**The McCormick Opera Award 2019**

**Conditions of entry**

This award is presented through the Perpetual Guardian Foundation and organised and administered by a designated committee of the Auckland Opera Studio. The award comes under the terms of the Patricia McCormick Estate and a first prize of NZD $20,000 (Patricia McCormick Memorial Scholarship) will be awarded to the winner. Second and third prizes will be awarded with a further award recognising exceptional young talent in the eyes of the judges. (The judges reserve the right not to award any particular prize).

The competition is to be held on the 30th and 31st of August and 2nd September. The first and second rounds will be held at the rooms of the Auckland Opera Studio (Level 2, 24 St Benedicts Street, Newton, Auckland) and the third and final round will be an evening public performance at the Mercury Theatre, Auckland.

Each contestant will be required to submit (with an entry fee of NZD $20) a list of six works. Guidelines for the repertoire are attached.

All entrants will be required to attend the audition venue for the preliminary judging in Auckland at their own expense. Auditions will take place on the 30th and 31st of August with the finalist performance on 2nd September 2019.

Candidates who enter the competition must submit a detailed study proposal including a budget which must be in the hands of the administrator no later than the August 15th. This study proposal will be the base of discussion at the judges’ interview with the finalists. The singers to compete in the final at Mercury Theatre will be announced at the end of the two-day auditions.

**The Competition**

**Round One, 30th August** – Competitors will perform one item of their own choice plus one item of judge’s selection (if requested). A maximum of two items will be heard. From round one ten semifinalists will be chosen for round two. (Judging will be during the day, time to be advised).

**Round Two, 31st August** – Competitors will perform one item of their own choice plus one item of judge’s selection (if requested). A maximum of two items will be heard. Works performed in round one may not be repeated. From the second round five finalists will be chosen. The judges, at their discretion, may add one further finalist. (Judging will be during the day, time to be advised). Finalists will be notified by email or text on the evening of the 29th.

**Final, 2nd September (evening)** – Public concert at Mercury Theatre. Performers will perform two items of their own choice back to back and (after a short interval) one piece the judges choose. On the day of the 2nd each of the five finalists must be available for interview with the judges, to discuss their career plan, focus and ambition. Each entrant will submit a resume and study plan to the Aria Administrator no later than August 15th, 2019.

The official accompanist Rosemary Barnes and all contestants will work with the official accompanist. Rosemary will be available for rehearsals (by appointment) at the Auckland Opera Studio.

All judges decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into.

**Entries**

Entries open May 1st and close at 5:00 pm on Friday August 9th, 2019. Entries will be accepted only by completing the application form. **All entrants must be New Zealand citizens, those who have applied for New Zealand citizenship or residency or people who hold a current New Zealand resident or student visa.** The contest will be open to all New Zealand singers aged between 18 – 32 years on the 26th July 2019 except:

1. Singers whose main income during the past two years has been derived from fulltime professional singing, i.e. performers or teachers;
2. Winners of first place in a Lexus Song Quest at the time of their filing entry to this competition; or
3. A competitor who has been regularly taught by either judge for one year proceeding the competition will not be allowed to compete.

**Adjudicators**

There will be two independent judges, Mr Andrew Dalton (Sydney) and Ms Patricia Price (Perth)

Throughout the competition the adjudicators will look for:

* Vocal quality
* Technical skill
* Musical presentation
* Artistic personality

**Music and copyright**

In presenting work, we require entrants to ensure they comply with copyright demands. Non-compliance may lead to disqualification.

Entrants must provide their own music. Three copies are required of all music, two for the adjudicators and one for the accompanist. The accompanists’ music should be preferably in score / book form. Any photocopies should be of high standard with the pages in correct order and securely presented in a spiral binder in individual non-glare plastic sleeves. Any cuts should be clearly marked.

**Dress**

* Heats and semifinals – day dress and lounge suit.
* Finals – concert gown, black tie.

**Photography and Recording**

All contestants must consent to participate in any media activity required by the administrator including but not limited to interviews, filming, photoshoots and social media participation. Any social media participation will be based on a content plan with guidelines to be advised.

The competition reserves the right to record, film, broadcast, telecast, live cast, video tape, photograph any entrant. Images may be used at the competitions discretion for publicity or promotional purposes of the McCormick Opera Award only.

Cameras, video recorders and mobile devices cannot be used by any competitors or audience members during the competition. The administrators reserve the right to legal recourse for any unauthorised postings of recordings or images.

**Awards**

The winner of The McCormick Opera Award will receive an award of NZD $20,000 net from the Patricia McCormick Memorial Scholarship through Perpetual Guardian. That award will be authorised by the judges on the basis of performance and study plan. A payment schedule will be determined upon acceptance of the winner’s detailed study plan and proof of acceptance into or commencement thereof. This study award must be taken up within two years of 2nd September, 2019. A second prize of $7,000 and third prize of $3,000 will also be awarded.

A further prize of $2,000 will also be awarded to a singer, who in the judge’s opinion, has demonstrated particular promise and potential. This may be awarded to any entrant. All those singers who are finalists but not prizewinners will receive an award of $200.

**Media Training**

All finalists will be invited to participate in an individual media training session with Alexander PR to polish their presentation and media skills.

**Liability**

The administrators will not accept any responsibility for any accident, loss or injury which may occur to an entrant or his/her property whether arising out of negligence or otherwise at any time in relation to the contest. Nor shall anything contained or applied in the contest entry be deemed to create a contractual relationship between the entrant and the Administrator. It is a condition of entry that all entrants release the Auckland Opera Studio as Administrator and Perpetual Guardian Foundation from any liability accordingly.

**Repertoire Requirements**

Each singer must prepare six items. Please choose from the following list:

1. A song or aria by a Classical or Baroque Composer; Mozart or earlier (e.g. Monteverdi, Handel, Bach, Purcell, Gluck, Haydn etc.)
2. A song or aria from the Bel Canto period (e.g. Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini etc).
3. A Lied, Melodie or Art song (in original language) from the 19th Century to the present.
4. A song or aria from 1900 to the present including a possible choice of operetta or music theatre.
5. Two songs or arias from any of the above categories or any period.

There must be a minimum of 3 arias submitted.

Categories 1,2,3,4, are compulsory.

An aria from Oratorio is permitted in any of the aria categories.

**Repertoire Guidelines.**

1. Each contestant will be required to submit a list of 6 works which can only be amended prior to the heats. To be submitted with the entry form also, is a detailed study plan which is relevant to present academic and or performing circumstances. (The judges consider this to be a very important part of their decision-making criteria)
2. Entrants should give careful consideration to selecting repertoire in which they are already fully proficient. This should showcase vocal quality, flexibility, style, range of expression and technique.
3. All items must be performed from memory and in original language and original key. There must be at least 3 languages in the submitted repertoire.
4. Of the 6 works submitted there must be a minimum of 3 Operatic Arias from the International Operatic Repertoire with at least one from the Bel Canto Period.
5. If a Recitative and Cabaletta are attached to the aria they must also be performed, in a cut version if necessary. Cuts are permitted but must be clearly marked.