

Adjudicator of the Lanka Festival of Music, Dance & Speech 2024

Speech & Drama Adjudicator

Timothy McCarthy MA, HDE, FTCL, LGSMD, FLCM, ALAM, PGCA

Timothy McCarthy studied Speech & Drama at the Cork School of Music (a constituent College of the Munster Technology University); graduated from the National University of Ireland with an M.A. Degree in Drama and Theatre Studies and the Higher Diploma in Education; he holds the Post Graduate Certificate in Adjudicating.

In his professional life as a Speech and Drama partitioner, Timothy works in a number of spheres and capacities. He runs his own Speech & Drama Studio, where he teaches all aspects of the subject and is the Elocution tutor to a local seminary. He is a member of the examiners panel in Speech, Drama and Communication at Trinity College, London and works closely with the Irish National Council for the Blind, recording audio books for its members. He is the Director of Cork Feis Maitiú – the Music and Drama Festival in his home City. During the pandemic crises he worked extensively online.

For 18 years he was the Drama Director at the annual International Youth Camp Festival of Music, Dance and Drama, Sri Lanka; a member of the Drama teaching staff at EYSM and the Betty Yager Summer School in Lincoln. He conducted Teacher Training Courses in Speech & Drama in Kuala Lumpur, Colombo and at his own Studio in Cork; lead workshops for English teachers in Thailand, Malaysia and Sri Lanka using Speech & Drama pedagogy as a means of teaching English; and gave Choral Speaking Workshops for teachers in Hong Kong. He directed an Adult Drama Company for ten years, specialising in One Act Play Productions.

Timothy is an Adjudicator-Member and Adjudicators Honorary Vice-President of the British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech, previously having served for 9 years as Vice-Chair; the membership application secretary of the Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama and a member of Speech and Drama Teachers of Ireland. In 2011 he was awarded the Federation of Festivals Fellowship for services to the Festival Movement and in 2023 the Federation's 40 Years long term service award for his work at Cork Feis Maitiú.



Speech & Drama Adjudicator

Susan Mackay ALAM,LLAM,LLAM(TD)

For ten years, Susan ran The Fylde Stage School teaching levels of RAD and ISTD dance and LAMDA Speech and Drama before graduating from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama.

After seasons in Repertory Theatre, touring and T.V she decided that it was time to realise other dreams. She now directs Upstage Drama, teaching all aspects of theatre. She is also a co-director of Phoenix Musical Theatre Company.

Susan is also an international adjudicator who has worked at drama festivals all over the UK as well as Ireland, China and Hong Kong. She is an adjudicator member of the British and International Federation of Festivals and has served as a deputy on the Adjudicators Council.

Susan sees her role as an adjudicator, teacher and mentor as a combination of bringing new ideas and approaches to text and performance as well as giving fresh encouragement to every participant. She feels that performer should leave a festival with a sense of achievement.

Susan is delighted to visit Sri Lanka, as this will be her first visit and she is very much looking forward to the Festival and working with all the performers.

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Music Adjudicator 2024

Richard Deering FTCL,GTCL,LRAM,ARCM,PGCA

Richard Deering studied with Frank Merrick (piano) – and subsequently with Peter Wallfisch and Clifford Curzon - and trumpet/cornet with Norman Burgess. He has given piano recitals and broadcasts in over 90 countries worldwide, and has also made several commercial recordings – including an arrangement of the Beatles music as a piano concerto with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra. Many leading composers have written works especially for him, and in 1981 he was elected a member of the Royal Philharmonic Society for “distinguished services to British music”.

As an accompanist he has worked with Robert Tear, Brian Rayner Cook, James Blades and others – including popular singers such as Martine McCutcheon - while for many years he worked as a cabaret performer on cruise liners and as Musical Director for television programmes. Currently, he is the director of the unique performing and recording group of 4

pianists known as Grimoire.

His interest in contemporary music – especially by British composers – has led to many commissioned magazine articles and a series of albums of new music for young musicians published by Bosworths/Music Sales. He has also been an Advisor to the London Arts Board on aspects of contemporary music and jazz, and is involved with the setting, and examining, of the higher grade and diploma levels of the Trinity piano syllabus. In 2006 he was given the Chairman’s Award by Trinity College London for services to musical assessment.

His adjudicating and examining work has taken him throughout the British Isles as well as to Australasia, North America, Africa, Orient and Caribbean and he has served on the juries for several national and international competitions, often as Chairman of the Jury. Until 2002 he was the Vice-Chairman of the British and International Federation of Festivals’ Adjudicator’s Council as well as being a Federation Trustee, and he also held the position of Chief Assessor for the adjudicator’s qualification – PGCA – when validated by the University of Leeds, and was the co-writer of the adjudication criteria used by all Federation festivals and adjudicators. In 2012 he was honoured by being elected a Fellow of the Federation, and, until 2015 served as Chairman of Croydon Performing Arts Festival.

As a teacher Richard has held positions at the London College of Music and Middlesex University as well as visiting positions at Trinity College of Music, Trinity College Dublin, Christ’s College Cambridge University, Hong Kong’s Academy of Performing Arts, Auckland University and the State University of New York.

Additionally he is busy as a cricket umpire both in England and overseas.

Dance Adjudicator 2024

Laura Symonds PGCA

Laura Symonds trained as a dancer from a very young age. She became a student at the Royal Ballet School, but chose a more commercial career – dancing and singing in many Musical Theatre productions, in London’s West End. She also appeared in many vanity shows on television, working for both BBC & ITV.

Laura taught dance and choreography at a local dance school for a number of years. After marriage, and a family demanded more of her time – she became an adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals. She has judged dance competitions for over 20 years, in every region in UK, as well as Northern Ireland, Wales and Gibraltar. During this time she achieved a Degree in Adjudication from “Bretton Hall” affiliated to Leeds University.

Laura first came to Sri Lanka in 2008, and this will be her fifth visit. She is delighted to return to judge talented dancers in this lovely country, where she has always been made to feel so welcome.

