



VCA Music

KEYBOARD (Repertoire) AUDITION requirements for 2009 entry

Auditions are approximately twenty minutes in duration. Please prepare a recital of between 12-15 minutes including three works in contrasting styles. At least one of these works should have been written within the last one hundred years, and we are especially interested in music created by Australian composers. The audition panel will select from your repertoire, and may hear entire works or parts of works offered.

You are not required to play a “study”, but if you have *Etudes* from the concert repertoire such as those by Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, Brahms, Skryabin, Szymanowksy, Bartók, Stravinsky, Messiaen, Ligeti, etc, you may certainly include one of these in your recital.

The audition will also include a sight-reading test and a brief assessment of your aural and analytical acumen. You will be asked to identify intervals, chords, modes, and to clap a rhythmic exercise. In the concluding interview, please be prepared to speak about the structural elements of each of the works you bring to the audition, in terms of form, harmony, texture, character, aesthetic and philosophical intent of the composer. Information about the background and significance of each of the composers is also welcome. Playing “by heart” is strongly advised, as memorisation of all works presented in recitals throughout the course is obligatory. Minimum standard is Grade 8 AMEB. Grade 5 theory will significantly enhance all other factors.

Please bring with you to your audition the following documents:

- A typewritten *curriculum vitae* listing your accomplishments, all piano teachers, and significant repertoire studied. For each work, please indicate whether memorized, performed in public, and length of time studied.
- A letter of reference from your current or most recent piano teacher.
- A typewritten statement of your dreaming in music, your ambitions, your favourite repertoire, what you expect to gain from your experience at VCA Music, where you imagine yourself in five years and how music will be a part of that imaginary future. We would also like to know what are your other interests outside of music.

Please contact Dr Donna Coleman, Head of Keyboard, donnac@unimelb.edu.au if you have any queries about the audition process or about the course we offer. We look forward to meeting and hearing you.

All general enquiries should be addressed to:
VCA Admissions
Phone: 03 9685 9419
Email: caholmes@unimelb.edu.au



VCA Music

KEYBOARD STUDIES 2009

Dr Donna Coleman, Head of Keyboard

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assisted by

Dr Elyane Laussade, Elizabeth Mitchell, Glenn Riddle, Len Vorster

PRINCIPAL STUDY

Contact Hours: 11 x 50 minutes per week per semester

1 x 120 minutes Principal Study Forum per semester

12 x 120 minutes Keyboard Workshop per semester

Principal Study: Content and Objectives

As an art form music combines and exalts all others. It is a way of painting luminous landscapes with sound, of drawing shapes with melodies, of carving monuments with articulation, of telling stories through juxtapositions of characterised phrases and gestures, it is poetry in nuance and drama in dynamics. Singing and dancing! As a science music yields its secrets through logic and analysis, through precise study and exhaustive research. As a discipline music demands commitment, self-awareness, self-control, athleticism, and the motivation to devote large blocks of time to study and rehearsal. The keyboard discipline is dedicated to helping students acquire all of the tools necessary to achieve complete mastery of the instrument as extensions of their own bodies, to facilitate fully liberated expressiveness, to create beautiful sound tapestries that ultimately communicate the music's inner meaning, and to gain insights into their inner worlds. The pathway to these depths leads to our own hearts.

The Keyboard Workshop is a valuable opportunity for the students to perform for each other in a relatively low-stress environment, receiving critique, advice and guidance from their colleagues and from the Keyboard Practical Studies staff. Visiting Guest Artists occasionally lead the class. The Workshop is also a forum for discussions about all aspects of the course objectives (as described above) and students are expected to maintain a journal into which they make notes about each class and about the research they undertake individually to augment their knowledge base about keyboard literature and other topics that come up in the class. Assessment is based on attendance, attitude and participation, the journals, and at least two performances are required in each semester.

The Principal Study Forums feature a guest from the profession invited to address the class about a particular issue or aspect of the repertory, and they are scheduled to take advantage of the availability of Visiting Guest Artists from overseas or interstate.

SPECIALIST-RELATED STUDIES

Sight Reading and Accompanying (12 X 2 hours per week per semester)

ENSEMBLE

Small Ensemble (15 hours per semester of tutorial)

Large Ensemble (12 hours per semester of tutorial)

Specialist-Related Studies and Ensemble: Content and Objectives

Pianists are fortunate that they command an instrument capable of producing more than one sound at once. They can be an entire orchestra and thus can have fully independent careers as soloists. But making music with other musicians takes the expressive experience to even higher transcendent realms. It is an art in itself, requiring not only all of the previously described skills and understandings about playing the instrument solo but with the added dimension of listening to, responding to and merging with other external elements to create a single voice.

The pianist's journey into this collaborative world can take many kinds of highway. Accompanists can work with choirs, requiring that they be facile in score-reading, alto- and tenor-clef reading, and occasionally with figured-bass realisations, or with individual singers in deep exploration of the poetic, dramatic and expressive delights of art song. They may be called upon to play thorny reductions of orchestral scores to rehearse soloists (or in some cases duos, trios or even small ensembles) for impending concerto performances or oratorios. They may need to improvise an accompaniment to a given melody or to transpose an entire accompaniment to suit a particular vocal range. Accompanists may also be repetiteurs, in which case they must not only be able to manage the often massive reductions of operatic scores, but be able to work closely with singers, familiarising them with the orchestral aspect of the drama, rehearsing specific cues, possibly working with them on diction, pronunciation and dramatic delivery.

Working with a single instrumentalist as a Sonata partner, with another pianist as duo-piano team, with a single singer as Lieder partner, or as a member of a piano trio or quartet (of course small ensembles of five to ten members also exist) carries the notion of Accompanist to another realm, for this is where the pianist is not just preparing others for a performance ultimately with other musicians. In this true partnership the performance is developed from the beginning as a fully shared, collaborative entity in which both parties equally contribute to the ultimate on-stage presentation. The piano literature expands exponentially when including all of the above, demanding further study and research on the part of the pianist.

In the Small Ensemble pianists collaborate with at least two other musicians, receiving fifteen hours per semester of tutorials with a member of staff.

The pianists' Large Ensemble comprises eight ninety-minute workshops devoted to learning to play the myriad instruments of the gamelan and the traditional repertory associated with it, under the direction of Jeremy Dullard.