Exciting electronic possibilities for AMEB teachers

Technology and the internet are changing the way we gather information, and the way in which we communicate with each other.

It is quite astounding to reflect that most of our students have no understanding of the world pre-internet, and for most of the younger students, learning without the aid of a computer is akin to the Dark Ages.

As teachers, we need to recognise and embrace this ever-changing environment to ensure we remain not only relevant to our students, but also be kept up-to-date with the latest happenings at the AMEB at both State and Federal levels. Here are some suggested online resources that teachers may or may not be aware of:

AMEB state website: www.ameb.adelaide.edu.au
The first point of reference for all matters concerning the AMEB in South Australia/Northern Territory. This website contains examination dates, closing dates for entries, State news, teacher events. Entry forms may be downloaded from this website and it is planned that in the not-too-distant-future it will be possible to lodge entries directly online.

AMEB federal website: www.ameb.edu.au
This Federal website contains information regarding specific syllabi, planned reviews and new releases. AMEB publications may also be purchased directly from this website, along with individual syllabus details.

AMEB Facebook page: www.facebook.com/AMEBexams
A great way to keep up to date with AMEB happenings, ask questions about any AMEB topic, and generally feel part of the AMEB community.

AMEB NSW website: www.ameb.nsw.edu.au
This site has some excellent resources for both teachers and students, such as ‘helpful hints from examiners’, and ‘guide to preparing Diploma candidates’.

YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/amebpiano
The AMEB's YouTube Channel features official recordings of AMEB piano works from the classical syllabus. (There are lots of other amateur recordings of AMEB works on YouTube; this can be a useful resource not only for recordings, but also to assist students in discerning positive performance aspects by comparing recordings.)

Much has already been published regarding AMEB Online Theory courses and exams, but further information may be obtained either from the state or federal websites. Regrettably AMEB recordings have been temporarily withdrawn from the iTunes store, but will return shortly.

We really are fortunate to live in an age where comprehensive information is only a mouse-click away. I'd urge all teachers to at least familiarise themselves with basic Internet navigation, which will in turn open up a new confidence of electronic possibilities.

Stuart Storer
AMEB examiner and Advisory Board CPM representative

AMEB Section III

The requirements for Section III are described in detail on pages xii, xiii and xiv of the current AMEB 2013 Manual of Syllabuses. Sections I and II of AMEB practical examinations focus upon the assessment of candidates’ technical and music performance skills. Section III focuses upon the assessment of additional essential music skills and knowledge – Aural Tests, where skills in relation to the musical fundamentals of time, rhythm, melody, pitch, harmony and memory are assessed; Sight Reading, where a candidate’s skill at playing a short piece of unfamiliar music as accurately as possible and without stopping, is assessed; and General Knowledge questions, which test candidates’ knowledge and understanding of the details contained within the musical scores of music presented for examination.

The AMEB provides a range of resources to support teachers and candidates as they prepare Section III. On the back cover of the current Manual of Syllabuses are listed Publications of the AMEB, among which are texts relating to Section III – ie. ‘Aural Tests – An Essential Handbook’, ‘Aural Tests and CDs’, and Sight Reading books for piano, strings, woodwind, classical guitar, singing and brass. Handbooks and CDs are also available, and a wealth of ‘General Knowledge’ information is provided in the handbooks. In addition, information about sight-reading apps, developed by Wessar, is to be found on p.51 of the current Manual of Syllabuses.

There are numerous resources to be found online. Just a sample includes: the AMEB’S Online Music Shop (www.ameb.edu.au); The Australian Music Centre (www.australianmusiccentre.com.au); Oxford Music Online (www.oxfordmusiconline.com); and YouTube, where performances of an enormous range of music, from amateur to professional standard, can be found. A particular favourite of mine is www.midnightmusic.com.au for tutorials on music software.

Section III covers the musical ‘macrocosm’ in which each piece of music exists, and thorough preparation of each component of this Section enhances every aspect of a candidate’s music performance presentation.

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