



waapa

Edith Cowan University

# INSIDE WAAPA

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY  
OF PERFORMING ARTS

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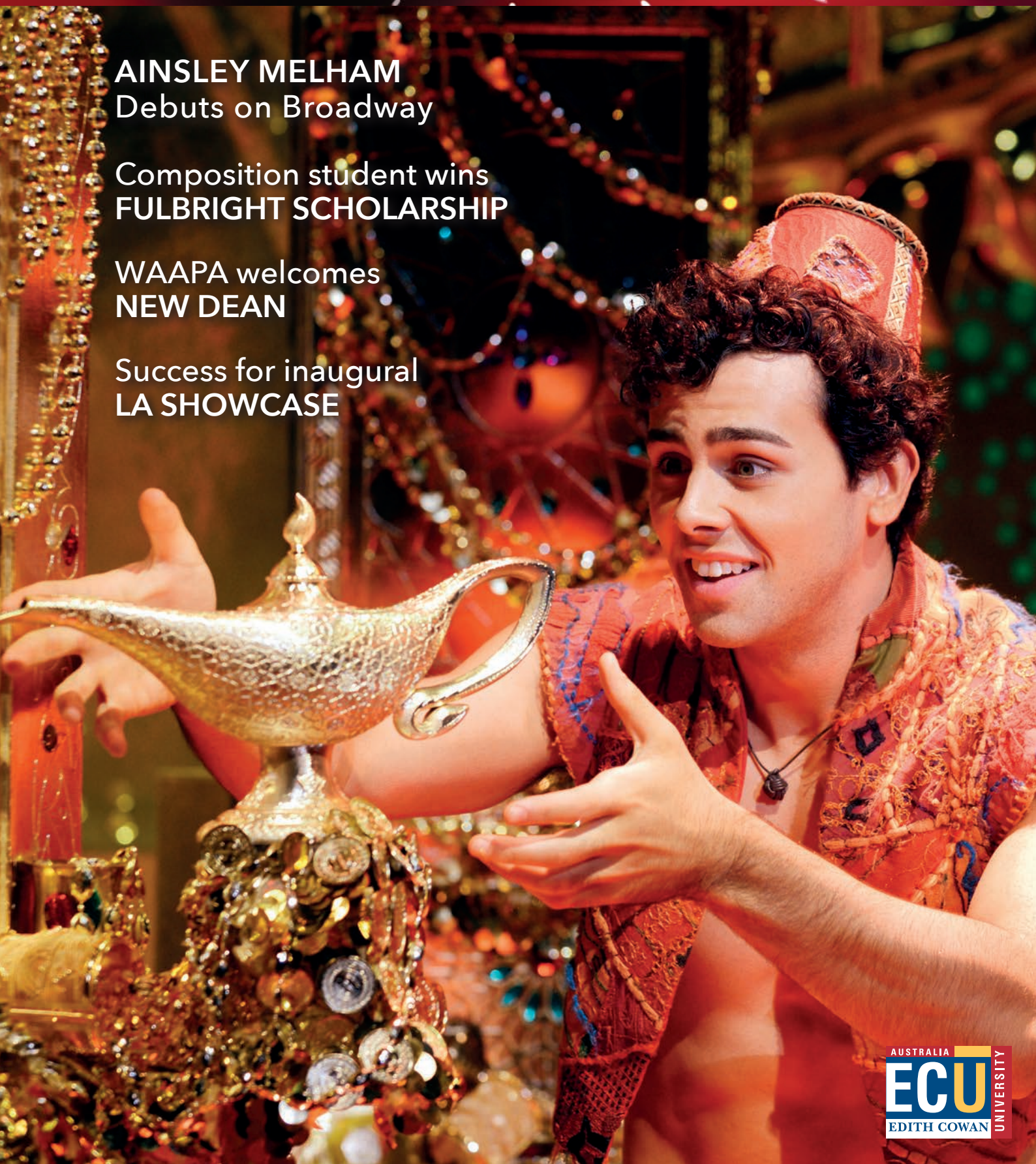






Photo by Kathy Wheatley

# DANCE COMPOSER WINS FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIP

MUSIC GRADUATE AZARIAH FELTON FINDS PATH TO FULBRIGHT AT WAAPA

Azariah Felton, who graduated with Honours in Music Composition last year, has been awarded a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship.

The Fulbright is the flagship foreign exchange scholarship program of the United States of America. Since its establishment in 1946, it has grown to become the largest educational exchange scholarship program in the world, operating in over 160 countries.

Azariah will commence his Masters in Music at the start the northern hemisphere's academic year this September.

The 21-year-old composer has shortlisted his university preferences to New York University, California Institute of the Arts (known as CalArts), University of Southern California and Indiana University Bloomington.

These universities all offer outstanding programs in both music composition and dance – a combination that allows Azariah to continue composing music for dance and researching the interaction between the two disciplines.

"When I started at WAAPA, I had no idea what contemporary dance was," Azariah laughs. "I knew there was a dance course here and I figured it was just ballet and they'd just be dancing to Mozart."

However in his first year of study, Azariah was invited to participate in the dance department's *Unleash* season. In this annual project, 3rd Year Dance students choreograph original dance pieces in collaboration with Composition students who create original music.

"I was paired up with a dancer and I absolutely loved working with her," says

Azariah. "I was writing a different style of music to what I normally did and I just fell in love with it. So I started doing more and more."

Since then, Azariah has undertaken 26 dance collaborations.

"I enjoy being involved right from the start of the process. I like to attend as many rehearsals as possible so I can see the work coming together and then I can incorporate what the dancers are exploring into the music."

"I think composition and dance has a really strong relationship," says Azariah. "This is facilitated at WAAPA by having all the performing arts disciplines under the one roof."

"I like working with dancers to help me bring my music to life."



Photo by Stephen Heath

## WAAPA FAREWELLS

### PROF JULIE WARN AM



Photo by Stephen Heath

On 5 April, after 15 years at the helm, Professor Julie Warn AM is stepping down from her position as Director and Executive Dean of WAAPA to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. During her tenure, WAAPA has built an enviable reputation as one of the world's leading performing arts academies. Since Julie commenced, student intake has more than doubled [now 1200 students]; courses have expanded and diversified; the number of performances presented has grown to over 400 annually; community engagement has been greatly extended through the delivery of multiple short courses and exciting collaborations with a diverse range of arts organisations, local councils and funding partners; international touring opportunities for students and staff have increased; and research has flourished.

Julie is especially pleased with ongoing enterprises such as WAAPA in the Park, ECU's acquisition of The Edith Spiegeltent and partnership with Fringe World, plus the truly

innovative Founding Pianos project. She is also immensely grateful to the growing band of individuals, foundations and corporate partners who have come on board to financially support scholarships and special initiatives.

When asked what she is most proud of, Julie cites the exceptional teaching, the inspiring Visiting Artists program, the quality of the student performances and the high production values of the WAAPA-produced shows. She is also impressed by the success of WAAPA's graduates both on stage and behind the scenes – locally, nationally and internationally. What will she miss most? The noise – the infectious enthusiasm of the students [and staff]! Julie says that watching the students flourish and build skills so they can confidently embrace opportunities once they have graduated is hugely rewarding. No doubt she will continue to attend performances and keep a watchful eye out for all those many graduate successes.

## ... AND WELCOMES A NEW DEAN



Photo by Lucas Smith

In April, following the retirement of Professor Julie Warn AM, David Shirley will take over as Executive Dean of WAAPA.

David is currently the Director of the Manchester School of Theatre within Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU).

His previous roles include Head of Drama at MMU and Head of the School of Theatre at Rose Bruford College. He is also a director and trained actor with numerous film, television and radio credits to his name.

David is the Chair of the Federation of Drama Schools, a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce (FRSA); and Associate Editor of Theatre, Dance and Performance Training Journal.

He holds a Diploma of Acting from The Arts Educational Drama School, a Bachelor of Arts from University of London and a Master of Arts from King's College London and The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Steve Chapman said: "David's experience in developing

international partnerships, building research culture and ensuring courses meet industry demand aligns with the ongoing strategic direction of WAAPA."

"He joins ECU at an exciting time as we seek to transform WAAPA into the leading performing arts academy within the Asia Pacific region and embark on the restoration and housing of our significant collection of historical pianos."

David said he was looking forward to the challenge of leading WAAPA from 2019.

"WAAPA is an extraordinarily dynamic and creative environment with an international reputation for excellence across all of the performing arts disciplines. The energy and vibrancy of the school and the dedication of all of the staff and students who work and train there make it truly exceptional."

"I feel honoured and privileged to have been invited to lead it through an extremely exciting and dynamic phase in its development as one of the world's leading and most prestigious performing arts academies."





# LA INITIATIVE

## WAAPA TAKES ITS ACTING SHOWCASE TO AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

At the end of 2018, for the first time ever, WAAPA presented its Acting Showcase to an international audience.

WAAPA's annual Acting Showcase is a performance of short theatre and film scenes by that year's graduating Acting students which is presented in Perth, Melbourne and Sydney. In each city, industry professionals such as directors, agents and managers are invited, with a view to assisting the actors to securing Australian representation.

Last year, after completing the national tour, the 18 Acting students flew from Sydney to Los Angeles. They were accompanied by Associate Professor Andrew Lewis, WAAPA's Associate Dean of Performance, and Lighting student Phoebe Pilcher, who oversaw the technical side of the Showcase.

On December 5, the students performed two sessions of the Showcase to an invited audience of industry professionals at LA's Matrix Theatre.

"Both Showcase performances were well attended and the feedback was extremely positive," said Assoc. Professor Lewis. "I received many enthusiastic comments about the format, as this was the first Showcase they had seen that integrated stage and screen work. They were also very impressed by the training and calibre of the acting."

In addition to the Showcase performances, the new graduates attended masterclasses at the University of Southern California which outlined protocols, visas and strategies for gaining acting work in the US. They were also able to meet top LA casting agent Barbara Fiorentino and were given a tour of CBS Studio City by studio casting agent Matt Skrobolak.

From the Showcase, eight of the graduating cohort secured US representation with reputable LA agents: Will Bartolo (Luber Roklin

Entertainment), Sam Corlett (Management 360), Thomas Jackson (Fourward Management Company), Mia Morrissey (Silver Lining Management), Kian Pitman (Elevate Entertainment), Ellen Robson (Mecon Mykonos Entertainment), Cameron Rouse (Roar Management) and Lily Stewart (Anonymous Content).

All of the students felt strongly that the trip was worthwhile, especially in allowing them to witness the American system firsthand, making them better prepared for future visits.

"The trip demystified LA for me, so I am now able to see myself travelling there alone safely and confidently in the future, after having done it with 18 of my closest friends and our mentor. I now have a newfound confidence in myself, and in my marketability to an international market." – Will Bartolo

"For myself, our LA Showcase tour has presented me with such great opportunities... I was able to meet with many managers but more importantly gained connections with casting directors in Los Angeles and New York." – Sam Corlett

"This trip really opened my eyes in terms of the scale of the American industry... I am 100 percent sure that on returning to LA in a few years, I will look back and say, 'I'm so happy I did that first trip with the support of my peers and staff, within the safety of the WAAPA bubble, because I had no idea what I was doing, but when I go back I'll be completely prepared and ready as a result'." – Michael Cameron

*The Acting Showcase tour was largely self-financed by the participating students but WAAPA is grateful for the additional support provided by the Minderoo Foundation and the D'Arcy Slater Foundation.*

## WAAPA HOSTS MUSIC'S BRIGHTEST MINDS

### A NATIONAL CONFERENCE SHARES MUSIC RESEARCH AND ECLECTIC IDEAS

Aboriginal song traditions, opera for children, extreme metal bands, and the work of Classical composer Joseph Haydn were just some of the themes that were explored at the 41st Musicology Society of Australia (MSA) National Conference, hosted by WAAPA from 6-9 December 2018.

Held in conjunction with the 17th Symposium on Indigenous Music and Dance and the Australasian Computer Music Conference, this unique convergence brought together the brightest minds in music research from around Australia and the globe.

Conference convener Associate Professor Jonathan Paget said ECU was delighted to host the MSA conference, which visits Perth only once a decade, for the very first time.



"It was a resounding success, with over 200 attendees and some 180 presentations, this was potentially the largest MSA conference to date and undoubtedly one of the largest music research events in Australia," said Professor Paget.

"The conference also offered an opportunity to highlight WAAPA's emerging research strengths to the nation, particularly in areas such as electroacoustic music and historical performance practice. Moreover, the renewed focus on Indigenous music in WA is highly significant to the cultural heritage of our state, and long overdue."

The opening address was presented by WAAPA's new Associate Professor Clint Bracknell on his Australian Research Council

project, *Mobilising song archives to nourish an endangered Aboriginal language.*

Other keynote presentations included issues of historical musicology (Geoffrey Lancaster, WAAPA/ECU), the aesthetics of modern performance (Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, Kings College London), new developments in computer music (Manuella Blackburn, Liverpool Hope University), and Indigenous music of the Kimberley (Sally Treloyn, University of Melbourne).

In addition to the diverse range of papers and presentations, the conference featured numerous free public concerts ranging from jazz, electroacoustic music, historic pianos, and a twilight Indigenous performance on the lawns of the Mt Lawley campus.



## BROADWAY DEBUT FOR AUSSIE ALADDIN

### WAAPA GRADUATE AINSLEY MELHAM STARS ON BROADWAY

After wowing audiences in the Australian production of *Aladdin the Musical*, Ainsley Melham has taken over the title role in the Broadway production, marking his North American theatrical debut.

The 2012 WAAPA graduate began his run as Aladdin at the New Amsterdam Theatre on February 19, just a month before the hit Disney musical celebrated its 5th anniversary on Broadway.

In addition to performing alongside his co-stars from the original Australian production, Arielle Jacobs as Jasmine and Michael James Scott as the Genie, Ainsley is joined

on Broadway by fellow WAAPA graduate Heather Makalani Manley. Heather joined the Broadway cast last December as ensemble member and Jasmine understudy.

Ainsley was nominated for Best Actor in a Musical at the 2017 Helpmann Awards for his role in the Australian production.

Prior to touring the major Australian cities with *Aladdin*, Ainsley was a cast member of the children's television show, *Hi-5*, appearing in its Australasian tours, the televised *Hi-5 House* series (Seasons 1-3) and the documentary film, *Some Kind of Wonderful*.





## BIG STAGE THINKING

Jessica Russell in the Rabozaal Theatre

### BPA GRADUATE GAINS INVALUABLE EXPERIENCE ON INTERNATIONAL SECONDMENT

Performance maker Jessica Russell, who graduated from WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts degree in 2016, undertook a six-week internship in August-September last year with Internationaal Theater Amsterdam (ITA).

Formerly known as Toneelgroep Amsterdam, ITA is the largest repertory company in the Netherlands. Its home base is the Stadsschouwburg, a classical 19th century theatre building in the heart of Amsterdam. Under Artistic Director Ivo van Hove, this Dutch theatre company has developed an international reputation for its avant-garde experimental theatre productions.

Jessica was seconded on the company's production of *Een Klein Leven*, the stage adaptation of Hanya Yanagihara's Man Booker Prize nominated work, *A Little Life* – the premiere work under the new ITA moniker.

Here Jessica describes her experiences of being seconded to such a ground-breaking theatre company:

**IW: What did your secondment entail?**

**JR:** I was one of four international interns who were invited to be in the rehearsal room each day alongside the creative team to witness how ITA produce a work, from rehearsals and technical rehearsals to opening night.

I was also given a taste of what it is to be the Second Assistant Director, who records the actors' movements so they can be collated later. It was interesting to watch this process

as Ivo is a director who works with free-form blocking up until the technical rehearsals, and so often doesn't say what he 'likes' during the rehearsal period but calls upon his assistants to recall specific moments in time. So you need to record everything, never knowing what he may want to return to as set material.

**IW: How did the secondment benefit you?**

**JR:** The company model of ITA – a repertoire company with an ensemble of actors on its payroll – is rare so it was really interesting to observe. While work is being rehearsed during the day, performances are being re-rehearsed over an intense few evenings to be mounted the following week. This also meant I was fortunate enough to see Robert Icke's *Oedipus* and other Ivo van Hove-directed productions. This would be such an exciting model to encourage in Australian theatre practice.

There is also a hugely encouraging dynamic within ITA to get young directors thinking of the 'big stage' again. Often younger directors are told to create theatre purely for smaller, black box spaces. ITA is actively trying to find avenues in which young directors and playwrights return to dreaming of large-scale productions. This was beyond exciting to me and has unlocked a number of ideas that had been rattling away in my brain.

I also had the brilliant opportunity to have a one-on-one meeting with Bart Van den Eynde, Ivo's long-term dramaturg, and hear more about how he and Ivo begin the process of script analysis months, sometimes years, before a work is ready for rehearsal.

Renee Roetman, their Artistic Coordinator, was incredibly generous with her time and we had several conversations about the structure of the company. As interns we were also given time with Johan Reyniers who acts as the Company Dramaturg. He explained to us how they discover new works and assemble their seasons, as well as the additional programs running alongside their productions.

**IW: What were the highlights of the experience?**

**JR:** I can't stress enough how welcoming the company was to me. I was always presented with additional opportunities and tickets, as well as having ongoing discussions with the Assistant Director to translate any notes for the day as it was a Dutch language production.

Also to be at the premiere with Hanya Yanagihara herself, and the following day to see her in conversation on stage. Hearing from such a respected and powerful female voice in literature was inspiring. I was also incredibly moved during the curtain call to see Ivo van Hove and Ramsey Nasr, who plays the lead role of Jude St. Francis, be overwhelmed by the thunderous applause. They don't take the scale on which they can make theatre for granted.

**IW: How has being at WAAPA helped your career?**

**JW:** BPA gave me a much more holistic sense to making and working in theatre, and showed me a number of avenues I could go through. Since graduating, I've worked as a producer, publicist, movement director, deviser and

performer. I wouldn't have half those skill sets if it hadn't been for my training. It's allowed me to be much more versatile in my work and gather a huge understanding of making theatre from both artistic and administrative perspectives. My ability to offer a range of skills has brought me into contact with a significant number of artists. I don't feel limited in my career whatsoever, I'm open to trying anything now.

**IW: What did you enjoy most about being at WAAPA?**

**JR:** Being challenged. I had to jump head-first into methods of practice and work that I wasn't familiar with, and it forced me to adapt quickly. This led me to discover much more about the world of physical theatre and movement, a realm I'm now incredibly passionate about. I also made long-time collaborative friends from across WAAPA's different courses who I'm still in touch with about future projects, so it has been own brilliant, networking opportunity. But definitely the space to make errors and fall flat on your face. You feel safe enough to try things that may well be laughed at in a professional environment but whilst at WAAPA, you're free to find that out for yourself.

**IW: What's next for you?**

**JR:** I'll be completing my Masters in Screen Studies (Directing) at the WA Screen Academy, so I'll be working alongside the 3rd Year Acting students and producing a number of short film projects. Again, it's all about getting as many tools under my belt as I can. Running alongside that, I'm eager to be making theatre again. Joe Lui and I – after a long collaborative history with him as director and myself as producer – are going to jump in a room and see what happens. There's also a novel I've had my eye on for some time now that I've been considering how to adapt. Having seen ITA and Ivo tackle this, we'll see what happens with that!

A new passion project of mine I've started is a small initiative in Perth for artists to skill share. Currently we have a pool of artists, studying or established, and we simply change out our current 'roles' in order to try our hands at something new. Collectively we'll produce very small-scale productions for feedback, so I want to see actors making soundscapes, directors acting again, and producers giving a crack at dramaturg work.

## NEW MOVES FOR DANCERS

Two WAAPA graduates have joined Sydney Dance Company (SDC).

Mia Thompson took up her position with the company after performing as a First Artist at Scottish Ballet for three years. Prior to that, Mia was a dancer with the Queensland Ballet and the West Australian Ballet.

2013 graduate Liam Green was in the Corps de Ballet with the West Australian Ballet for four and a half years, being promoted to Demi Soloist last year.

They join fellow WAAPA graduates Juliette Barton and Charmene Yap, who joined SDC in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

On the Perth dance scene, 2018 graduates Sara Ouwendyk and Kirsty Clarke have joined the WA Ballet as Young Artists.

"I admire all my teachers here at WAAPA and I'm grateful for everything they've done for us over the years," Ouwendyk said.

The duo join fellow WAAPA alumni Carina Roberts, who was promoted to Demi-Soloist last year, and Kristin Barwick who is in the Corps de Ballet.



Photo by Alex Fine





Production image from *Fighting Season*. Photo by Mark Rogers

## RISING ACTING STAR GEORGE PULLAR SCORES A DREAM RUN OF LEAD ROLES

Since graduating from WAAPA in 2016, actor George Pullar has established himself as a rising star with lead roles in three national television series.

Just a few months after completing his Bachelor of Arts in Acting, George joined the cast of *A Place to Call Home* for its fifth season in the role of young mechanic Larry Forbes.

“I originally said I couldn’t audition because the casting brief stated that the character sings, and I can’t sing,” laughs George. “My agent said ‘Audition anyway and worry about that if you get the role’. So after a few call backs, I realised I’d be having to learn to sing! Filming began around February 2017. It got me off to a great start.”

That great start continued a year later when George scored the part of country kid-turned-AFL star recruit Daniel Fletcher in the Channel 10 drama, *Playing for Keeps*. His onscreen girlfriend, Paige Dunkeley, was played by fellow WAAPA graduate Cece Peters. The show premiered nationally in September 2018.

A month later, George swapped his AFL guernsey for army combat uniform in *Fighting Season*, a Foxtel six-part drama series about Australian soldiers returning from Afghanistan. In the lead role of Private Jarrod Vogel, George starred alongside Jay Ryan (*Beauty and the Beast*, *Top of the Lake*), Kate Mulvany (*Secret City*) and

2000 WAAPA graduate Ewen Leslie (*Love My Way*, *The Daughter*, *The Cry*).

George was delighted to find himself working alongside Leslie, who is widely regarded as one of Australia’s finest actors.

“Ewen taught me a lot,” says George. “He was very generous to all the actors and took a real interest in how things were going for me.”

From 1950s period piece to AFL rookie to professional soldier, George describes how these different characters required him to start from scratch with each role.

“I try to work as closely and collaboratively as possible with the director, writer and other actors. It’s a team job, and the more I can merge my ideas with other creatives on the show, the stronger the overall outcome.”

The 22-year-old actor believes that WAAPA gave him the permission to walk on set and feel like he deserved to be there.

“Not only does WAAPA have a great reputation among the industry but you don’t quite realise how great the training is until you are able to apply it in a professional context. Those three years dedicated to honing my skill set have given me a steady confidence and foundation to build on.

“The kind of rigour that WAAPA demands is great for setting the bar for how you should approach work in the industry... only you don’t have teachers reminding you!”

## WAAPA MARKETING WINS GOLD



The radio/audio campaign for WAAPA’s 2018 mid-year musical, *Carousel*, gained national and international recognition when it picked up two awards late last year.

*Copyright Infringement*, produced by The Studio at Perth’s Southern Cross Austereo (SCA), was awarded a 2018 Australian Commercial Radio Award (ACRA) and a Gold Statue at the 2018 the London International Awards (LIA).

Judged by a global jury, the annual LIA awards honour media excellence from around the world.

WAAPA’s Marketing Manager Anton Maz worked with producer Carl Step and creatives Aussie Moore and Mitch Mitchell at The Studio to develop the award-winning ads.

The commercials featured the talents of four 2018 Music Theatre graduates: Jessica Clancy, Jarrod Draper, Maverick Newman and Stacey Thomsett.



## CAREER MOVES

### FROM DANCE TO DIGITAL MARKETING, IT’S ALL ABOUT ART

A career in the arts often takes its practitioners all around the world. So it’s not surprising to find a WAAPA dance graduate working in a ballet company in Glasgow – except that Tony Currie is not dancing, he’s the Content and Digital Executive at Scottish Ballet.

Tony was one of the creative forces behind Scottish Ballet’s inaugural Digital Season in 2017, which took out the UK Theatre Award for Achievement in Marketing/Audience Development. He is currently producing a digital program for 2019, a month-long season of new commissions created exclusively for smart phones, cinemas and ‘everything in between’.

“Digital platforms allow us to be responsive, agile and disruptive in ways that main-stage work sometimes can’t,” says Tony. “By communicating digitally with audiences, we can give them tools to better understand the artform and by doing so, hopefully build our following.”

Tony’s transition from dancer to digital executive took five years, with a few lucky breaks and a heap of determination.

A 2011 Adelaide College of the Arts graduate, Tony was accepted into WAAPA’s LINK

program, which he completed with First Class Honours.

“LINK offers something unique – a chance to continue growing as an artist under the wing of teachers and mentors while building new connections and laying strong foundations in the professional sphere,” he explains. “LINK dancers are treated like professionals which gives you the responsibility of operating like a professional.”

On graduating from WAAPA, Tony undertook five choreographic development projects and extensive research in his solo improvisation practice. He also toured Australia and Europe with Larissa McGowan, and worked with a number of other Australian choreographers.

However, he faced a difficult decision when he realised he enjoyed dancing more than being a dancer.

“When you’ve worked towards something for most of your life and you’ve sacrificed so much, it’s not easy to give it up without a great deal of guilt, uncertainty and fear.”

“Thankfully I had some incredible role models around me and I was able to see that there are many rewarding ways to work in the performing arts industry without being a practicing artist.”

Tony successfully applied for WAAPA’s Arts Management course, with a view to re-training as an arts manager.

At the same time, through his dance industry contacts, he was offered a part-time administrative role at the West Australian Ballet. When a full-time position as the WAB’s Content Development and Publicity Officer became available six months later, Tony got the job.

“I was heading up all things digital – social media, website, content, as well as managing arts and mainstream press. Needless to say, the learning curve was rather steep,” he laughs.

In another fortunate turn of events, Tony’s time at WAB overlapped with the company’s Executive Director, Steven Roth, leaving to take up the same role at Scottish Ballet.

“I knew that I wanted to work in Europe but was waiting for the right way in,” says Tony. “Scottish Ballet had been on my radar for quite

some time already because of the work they were doing in the digital sphere.

“When this job opened up in 2017, I knew it would be the right move for me. It helped having Steven on board to help me convince the Head of Marketing that hiring someone from the other side of the world would be a wise move!”

When asked what he enjoys most about his marketing job, the former dancer is effusive: “Not a single day is the same; I work with a fantastic team and am constantly challenged to learn new skills; I’m in awe of the artists we collaborate with; and it takes me to wild and wonderful places all over Scotland and beyond.”

## PERTH’S NEW JAZZ CLUB

Perth’s newest jazz venue is the brain child of WAAPA graduate Renee Coyle.

Opening on January 18, the Duke of George jazz club is in the basement of the old, heritage-listed Brush Factory on Duke Street in East Fremantle.

“I wanted to create a stage for incredible musicians, locally and beyond, to nurture their talent and provide an exceptional space to share their souls with appreciative audiences,” said Renee in a recent interview.

Coyle worked with Grammy award-winning musician Lucky Oceans to curate a program of artists.

“Perth has a deep reservoir of great musicians and we’re hoping this new venue will spur them on to new, exciting creations and collaborations to share in this very friendly space,” he said.

The Duke will have a variety of sessions including after-work blues/jazz on Thursdays, acoustic blues on Sunday afternoons with free entry for locals, and Saturday night dinner-dances.





Ashlyn Tymms in *Drift* at Albany's Historic Whaling Station  
Photo by Julian Blogg

## COMMUNITY SPIRIT

### WAAPA GRADUATE BUILDS VOCAL PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES IN COMMUNITIES



Opera singer-turned producer/director Matt Reuben James Ward was the creative force behind two commemorative community arts projects performed in Albany last November.

*By Other Eyes*, a new choral-theatre work commemorating the centenary of Armistice, the end of the First World War, was performed on November 11 by a community cast of over 100 with soloists from the West Australian Opera and a small orchestra. The sold-out performance was broadcast live on radio, online and to wireless audience headsets from inside Bruce Munro's Field of Light: Avenue of Honour installation on Mt Clarence.

Then on November 20, Ward and a team of WA Opera singers and Great Southern musicians performed a promenade theatre piece commemorating the 40th anniversary of the closure of the Albany's Historic Whaling Station. *Drift* led small groups of concert-goers through five locations at the Whaling Station as it told, through music, the story of the bitter end to whaling in Australia.

Both projects were produced and directed by Ward with sound design by WAAPA Composition and Music Technology graduate Jean-Michel Maujean, and music composed by Jonathan Brain.

These three creatives are the artistic team behind Vocal Performance Initiative (VPI), which designs and delivers world-class vocal performance projects in collaboration with professional and community organisations.

While Ward has enjoyed a long-standing creative partnership with Brain, his collaborations with Maujean only began in early 2018 when they met as PhD candidates at WAAPA.

Maujean is an experimental composer and cymatics artist (cymatics might broadly be described as the visualization of sound). For his PhD, he is recording birdsong and using it as the basis for the composition of new music. In 2017, Maujean was nominated for WAM's Experimental Artist of the Year award.

For Ward, working with Maujean brings an exciting and different perspective on performance and composition to their collaborations.

"It's my goal as creative director to take the audience on a journey of discovery, not only through narratives and histories, but genre and technologies too," he explains. "Jean-Michel's work is an integral part of that vision."

Ward traces this vision back to his time as an undergraduate at WAAPA – which he

describes as "literally an apprenticeship" – when he was exposed to different genres of music and performance.

After graduating, Ward completed his Masters at London's Royal College of Music before performing throughout the UK and France. His wife Michelle, a WAAPA costume graduate, worked on numerous West End shows for companies including the Royal Opera House and English National Opera.

In 2017, after seven years overseas, the couple returned to WA. Since then, Ward has been multi-tasking across a variety of vocal performance opportunities. These range from his VPI projects to teaching, to more traditional singing engagements – such as performing for the West Australian Opera's 2018 season in the roles of School Master in *Cunning Little Vixen*, and Remendado in the Lindy Hume-directed production of *Carmen*, alongside fellow WAAPA graduates Paul O'Neill as Don José, Paull-Anthony Keightley as Zuniga, Sam Roberts-Smith as Moralès and Rebecca Castellini as Frasquita.

Ward is also working on his PhD, in which he is exploring the effects of community participation in choral-theatre. He is particularly interested in how involvement in such projects can promote empowerment in individuals.

"It is definitely the meaningful connection between people through music that inspires me," he says. "Working with the community allows me to spread the joy of vocal performance by getting to know people and sharing a journey together. I believe everyone should sing, create and participate."

Ward describes how he is particularly proud of the collaborative work that helped create *By Other Eyes*. Through working closely with Indigenous elders Averil Dean, Lester Coyne and Eliza Woods, Ward was able to incorporate their stories into the choral-theatre piece. In this way, *By Other Eyes* was able to speak to painful histories relating to the Noongar community in the Great Southern.

"I'm thankful to the many people who bravely open up their lives to assist in creating new performance works which speak to the valuable things in life and work towards making the future of our communities stronger."



Photo by Jess Gleeson

## STAR COMPOSER

At the 2018 APRA AMCOS Screen Music Awards, Sean Tinnion won Best Music for a Documentary for his work on the ABC's *A Stargazer's Guide to the Cosmos*.

The film and television composer fell in love with what he describes as 'music to pictures' as a seven-year-old boy, after his mother played him the soundtrack of the movie *Braveheart*, starring Mel Gibson.

"James Horner was the composer of that score and it just did something to me that set me on a path to writing for film and television," explains the 2014 WAAPA graduate.

With his strong background in music, having played piano since he was five, Sean's passion for mainstream orchestral film music led him to successfully audition for WAAPA's Composition and Music Technology course.

At WAAPA, after researching film composers such as Howard Shore, Jóhann Jóhannsson, Hans Zimmer, James Newton Howard, Brian Tyler and Lorne Balfé, Sean began incorporating electronic and experimental music into his compositions. As part of his course, he was required to compose two scores for Screen Academy films in collaboration with the Screen Academy students.

"I became very friendly with the Screen Academy students and ended up doing a lot more than just two films," he says.

"Those friendships are still going strong today and have led to more work and more networking with other people in the industry."

"I met a lot of wonderful and talented people during my time at WAAPA and I am still in touch with a lot of them. I think just being around like-minded people was the best thing."

Since leaving WAAPA, Sean has composed music for several television documentaries commissioned by SBS and the ABC through Perth production company, Joined Up, plus scored numerous short films, advertisements and a romantic-comedy web series.

In 2017, Sean released his first album, *Timeless* and is currently working on a second album set for a mid-2019 release.

Also in the pipeline are scores for nature documentaries for National Geographic and ABC television, music for a contemporary dance piece scheduled for performance mid-year, and a possible feature film.

With all this ahead, Sean sees winning the 2018 APRA Screen Music Award as validation that his career is heading in the right direction.

"It's nice to know that my music has made an impact on people," he says. "It's something I hope to continue to do throughout my career."



# HOPE RISES

## THE EXCITING COLLABORATIVE PROCESS OF TURNING A NOVEL INTO A PLAY CONTINUES

When WAAPA's 2nd Year Acting students take to the Enright Theatre stage this October to perform *The Hope Fault*, it will mark the culmination of a two-year-long process to transform Australian writer Tracy Farr's novel into a stage play.

With the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation, the 'from page to stage' commission began a year ago when WAAPA acquired the book rights from Farr's publisher, Fremantle Press, and Perth actor/playwright Andrew Hale was brought on board to adapt and direct the play.

An initial script-reading in August with last year's cohort of 1st Year Acting students was followed by a week-long workshop in November to whittle the monster 112-page script down to a more workable size.

Farr, who grew up in Perth but now lives in New Zealand, is a widely anthologised short story writer and novelist. Her debut novel *The Life and Loves of Lena Gaunt* was longlisted for the Miles Franklin and shortlisted for a Barbara Jefferis Award and a Western Australian Premier's Book Award. The Hope Fault is her second novel.

Farr was invited back to her hometown to attend the November workshop, where she described seeing her novel transformed into a play as 'an absolute privilege'.

"Andrew has done such an amazing job with the adaptation, he's taken it and turned it into something different but it still feels like the story I was telling," she said.

"As a writer, you're very much working on your own most of the time. So the opportunity to be in the room while these 18 actors and Andrew are making my novel into a brand new thing, it's amazing to watch that happen."

Hale, who in 2015 adapted Patrick White's short story *The Cockatoos* for a season at Perth's Blue Room Theatre, said he was terrified when he heard that Tracy was crossing the Tasman for the workshop.

"I've been in rehearsal rooms with writers who have not been generous with the director, and it's really hard. But Tracy has been very open to the process and it's been a delight."

Hale describes the plot of *The Hope Fault* as being about a family travelling south to pack up an old holiday house; while they're there, they throw a 'house cooling' party.

"That's the essence of the story, but there's a real element of fairy tale and magic too so we're looking for a kind of alchemy, it's a magical potion we're mixing up," he adds.

Both Farr and Hale have praised the enthusiasm of the Acting students.

"It's been really amazing to see the engagement of the students, they're contributing ideas and they're questioning us and the script," said Farr.

Hale agrees: "There's something wonderful about the student actors that we have, I don't know if it's because they're young... they're all so keen and fresh and engaged."

"I always come from the idea that everybody in the room wants to make the absolute best play possible."

After an extensive rehearsal period later in the year, Perth audiences will get to see the results when *The Hope Fault* receives its world premiere at WAAPA.

Andrew Hale and Tracy Farr with WAAPA Acting students at The Hope Fault workshop.



## A VISIONARY PRIMARY SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM PRODUCES OUTSTANDING RESULTS

WAAPA lecturer Micheál McCarthy has been teaching aural training, music theory, and choral training to university students and children for over 25 years. So he was a natural choice to help introduce a new music program at a primary school in the outer suburbs of Perth.

The program and the impact it had on the students, parents and teachers at Challis Community Primary School in Armadale was the subject of a three-part documentary television series, *Don't Stop the Music*, that aired on the ABC last November.

Filmed over nine months, the series followed the primary school students at school and at home with their families as they learn how to sing in a choir and how to play instruments.

"I was asked to take on the role of classroom music and choir mentor some 18 months ago," says McCarthy.

"When I first visited Challis and observed the music classes, it became clear that the teachers were largely self-taught, and that the job would entail teaching the teachers, and then teaching them how to use those skills to teach children."

This involved McCarthy visiting the school on a weekly basis over the course of 10 months, with further mentoring sessions occurring outside of school hours via Skype, text and email.

McCarthy also helped the school's principal, Lee Musumeci, in planning the school's music strategy and the broader school community to create a vision for a 'singing' school.

Other mentors enlisted for the program were Dr Anita Collins, an award-winning educator,

researcher and writer in the field of brain development and music learning, and singer/songwriter Guy Sebastian.

WAAPA Director Julie Warn arranged for the newly formed Challis choir to visit WAAPA to hear the Eneksis Vocal Ensemble rehearse. This was a life-changing event for a few of the children, who now aspire to come to WAAPA one day.

A highlight of the program saw the children take part in a concert at the Perth Concert Hall in May last year. The children performed on stage alongside music stars including Guy Sebastian and trumpeter James Morrison, and an array of Perth's finest music ensembles, including WAAPA's Eneksis Vocal Ensemble, Defying Gravity percussion ensemble and the WAAPA Jazz Ensemble.

Before the program started, Challis Community Primary School had virtually no musical resources. Now, thanks to choir and music mentor Micheál McCarthy and the passionate teachers, music tutors and Challis community, it has a rapidly developing music culture with a flourishing choir and over 80 students learning brass and string instruments.

In tandem with the series, the ABC, the Salvation Army and Musica Viva launched a national appeal, encouraging people to donate unused or unwanted musical instruments to be provided to school music programs.

"It has been a transformative experience for everyone involved," says McCarthy. "The program has been built from the ground up and has been incredibly successful."

WAAPA Music Lecturer Micheál McCarthy with Challis Community Primary School students. Photo by Megan Lewis

## MUSICAL PARTNERSHIP

In an exciting new partnership, the WA branch of the Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL) is generously funding a range of new music prizes and scholarships at WAAPA.

ROSL is a non-profit Commonwealth private members' organization that supports international understanding and friendship through social, arts and welfare activities. With 200 members in Perth, ROSL WA demonstrates its commitment to the arts through its patronage of local student musicians.

As part of this commitment, ROSL WA is funding two entrance scholarships for WAAPA music courses in Jazz and Classical Music, plus prizes for music performance in six categories. The inaugural 2018 winners are:

**Art Song Prize**  
Jessica Taylor (soprano) and George Carolin-Unkovich (piano)

**Bach Prize**  
Ariel Postmus (viola)

**Chamber Music Prize**  
Robyn Blann (violin), Miranda Murray-Yong (cello) and George Carolin-Unkovich (piano)

**Composition Prize**  
Callum O'Reilly

**Early Keyboard Prize**  
Jordan Proctor

**Improvisation Prize**  
Niran Dasika (trumpet)

WAAPA is delighted that ROSL WA has chosen to support its music students and looks forward to an ongoing partnership that will foster the important values of the League.



Photo by Kathy Whealley



# ECU HONOURS INSPIRING RECIPIENTS

AT ECU'S RECENT GRADUATION CEREMONIES, THREE DISTINGUISHED INDIVIDUALS CONNECTED WITH WAAPA WERE AWARDED HONORARY DEGREES



### CHARLIE BASS

DOCTOR OF BUSINESS

Mr Bass is a successful mining and technology entrepreneur, active philanthropist and influential supporter of education, research and innovation. In 2015, Mr Bass founded the Centre for Entrepreneurial Research and Innovation (CERI) which helps postgraduate researchers gain entrepreneurial skills.

Through his Bass Family Foundation, Mr Bass supports education for disadvantaged children in rural WA and also established the Bass Family Learning Centre at Ronald MacDonald House.

The Bass Family Foundation is also a valued contributor to the WAAPA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Fund at ECU.



### RACHAEL MAZA

DOCTOR OF PERFORMING ARTS

Ms Maza is an outstanding actor, respected director, narrator, singer, Indigenous Liaison Advisor and acting coach. A WAAPA graduate, she is a well-known face in the Australian theatre, film and television industry, having appeared in the award-winning film *Radiance* and the stage production of *The Sapphires*.

She is a generous and inspiring mentor of young actors and has been instrumental in moving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander performing arts centre-stage in Australia. She is the Artistic Director for the Ilbjerri Theatre Company in Victoria, one of Australia's leading theatre companies creating innovative works by First Nations' artists. Last year she directed WAAPA's Aboriginal Performance students in a production of *Fever*.



### RONALD WOSS AM

DOCTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY

Mr Woss is a highly successful entrepreneur who has combined his business skills and experience with his passion for helping others to establish a range of services for youth mental health and suicide prevention, the arts and culture.

A jazz enthusiast, Mr Woss helped found the Perth International Jazz Festival and with his wife Brigid, through the Woss Group of Companies, supports Visiting Artists in the Jazz program at WAAPA. This year's special guest artist is Katie Noonan.



Photo of Dr Richard Gill AO conducting the 1986 Babies Proms in the WAAPA Music Auditorium, to be known as the Richard Gill Auditorium. Photo courtesy of WA Youth Orchestra.

## ECU PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE LATE RICHARD GILL AO

The Music Auditorium at WAAPA has been renamed the Richard Gill Auditorium in honour of the late Richard Gill, founding Dean of the WA Conservatorium of Music at WAAPA.

The Music Auditorium was the home of Richard's much-loved 'Big Choir' and the venue for so many of his landmark concerts, operas, recitals, lectures and classes, and it is still the busiest performance space in the whole of Edith Cowan University.

During his tenure at the Conservatorium from 1985 to 1990, his energy was legendary, his inspiration was endless, and his love, support and encouragement of every single student influenced each of their lives.

Richard remained a key part of WAAPA, returning as a visiting artist to impart his knowledge on new generations of music students.

In 1995, ECU granted Richard an Honorary Doctorate of Music for his outstanding role in music education, and he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia – just two of many recognitions he received.

WAAPA is delighted to pay homage to this great Australian music educator and conductor.



## UNIVERSITIES AUSTRALIA

### 2018 AWARDS FOR PROGRAMS THAT ENHANCE LEARNING



#### Congratulations

WAAPA's Bachelor of Arts (Acting)

From left; Samantha Chester, Donald Woodburn, Glenda Linscott, Assoc Prof. Andrew Lewis and Luzita Fereday

WAAPA's Bachelor of Arts (Acting) course has won a 2018 Award for Programs that Enhance Learning from Universities Australia. These national awards recognise learning and teaching support programs and services that make an innovative and outstanding contribution to student learning outcomes and the quality of the student experience. Congratulations to Associate Professor Andrew Lewis (Associate Dean of Performance), Glenda Linscott (Head of Acting), movement lecturer Samatha Chester, and voice lecturers Donald Woodburn and Luzita Fereday.

## Founding Pianos

Edith Cowan University has become the custodian of one of the world's most significant collection of 18th, 19th and 20th century keyboards in the world, donated by Stewart Symonds and fellow collector David Forward.

The collection, known as the Founding Pianos, is comprised of instruments that are the last remaining pieces of their kind globally.

One such instrument is the First Fleet piano, which arrived in Australia on board the flagship vessel HMS Sirius, and is the first keyboard instrument played on Australian soil.

The acquisition of this incredible collection forms an important part of WAAPA's music strategy. It also marks the commencement of a multimillion-dollar program to capture and preserve a collection that features the most significant historic keyboard through to the most modern pianos.

To be part of this incredible journey please visit: [foundingpianos.com.au](http://foundingpianos.com.au)

Telephone: (08) 6304 2761 or email [development@ecu.edu.au](mailto:development@ecu.edu.au)

### FOUNDING PIANOS CONCERT SERIES

- Beethoven: Moonlight and Pathétique - **Apr, Fri 12 & Sat 13**
- Double Trouble! - **June, Sat 1**
- Marvels and Curiosities - **Sep, Sat 28**
- The Seven Last Words of Christ on the Cross - **Oct, Sat 19**

**Tickets: WAAPA Box Office 9370 6895**

Visit [waapa.ecu.edu.au](http://waapa.ecu.edu.au) for further concert announcements throughout the year.



FOUNDING PIANOS

Rare and Important Piano Collection

[foundingpianos.com.au](http://foundingpianos.com.au)

Founding Pianos. Photo by James Kilian





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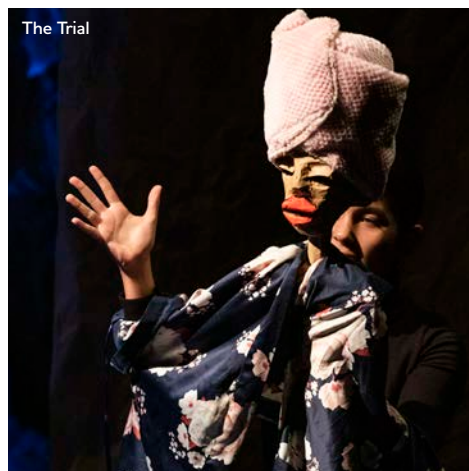


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