

## Dorothy Watts

Last Updated Saturday, 23 May 2009

The Dorothy Watts award was run in 2003 and 2005 and is no longer available. The Edna Warren Memorial Award replaced this award in 2007.

"When Mr. Woodhouse first started me on Chopin waltzes, in explaining the difference between a Valse de Danse (Strauss) and a Valse de Salon (Chopin), he danced me round the room on one occasion, only to be interrupted by the Senior Music Mistress who chanced to enter, and who obviously was quite horrified. After that, whether deliberately or not, a member of staff sat in on his lessons. George Woodhouse was a great inspiration in my musical life."

The author of this paragraph, Dorothy Watts (1918-2002), was a great inspiration in my musical life. She was my first piano teacher and lifelong mentor. On her own admission she "simply adored Chopin's music" and was a very fine exponent of it. This competition is my memorial to the lady whose determination and dedication enabled me to embark on my own life of music.

I hope that the experience of taking part in this competition will be an enriching one for all the performers and that the prizes will help them to further their studies.

Christine Morhall (Past President, RSMC)

### 2003 Dorothy Watts Chopin Competition

The Dorothy Watts Chopin Piano Competition is the brainchild of Immediate Past President of the RSMC Christine Marshall who inaugurated the contest to "celebrate and commemorate the positive and beneficial influence" of her first piano teacher Dorothy Watts who died last year full of years and achievements in a life devoted to music. What a splendid memorial this initiative is. I dare say that had the shade of the late Ms Watts hovered over the proceedings, it would doubtless have nodded approval at the abilities of the six young pianists who competed for a number of useful prizes.

Allycia MacDonald (under 16) won a first prize of \$150 for her account of two Etudes from opus 25 - Nos 1 and 12 - as well as the Waltz in A flat, opus 42. Maria Welna took top honours in the under 21 category, winning \$250 for her performance of the Fantaisie-Impromptu, the Ballade in A flat and the Etude in C sharp minor from opus 25.

An album of Purcell keyboard pieces with CD, donated by ABRSM Publishing, was the second prize in the under 16 category and won by Jennifer Banks, playing the Polonaise in C minor from opus 40 and the Etude opus 10 no 12. Cindy Kalai, who presented the first movement of the Funeral March Sonata and the Heroic Polonaise, took out 2nd prize in the under 21 category - Bach's The Art of Fugue with CD, also donated by ABRSM Publishing. And worthy third prizes went to Patrick Ryan who offered the Raindrop Prelude in the under 16 category - and Eric law (under 21) who essayed the first two movements of the Funeral March Sonata as well as the Nocturne in E minor from opus 72.

I dare say that, for future Chopin Piano Competitions, there will be some fine tuning of regulations governing the contest

in relation to both duration of selections and their level of difficulty.

While waiting for adjudicator Roger Smalley's decision, we heard Geoffrey Bourgalt (who is to re-locate to Adelaide as associate principal clarinet in the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra) in a stylish account of Stravinsky's Three Pieces for unaccompanied clarinet and, with Anna Sleptsova in splendid form at the piano, in Milhaud's Duo Concertante. This was unfailingly stylish, finely considered ensemble playing.

In the absence of Emeritus Professor David Tunley, RSMC patrons John Winstanley and Margaret Winstanley jointly performed the onerous task of cutting the Club's 77th birthday cake but not before John Winstanley, in customary rhythmically emphatic form, led from the keyboard in the national anthems of Britain and Australia.

Neville Cohn