

ANU Friends of the School of Music

President's Report to the Annual General Meeting

21 May 2024

Dear Friends

The last 12 months have seen a consolidation of the 'New Normal' since the end of the COVID-19 emergency, for the School of Music and the activities of the Friends. Our activities, in both fund raising concerts and grant giving, are now well back to pre-COVID levels.

We have put on an excellent series of concerts with performances by students of the school. These showed very well judged curation by faculty members, great commitment by the performers, and a standard of playing that Canberra can be proud of.

As in previous years, we were supported by members of the diplomatic community making their premises available for some of the concerts, and bringing members of their community to hear the wonderful music making of the students. We also staged a lovely concert in the house of one of the members of the Friends, and as always, the ANU provided access to its venues.

In 2023, we held concerts at the Croatian Embassy featuring students from the School of Music, in the house of Prof Russell Gruen, Dean of the ANU College of Health and Medicine featuring classical guitar students, in the Big Band Room at the SoM featuring jazz students, in Llewellyn Hall featuring historical instruments, and at the Hungarian Embassy featuring young performers. We also participated in a joint friends event with the Friends of the Drill Hall Gallery, where students of the SoM provided the music and the Drill Hall provided the art.

The concerts raised a good amount of revenue to support our grant giving, and the Friends financial result for the year was excellent, remembering that our financial objective is not to make a profit, but to see the money go around from our members and the wider community to support the education and experiences of School of Music Students beyond the support provided by the ANU.

Our continuing scholarship holders in 2023, James Monro and Koebi Faumui, kept up a high level of academic achievement, and their musical progress has been – to me at least – astonishing in terms of repertoire, technique and sheer joyfulness.

In addition, we were able to give out a large number of grants, meeting all reasonable (ie, within the rules) requests that were supported by their teachers and the Head of School. A detailed list of scholarships, grants and prizes supported by the Friends is appended at the bottom of this report.

The Friends do rely on additional donations over and above what we raise to support our grants and scholarships. If you would like to contribute something to the fund to support the students, it would be much appreciated.

The recent routine review of the School highlighted its strong engagement with the Canberra community, and the Friends can be proud to be an important part of this. The reviewers – from the Sydney and Queensland conservatoriums and Oxford University, no less – noted how impressed they were with the standard of student playing they heard. They also provided a clear sense of direction for the School in teaching (including teaching performance) and research.

Prof Kim Cunio, our dynamic Head of School for the last five years is currently on sabbatical and on his return will move to head up the New Zealand School of Music in Wellington. Prof Adrian Walter, a distinguished previous head of our School is now our Interim Head of School while recruitment gets underway. The clear and strong ongoing support for the School shown by the University, and the excellent prospects held out by the Review, should ensure we get a good field of candidates for this most important post.

2024-25 will be a dynamic year for the School. We are looking forward to supporting this by slightly expanding our concerts, continue to encourage and facilitate gift giving, and slightly expand our grant making.

I would like to finish by offering some thanks. Thankyou to our committee members for their hard work and camaraderie, and in particular to two who are finishing their committee membership today: our longest serving member **Terry Neeman**; and my predecessor as President **Tony Henshaw**. Thank you to the staff of the School for their support and inspiration, in particular to our previous Head of School **Prof Kim Cunio** and to the Deputy Head of School **Dr Scott Davie**. Thank you to **Chris Leslie**, who tunes the piano before each of our concerts, and to **Peter Hislop** who takes and provides photographs at most of our events. Thank you to you, the members of the friends for your financial support and participation in concerts.

And finally, thank you to the students of the School for their performances and for being the point of it all. It is their commitment to becoming the next generation of music makers and scholars of music that the Friends aim to support, for the joy of all.



Paul Dugdale

Scholarships, Awards, Prizes and Grants supported by the Friends of the School of Music in 2023

(Prepared by Rosemary Greaves)

Friends Performance Scholarship

During 2014, the Friends received government approval to establish a public fund (Friends of the School of Music – ANU Inc Public Fund) with tax-deductibility status. The Friends Committee decided to use the fund to establish an annual scholarship to support a newly enrolling student for up to four years in an approved performance studies course at the ANU School of Music. The scholarship is for \$5,000 per year with continuing support dependent on the student achieving progress acceptable to the Head of School and continuing in a performance major.

The fund is overseen by a committee consisting of the Friends Treasurer, Secretary and three independent people – **Mr Lachlan McOmish, Mr Terry Dwyer and Mr John Doherty**. We appreciate their continuing help with the fund.

The Friends Committee decided to offer a **Friends Performance Scholarship** in 2023 to **Emily Thornton**, a first year student studying classical flute. She secured the scholarship on the recommendation of the Head of School based on her audition performance for admission. She will receive \$5000 each year for up to 4 years subject to achieving outstanding results in music performance each year.

The Friends Performance Scholarship continues to support the most promising students at the School. Both **James Monro** and **Koebi Faumui** achieved high level results in their music performance assessments in 2022, enabling their Performance Scholarships to continue in 2023.

Awards, Prizes and Other Activities funded by income from the ANU Endowment for Excellence

The **Bernhard Neumann prize** of \$2000 for an outstanding 4th year student in 2022 was jointly awarded to **Matthew Barnes** and **Caitlin Manning**. This prize is awarded (in early 2023) to a graduating student who has performed well academically but also contributed to the life of the School in other ways.

The **2023 Transition Award** was awarded to **Caitlin Manning** to pursue her interest in becoming a high level piano technician (piano tuner). The **Transition Award** (\$5000) assists School of Music graduates to transition between formal study and a professional career in music. The award is available each year to an ANU student who has completed, within the last two calendar years as at the closing date for applications, the requirements for the award of a Bachelor with Honours, Master or Doctoral degree in the School of Music.

The **Christel Larko Award** for 2023 was shared between **Ying Cheung (Jojo) Yuen** (piano) and **Emily Horton-Hume** (jazz voice). The annual **Christel Larko** music scholarship, funded from a bequest to the Friends, which is invested in a university endowment, provides up to \$10,000 for outstanding SOM students, at any stage of their studies, in classical or jazz voice or keyboard performance

The **Fankhauser Bequest** is from a former ANU staff member, **Barry Fankhauser**. We have invested it and use the interest and some of the principal to fund a \$5000.00 **Fankhauser Travelling Fellowship** introduced in 2015. We did not award a fellowship in 2023 because the student in line to receive one decided not to continue with his studies at the SOM.

The annual **Friends of the School of Music Ensemble Competition** went ahead in May 2023, the School hosting the competition. This competition offers \$1000 prizes for the best Chamber Ensemble and the best Jazz and Contemporary Ensemble. In addition, there are Peoples' Choice prizes in both categories of \$500. The Peoples' Choice prize for Chamber ensembles is supported by the **Canberra Chamber Music Players**. Our thanks go to them for this generous support.

The **Classical Ensemble Winner** was The Faure Quartet (Anika Chan violin, Brad Tham viola, James Monro 'cello, Rhys Butterworth piano). The **Classical Ensemble Audience Prize** was

shared between The Faure Quartet and Amanda & Michael (Amanda Tao flute, Michael Anthrak piano).

The **Jazz Ensemble Winner** was Tiny Jazz Collective (Mereki Keten saxophone, Olivia Uebergang guitar, Michael Larsen-Collins bass, Daniel Simmons drums). The **Jazz Ensemble Audience Prize** went to Chef (George Butler saxophone, Cian Boesen guitar, Harrison Whalan bass, Ruben Hinton keys, Felix Huber keys, Elisha Adisa drums).

Grants to students funded from the Friends' account (derived from membership fees, concert income and donations)

During 2023, we awarded a number of general grants to students for a wider range of musical activities. We consider proposals from students who have been selected to perform in national and international competitions and concerts, fund recording projects and receive additional tuition and master-classes from leading domestic and international teachers. These grants are intended to help defray some of the considerable costs students face in participating in such developmental activities.

In making these decisions the Committee took into account whether students had previously received Friends' grants, whether they had contributed to our fund-raising concerts; whether they were undergraduates or postgraduates (with therefore other sources of income) and the proportion of the costs they were seeking.

Gabriel Fromyhr (cello student) received funding to participate in the Australian Romantic and Classical Orchestra Young Mannheim Symphonists National Academy in Brisbane from 11-16 April. **Benjamin Van der Niet**, undertaking honours in classical guitar, received funding for additional classical guitar tuition. This was somewhat unusual because we normally do not provide funding for activities we would expect the SOM to cover. The funding was provided in recognition of the unique difficulties Benjamin faces as he attempts a double degree with honours in both degrees and in appreciation of the benefits he would gain from additional external expert tuition.

Nicholas Moynihan (PhD student) was offered funding to enable him to hire cinema space at the National Film and Sound Archive in order to present publicly his acoustic composition named 'Silence' in July. **Lilian Fromyhr** (jazz voice student) also received funding for classical voice coaching to support her performance in October/November in a new indigenous opera with the Victorian Opera.

The Committee also provided grants to **Amanda Tao** and **Dante Costa** to enable them to participate in the 2023 Australian Flute Festival I Sydney in September/October. **Vaishnavi Muddam** (BPhil Hons) flute performance major received a grant to enable her to perform Southern Indian Classical Music on the Veena (an Indian stringed instrument) at the Kalakruthi Annual school concert in Melbourne in July. **Rafe Yang** (B.Mus composition) received funding to enable him to travel and be mentored in composition and sound design on the play 'How Do I Let You Die' by a Hmong-Australian playwright in Melbourne in November.