



## ADFAS Narrabri Young Arts 2021 award goes to acclaimed adjudicator Richard Morphew

By LIZ CAMPBELL



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*Narrabri local Judy Watson*

For twenty years, and completely off her own bat, Narrabri resident and music enthusiast Judy Watson has been organising tuition workshops by Richard Morphew, arranging his visit to Narrabri each year to conduct tuition and assessments for the students of Narrabri Shire.

Music teachers and students gain a momentous advantage and a timely insight into performance strategies straight from the wisdom of this seasoned and highly respected music educator, adjudicator, author and performer. And the timing could not be better, with the workshops scheduled each year just a few weeks before Eisteddfod season.

This year, ADFAS Narrabri presented their 2021 Young Arts donation towards Richard Morphew's travel and accommodation costs. Each year, ADFAS awards arts related scholarships and funding to schools, groups or individual students, aiming to encourage emerging young talents in our community.

Richard Morphew studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music with the legendary Alexander Sverjensky for piano and with the equally legendary Elizabeth Todd for singing, and Errol Collins for violin. He taught music at several NSW secondary schools before traveling to the USA and England to further his musical studies. Richard returned to Australia to take up a position as lecturer in music and music education at Alexander Mackie Teachers' College and later at Sydney College of Advanced Education and the University of New South Wales as well as being a part time lecturer at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

For over 40 years Richard has taught singing and piano in studios in Sydney and the Blue Mountains, and has performed in both these disciplines on national radio and television. He conducts piano, vocal, and choral workshops throughout Victoria, Queensland and New South Wales, and is respected internationally in the field of vocal and instrumental training and has presented papers relating to his research at international conferences in England and America. He has been a guest lecturer at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London and the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Richard is a senior examiner of piano and chief examiner for singing with Australian Music Examinations Board (NSW) and is an Honorary Life Member of the Music Teachers' Association of NSW.

Richard was delighted to visit Narrabri for the 2021 Music Workshop from April 30 to May 1, the timing luckily avoiding any COVID lockdowns. "Judy Watson invited me to conduct a music workshop for young students who were preparing items to perform at the coming Narrabri Eisteddfod, and also for AMEB music examinations scheduled for later in the year.

"The workshop was originally scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 1, 2021, but because several enrolled participants had to attend other activities on that day, I provided availability to commence the worship on Friday, April 30 after arriving in Narrabri on a midday flight from Sydney.

"The total number of participants in the workshop was twenty-five, most of whom were pianists, but I was able also to work with a violin student and two singing students who had travelled from Moree to attend the workshop. The Saturday workshop ran from 8am until 5pm. The main aim of the workshop was to provide assistance for the young participants to work on refining their performance of pieces at the eisteddfod, and to attend to issues related to the learning of new works being prepared for AMEB examinations.

"Also, because there is a close relationship between teacher and student in the learning process, teachers were invited to attend and take part in discussions on matters relating to pedagogy. In my long and vast experience of conducting workshops and adjudicating at eisteddfods in many of the more remote regional areas of NSW and other states in Australia, I have found that teachers face the tyranny of distance when it comes to seeking assistance and advice on appropriate repertoire for their students, technical issues, and general knowledge of the examination lists repertoire.

"But above all else, the teachers need encouragement and support as they work valiantly in total isolation to give their young students the best possible opportunities to develop their skills and talents not just as music performers but in building their confidence and general demeanour to become respectable members of society. Judy Watson is to be congratulated for her hard work in organising the recent workshop and for the annual and often twice-yearly workshops in the past at some personal financial cost. It has been my privilege to conduct workshops in Narrabri for the past 20 years, and it is always a humbling experience for me to see the effort and sacrifices those teachers make to give their students the opportunities they deserve to continue in their pursuit of excellence".



Students Patrick Campbell and Amelia Lennox



Adjudicator and tutor Richard Morpew