



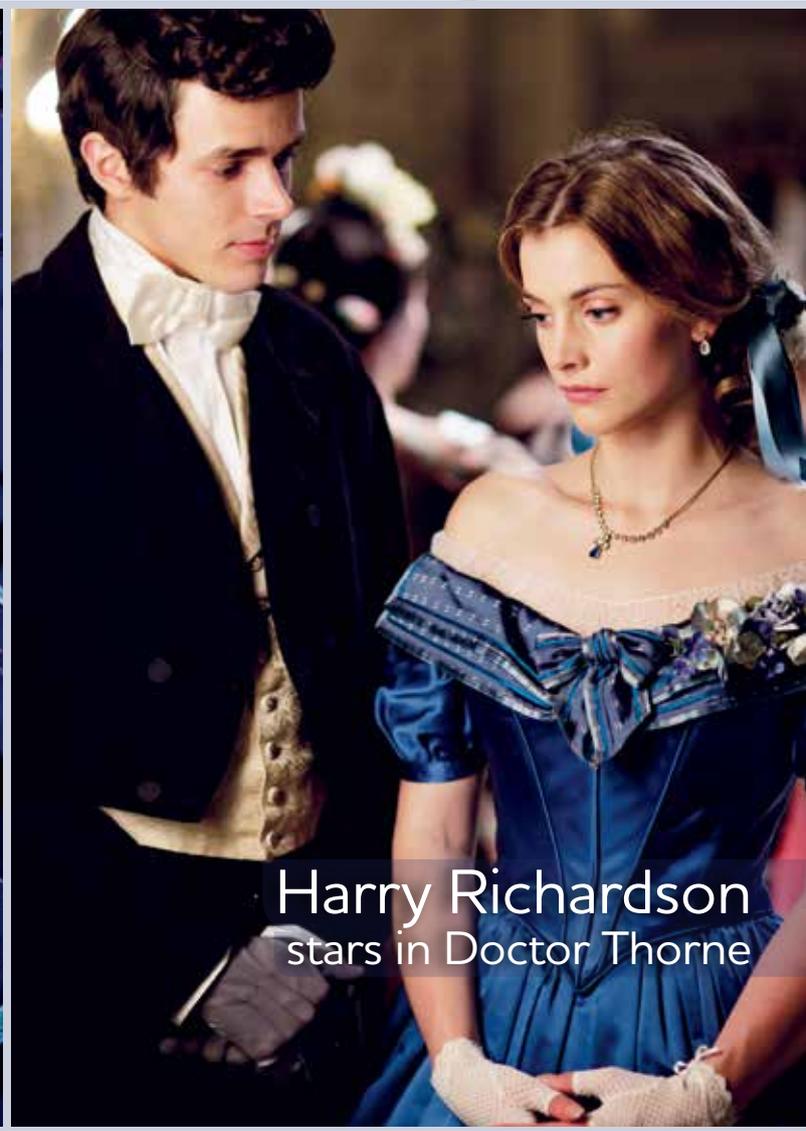
INSIDE WAA PA

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Suzie Mathers scores
West End Wicked



Harry Richardson
stars in Doctor Thorne



Josh Wakely's Beat Bugs
brings Beatles songs to kids



BEATLES FOR KIDS

Josh Wakely describes himself as a 'multi-hyphenate' and that seems a fair assessment, given that he is a director, screenwriter, producer and published author.

The WAAPA graduate's latest project is an animated children's series called *Beat Bugs*, which he created, wrote, produced and directed. Due to air in August this year on 7Two, Plus7 and Presto, the 26-part Netflix series features the music of The Beatles as a backdrop to the adventures of five best friends.

For the series, Josh acquired the worldwide rights to the Lennon/McCartney 'Northern Songs' music catalogue. Eddie Vedder, Pink, James Bay, Sia, The Shins, Of Monsters and Men, Chris Cornell, Regina Spektor, James Corden, Daniel Johns and Birdy are all recording their renditions of iconic Beatles songs.

Josh, who graduated from WAAPA's Acting course in 2005, is a principal partner at Grace, a film and television production company with offices in Australia and the U.S.

In addition to *Beat Bugs*, Josh has secured a rights deal for Bob Dylan's catalogue and is currently developing an hour-long television drama series, *Time Out of Mind*, based on the characters and themes in Dylan's tunes.

Josh is also adapting Darin Strauss' best-selling memoir, *Half a Life*, into a film that he will direct in 2017.

The book, which was awarded the 2011 National Book Critics Circle Award, tells the haunting story of one man's 20-year struggle with the accidental death of his high-school classmate.

Production shots courtesy of Netflix



A HONEY OF A ROLE FOR LUCY

2006 Music Theatre graduate Lucy Maunder will join the Australian cast of *Matilda The Musical* as Miss Honey when the show tours to Brisbane and Perth from November this year.

Lucy is taking over from Elise McCann who originated the role of Miss Honey in the Australian production. She will be performing alongside fellow graduate James Millar, who plays Miss Trunchbull.

This will be the second time the two Music Theatre alumni have worked together, after appearing in the Nancye Hayes-directed *Noël and Gertie* in 2013, with James playing Noël Coward opposite Lucy as Gertrude Laurence.

Lucy is currently starring as Heather Chandler in *Heathers The Musical* at the Sydney Opera House following a successful season in Melbourne.

Before *Heathers*, Lucy appeared in the QTC/MTC co-production of *Ladies in Black* in both Brisbane and Melbourne, starred as Rizzo in the Australian national tour of *Grease*, and created the role of Lara in Lucy Simon's *Doctor Zhivago*, opposite Anthony Warlow.

She has appeared in roles in various Sondheim works including *Into the Woods*, *A Little Night Music*, *Side by Side by Sondheim* and *Sondheim on Sondheim*. In international tours, Lucy has performed as Emma Crew in *Jekyll and Hyde* and Janet in *The Rocky Horror Show*.

Based on the beloved novel by best-selling author Roald Dahl, *Matilda The Musical* features the award-winning music and lyrics of WAAPA graduate Tim Minchin.

WEST END WICKED FOR MATHERS

AN AUSSIE GLINDA IS SET TO STAR IN THE LONDON PRODUCTION OF WICKED

Musical theatre star Suzie Mathers will take over the lead role of Glinda in the West End production of *Wicked* in September this year.

The WAAPA graduate will perform alongside West End and Broadway star Rachel Tucker as Elphaba as the show celebrates its 10th anniversary on 27 September at London's Apollo Victoria Theatre.

The Scottish-born performer, who was raised in Perth, WA and graduated from WAAPA in 2007, started her *Wicked* journey as an offstage vocal swing for the 2008 Melbourne production.

After taking a year out to play the lead role in the Australian tour of *Mamma Mia!*, Suzie returned to *Wicked* as part of the onstage ensemble and understudy to fellow WAAPA graduate Lucy Durack, who originated the role of Glinda in Melbourne.

In 2011 Suzie played Glinda for the 2011 Asian tour and three years later reprised the part for the Brisbane and Perth seasons of the 10th Anniversary Australian tour.



Suzie Mathers will assume the role of Glinda in the London production of *Wicked* from 5 September 2016

"WAAPA is such an amazing school," Suzie said in a recent interview. "I think the fact that there are all these wonderful graduates throughout the world and in Australia performing lead

roles on these amazing stages is a real credit to how wonderful it is over there."

Wicked's UK Executive Producer Michael McCabe said: "We very much look forward to welcoming Suzie Mathers to the London company of *Wicked* in September alongside the incredible Rachel Tucker, who returns to the West End production following her triumphant engagement as Elphaba on Broadway. Suzie was a member of the original Australian cast of *Wicked* and went on to play Glinda to great acclaim in Singapore, South Korea, New Zealand, the Philippines and on the most recent Australian tour. We are all delighted that these two superbly talented actors will join us in London to lead an amazing new cast through the 10th birthday celebrations at the Apollo Victoria Theatre later this year."

Asked how she feels about performing *Wicked* in London, Suzie said, "When you come down in that bubble in the opening of *Wicked*, you're always nervous and not sure what's going to happen, but I'm sure it's going to be an absolute thrill."

Photo by Andrew Ritchie

IF THE JACKET FITS...

In early June, Dane Alderson made a welcome return to his hometown of Perth as a member of the renowned American jazz-fusion band Yellowjackets, one of the headlining acts at this year's Perth International Jazz Festival from 3-5 June.

Having moved to the US four years ago, the electric bass player has been playing with the multiple Grammy award-winning band for the past year.

Dane got the gig in a very modern way.

Yellowjackets drummer Will Kennedy had seen a YouTube clip of Dane's bass playing and based on that, the band decided to sign him up.

Founded in 1979 by guitarist Robben Ford, Yellowjackets boasts an extensive discography of acclaimed jazz-fusion albums recorded in its three decades and a number of

illustrious names have appeared under the label.

Their most recent album *Coherence* features founding member Russell Ferrante on keyboards, Bob Mintzer on saxophone, Will Kennedy on drums and Dane on electric bass.

The 2002 WAAPA graduate, who spent a decade building a solid career in Australia before relocating to the US, is among a number of Perth musicians to win the prestigious James Morrison scholarship. At one point, Dane joined fellow scholarship winners and WAAPA graduates Andrew Fissenden, Troy Roberts and Mat Jodrell to form a band with Morrison himself called On the Edge. The band toured Europe and released an album.

Dane, who is now based in Charlottesville, Virginia, has dual citizenship, making it easy to move between the jazz scenes in Australia and the US.



CRIMES OF THE HART

ONE-MAN SHOW SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON STOLEN GENERATIONS

Actor/writer Ian Michael has received critical acclaim throughout Australia for his one-man play *Hart*, in which the WAAPA graduate uses verbatim stories to reveal the impact of the Stolen Generations on four Noongar men.

Sam Dinah, Paul Parfitt and 'Hart' (a nickname to protect his privacy) have stories stretching back to the 1930s; Ian himself, a proud Noongar man, brings the story up to the present day.

Following sell-out seasons at the Melbourne, Adelaide and New Zealand Fringe festivals – where Ian won Best Emerging Artist at the Adelaide Fringe and Best Emerging Indigenous Artist at the Melbourne Fringe – *Hart* played at Perth's Blue Room Theatre from 24 May to 11 June.

The play was co-written with writer/dramaturg Seanna van Helten and directed by Penny Harpham, co-founders of Melbourne-based She Said Theatre.

Ian spent a year reading testimonials, reports and articles from the past 50 years, a process he describes as heartbreaking and shocking.

"I made a very strong choice to tell Noongar stories because I think that's my responsibility to do that," says Ian.

"These testimonials are another person's experience of trauma, being stolen, the loss of identity/culture and when you are telling people's lives it can be hard at times," says Ian. "Early on in rehearsals, I did find it emotionally hard to tell the stories for sometimes six hours a day. They drained me emotionally, it sounds like a cliché but I was on an emotional rollercoaster every day."

The critics have been unanimous in their praise for *Hart*. Anne Marie Peard from *Aussie Theatre* applauded it as "beautiful, heartbreaking and liberating storytelling..." while Cameron Woodhead from *The Age* described it as "moving theatre that handles some emotionally harrowing material with dignity and grace". David Zampatti in *The West Australian* called the show "Ian Michael's powerfully argued tour de force", writing that "Michael gives a wonderful,

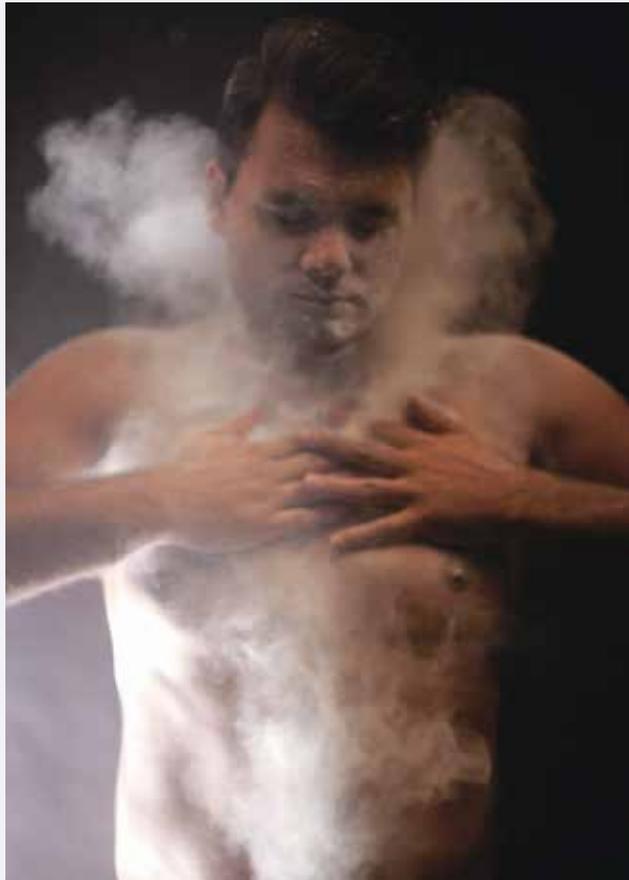


Photo by Gabi Briggs

controlled performance, moving from gentle remembrances to white-hot anger with perfect control."

After graduating from WAAPA's Aboriginal Theatre course in 2008, Ian spent two years in Perth working with Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, Bunuba Films and the WA Youth Theatre Company. He then moved to Melbourne, where for the past five years he has worked mainly in theatre and short film with companies such as Melbourne Theatre Company, Ilbijerri Theatre Company and Malthouse Theatre.

Here Ian talks to *Inside WAAPA* about performing his one-man show:

- What is the best thing that has come out of creating and performing Hart?

The best and most important part about *Hart* is that we're able to give a voice to generations of people whose lives and experiences of being forcibly removed from their families, country and communities for so long have been silenced. *Hart* has opened my eyes and made me question the history of this country, particularly the parts of it that we've swept under the rug and we still don't acknowledge and personally, I've learnt even more about my culture, my family and myself.

- What has been the most memorable audience reaction?

On opening night in Adelaide, the whole front row was entirely women from the Stolen Generations and they talked to me throughout the whole show, agreeing with parts of the stories about being in missions and telling me about life in the 70s and 80s. It was a special moment that we got to share with each other and it's always humbling when survivors of the Stolen Generations thank me after the show because they thought nobody would ever hear their stories.

- Why is it special for you to be able to bring Hart to WA?

It's special for a lot of reasons but mainly because all of the stories in *Hart* are from Noongar men and to be telling them on Noongar boodja feels very right – I can feel my ancestors in the theatre every night. Another reason is because *Hart* is the first show I've ever done in WA and

my family and people I grew up with are coming to the show and that means a lot to me.

- What did you enjoy the most about being at WAAPA?

I enjoyed the hard work every day and some of the shows I saw at WAAPA are still some of my favourite pieces of theatre I've ever seen. I really fell in love with theatre and the process of making it when I was at WAAPA and from pretty early on knew that I wanted to do it for the rest of my life.

- What was the most important thing you learnt at WAAPA?

WAAPA and Rick Brayford really prepared me for the industry in pretty much every way. But probably most important was to always be on time for rehearsal and to find the truth in every story.

- What's next for you?

Hart will have two more seasons at the end of the year and then hopefully continue to tour regionally and internationally. Besides *Hart*, there are a few theatre projects I'm going to start working on and do what every actor does, just wait to see what doors will open in the future.



From left: Stefanie Martini, Tom Hollander, Harry Richardson and Rebecca Front in *Doctor Thorne*. Photo courtesy of Hat Trick International.

THE BEST MEDICINE

In just over a year, Harry Richardson has gone from WAAPA graduate to playing the lead role in a British primetime television period drama written by *Downton Abbey's* Julian Fellowes.

The three-part ITV drama *Doctor Thorne*, which premiered in March this year, is an adaptation of Anthony Trollope's nineteenth-century novel about cash-strapped and status-obsessed English aristocratic families. Tom Hollander plays the eponymous role, with Ian McShane and Rebecca Front in the main cast.

Harry plays the role of Frank Gresham, a financially troubled heir who is in love with his beautiful but poor childhood friend Mary Thorne.

Mark Redhead, executive producer of *Doctor Thorne*, describes Harry as "like an artist's vision of a young romantic hero." He might have looked the part but Harry was grateful for the advice given to him by Fellowes about aristocratic etiquette. "It's like having someone from that time period with you – no hands in pockets, never, never, never," Harry says.

Harry also found that the period costumes and sets eased his path into the world of *Doctor Thorne*. "The lads in Italian-made tails and top hats from the 1860s and all the women in corsets and gowns was incredible. We also shot everything on location in beautiful stately homes and castles. All this made the acting far too easy. We were completely transported back in time."

Harry, who was born in NSW, spent his early childhood in England but returned to Australia for high school at Sydney Grammar and then, drawn

to acting, successfully auditioned for WAAPA.

"WAAPA is so rigorous it prepares its students to handle pretty much anything," says the 23-year-old, noting that his dialect training has come in handy. "The accent work I learnt really paid off as my character Frank was so darn English! I needed to know how to be specific."

"As well as that, the ability to handle new scenes every day was something I thank WAAPA for. TV is shot so fast, you have to know how to stay on top of the work and be vocally and physically fit."

Harry describes the benefit of studying in the safe environment of WAAPA was the opportunity to be able to "fail miserably and learn from it". He also found being surrounded by WAAPA's creative diversity rewarding.

"It was such fun each week getting to see mind-blowing dance performances, glorious musical theatre and the grooviest jazz because it inspires you to pour more into your craft."

Before *Doctor Thorne*, the 2004 graduate filmed a role in Sue Brooks' feature *Looking for Grace*, with Richard Roxborough and Radha Mitchell, which was released earlier this year.

Harry has now permanently relocated to London and is looking for his next job in the UK, on stage or screen. Although he is eager to perform on stage in England, he admits he's happy to follow where the work takes him.

"It is an exciting time to be a young actor. The possibilities are infinite, there's no real roof on anything."

A MODERN-DAY TRAUTONIUM

Trautonium might sound as if it belongs on the periodic table but it is in fact the name of an early electronic instrument, the forerunner of today's synthesizers.

Invented in Germany in 1929 by Friedrich Trautwein and later developed by Oskar Sala, the trautonium was the first electronic instrument that could produce a wide variety of sounds.

The handful of examples of this antique synthesiser that remain in the world are held in German museums. When WAAPA research student Meg Travers learned that these instruments are never used in performance, she decided to build her own.

On Friday 3 June, the PhD candidate gave a West Australian-first performance of her trautonium at the Western Australian Museum, performing a work written by Oskar Sala.

"The concert provided a great bridge between my new version of the trautonium and the original instruments which are displayed in museums," Meg says.

"When it was invented the instrument was taken fairly seriously and concertos were written for it. But ultimately it found its main use in the creation of film soundtracks, most famously for the bird noises in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*."

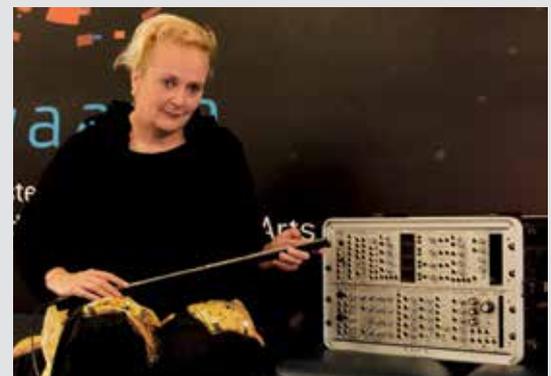
Meg says her version of the trautonium looks like a modular synthesizer and has the many varieties of sound that a sound synthesizer can make.

"Importantly though, it uses formant filters and subharmonic synthesis, which were both developed by Oskar Sala," she says.

"It also makes extensive use of a frequency shifter, which is quite an unusual effect to use in music today, but was very much the calling card of the trautonium. It uses analogue electronics still, but 21st century versions of them, making the instrument smaller and more robust."

However learning how to play the trautonium has been a challenge.

"There's no one left in the world who knows how to play it, so I've been listening to recordings and learning by watching videos of Oskar Sala's performances."



GLOBAL THINKING

Dancer Samuel Maxted, who has been a soloist in Tanz Company Innsbruck in Austria since September 2014, believes WAAPA encouraged him to think globally about his career.

“Throughout my time training at WAAPA I was tutored and mentored by lecturers who had very successful international careers, so my mind was always open to the possibility of taking my dancing overseas,” he says. “They gave me the encouragement I needed to make the big move to Europe.”

That big move took place at the beginning of 2014, two years after graduating from WAAPA straight into a Young Artist position with the West Australian Ballet.

In his final year as a student, Samuel was awarded the Linley Wilson Scholarship, first place in the Royal Academy of Dance Competition and his Solo Seal – the RAD’s highest calibre examination – while his time at WAB saw him perform in *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Pinocchio* and *The Nutcracker*, among others.

Fuelled by his passion to explore neo-classical dance and modern ballet in Europe, Samuel moved overseas for freelance work in Paris, followed by a four-month engagement at Ballett Im Revier in Germany. A few months later, Samuel relocated to Austria to join Tanz Company Innsbruck, based at the Tiroler Landestheater.

This neoclassical company of 17 dancers performs both repertoire (Scholtz, Goecke, Kylian) and premieres by director Enrique Gasa Valga and in-house choreographer Marie Stockhausen.

Samuel’s favourite roles so far have been the Young Lover in *Rite of*

Spring, *Vicomte de Valmont* in *Dangerous Liaisons* and the Button Collector in *Peer Gynt*.

Testament to the international nature of modern dance, not a single dancer in the company is Austrian; their home countries include Italy, France, Germany, Russia, Canada, Japan, China, Switzerland, Albania and Australia. Director Enrique Gasa Valga is Spanish and the company ballet mistress is Dutch.

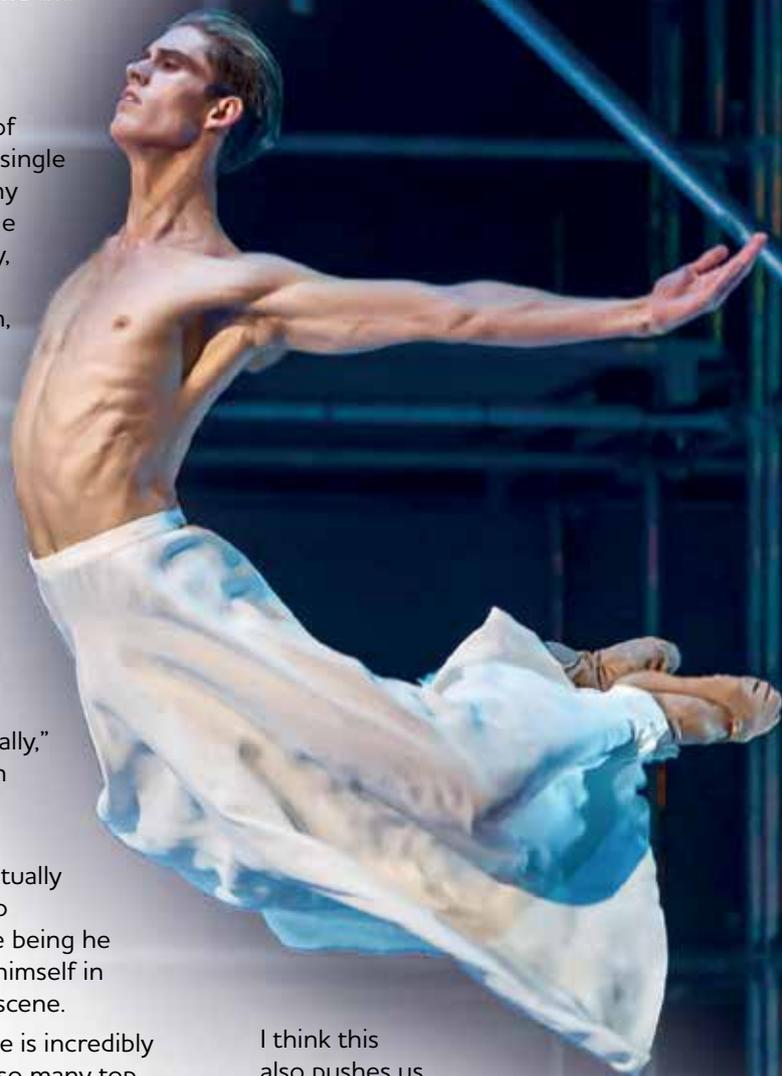
“Having colleagues coming from all over the world brings a diversity to the workplace both physically and artistically,” says Samuel. “You can learn a lot, I certainly have.”

While Samuel eventually plans to move back to Australia, for the time being he is happy to immerse himself in the European dance scene.

“Working in Europe is incredibly exciting as there are so many top companies working so near, you really feel a part of the action,” he says. “The industry is competitive and diverse. Dancers, choreographers and directors move around to different theatres very frequently, so there is a strong network in Europe and the industry is very in-touch with one another and engaged in what is happening in other companies.

I think this also pushes us competitively and the standard is very high because of this.

“I would like to move around dancing in different theatres here and dancing as much variety of repertoire as I can, and working with as many choreographers as I can,” he says. “I’m really in the right place for that.”



TOP MARKS FOR DANCERS

WAAPA’s dance students took out a number of major awards at the recent Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) Festival of Dance, held at the John Curtin College of the Arts in Fremantle from 2-6 June.

RAD is the world’s leading organisation in classical ballet education. The annual event drew around 400 dancers from ballet schools across Perth to compete for three prestigious scholarships and awards across various categories.

The Lynley Wilson Scholarship, worth \$3000, was awarded to WAAPA Advanced

Diploma of Dance (Elite Dance) student, Evelyn Roberts, while fellow student Kristin Barwick took out the second-place prize of \$1000. Lily King was awarded Best Senior Female Dancer, Alex Diedler won Best Senior Male Dancer and Sara Ouwendyk took out the Artistic Award, worth \$600.

A gala concert held on the final night of the festival showcased the winning students plus performances from WAAPA’s 2nd Year Dance students and graduate dance company, LINK.



Left: Winner of the Lynley Wilson Scholarship, Evelyn Roberts



Photo: Mary King (third from left) with WAAPA masterclass participants.

MUSIC IS THE ANSWER

GUEST ARTIST MARY KING GETS VOCAL ON A MONTH-LONG VISIT TO WAAPA

Ten years ago, British vocal coach Mary King was approached by the actress Maureen Lipman with an unusual request: she needed to be taught how to sing badly.

Lipman was to star in *Glorious!*, Peter Quilter's play about Florence Foster Jenkins – also the subject of the recent Stephen Frears' film starring Meryl Streep.

Although Lipman had to sing terribly in order to play the famous American socialite, she also needed to be able to maintain her voice for eight shows a week. So she came to Mary for help.

"The deal was that I would never put a student immediately after her, so that no-one would hear what we were doing," laughs Mary. "We did hilarious things, we quacked like ducks, we did chicken impressions, we found silly ways of doing what was needed vocally but in a really, really safe way. That was a very odd job!"

Mary King, performer, teacher, coach, broadcaster and writer, spent four weeks in March-April as a visiting guest artist at WAAPA, sharing her expertise with students across six disciplines: Classical Voice, Music Theatre, Contemporary, Jazz, Acting and Aboriginal Studies.

"What I've noticed is the motivation and the openness here, it's absolutely fantastic," says Mary. "There's a very high skill level, fantastic voices, I've heard really good singers in all the departments."

A mezzo soprano, Mary has performed in concerts and operas all over the world and is a leading exponent of contemporary vocal music. She has a high profile career as vocal coach for a wide range of choral, operatic and musical theatre groups and solo performers, and regularly works as resident vocal coach on West End shows,

including *Wicked*, *Women on the Verge of A Nervous Breakdown – the Musical*, *Chicago*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Ghost - the Musical*, and *Once*. She is also a writer and broadcaster on TV and radio.

Although she has enjoyed a highly successful career as a singer, Mary describes herself as having 'teacher genes' which have always made her interested in the process of learning.

"I've always been very curious about how anybody in a musical context learns and how it takes a lot of time to figure out as a musician where your place in the musical world is if you've got aspirations."

Nowadays, although she still does the occasional performance, she mainly sings in her masterclasses to demonstrate vocal technique to her students, many of whom are professional singers themselves. As a vocal coach, Mary works to create the 'vocal health' singers need to achieve a sustainable vocal performance.

"Singers are like a combined sprinter and a marathon runner, you have explosive moments but you also need stamina," Mary says. "You're performing shows that might be three hours long or sets that are 45 minutes long, that's heroic, that's a lot of voice use and you've got to find a way to build up that stamina gradually."

Mary believes the best way to achieve this is through developing good habits early on, working hard and acquiring a robust attitude to criticism.

She describes being a professional singer as 'jolly hard work'. For classical singers, there's mastering the vocal technicalities, the musicianship, the different languages. Musical theatre singers also need to be able to dance and act.

Motivation is critical, often making the difference between a singer with less

talent who will succeed and a singer with more talent who won't.

"Tortoises sometimes get there!" she says. "You need some talent but you really need to be able to apply yourself, you need aptitude and determination and an ability to process the information you get."

"To a degree you can get to a certain level with not much input but if you want to be a professional then there's so much you have to learn and you have to really love it. You really have to be motivated to practice, you have to motivate yourself to do the work on your own."

In terms of the amount of criticism that singers will receive on their journey to a professional career, Mary compares them to elite sportsmen and women.

"As a singer, the instrument is inside you. So you might get criticism from a director, a vocal coach, a conductor, that's a barrage of information that's coming at you and because the voice is inside you, it feels personal. So you need an ability to detach and say 'that is my instrument and my artistry, it is not me, it's not my fundamental self.'"

Mary, who believes that everyone can sing, is scathing of young children being told that they can't or shouldn't sing. "Then it becomes a tension forever for that person. It drives me up the wall!"

"Music is it, that's the answer. Everybody should sing."

Mary King's visit to WAAPA was made possible through the generous support of the Jackman Furness Foundation for the Performing Arts.

FIRST FLEET PIANO DONATED TO WAAPA



When George Worgan completed his tour of duty in 1791 he gave the piano to his friend, Elizabeth Macarthur, wife of Lieutenant John Macarthur of the New South Wales Corps.

That Worgan had given Elizabeth a few piano lessons before he left the colony is also important, as Professor Lancaster explains: "Therefore, this is the first piano in Australia and the first piano upon which piano lessons were given, by the first piano teacher in Australia. There's a whole cloud of cultural significance associated with this particular instrument."

The piano was sold on and off until 1838, and that was the last that was heard of it until 1965.

"A very eminent antiques dealer named William Bradshaw heard of a so-called spinet for sale in an old farmhouse on the outskirts of Windsor," he said.

William Bradshaw tracked down the home in Windsor, north-west of Sydney, and found the piano being stored in the laundry.

"The family that owned it wanted the money to buy a new washing machine so they sold this piano to Bradshaw," Professor Lancaster said.

"He kept it in his private collection for a number of years until Stewart Symonds bought it."

Mr Symonds said he is delighted WAAPA will become the new custodians of his collection.

"The collection I've put together has taken on its own identity that is more important than I am," Mr Symonds said. "WAAPA fully appreciates what the collection is and recognises its world importance."

"By giving these pianos to WAAPA, they will be there for all who come for hundreds of years. Students, observers, and people of all sorts of interests will find it a wonderful resource," he said.

The university plans to restore the First Fleet piano, along with others from the collection, to a playable condition so they can be used by students and researchers. The pianos will be sent to master restorers in London, who will also teach their techniques to Western Australian restorers.

ECU also plans to seek philanthropic donations to build a space to house and display the collection.

Photo: ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Steve Chapman, donor Stewart Symonds, Professor Geoffrey Lancaster, the Honorable John Day, Minister for Health, Culture and the Arts, and Director of WAAPA, Professor Julie Warn with the First Fleet Piano

Australia's first piano, which arrived on board the *Sirius* as part of the First Fleet in 1788, has found a new home at WAAPA.

The First Fleet piano is among a multi-million dollar collection of 130 historically-significant pianos to be very generously gifted to WAAPA by collector Stewart Symonds.

Mr Symonds has been collecting historic pianos since the late 1960s and had been looking for an institution to take them after he ran out of space to store them at his home in NSW.

The procurement of the First Fleet piano and the Stewart Symonds Collection was facilitated by WAAPA Professor Geoffrey Lancaster after working closely with Mr Symonds to research his book *The First Fleet Piano: A Musician's View*.

"This is an extraordinary gift to WAAPA and one that we are very excited about," Professor Lancaster said.

"The acquisition of the First Fleet piano, let alone the acquisition of one of the world's most significant historical keyboard collections, is a major boon for the cultural and academic life of WAAPA and ECU."

"But most importantly it's something that the people of Western Australia can happily own. This is a wonderful thing for WA to have."

The First Fleet piano is an English square piano that was built in London in 1786. It was brought out to Australia by a surgeon, George Worgan, on board the flagship of the First Fleet, the *Sirius*.

Considerably smaller than a modern piano, its legs can be folded away for storage and records show that it was brought up onto the deck for recitals on the journey to Australia.

WARNOCK WINNER

In June, 2nd Year Music Theatre student Thomas New was awarded the prestigious Bill Warnock Scholarship. The award was announced at the conclusion of the preview performance of WAAPA's mid-year musical *Bring It On* at the Regal Theatre.

The scholarship, awarded to the most promising 2nd Year Music Theatre student, honours the late Bill Warnock's love of WAAPA performances and his passion for the WA performing arts community.

The award was presented to Thomas New by Bill's wife, Diana Warnock AM, with Bill's daughter Kylie, and his grandchildren Hugh and Greer.



From left: Diana Warnock AM, Thomas New and Greer Dalrymple.

INTERNATIONAL FORUM FOR DANCE RESEARCH

WAAPA has had eight abstracts accepted for the International Association for Dance Medicine and Science annual conference in Hong Kong in October this year.

The postgraduate work of Sue Peacock, Diana Beck, Sarah Carter and Peta Blevins has been accepted for podium presentations, with Sue being allocated a 50-minute movement session to give a practical demonstration of her work.

Formed in 1990, IADMS has over 900 members, including dancers, dance medicine practitioners, dance scientists and dance educators, representing 35 countries. The group aims to enhance the health, training and performance of dancers by cultivating educational, medical and scientific excellence.

The conference will provide a unique opportunity to showcase, to an international audience, the valuable and diverse research in the field that has been happening at WAAPA.

THE AUSSIE EYE-TO-HEART CONNECTION

LEIGH KILTON-SMITH BRINGS HOLLYWOOD 'SMARTS' TO WAAPA

Leigh Kilton-Smith's webpage opens with the quote: "I train actors to be comfortable with the uncomfortable."

The LA-based acting teacher, who has honed her craft on the television and film sets of Hollywood, prepares actors so they are able to reveal the emotional truths required of them when the camera rolls.

"A director can spend a monologue trying to get a moment out of an actor and I can usually say three or four sentences and get even more because I have that relationship," she says. "That's the only reason I'm good at my job."

Leigh's client list speaks volumes to the esteem in which her skills are held. She has worked with a rollcall of famous actors, including Jennifer Aniston, Sam Rockwell, Danny Huston, Diane Lane, Gerard Butler, Felicity Huffman, Molly Sims, among many others.

A proponent of the Meisner acting technique, Leigh provides on-set coaching and runs classes for actors in LA and London. She also works with writers, directors and producers.

In May this year, Leigh Kilton-Smith brought her expertise to WAAPA for a week of masterclasses on camera work with students from the Acting, Music Theatre and Screen Acting courses.

"I've fallen in love with all of the students," laughs Leigh. "There's something so specific about Australian actors, there's an eye-to-heart connection and that makes for a very good actor because if you can feel it – not necessarily show it but just feel it – we'll see it in your eyes on camera."

Leigh, who had never been to Australia before, was keen to work at WAAPA

because of its strong focus on preparing students to be industry-ready.

"I'm very interested in any academic setting where the students are being prepared for the outside world, so not just in theatre, not just in television and film, but entire programs. I go to a few universities in the US to teach and a lot of them are not necessarily preparing the students in that way and it's the same with my teaching in London."

"Actors have to know how to train, how to prepare, how to show up, how to commit, how to step apart from themselves to give life to a character and so when I realised that WAAPA had something special going on, I was really tantalised."

Leigh loves working with actors. Early on in her career, while studying at the William Esper Studio in New York, she realised that her ability to articulate between the cerebral and the emotional made her a better teacher than an actor. She describes her artistry as being able to "pull an actor out of their head and get them back in their hearts pretty quickly".

She is also a champion of the director, and works hard to ensure a strong working relationship between the actor and director. For her, this means having an actor who is prepared but not wedded to their choices.

"We've gone through this phase, and I continue to do battle with it in LA, where preparation is sometimes perceived as the enemy of spontaneity and freshness to which I say that's a ridiculous lie," she says. "The more prepared actor is the more prepared to be more spontaneous, more receptive to other ideas – again, as long as they're encouraged to not attach

themselves to something that has not been approved by their director."

"I teach preparing in a way that makes it look as if the actor hasn't prepared at all. I want their highest level of spontaneity, I want their highest level of presence and if they understand the story."

For Leigh, understanding story is a crucial part of preparation. She teaches that every scene must relate to the entirety of the screenplay. When scenes are filmed out of sequence, she creates a visual guide so the actor can prepare by seeing the story arc and quickly place themselves in the emotional truth of a scene.

3rd Year Acting student Giuseppe Rotondella was inspired by Leigh's insights: "Leigh was an absolute legend to work with, her understanding of story structure and character truth have shifted my views as an actor."

Fellow Acting student Emma O'Sullivan was equally impressed.

"When doing scene work with Leigh she has this incredible ability to create a space that empowers you to push the limits of your craft as an actor, and then immediately afterwards she'll have everybody in the room dissolve into fits of laughter – both incredibly important things for training," Emma says.

"Working with Leigh was one of the most profound turning points I've had during my acting training at WAAPA, and lessons were learnt that I will hold with me for the rest of life."

Leigh Kilton-Smith's visit to WAAPA was made possible through the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation.



PUPPETRY PARTNERSHIP

WAAPA STUDENTS REIMAGINE A CLASSIC FAIRY TALE

A collage of edgy adult puppetry works inspired by the classic fairy tale, *Little Red Riding Hood*, was the basis of an exciting performance collaboration between WAAPA and Spare Parts Puppet Theatre in May.

WAAPA's 3rd Year students from the Bachelor of Performing Arts program worked with Spare Parts Puppet Theatre's award-winning Artistic Director, Philip Mitchell, to create a theatre show exploring the power and potential of puppetry, object manipulation and visual theatre in performance.

I See Red, featuring nine short pieces, was performed over two nights at Spare Parts Puppet Theatre in Fremantle. Described by Philip Mitchell as "very intriguing, funny and slightly disturbing", the works were the end product of this semester's puppetry and visual theatre unit at WAAPA, the only course of its kind in Australia.

David Zampatti, in his review for *The West Australian*, wrote that "the students gleefully cut and dice the old fairy tale, with often revelatory results... It's testament to the reach and variety of modern puppetry that WAAPA, always conscious of the career prospects of its students, has introduced puppetry into its syllabus."

This is the second year that WAAPA's 3rd Year BPA students have been offered the opportunity to study puppetry through an ongoing partnership with Spare Parts Puppet Theatre.

Last year, WAAPA student Barnaby Pollock's puppetry skills impressed the Spare Parts team so much that he was signed to work with the company this year. Now a graduate, he is currently on a 13-week contract touring Spare Parts' acclaimed work *Hachiko* throughout regional WA.

Pollock's fellow graduates, Zoe Hollyoak and Rachael Woodward, have recently been awarded two of the four places offered in Spare Parts' 2016 FirstHand emergent puppetry artist training program. Hollyoak and Woodward

will each be mentored by Spare Parts' artistic leaders, receive a \$3,000 seed fund to develop a puppetry project, and have a fee-free position in the company's two-week intensive skills training program.

With the profile and popularity of puppetry in Western Australia being fuelled by the PIAF Helpmann Award-winning outdoor event *The Giants* in 2015, the FirstHand program continues to be highly sought-after, with more than 20 applications received from local and interstate artists wishing to develop their skills with Australia's flagship puppetry company.

"There is so much exciting work going on in puppetry at the moment internationally and in contemporary performance that integrates puppets and objects in interesting ways," says Dr Frances Barbe, WAAPA Course Coordinator of the BPA program. "Our students need an understanding of those developments and they are very lucky to have Spare Parts Puppet Theatre on their doorstep. The Puppetry unit for the BPA program is taught in the Spare Parts venue and by Spare Parts creatives, so it's an exciting collaboration."

Philip Mitchell agrees that this is an important relationship. "We see puppetry as an essential part of any performer's tool belt and our partnership with WAAPA is ensuring that there are pathways for emerging performers to use puppetry in their practice in an informed and considered way. This is the beginning of something exciting and significant in contemporary theatre making in Australia."

"This partnership is unique in Australia and positions both WAAPA and Spare Parts Puppet Theatre as leaders in training for puppetry," he says. "Our hope is that these artists will pave the way for a much more visual language in performance making in Australia."

Production photos from 'I See Red'
Photos by Jan Green



MOMENT TO MOMENT



Actor, director and writer Andy Paris, a company member of New York's award-winning Tectonic Theatre Project, was a guest artist at WAAPA for two weeks in early June.

Tectonic Theater Project, founded in 1991 by Moisés Kaufman and Jeffrey LaHoste, develops innovative theatre pieces that explore theatrical language and form.

The company's groundbreaking plays, including *The Laramie Project*, *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* and *I Am My Own Wife*, have been produced throughout the world.

Drawing on the influences of physical theatre and modern dance, Tectonic has developed its own acting method, known as Moment Work.

Moment Work is a process that helps actors find ways to tell stories in a new and surprising way.

"'Tectonic' means the art and science of structure," says Andy. "So we break down the theatre work into its basic tools. Set, costume, props, convention, context, emotion ... it's a list of learned things that we as theatre artists have at our disposal to discover the poetry of each moment."

Andy describes the process of developing a theatre piece as a search for "these little building blocks of narrative, little moments that are powerful to us" that can then be put together to create a play.

Andy, who has been making theatre work for more than 25 years, believes that being involved in the creation

of a play makes a huge difference in performance.

"You are seeing a company that understands why they're performing a particular story in a particular time to a particular audience, and each actor knows what role they have in the telling of that story."

At WAAPA, Andy taught the principles of Moment Work to the 1st Year Acting students, ran workshops with the 2nd and 3rd Year Acting cohorts, and participated in a Q&A session open to all WAAPA students.

Andy Paris' visit was made possible through the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation.



In May, WAAPA's Production & Design students were hosted by the CATS Stage Management team and the Really Useful Company for a backstage view of *Cats the Musical* at Crown Theatre Perth.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A GLIMPSE OF WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING ON STAGE AT WAAPA

A View From the Bridge



LINK: Motion State



Les Liaisons Dangereuses



Dido and Aeneas



Bring It On!



Vortex

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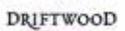
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Solo Stage: Deadly Sins



On Things That Matter



Dido and Aeneas