awarded Drama Captain of her graduating year at St Margaret's School, which led her to train at the Federation University Arts Academy in Ballarat. During her time completing her Bachelor of Acting, Taylah performed in such productions as: *Ant + Cleo* (Cleopatra), Australian premiere of *Ebbingtide* (Sarah), *Oh What a Lovely War*, and *Machinal* (Stenographer). Taylah is a dedicated performer who also holds performance qualifications

from Trinity College London. She completed all Speech & Drama grades with Distinctions, as well as receiving a bronze medal in 2004 and silver medal in 2010 for her results. In addition to her Federation University training, Taylah is also a graduate of NIDA's Young Actors Program. Taylah loves performing for children and after graduating from University, completed a twelve-month contract working in the entertainment department at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. Taylah may have left 'The Happiest Place on Earth', but is now back in Australia working in her happy place, the theatre. She appeared last year in Heidelberg Theatre Company's production of *The House of Bernarda Alba*, and most recently in the role of 'Yolanda' in Essendon Theatre Company's production of *A Good Man*. Since moving back to Gippsland, Taylah has also been working and training in the radio industry, making her radio presenter debut at TRFM last year. Taylah will be experiencing this year's West Gippsland Music & Drama Eisteddfod from the Adjudicator's seat for the first time, and is thrilled to be involved and looking forward to sharing all of her knowledge and skills with this year's students, as she regards herself a well seasoned Eisteddfod performer.

Katrina Wellins – Contemporary Popular Vocal Adjudicator



Katrina Wellins is a passionate voice educator with almost 20 years' experience, teaching a wide range of styles including pop/contemporary and music theatre styles. She has worked across tertiary (currently working with Monash University Contemporary Voice degree students and CQCM Bachelor of Music students), secondary (Viewbank College and East

Doncaster Secondary College) and private studio settings.

In 2018 Katrina returned to private studio teaching after 3 years of coordinating the vocal program at Box Hill Institute.

She has extensive experience with VCE Contemporary Voice training and an intimate knowledge of the examination criteria and regularly works as an assessor, eisteddfod adjudicator and presenter for professional development forums including presenting for ANATS. Katrina also prepares students for auditions for universities and professional music theatre.

Tiffany Speight – Classical Vocal Adjudicator



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Tiffany Speight is the “Down to earth Diva”, a Helpmann and Greenroom recipient and a graduate of the Victorian College of the Arts.

Early on in her career, Tiffany was awarded the ABC Young Performers Queen’s Trust Award, Kitty Fisher Gift (Australian Singing Competition) and the 2002 Opera Foundation Australia Vienna State Opera Award, under which she made her European debut at the Vienna Staatsoper.

Tiffany made her Australian debut as Cupid in Semele with the Victorian State Opera and later joined Opera Australia’s Young Artist Program.

Tiffany’s roles include...

Opera Australia: Phyllis (Iolanthe); Cherubino, Susanna, (Le Nozze di Figaro); Johanna in Sweeney Todd; Tebaldo (Don Carlo); Papagena, Pamina (Die Zauberflöte); Micaëla, Frasquita (Carmen); Valencienne, Merry Widow (Green Room award);

Yum Yum (The Mikado); Josephine (HMS Pinafore on DVD); Gretel (Hänsel und Gretel); Despina (Cosi Fan Tutte). **Opera Queensland:** Johanna (Sweeney Todd); Susanna (Le Nozze di Figaro).

OzOpera: Mimi (La bohème); Angelica (Orlando). **Victorian Opera:** Poppea, L’Incoronazione di Poppea (Helpmann Award); Romilda (Xerxes); Cleopatra (Giulio Cesare); Pat Nixon (Nixon in China); Countess (Le Nozze di Figaro); Anne Trulove (Rake’s Progress); Marschallin Der Rosenkavalier excerpts for Richard Gill Gala Concert. **Singapore Lyric Opera:** Valencienne (The Merry Widow). **NBR New Zealand Opera:** Musetta (La bohème); Pamina (Die Zauberflöte); Romilda (Xerxes). **Alexander Productions:** Sister Rose, Dead Man Walking. **Production Company:** Best of British; Gilbert and Sullivan Show.

Concert appearances include performances with all the major Australian Symphonies and Orchestras plus local and international festivals including Armida (Rinaldo) at the Rheingau Music Festival in Germany with the Lautten Compagney; Musica Viva Coffee Concert series in Melbourne (Classic FM broadcasted) and Beethoven’s Symphony no 9 with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZ radio broadcasted).

She created the roles of numerous women in “Who Killed Mario Lanza?”, featured in the documentary “Outback Opera”, appeared on the ABC hit TV show “Spicks and Specks” and hosted Musical Maestro’s on ABC Statewide Drive.

In recent years, she has taken some time out to coach many up and coming singers through Opera Scholars Australia and her own private singing studio. She has also adjudicated on many singing panels including the prestigious Herald Sun Aria.

Her latest appointment is as Vocal Director of Opera Scholars Australia.