

LIBRETTO

CT ABRSM
Hong Kong launch

Theory
a new look

These Music Exams
revised edition

Starter's Orders!
for Piano Prep Test

***Jubilee Celebrations
in Sri Lanka &
New Zealand***

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Introduction

Compared with the working lives of teachers of other subjects, instrumental teachers often work in relative isolation. Perhaps for this reason any gathering of instrumental teachers is likely to be a lively occasion, with a rapid exchange of ideas. This was most certainly the case when nearly 200 instrumental teachers converged on the Royal College of Music on 22 July for the UK CT ABRSM 1998 Award Ceremony. It was also the case when I had the privilege of meeting the first group of Singaporean piano teachers in March at the very start of the first year of their CT ABRSM course. It was striking to observe just how similar are the needs of instrumental teachers in different countries for sharing ideas and for participating in professional development activity.

The Associated Board will continue to provide many opportunities for instrumental teachers to meet, both within the CT ABRSM course and more generally at seminars in many parts of the world. In this issue of *Libretto* you will find several examples of this, including the plans for Clara Taylor to conduct the Educational Support Programme in Malaysia and Singapore this autumn and for Jean Harvey and Anthony Williams to address teachers in Spain. Earlier this year David and Shirley Gwilt, the Board's Regional Consultants in Hong Kong, conducted over 20 consultation sessions with a wide spectrum of teachers there.

On a more regular basis, the Board will continue where practicable to provide seminars in international centres at the end of examining tours, whilst across the UK we already have registrations of over 1200 teachers for the 14 autumn seminars featuring Piano and Jazz Piano. I am sure that all this activity in bringing teachers together makes a major contribution to the nourishment of the whole instrumental teaching and learning process.

Richard Morris

Richard Morris
Chief Executive

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Cause for Celebration: 100 Years in Sri Lanka and New Zealand

As we go to press, Richard Morris, Chief Executive, Clara Taylor, Chief Examiner, and Giles Morris, Marketing Manager, ABRSM (Publishing) Ltd, are en route to Sri Lanka and New Zealand for the start of our centenary celebrations.

Teachers in Sri Lanka will enjoy a range of events in celebration of our centenary year. These include a Jubilee Concert with performances by Associated Board Scholars and High Scorers, a music pedagogy course for teachers and students, an award ceremony and concert, a seminar presented by examiner Marc Rochester and a series of public talks and videos. Olga de Livera, pictured below, who has represented the Board in Sri Lanka for 25 years, writes:

"Since 1898 the Board's examinations have not only helped to promote the musical talent of Sri Lanka, but have also encouraged interaction and communication among the communities in a lasting and special way."

Dignitaries including the Hon. Minister of Cultural Affairs and His Excellency the British High Commissioner are scheduled to attend these events. A souvenir Jubilee programme will be presented to all participants, containing a special message from H.M. Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother, President of the Associated Board.

Teachers and pupils in New Zealand are also preparing for a series of events beginning on 5 September with a workshop in

Auckland presented by Richard Morris and Clara Taylor. A Centenary Concert will also take place in Auckland with solo performances by High Scorers, Associated Board Scholars and some of New Zealand's well-known musicians. In recognition of the Board's partnership with musicians in New Zealand, the concert will feature the alternative list of piano exam pieces composed by musicians of New Zealand and will open with a Maori Powhiri ceremony presented by the Ngati Whatua o Orakei.

During their visit, Richard, Clara and Giles will take the opportunity to meet many of the teachers who make the Associated Board the most popular and successful



Olga de Livera pictured with her husband

music exam service in New Zealand. Among them will be Alan Clark, pictured bottom left, who has been teaching and entering pupils for our exams since 1929.

The Board has a local office in New Zealand, run by David Goodyear, Examinations Administrator, and supported by a panel of HLRs and examiners. In addition to regular copies of *Libretto*, teachers receive a local newsletter and information is published on the New Zealand website (www.abrsm.org.nz).

For further details of our centenary events, please contact:
Sri Lanka –
Olga de Livera 94 1 588139
New Zealand –
David Goodyear 0800 687 3926 ■



MTNA: 1998

Earlier this year Clara Taylor and Rita Rattray visited the USA. Rita joined a gathering of Representatives from the east in New Jersey, to meet our Representatives in New York and Florida and to welcome a new Representative, Deborah Cardenas, from Hartsdale, New York to the growing team.

Clara joined Rita at the Convention of the Music Teachers National Association at Nashville, Tennessee where the Board exhibited side by side with Theodore Presser. 2,000 delegates attended and the 'internationality'

of our exams was well represented with teachers and students from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia and Singapore visiting the stand.

Clara's purpose for a brief but memorable visit was to talk to the large gathering of teachers, answer their questions and to share the experience of a 'live' exam, bravely undertaken by Julie Mei, a student of Margaret Liu, our Representative in Georgia who also gave tremendous support throughout the convention.

A selection of the most popular queries raised by teachers at MTNA is reproduced on page 10. ■



Alan Clark



Rita Rattray and Clara Taylor

Richard Morris to chair Music Education Council

Richard Morris, Chief Executive of the Associated Board, has been appointed as the new Chair of the Music Education Council for a three-year term.

MEC's 160-strong membership includes the key organisations in music education ranging across conservatoires, colleges, universities, instrumental music services, music associations and the music industry.

MEC has also announced that **Larry Westland**, Director of Music for Youth, **Richard Hickman**, Chief Executive of the Federation of Music Services, **Joan Child**, Head of Kingston Music and Arts Trust, **Stephen**

Richards of the Music Industries Association and **Keith Horsfall** of the National Association of Youth Orchestras have been elected to MEC's Executive Committee. The MEC Committee already includes representatives from the Musicians Union, The National Association of Music Educators, The British Federation of Festivals, The National Music Council and The Committee of Principals of Conservatoires.

MEC aims to bring together and provide a forum for all organisations concerned with music education and training in the UK. Roger Durston, who stood down as MEC Chair in July but remains on its Executive Committee, said:

"I am delighted that collective action between music education organisations, the industry, and the performing profession has brought into focus the critical issues facing us today. I wish Richard every success in leading MEC into the 21st Century."

Richard Morris, who has been a member of the MEC Executive Committee since 1995, spoke of his vision for MEC over the next three years:

"I am very honoured to have been appointed to succeed Roger Durston as Chair of MEC just at the time when, thanks to his efforts and to the efforts of many MEC member organisations, the Government is publicly acknowledging that music is a special case within education, deserving and requiring unique structures and funding at national level."

Membership of MEC is open to any organisation or institution involved or associated with music education and training. Benefits include:

- The opportunity to keep abreast of and debate developments in music education with

colleagues from all sectors of the profession at national level

- Representation on the full Council and the right to stand/make nominations for the Executive Committee and Task Groups

- Free copies of bi-monthly newsletters and other MEC reports

- The opportunity to play an active role in Council policy and decision making.

For MEC membership details, please contact Anna Hassan, MEC Administrator:

telephone 0161-928 3085, email ahassan@easynet.co.uk ■



Richard Morris

Music for Youth – Larger Than Life!

Europe's largest youth music festival saw more than 16,000 young musicians perform at festivals in Birmingham, London and Manchester in June and July.

Every year Music for Youth enables over 50,000 young musicians to perform in prestigious venues around the UK in non-competitive festivals. These regional events are supported by the Associated Board and UNISON and enable young musicians to enjoy the art of making music and performing to an audience.

In 1999 we will extend our collaboration with MFY with a one-day Jazz extravaganza for teachers and pupils. Full details are on the new MFY entry forms, available at the end of September 1998.

This year the MFY team has organised a record-breaking attempt to create the world's largest orchestra, under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle. This world record extravaganza takes place on 23 November 1998 at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham.

1999 is the 25th Anniversary of the Schools Prom and MFY would love to hear from people who played in the National Festival and Schools Prom between 1971 and 1998.

Contacts: 25th Anniversary Reunion – Pippa Cleeve/Lucy Riley; World's Largest Orchestra – Richard Butler.

Telephone 0181-870 9624
email: mfy@globalnet.co.uk ■

1998 UK CT ABRSM success

The 1998 award ceremony for successful UK CT ABRSM students was held at the Royal College of Music on 22 July. The Guest Speaker was the Rt. Hon. Robert Maclennan MP, President of the Liberal Democrat Party.

Of the 209 students who successfully completed the course 177 were present to receive their certificates from Sir Peter Marychurch, Chair of the Board's Governing Body.

Addressing the audience Mr Maclennan said:

"The Associated Board has taken a positive and creative line by establishing the CT ABRSM course which has clearly been a runaway success attracting more students than ever."

As we go to press 200 applications for the 1998 – 99 course in the UK have already been received. Teachers considering enrolling for the UK course this year are reminded that the last date for applications is 14 September ■



Performers at Music for Youth.



The 1998 UK CT ABRSM award ceremony line-up.

News from Spain

Exam entries continue to boom in Spain and this summer the Board ran 3 days of workshops for music teachers at the Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo (UIMP) in Santander. The UIMP runs three months of courses each summer in the beautiful Palace of La Magdalena in Santander with over 5,000 students attending lectures and practical classes.

Jean Harvey, International Music Consultant and examiner Anthony Williams presented the workshops on behalf of the Board. Sessions included: developing musical skills in young performers, piano accompaniment, interactive skills in chamber music and overcoming stage-fright.

ABRSM (Publishing) Ltd

Giles Morris, Marketing Manager, ABRSM (Publishing) Ltd together with Timothy Jones, the Board's Representative for Madrid and Neil Manders, from Oxford University Press recently visited the two main music retailers in Madrid; Real Musical and Hazen. An agreement has been secured that will ensure the availability and display of ABRSM publications at both music shops.

Hazen

Arrieta 8, 28013 Madrid
tel: 91 5594554
Contact: Jose Miguel Salamanca

Real Musical

Venta al Menor s.a., Carlos III 1
28013 Madrid
tel: 91 5413007, fax: 91 5427991
Contact: Encarna Jimenez, or Sixto Puebla ■

CT ABRSM launched in Hong Kong

Richard Crozier visited Hong Kong in June to confirm the appointment of Professor David Gwilt, the Board's Hong Kong Consultant, as Course Leader for the CT ABRSM course in Hong Kong. David Gwilt said:

"During Richard's visit to Hong Kong much enthusiasm was shown by teachers, and since then they have talked constantly about their interest in this course. Often teachers do not have time to study away from home so this type of 'on-the-job' course is ideal for them".

The CT ABRSM course for piano teachers in Hong Kong will begin in April 1999 and will initially be staffed with UK mentors.

Prospectuses will be available in October 1998 from CC Choi, HKEA, 17 Tseuk Luk Street, San Po Kong, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

Also in June this year David and Shirley Gwilt ran a series of group Consultation Sessions dealing with preparation of Branches C and D of the LRSM, the Advanced Certificate and all Piano grades. As well as this series of sessions, programmes about the Board's graded exams were broadcast over RTHK.

The 1999 consultation sessions will include repertoire expansion, modern repertoire, aural training and support materials.

Details will be included in the January 1999 *Libretto*.

CT ABRSM Singapore

The CT ABRSM course in Singapore began in April 1998 with the arrival of 42 Singaporean piano teachers in the UK for the initial week. This week was characterised by the immense energy, enthusiasm and vitality of our colleagues from the Far East. UK Course Leader, David Barnard, commented:

"This has been an amazing week (and an exhausting one!). I have thoroughly enjoyed working with the students, and have been very impressed with the quality of their work. The mentor team has been excellent and an inspiration to us all. I feel privileged to have been part of the launch of the Singapore course."

Richard Crozier, Course Director, greeted the Singaporeans as they arrived.

"I expected them to want to head straight for their beds, but they were desperate to find out how to get into London to do some sight-seeing before the course began! In June I was able to get a further update from John Howard, our Course Leader in Singapore, and I am delighted to say that their enthusiasm is undiminished."

Prospectuses for the 1999-2000 course will be available in October from Su San Hay at the Board's exam office in Singapore ■

Singapore CT ABRSM students and mentors



David and Shirley Gwilt pictured with teachers and students.

'A Common Approach'

The Federation of Music Services (FMS) has launched a new framework document entitled 'A Common Approach'. The framework is intended to offer a progressive curriculum for instrumental and vocal teachers, complementing and reflecting the National Curriculum's music provision.

It was developed over two years by members of a steering group

in consultation with heads of music services and individual teachers.

'A Common Approach' is priced £3 and distributed by Faber Music Ltd; telephone 0171-833 7931; email; sales@faber music.co.uk ■



ESP Jubilee Special

As part of our 50 Year Jubilee celebrations, Clara Taylor will this year present a special ESP series for teachers and candidates in Singapore and Malaysia. Clara's workshop tour starts on Sunday 1 November and takes her to Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Penang and Johor Bahru.

The Malaysia workshops are presented in collaboration with the British Council. 1998 is also the British Council's 50 year Jubilee, and they have joined together with the British High Commission,

the British Malaysian Industry and Trade Association and the British Tourist Authority to launch a programme of cultural, educational and trade events

We wish to thank Ted Edmundson, Director of the British Council, Malaysia, for his generous support. *"The 'Britain in Malaysia' initiative is a reaffirmation of the long and close relationship between our two countries,"* he writes, *"I am delighted that the Board's activities fit so well within this framework."*

Examinations



Making more approachable

Philip Munday reports on changes which will help teachers and candidates

Plainer English – can the Board do more?

The Associated Board is based in London, but its services are accessed all over the United Kingdom and in more than 80 countries world-wide. At Bedford Square we are constantly on the lookout for ways of improving and extending these services. I am pleased to be able to announce two developments, one of which will help practical exam candidates, the other for those taking theory exams.

First, the Board's criteria for assessing the performance of pieces are to be presented in a more concise way. The published criteria are intended to explain the elements which contribute to the awarding of particular marks. They form the basis of all examiner training and teachers find them invaluable in preparing pupils for examinations. When Clara Taylor took up the post of Chief Examiner, she found that there was some uncertainty amongst teachers as to exactly how these criteria were applied. This led her to recommend an even more approachable statement of the basis of assessment for pieces, including for the first time some indication as to common causes of failure. This will be available in the new edition of *These Music Exams* to be published soon, and obtained, free of charge, from music retailers. Examiner expectations remain identical, but the new Basis of Assessment statements provide even greater clarity as to what they are looking for.

A new look for theory

Secondly, we wanted to make Theory exams more straightforward. Candidates with large hand-writing sometimes cannot find enough space on the paper to write their answers. Also, very young candidates sometimes find it difficult to understand precisely what they are being asked to do. Some questions have previously required candidates to do several things at once and marks have been lost because some of them have been overlooked. The papers at Grades 6, 7 and 8 are intended to pose tougher challenges, and the gap between Grades 5 and 6 is designed to be a significant one. However, greater clarity and some shorter questions would make the advanced papers more accessible.

As from 1999, the language used in the questions will be clearer, less formal and more user-friendly. The layout of the theory papers will be improved too, with four pages being used at Grades 1 to 3, and eight pages at Grades 4 and 5, allowing much more space to be given to answers. Bold reminders that the page must be turned will be printed where appropriate. Candidates should not be alarmed by the fact that the papers have more pages – this has been done to make them more welcoming. There are no extra questions!

Another difference is that questions will involve less multi-tasking –

candidates won't have to do so many things simultaneously, particularly in the scale questions in Grades 4 and 5. In future these will not involve the use of C clefs, for example, although candidates will still be required to use these clefs in other contexts such as writing a note or notes in a C clef so that they sound the same as given treble or bass clef notes.

Changes to the three highest grades may be less obvious, but are present nevertheless. In fact they have been evolving over the course of recent papers, in particular asking candidates to complete sentences rather than tackle essay-type descriptive questions. We realise that time is of the essence at these higher grades, and have decided to ask less of candidates in terms of sheer quantity, while of course insisting on the same level of knowledge of the syllabus and its concepts. We have done this in several ways, for example by restricting the number of bars which have to be searched for a particular chord, requiring shorter pieces of melodic composition, giving specific guidance as to where chords have to be supplied and limiting the number of keys in which figured bass is presented. In some papers we will be able to use a single musical text for both questions 4 and 5, again cutting down on the amount of research required.

We feel that any candidate coming across these changes unprepared would be very pleasantly surprised,

but we intend to give the maximum possible help by providing a booklet containing a new Specimen Paper for each of the three higher grades which will provide excellent preparation material. As an additional aid, the marks available for each section of questions 4 and 5 will be shown, as indeed they will be in all upper grade papers from 1999. The specimens are available from your music shop, and the past papers for 1998 will be available in January 1999.

New support publications

I am pleased to give you advance notice of a set of new theory publications. The first is a book on harmony, which teachers will find invaluable in bridging the gap between Grades 5 and 6; *Harmony in Practice*, by Anna Butterworth. This will provide a wealth of information and insight which will be useful far beyond the confines of theory exams. It is due to be published in February 1999, and at the same time the first of three new theory workbooks will be available, covering Grade 6. The new workbooks have been designed to complement the existing series of *Theory in Practice*, and provide 'no nonsense' advice and guidance in the context of the new-look higher grade papers. As with the Specimen Papers, the marks available for the context questions will be shown, and addi-

tionally specimen answers will be given for all the question 4 and 5 texts. The workbooks for Grades 7 and 8 will be available in mid-1999.

So, from 1999 – no changes to the Theory syllabus, but more accessible ways of exploring it. Look out for:

- Better layout
- Clearer language
- Less multi-tasking
- Some shorter questions
- More part-worked questions
- Excellent new support materials

These Music Exams by Clara Taylor

The format of the new edition takes teachers, candidates and parents through the Big Day. There is guidance from choosing the pieces, right through to the arrival of the mark form and certificate. It also tackles how to cope with failure when efforts have not quite hit the target. There are practical hints for every step on the way and also an understanding of the parents' natural wish to support their children without compromising the teacher's responsibility.

The Basis of Assessment is presented in full, showing how examiners approach the delicate task of balancing strengths and weaknesses in the performances they assess and how this is reflected in the marks.

Examiners will be pleased to know

that their point of view is also discussed, as understanding of the selection, training and monitoring of examiners, plus a glimpse of what life is really like behind that formidable desk, will be valuable for those about to embark on a graded exam.

The new edition of *These Music Exams* will encourage, enlighten and reassure all.

Available soon from all good music retailers

New Prep Test for Piano

The new Piano Prep Test has now been published, and will replace the current test from 1 January 1999, although Prep Test candidates may use the current test in the first session of 1999 if they wish.

The new test has the same balance of elements as the old: three 'tunes' to encourage good technical development, two pieces and some new 'listening games' which have been specifically designed to give a sound foundation for moving on to Grade 1 Aural Tests.

The pieces have been specially commissioned, and there is now much more choice and flexibility about what is played. The new booklet is colourful and welcoming, there is advice on what the examiner will be looking for, and there are entertaining illustrations and a 'fun page'.

Grade 4 Sight-Reading Tests: Piano and Bowed Strings

It is planned to make a small change to the Grade 4 Sight-Reading parameters for Piano and Bowed String exams allowing for the possibility of a test in $\frac{6}{8}$ time, as set for most other subjects. Although some examples of tests in $\frac{6}{8}$ will be included in the revised editions of the Grade 4 Specimen Sight-Reading Tests for Piano (now available) and for Violin, Viola, Cello and Double Bass (to be published later this year), Grade 4 candidates in these subjects will not be given a test in $\frac{6}{8}$ time in their exam in 1999.



Starter's Orders!



The Prep Test is an ideal introduction to the world of music exams. In this feature, examiners Caroline Diffley and Graeme Humphrey describe how they will approach the newly launched Prep Test for Piano.

Caroline Diffley is an Associated Board examiner, and a mentor on the CT ABRSM and Mtp courses.

A comparison of the old Preparatory Test piano book with the new Piano Prep Test reveals what an amazing distance has been covered. The new Piano Prep Test is a far more child-centred (and teacher-friendly) publication and really fun for both teaching and learning.

The exercises themselves, and there are three of them (no scale), are no longer C major centred. The first is in D minor, the second in G major, and the third is a little study in 6ths. Some simple dynamic shaping is an integral part of all three, encouraging children to listen all the time.

You and your pupil can choose from a selection of set pieces: either of the two pieces printed in the Piano Prep Test Album by Alan Bullard or any piece from *Roundabout* by Alan Haughton or any piece from *Party Time!* by Michael Rose, all published by the Board. The two pieces given in the new Album are straightforward and nicely contrasted, one lively and one more expressive, both with illustrations. The range of the pieces is from bass second space C to treble fourth line D, a range that fits well within most of the usual piano tutors. The range for the exercises is slightly larger, reaching down to bass bottom line G. Both Bastien's *Primer Level* and Alfred's *Prep Course Level C* use this

compass, as does Lela Hoover Ward's *Jibbidy - F and ACE*.

After the set piece, the own choice piece remains. What pieces are suitable for this? The answer is anything your pupil enjoys playing! A very simple piece like *Dinosaurs' Bedtime March*, from Pauline Hall's *More Tunes for Ten Fingers* is ideal.

If your pupil finds the choice difficult, why not help him or her to compose their own piece? However simple it might be, the achievement of playing an own composition is a winner. For many children, creating a piece of their own gives them a great boost in enjoyment and motivation. Many of

than singing from a given piano sound. Many pupils will echo sing from your voice, as vocal sounds are much easier to imitate. Playing by ear is also such a useful skill that I would suggest developing this alongside the singing; after singing back the short phrase, try to find the notes on the piano. This is developed in the graded aural tests and the Practical Musicianship Syllabus, and encourages children to try to play music that they have heard and liked, but not seen written down.

So why put a young candidate through a Prep Test? Preparation for the test puts most of the basic musical

YOUR PUPIL'S ALL-TIME FAVOURITE PIECE CAN BE PLAYED HERE

the ideas given in the early chapters of *Jazz Piano from Scratch* by Charles Beale (published by the Board), for example the question and answer form, will help even the most reticent pupil get started.

The last part of the Piano Prep Test is the Listening Games. These help to build the basic skills required for a musician as set out in the National Curriculum.

Most children of school age will take these tests in their stride, but some find pitching notes really difficult at first. A good way of beginning is to get the child to sing you a 'comfortable' note, and then for him or her to try to find that note on the keyboard. This is a much easier starting point

building blocks in place, as the four key components of the National Curriculum (Performing, Composing, Listening and Appraising) are all embraced.

What's in it for our young pupils? Firstly it gives a focus to the early months of learning. The test itself, with no pass or fail marks, gives an excellent opportunity for a child to perform on his or her own, to try a strange piano, a different stool and a slightly more formal atmosphere. This is especially useful for shy or anxious pupils, as the test will serve as a real confidence builder.

For the examiner, it is a wonderful chance to talk to the candidate and to discuss with them how they feel they

have done. The certificate simply has headings: Note Accuracy, Rhythm, Tone, Posture, Aural Response and General Impression. I ask the candidate to help me to fill in the certificate, asking them how they feel they performed in each section. I try to write 'excellent' or 'very good' at least once, and my final comment will probably be along the lines of 'I enjoyed hearing you play. You have made a good start. Keep up the good work.'

THE NEW PIANO PREP TEST IS FAR MORE CHILD-CENTRED

On the title page of the Piano Prep Test book, underneath 'This book belongs to...', is a space for the examiner's signature. It will be a real privilege to sign.

Graeme Humphrey is an Associated Board examiner and was the ISM Private Teacher Section Warden 1997/98.

How many of us piano teachers worry about how long a pupil takes to reach their maximum potential before taking their Grade 1 exam? In my own experience few children can absorb the complexities of rhythm/ pitch/tone and produce a good Grade 1 in three or four terms. Much more common is a two or even three year learning period. This is where the Prep Test can be most valuable - it can bridge the gap before the first exam, accustom the child to the exam room atmosphere and reassure the parent (as well as the teacher) that good habits are being formed.

The new Piano Prep Test asks for three areas of expertise - simple exercises (now called Tunes), two pieces and elementary aural (now called Listening Games).

Let's look at them one by one:

1. Tunes

- Test (A) is very simple and chiefly requires control of a long crescendo all within a crotchet progression, hands separately

- Test (B) requires a decrescendo as well as a crescendo, again in crotchets, hands separately. Both (A) and (B) will be best achieved with either a clean finger action or small rotary movement and not with any vertical arm movement

- Test (C) develops 6ths in staccato, hands separately. Any candidate who can properly reach the pedals might like to pedal legato bar 3 to bar 4 with

a downward pedal movement on beat 1 of bar 3 followed by an upward pedal movement on beat 2 of bar 4. Significantly the most challenging aspect of the exercises is the control of expression.

2. Pieces

Most teachers will be aware that as from 1999 there is a greatly increased choice for all AB piano exams. The Prep Test offers perhaps the greatest choice of all. The requirements are, to all intents and purposes, own choice. A guideline level of difficulty is given by the pieces from which the first choice needs to be made. The first choice will require elementary independence of hands, primarily in the 5-finger position. For the second choice, your pupil's all-time favourite piece can be played here, whatever the difficulty. This piece can be from absolutely any primer, repertoire



book, anthology, method or whatever, which is an extremely healthy development. I have often felt that in teaching any pupil, the single most crucial decision I make is the choice of music.

3. Listening Games

There are four elements to the Listening Games;

- Clapping the basic beat of a piece of music
- Rhythm (or echo) clapping in response to the examiner's clapping
- Singing of three notes within a range of major 3rd
- Commenting on whether a short piece played by the examiner is fast or slow and loud or soft.

For me as a teacher, judging the moment when I introduce a child to the examination system is an important skill, for it sets in train a domino effect which is sustained at the rate of usually one exam per year. If this process is begun too early the child will be constantly trying to catch up. Exams should occur at the end of the learning stage, not at the beginning, and it is here that the Prep Test fills the long wait before Grade 1 so admirably and can stall a too early approach to exam taking.

EARLY SUCCESS AND ENCOURAGEMENT IS THE KEY TO ALL

All teachers who commit their pupils to external assessment are exhibiting a confidence in three important areas; that the pupil is capable of sustaining interest in the eyes of an outsider, that we ourselves have taken our pupil's development to a worthwhile level, and that we have confidence in the exam board itself. At its conclusion is always the feeling of Well Done! This is just what every child needs to hear. Early success and encouragement is the key to all. ■

Adult Learners

I am writing to say how pleased I was to read the article in the last copy of *Libretto* regarding older music lovers.

Can the Board do more to encourage adult beginners? Either those starting again or complete beginners?

John Walker
Nottingham

Reply: I am not sure that the Associated Board can directly intervene to encourage more adult beginners. What we can do is to provide professional development opportunities for instrumental teachers so that they can enrich their skills in teaching all categories of student.

Within the CT ABRSM Professional Development Course there is substantial discussion about the teaching of adult late starters and the range

of strategies that are most effective for these particular students.

Richard Morris
Chief Executive

Instant Results?

In recent years the Associated Board seems to have made every attempt to make the higher grade exams more transparent.

Why not carry these initiatives a step further? Could the results of exams not be given (if only verbally) to each candidate immediately after taking the exam?

Des Ryan
Dublin

Reply: I can certainly sympathise with those who agonise during the time between the exam and the arrival of the results. We have considered the immediate issue of results but, due to the careful monitoring of all exams which takes place, and the reading of the mark forms before their issue,

it is still not feasible to give an immediate result without the safety net of the checking that follows the exam period.

All good wishes for your playing and I hope that your patience will be rewarded with cause for celebration!

Clara Taylor
Chief Examiner

Jazz

Congratulations on bringing out the Jazz Piano Syllabus. The idea of having graded exams for Jazz Piano with a recognised authority such as the Associated Board is very exciting and one which I have great interest and enthusiasm for. I was wondering when you intend extending the syllabus to Grade 8? Also, when will there be a jazz saxophone or jazz trumpet syllabus?

Rob Gibney
Merseyside

Reply: Thank you for your letter-positive feedback is always welcome.

We are currently considering proposals for extending the Jazz Piano Syllabus to Grades 6-8, and are also looking into possible jazz syllabuses for other instruments. However, as I am sure you will understand, much will depend on how well the current jazz syllabuses are received in 1999, so no firm plans yet.

Philip Munday
Director of Examinations

All letters should be addressed to Clara Taylor, Chief Examiner, Teachers Forum, c/o *Libretto*, at the usual address.

During my travels over the last 6 months (including Hong Kong, Korea, Japan, USA and of course the UK), questions asked by teachers have been remarkably similar.

The most common concern was to do with the Aural Tests, for example;

1. How much does the singing matter?

Not as much as people think. Singing is only a small part of the overall assessment. Whistling or humming are also acceptable.

2. How can I cope with teaching the D test when I can't play the piano?

Many teachers record examples of the D test, either asking a pianist colleague or using examples from CDs.

3. Will the examiner take nerves into account?

Examiners are all trained to create a calm and friendly atmosphere but will always mark the performance presented at the time on its own merit.

Having just written from the examiner's point of view for the new edition of *These Music Exams*, I feel it may be worth a moment's thought about what to expect in the way of general demeanour from an examiner of the Associated Board.

Potential examiners undergo a demanding and intensive induction to examining for the Board which takes place over a weekend, followed by four days one to one training, each with a different moderator, before meeting me on their final day. By this time they should be ready to work as independent examiners. It is a sharp learning curve.

As the candidate comes into the exam room, announced by the steward, the examiner will be keen to create the right professional but friendly atmosphere, while at the same time checking that all

the relevant syllabuses, papers, Aural Tests, Sight-Reading tests etc. are in place. The combination of the examiner's face and voice will make the first impression on the candidate, and candidates who, due to the positioning of the room, play the piano with their back to the examiner will be more conscious of the inflection in an examiner's voice, particularly when they are nervous. It is possible to say "thank you" in many different ways and only a simple acknowledgement after a piece does not mean that the examiner is disappointed with what has been presented, rather that they are writing at great speed!

It is helpful to alert candidates to this situation as well as the likelihood of there being a short pause between pieces before the examiner asks to hear the next item. Sometimes candidates play all three pieces straight through like a continuous medley, presenting the poor examiner with an even greater challenge to the speed with which the pen can cross the page.

Candidates who play or sing facing the examiner are sometimes concerned by what they perceive as a 'serious' expression on the examiner's face. This is

invariably caused by the examiner's concentration in listening, assessing and then writing about what is being played or sung within the space of time. Candidates are likely to be oversensitive to small signs simply because of their nervousness and although examiners will do everything they can to put the candidate at ease, it is not possible to have a permanently smiling face!

The Board's panel of examiners is made up of musicians from all areas of the profession, and an orchestral player may have a slightly different approach from a director of a school music department, but each will have been trained to administer the exams with consistency of procedure and marking, despite natural variations on the personal theme.

Clara Taylor
Chief Examiner.

Clara can be contacted by telephone on 0171-467 8267 (Monday, Wednesday and Friday) or alternatively by e-mail on chiefexaminer@abrs.ac.uk.



UK High Scorers' Concerts

Concerts arranged for this term are as follows:		
Centre	Date	Representative
Norwich	September 13	Carmela Furniss
Swansea	September 13	Helen Hopkins
Sutton Coldfield	October 3	Barbara Howell
Doncaster	October 4	Jean Stewart
Northampton	October 6	Peter Dunkley
Rhyl	October 8	Helen Pilling
Penzance	October 10	Dominic Foster
Stockport	October 10	Patricia Meller
Ashburton	October 24	Sheila Harman
Liverpool	October 30	Dilys Mierzynski
Wolverhampton	November 21	Malcolm Thirlby

Hedy King Robinson Prize for Theory of Music

The Hedy King Robinson prizes were endowed by the late James T Robinson Jr, of Phenix City, Alabama, USA and are named in the memory of his late wife Hedy. They are awarded world wide on an annual basis to candidates who achieve 90 marks or more in Grades 6 to 8 Theory, and also to all candidates in the USA who achieve full marks in Grades 1 to 5 Theory. All successful candidates are contacted direct with news of their achievement.

The prizes acknowledge the achievements of candidates such as cellist Iain Brandram-Adams

from New Zealand (below) who was awarded the prize in 1997 for both Grades 7 and 8 Theory and Chow Hoi Shuen from Hong Kong (below) who was also awarded the prize in 1997 for Grade 8 Theory. Prizes were also awarded to candidates from Indonesia, Malaysia, Malta, Singapore, South Africa and the United Kingdom. A complete list of candidates who received awards in 1997 is published in the 1997 Annual Review which is available free of charge from the Marketing Department, Tel: + 44 171 467 8279.



Centre News

UK

Blackpool

Marilyn Stewart now has a mobile number: 0860 751372

Chandlers Ford

Marion Silvester is the HLR for Chandlers Ford as well as Winchester

Hexham

Anne Wallace has a new telephone number: 01661 844558

Liskeard

Victoria Van der Vliet has a new telephone number: 01503 230808 Her mobile number remains the same: 0378 935085

Republic of Ireland Waterford

Anne Woodworth has an extra digit in her telephone number: (051) 852813



International Representatives

A number of Representatives now have email addresses:

Australia (Canberra)

Peggy Crosskey:
bopac@interact.net.au

Australia (Melbourne)

Joan Earle:
ear_j@taylorsgroup.edu.au

Bermuda

Toni Davis: bdafest@ibl.bm

British Virgin Islands

Charles Wheatley:
cwheatley@mail.hlsc.edu.vg

Cyprus

Cyprus Representative:
bcexams.nicosia@britcoun.org.cy

Japan

Eriko Sugano: sugano@piano.or.jp

Malta

hconrad@units.net

Mauritius

mesexam@intnet.mu

Spain (Barcelona)

Teresa Pont: pontas@lix.intercom.es

Sweden

marianne.ribbing@nacka.se

New HLRs

The following HLRs have been appointed recently:

UK

Bishop Auckland

Barbara Fletcher
Tel: 01388 663761

Bletchley & Milton Keynes

Joyce Shirley
Tel: 01908 224251

Southport

Freda Beaven
Tel: 01704 567693

Stranraer

Joyce Hunter
Tel: 01776 703208

Republic of Ireland

Limerick

John Davis
Tel: 061 321371

Obituary

The Board was saddened to learn of the death in March of David Goldsmith, Representative in Tenerife for ten years until his retirement in 1997. David was an inspiration not only to his pupils but also to fellow teachers, both through his work in promoting the examinations and through the annual *Cursillo*. His warmth and commitment to enhancing

Taiwan

abtaiwan@ms23.hinet.net

USA Texas (Houston)

Paula Manuel:
pmanuel@mc12000.com

Update

Canada (Vancouver)

New Representative:
Richmond Community Music School
11371 No 3 Road
Richmond BC V7A 1X3
Tel/Fax: (604) 272 5227

Enquiries should be addressed to: Mrs Patricia Rolston, Principal, or Penny Cavers and Elaine Sass, Administrative Assistants.

Japan

Eriko Sugano is now dealing with ABRSM exam administration and promotion at PTNA.

Macau

New Tel/Fax: 311071

Netherlands

Elaine van der Plas now has a combined telephone/fax number: 071 517 6335

New Zealand: Free phone no.

0800 MUSEXAM 0800 687 392
www.abrsm.org.nz

Sicily

New Tel No. for Doris Chircop:
09247 44833

South Africa (Western Cape)

Rosemary Wallace's postal code is now '7708'

Thailand

New fax no. for Chorlada Bunnag:
259 9537

USA (Hartsdale, New York State)

New Representative:
Mrs Deborah Cardenas
26 Wilson Street
Hartsdale, NY 10530, USA
Tel: (914) 288 9608
Fax: (914) 288 9673
Email: marsdeb@aol.com

Zambia

Second tel no: 252582

music-making will be much missed by all who knew him.

The Board is sad to report the deaths of two HLRs in post. Stephanie Field who was HLR for Southampton, and John Guillaume who was joint HLR for Bath. His wife, Patricia, will continue as HLR.

The Board would like to extend its sympathy to family and friends.

Clarinet Music

Rhythm & Rag for Clarinet Alan Haughton £4.25

Step into the limelight with this superb collection of jazzy pieces for clarinet and piano! Written with the Grade 2 to 5 clarinetist in mind, these idiomatic pieces perfectly capture the distinctive sound and rhythms of jazz. Enjoy the up-beat swing of 'Jazz It Up', escape with the beautiful melody of 'Bird of Paradise' or just chill out to the groove of 'Keep Cool'. A collection of real show-stoppers, these pieces will be an absolute hit.

Publication: 3 September 1998

Also available by Alan Haughton:
Rhythm & Rag for Piano: £3.50
More Rhythm & Rag for Piano: £3.75
Rhythm & Rag for Trumpet: £4.25

Time Pieces for Clarinet: Music through the Ages

Ian Denley

Volumes 1 - 3 £4.25

Time Pieces is an exciting new series of repertoire which explores the wealth of music written from the sixteenth century to the present day. Presented chronologically within each volume the pieces all include the year in which they were written. *Time Pieces for Clarinet* is a three-volume anthology providing a graded selection of well-crafted and idiomatic arrangements for clarinet and piano, Grades 1 - 5. All have been carefully written to practise the note ranges and keys of the early grades while providing straightforward piano accompaniments. From Byrd to Elgar and from Mozart to Kodaly, *Time Pieces for Clarinet* allows the pupil to get a real feel for the different styles of music through time.

Publication: 3 September 1998

Also available in the *Time Pieces* series:

Time Pieces for Trumpet:

Paul Harris & Ian Wallace

Time Pieces for Cello:

Paul Harris & Catherine Black

Time Pieces for Flute: Ian Denley

In preparation:

Time Pieces for Oboe: Ian Denley



SPECIMEN SIGHT-READING TESTS

Brass instruments

Horn	
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25
Trumpet and Brass Band Instruments, treble clef (excluding Trombone)	
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25
Trombone treble and bass clefs and bass trombone	
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25
Baritone, Euphonium and Tuba, bass clef	
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25

Publication: 3 September 1998

String instruments

Violin	
Grades 1 - 5	£2.50
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25
Viola	
Grades 1 - 5	£2.50
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25
Cello	
Grades 1 - 5	£2.50
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25
Double Bass	
Grades 1 - 5	£2.50
Grades 6 - 8	£3.25

Publication: to be confirmed

The volumes in these series provide much useful practice material for candidates preparing for Associated Board examinations. At each grade a number of tests are provided, each representative of the technical level expected in the examination and exploring different keys, styles and tempi.



PIANO MUSIC

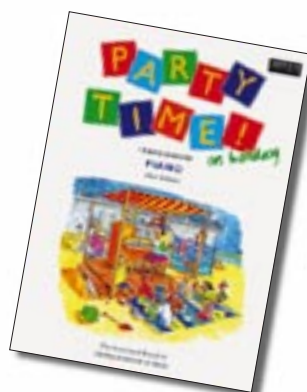
Party Time! on Holiday

15 party pieces for piano
 Alan Bullard £2.95

Get into the holiday mood with these fifteen party tunes! This second collection of piano pieces in the *Party Time!* series is imaginatively themed to illustrate different holiday activities. The pieces are fun to play and conjure up a variety of summer scenes and pictures to fire the young player's imagination. The collection also includes some witty and lively cartoons.

The tunes range from the simplest to Grade 1 standard and many are ideal for the Board's new *Piano Prep Test*. They have also been cleverly written to help students practise basic fingering patterns and simple technical problems. The pieces will help pupils build confidence in their playing and give them plenty of music to enjoy.

Publication: 16 July 1998



A Companion to Beethoven's Pianoforte Sonatas

(revised edition)

Donald Francis Tovey £tbc

Professor Sir Donald Tovey's celebrated 'bar-by-bar analysis of Beethoven's 32 Pianoforte Sonatas' remains a key text for pianists, students, scholars and

music lovers. Intended as a companion to the Associated Board's *Complete Pianoforte Sonatas* edition, the book contains a succinct and illuminating summary of the author's analytical approach before each sonata is dealt with in detail.

This new imprint is prefaced with an introduction by Dr Barry Cooper, Lecturer in the Music Department of Manchester University. Tovey's text is reproduced faithfully; however, Dr Cooper has added footnotes to correct errors or to qualify conclusions drawn by Tovey that the passage of time, since the book was first published in 1931, has suggested might be questionable. With the re-issue of this book, Tovey's famed insight, common-sense and wit will continue to enlighten and entertain the author's devotees, as well as a new generation of performers and students.

Publication: to be confirmed

FLUTE MUSIC

Fifty for Flute

Alan Bullard

Book 1 £2.95

Book 2 £2.95

Fifty for Flute has recently been nominated a winner in the 1998 Newly Published Music Competition organised by the National Flute Association of the USA.



Associated Board publications are available from your local music retailer. If you experience difficulties obtaining titles please contact the publishing company's marketing department:

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