



INSIDE WAAPA

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CELEBRATION KUDOS

WAAPA CELEBRATES ECU'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A NIGHT OF MUSICAL TRIUMPH

The Perth Concert Hall was packed to capacity on Friday 12 August when WAAPA staff, students and graduates celebrated Edith Cowan University's 25th anniversary.

To the enthusiastic appreciation of the audience, what respected music critic Neville Cohn described as "a veritable torrent of talent" took to the stage in a night that showcased the breadth of WAAPA's music programs.

Half of WAAPA's 1200 students study music. WAAPA's Music program offers courses in classical instrumental music, classical vocal studies and opera, composition and music technology, contemporary music and jazz.

It was this brilliant diversity of musical talent that wowed the crowd, with performances by WAAPA ensembles including the WAAPA Big Band, Defying Gravity, Phat Phunk Band, Eneksis, the Indian Ocean Ensemble, the Faith Court Orchestra and the WAAPA Opera Chorus.

The student contribution was peppered by brilliant performances from staff such as WAAPA's Head of Strings Alexandre Da Costa, playing his rare Stradivarius violin.

WAAPA's high-achieving alumni were also featured: percussionist Marcus Perrozzi led Defying Gravity percussion ensemble through a performance of his work *Fire in the Sky*; jazz trumpeter Mat Jodrell performed with the WAAPA Big Band; singer/songwriter Helen Shanahan, backed by the WAAPA Gospel Choir, performed her song *Finding Gold*; and award-winning Australian conductor Jessica Gethin led the Faith Court Orchestra and choristers through the world premiere performance of fellow graduate Rebecca Erin Smith's *Speak*.

Smith, a Fulbright Scholarship winner, composed *Speak* to honour one of the most remarkable women in Australian history, Edith Dircksey Cowan, for her trailblazing work in women's literacy and education.

The father-son duo of baritone Michael Lewis OAM and tenor Alexander Lewis performed together on stage for the first time, bringing the house down with their rendition of *Au fond du temple saint* from Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*.

Alexander, a WAAPA Music Theatre graduate, who has already performed for Metropolitan Opera, New York and Komische Oper Berlin, will be making his Royal Opera House Covent Garden debut next month. Michael Lewis OAM is one of Australia's most respected baritones, highly regarded for his command of both operatic and concert repertoire. He is also a visiting voice lecturer at WAAPA.

The finale was a rousing, roof-lifting rendition of Sir Hubert Parry's *I was Glad* that filled the Concert Hall with the combined voices of the WAAPA Opera Chorus, the All Saints' College Choir and John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School Choir, with WAAPA's Associate Dean of Music, Stewart Smith, playing the Concert Hall organ.

In his review in *The West Australian*, Cohn wrote: "From traditional Japanese drumming to gospel singing, from big band favourites to *West Side Story* gems, this was an event to remember – and for all the best reasons ... The sheer verve and grandeur that informed this offering augur encouragingly for continuing music achievement during ECU's next 25 years."



Photos by Jon Green Photographer

THE MINCHIN MACHINE ROLLS ON

TIM MINCHIN AND JAMES MILLAR WIN HELPMANN AWARDS FOR MATILDA

WAAPA alumnus Tim Minchin had a lot to celebrate at this year's Helpmann Awards, held at the Sydney Lyric Theatre in July.

Matilda The Musical, for which Minchin wrote the music and lyrics, broke all records by winning every one of the 13 categories in which it was nominated.

The Helpmann Awards are the premier celebration of Australia's theatre industry and recognise excellence across fields as varied as comedy, cabaret and dance.

Minchin, who flew in from Los Angeles for the ceremony, won Best Original Score for *Matilda*.

Fellow WAAPA graduate James Millar won Best Male Actor in a Musical for his role as headmistress Miss Trunchbull.

Matilda also picked up awards for Best Musical, Best Director for Matthew Warchus, Best Supporting Actor and Actress, and awards for music direction, choreography, and lighting, scenic, costuming and sound design. The award for Best Female in a Musical was shared by the eight young performers who have played the role of Matilda in the Sydney and Melbourne seasons.

The Royal Shakespeare Company co-production, based on Roald Dahl's tale of a schoolgirl who outwits her nasty parents and ogre-like headmistress, has already won seven Olivier Awards in the UK and four Tony Awards on Broadway.

If the sweeping international success of *Matilda* wasn't enough, Tim Minchin's

new musical *Groundhog Day* recently opened in the West End to rave reviews.

The production is based on the 1993 Bill Murray movie about an unfriendly TV weatherman who lives the same day over and over again.

Theatre publication *The Stage* awarded *Groundhog Day: The Musical* a five-star rating after its premiere at London's Old Vic Theatre, with critic Mark Shenton calling it "an absolute musical triumph".

The Telegraph's theatre critic Dominic Cavendish, who also gave it five stars, wrote: "A much-loved, ingeniously funny and clever Hollywood film has made a triumphant theatrical rebirth – in a show that looks, on first viewing, equal to, and perhaps better than, the movie ... *Groundhog Day* is as funny and as touching as you could wish, and it lands with the confidence of an instant classic."

Groundhog Day reunites the masterminds behind *Matilda*, with Minchin once again penning the music and lyrics, Matthew Warchus directing and Peter Darling choreographing.

Groundhog Day will play at the Old Vic for ten weeks before officially opening on



Helpmann 2016 winners: Tim Minchin (above) and James Millar. Photo by Lightbox Photography

Broadway, New York in March next year.

Minchin is currently based in Hollywood, where he is writing the music and lyrics for the DreamWorks Animation comedy *Larrikins*, which he is also co-directing with Chris Miller.

Larrikins tells the story of a bilby who finds himself launched on a musical adventure across the Australian outback.

Voicing the animated movie will be an all-Australian cast including Hugh Jackman, Margot Robbie, Rose Byrne, Naomi Watts, Jacki Weaver, Ben Mendelsohn, Josh Lawson, Damon Herriman, and Ewen Leslie. Minchin will also voice a role.

Larrikins is due to be released in 2018. Perth audiences will get the opportunity to see James Millar in his award-winning role when *Matilda* opens at Perth's Crown Theatre in February 2017.



Photo by Elisabeth Clouter

SOLO VENTURES

During WAAPA's mid-year break, WAAPA's Head of Strings Alexandre Da Costa performed as a guest soloist with a number of international orchestras.

As part of his ongoing relationship with Canada's Orchestre de la Francophonie, the acclaimed virtuoso violinist performed with the orchestra at Lachine and at the Domaine Forget International Festival in St-Ir nee. He also appeared with the Laval Symphony Orchestra and with the Canadian Army's 22nd Regiment Orchestra.

In addition, the northern summer season took Da Costa to Buenos Aires

where he performed with the National Orchestra of Argentina, and to Spain where he was guest soloist with the Seville Royal Symphony in a concert attended by US President Barack Obama.

At the start of July, Da Costa and jazz pianist Graham Wood (WAAPA Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning) performed together in Canada at Montreal's Maison Trestler, at the Festival des Hautes-Laurentides in Mont-Tremblant and at the Ottawa Chamberfest. This followed on from their performances in June at the Perth International Jazz Festival.

AINSLEY SHINES AS ALADDIN

For Ainsley Melham, performing in one of Australia's most well-known children's musical groups proved to be the perfect training for making the leap to national stage shows.

After three years with Hi-5, the 2012 Music Theatre graduate left the singing and dancing group earlier this year to star in the Australian musical production *Xanadu* at Hayes Theatre Co.

"Hi-5 was a great training ground," Ainsley said in a recent interview. "It was high octane, but it also was perfect to learn how to be open and honest and connect with audiences."

"Kids can sense insincerity. So it's been good to learn how to be open and vulnerable on stage with the audience."

That honesty in performance is winning Ainsley accolades as the title character in Disney's musical *Aladdin*, which opened at

Sydney's Capitol Theatre in August.

Ben Neutze in *The Daily Review* wrote: "Of all the Disney films adapted for the stage so far, *Aladdin* is perhaps the most magical, requiring the most razzle dazzle ... Melham is still a relative newcomer, but very comfortably carries the title role, with his sweet and slightly dark singing voice."

The stage show of *Aladdin* debuted on Broadway in 2014 and has since toured around the world.

Ainsley appears as Aladdin alongside Broadway heavyweights Michael James Scott as Genie and Arielle Jacobs as Jasmine. Scott and Jacobs are original cast members from the show's first performance in the US.

Also in the Australian cast are fellow WAAPA graduates Dean Vince, Jakob Ambrose, Max Bimbi, Ross Chisari and Heather Manley.

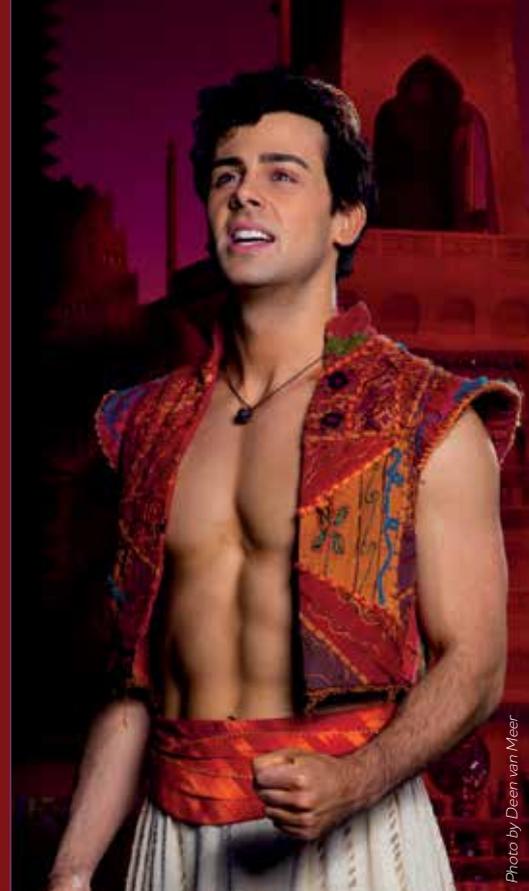


Photo by Deen van Meer

A COMMAND PERFORMANCE



Perth-based DJs Command Q are making a name for themselves in the electronic music scene for their unique, high energy sound.

WAAPA Music graduates Shaun Pickett and Louis Frere-Harvey combine DJ elements, drums and vocals to create a sound that crosses musical genres.

Command Q's debut EP *We Are Animals* was independently released in July and premiered at No.2 on the iTunes dance album charts.

Since then, their tracks have been picked up by big American DJ/producers Skrillex and Diplo, and in the local scene by Australian acts such as Alison Wonderland.

After supporting ShockOne's Australian tour earlier this year, Command Q's own tour kicked off in late July with shows around Australia and New Zealand.

"We both loved the never-ending possibilities of electronic music. No keys, bars, or strings to define what you create," says Shaun. "We got there using the skills we had learnt from WAAPA, such as how to market ourselves, network, perform on stage and create material."

The duo also see their WAAPA training, under Senior Lecturer in Music Tim White, as giving them a wide scope of musical knowledge that feeds directly into their work, allowing them the freedom to experiment with different styles of music.

Strong theory and aural skills honed at WAAPA have made it easy to work with other artists and their technical training has helped them in performance.

"One of Command Q's biggest assets is our performance," says Shaun. "Learning to exhibit energy whilst maintaining good

technique on the drums has been an essential element to our business."

Command Q are keen to build on their success with another tour planned for next year and a desire to move their sound into a more melodic area. But for the time being, they continue riding the wave of their growing fame.

Shaun describes recently doing a show in Townsville, having never been there before.

"The venue was unexpectedly packed to the brim of fans and the energy was incredible," he says. "It's those intense moments that regain any doubts you had about yourself."

Shaun believes that what WAAPA offers students is a 'wonderful temporary bubble' in which to learn.

"It doesn't last long and it is its own little world. Once you're out you will have to make the real industry networks and bust your guts starting from the ground up.

"So while you're at WAAPA, enjoy it, enjoy the people, make the most of them and make them your friends.

"The mentors at WAAPA are brilliant people and it's very hard to find good mentors once you're thrown out into the music industry so use them and take everything you can from them."

Photo: Louis Frere-Harvey (left) and Shaun Pickett

WAAPA'S MIRROR TENT

ECU is the first university in the world to acquire a Spiegeltent, providing a unique performance space for WAAPA students to hone their craft.

At WAAPA's Open Day on Sunday 14 August, the public was invited to watch WAAPA Contemporary and Jazz musicians showcase their talents in the venue for the first time.

WAAPA Director Professor Julie Warn said the Spiegeltent was a wonderful addition to ECU's Mount Lawley Campus.

"There's a whole range of different opportunities that can be offered to our students by having the use of this really alternative space," Professor Warn said.

"Performances might include plays, musicals, cabaret, comedy or improvisation for example," she said.

Spiegeltent is Dutch for 'mirror tent' due to the hand-made architecture of wood, mirrors, canvas and leaded glass, with intricate detailing in velvet and brocade. The tent will be named The Edith and WAAPA Props & Scenery graduate Jerome Davenport, now a muralist making his mark internationally, has been commissioned to reimagine the façade.

The Edith is one of just a handful Spiegel tents in the world and was designed by historical custodians of the ornate tents, the Klessens family in Belgium, who have been building Spiegel tents since the 1920s.

ECU's Spiegeltent is even more rare because it has the ability to expand and contract its configuration and capacity.



2nd Year BA Performing Arts (Performance Making) students Imogen Flint, Tim Bolton and Ravenna Boucaert in the WAAPA Spiegeltent. Photo by Stephen Heath Photography

Its extra-large configuration means it can extend out to an impressive 42m in length, allowing for a capacity of up to 300 guests.

Professor Warn said the unique nature of the Spiegeltent means students will need to learn to work differently to reach their audiences.

"You're not just at the front of the theatre so performers will need to play to all sides, using their voices and bodies differently."

"And it's not just performance students who will acquire new skills," Professor Warn said. "Working in this unique space also provides great learning opportunities behind the scenes for stage management, lighting, sound and production and design students."

"Let's not forget our WAAPA audiences too, they will love it," she said.

Fringe World Festival facilitated the acquisition of the Spiegeltent, and the Festival team is providing the expertise with erecting the tent for ECU.

Fringe World Chief Executive Marcus Canning said that ECU students would benefit from performing and working in the beautiful Spiegeltent.

"It's a world first for a university and a unique opportunity for ECU students to have access to their very own Spiegeltent. I look forward to them honing their skills and growing their creativity and potentially one day presenting work at future Fringe World festivals and beyond. This is another way that ECU and WAAPA are giving their students the absolute best opportunities to succeed and shine on a world stage, whatever their chosen field," Canning said.

HONORARY DEGREE FOR BEN ELTON



From left: Dean of WAAPA, Professor Julie Warn AM, Dr Ben Elton and Vice-Chancellor of ECU, Professor Steve Chapman CBE

At Edith Cowan University's graduation ceremonies in September, English comedian, writer, actor and director Ben Elton was the recipient of the honorary degree of Doctor of Arts Honoris Causa.

Dr Elton was a writer for the popular British television series *The Young Ones* and *Blackadder*. More recently he has produced West End plays, published several novels and is currently directing a feature film in WA.

The honorary degree recognises Elton's distinguished career in the arts as "an inspiring, charismatic personality and genuinely talented performer, artist and writer".

Dr Elton, who lives in Fremantle, is a great supporter of WAAPA. He was the patron and keynote speaker at last year's Musical Theatre Educators' Alliance Conference, which brought over 175 delegates from ten countries to WAAPA for a four-day program of masterclasses, workshops, panel discussions and entertainment.

In August, WAAPA's 3rd Year Music Theatre students performed the Australian premiere of Dr Elton's musical *The Beautiful Game*, with music by Andrew Lloyd Weber. The production was directed by award-winning choreographer/director Meryl Tankard.

ENRICHING EXPERIENCES



From left: Jack Thompson, Joe Windley, Hugh Hodgart and Russell Bolam.

Photo by Katy Wheatley

HIGH-CALIBRE VISITING ARTISTS SHARE THEIR EXPERTISE

JACK THOMPSON

Thanks to the Jackman Furness Foundation for the Performing Arts and the Minderoo Foundation, Australian screen legend Jack Thompson spent a week in July at WAAPA teaching Screen Acting classes to the 2nd and 3rd Year Acting students and Screen Performance Diploma students.

Thompson's masterclasses focused on his philosophy of acting and practical skills to 'feed the camera' and maximise the impact of the actor's on-screen presence.

Thompson discussed the process of collaborating with directors, actors and other members of creative teams and shared insights into his illustrious career.

HUGH HODGART AND RUSSELL BOLAM

Thanks to the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation, two of Britain's finest directors were visiting artists at WAAPA in August: Hugh Hodgart, Director of Drama, Dance, Production and Screen at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and Russell Bolam, previously Assistant Director with The Royal Shakespeare Company.

Hodgart directed *A Tale of Two Cities* with the 3rd Year Acting students in the Geoff Gibbs Theatre while Bolam directed the 2nd Year Acting students in William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in the Enright Studio.

Hodgart was delighted with his student actors. "The 3rd Year actors have been a real pleasure to work with. They are thoughtful, skilful, collaborative, hard-working, adventurous and, most importantly, full of fun!"

Bolam believes the joy of being a guest director in a drama school is that the student actors have been performing together for two to three years, a privilege he compares to the repertory systems in professional theatre in mainland Europe.

"At WAAPA you inherit a game-faced, show-ready ensemble," says Bolam. "My *Twelfth Night* cast is in their second year and yet this is their fifth public show. The rigour, dynamism, craft, and invention that crackles in the corridors of WAAPA explodes in the rehearsal room. I put this down to the amount of time the actors have spent with the greatest teacher and collaborator of all: the audience."

JOE WINDLEY

Thanks also to the Mindaroo Foundation, Hodgart and Bolam were joined at WAAPA by compatriot Joe Windley, Lead Voice Tutor at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

RADA is one of the oldest and most prestigious drama schools in England, boasting an impressive alumni of famous British actors, including Kenneth Branagh, the late Alan Rickman, Anthony Hopkins, Ralph Fiennes, Tom Hiddleston, Vivien

Leigh and Gemma Arterton, among many others.

Windley was struck by the openness of staff and students at WAAPA which he felt helps create a vibrant learning community. He says this is informed by unquestionable talent and directed by a great spirit of cultural and creative adventure.

"Perhaps it is historically born of life in a challenging physical landscape but I was impressed enormously by WAAPA students in terms of philosophical flexibility, energy and creative courage," Windley says. "It is wonderful to have travelled such a distance and to have arrived in an institution that is clearly a beacon of creative modernity ... what on the one hand may seem to be a place of geographical isolation actually is a place of great philosophical focus and attentive learning where students can work truthfully on themselves in the service of their chosen expressive art form."

"In my experience the teaching and learning standards at WAAPA are universally high and clearly the institution is a global player in that respect."

Being able to invite a range of guest artists to WAAPA is obviously a significant bonus to the students, however there is another less overt benefit for the guest artists themselves.

Hodgart describes meeting Windley in the "supportive and thoroughly professional" atmosphere at WAAPA as an unexpected pleasure.

"It's a real testament to the international ambitions of WAAPA, and the support it receives from the university and, crucially, from the Minderoo Foundation, that Joe and I should have travelled across the world to meet for the first time and to forge a firm personal and professional friendship which should reap future dividends for our two institutions back in our not-quite-so United Kingdom," he says.

"I'm sure these dividends will also benefit our friends here in Perth as we all seek to strengthen the links between us. The links between WAAPA and RCS, Glasgow and Perth, are strong and can only get stronger."

MICHAEL LOWENSTERN



American bass clarinetist and new music composer Michael Lowenstern was a guest artist at WAAPA from July 25-29.

Lowenstern has created numerous compositions for bass clarinet, both solo and with electronics. His works explore the possibilities of large ensembles of bass clarinets (done by multi-tracking), as well as juxtaposing the instrument with drum and bass-style beats more common to electronic dance music than to contemporary classical music.

During his week at WAAPA Lowenstern attended classes and rehearsals with the students, in particular a class on Contemporary Performance Practices with 2nd and 3rd year students. He performed a lunchtime concert with the woodwind and brass students, held a masterclass and recital with students Lorenzo Italiano, Jarrad Linke and Seonaid Parker, and took part in the woodwind and brass department's *Gabriel* to *Gershwin* evening concert.

Clarinetist Jarrad Linke, who is in his 3rd Year of a Bachelor of Music, described working with Lowenstern as "an incredible experience that I found truly invaluable and inspiring."

Seonaid Parker, who is in her Honours year on flute, said: "My thesis is actually on flute beatboxing, so having comments from Michael as well as watching him perform was an amazing experience. I played Ian Clarke's contemporary flute piece *The Great Train Race*, for which Michael gave me some brilliant feedback which inspired me to play for myself, do what I want with the music and to have as much fun as possible!"

Michael Lowenstern's visit to WAAPA was generously supported by the Jackman Furness Foundation for the Performing Arts.

MERYL TANKARD



In August, thanks to the generous support of the Jackman Furness Foundation for the Performing Arts, award-winning choreographer/director Meryl Tankard directed and choreographed the 3rd Year Music Theatre students in the Australian premiere of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Ben Elton's award-winning musical *The Beautiful Game*.

Tankard was the original choreographer on the soccer-inspired musical when it premiered in London's West End in 2000.

"Since that time I have always wanted to direct the production so I am thrilled to be at WAAPA now working with these enthusiastic and talented students," Tankard says.

Ben Elton attended the opening night of the WAAPA production.

"WAAPA is one of the world's great theatre arts schools," he says. "I know because I have had the enormous

pleasure of seeing many of its superb productions here in Perth and having worked professionally with its graduates both in Australia and the UK. I have also visited the Academy on a number of occasions to speak to the students, which is always an inspiring experience.

"I am therefore so pleased that WAAPA have chosen to stage the Australian premiere of *The Beautiful Game*. Andrew [Lloyd Webber] and I are delighted that it is finally to be seen here in Australia presented by this vibrant and immensely talented young company."

GABRIELLE MOLETA



Movement specialist Gabrielle Moleta spent two weeks at WAAPA in August working with students on animal transformation. Moleta, who trained in Paris, Vienna and London, teaches at RADA and works as a movement director on films and stage shows.

Moleta's one-week intensive workshop with the 1st Year Acting students challenged them to develop their imagination, concentration and sense of observation by using their animal transformations to understand their own bodies and physical capabilities. In the second week Moleta worked with students from the Bachelor of Performing Arts, Aboriginal Theatre and Music Theatre courses.

1st Year Acting student Shannon Ryan describes the week with Moleta as "invaluable. She brought an enormous wealth of knowledge about animal work and inspired us throughout the week with her insight."

Gabrielle Moleta's visit to WAAPA was generously supported by the Minderoo Foundation.



A PERCUSSION REVELATION

Tim White, Senior Lecturer in Music and Artistic Director of Defying Gravity percussion ensemble, mimes bouncing a ball. Each imaginary bounce is punctuated by Tim's vocal accompaniment of assorted sounds: "Doyng, doyng, donk, shoo, shoo."

Tim is demonstrating a work performed at the 2016 Australian Percussion Gathering in Brisbane by orchestral specialist Jean-Baptiste LeClère, in which the French percussionist mimed bouncing a ball to a series of taped sounds.

"Right at the end of the piece he pulled a real ball out of his back pocket and threw it into the air – but just once," laughs Tim.

This was just one example of a number of genre-bending percussion performances showcased at the APG, which Tim and 19 of his WAAPA percussion students attended from July 18-23 at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University.

The APG was a week-long event bringing together percussion students, educators, industry professionals, orchestra musicians and instrument makers from around the country.

The brainchild of Associate Professor Vanessa Tomlinson, Head of Percussion at Queensland Conservatorium, the inaugural APG was held in 2010.

Six years later, this year's APG boasted internationally renowned guest artists Jean-Baptiste LeClère, Kuniko Kato (Japan/USA), Aiyun Huang (Taiwan/Canada) and Michael Askill (Australia), and hosted 180 percussionists in nine conservatorium venues for lectures, masterclasses, workshops, rehearsals and a wide variety of performances.

These performances ran from 9am through to 9pm every day – even during the lunch breaks – and ranged from

traditional 'stand on stage and play' type works to those which, like LeClère's, stretched the boundaries of percussion music.

"Vanessa's aim is to enhance community, to share the joy of percussion and to further explore what 'percussion' is," explains Tim. "So for the students at the gathering, a lot of this was totally eye-opening because they were encountering concepts and ideas about 'percussion' that had never crossed their minds before."

Tim describes how one work used the performer's body as an instrument, while another involved a glass of red wine and spoken words.

**“WE CAME BACK,
OUR LIVES
TRANSFORMED”**

"What is the definition of 'percussion'?" asks Tim. "None of us really know, and that was part of the joy of this gathering. It seemed to me that a lot of these international specialists are still exploring what it means to be a percussionist – because sometimes it involves lots of instruments and mallets, and at other times we don't use any instruments at all. Instruments are constantly being invented and redesigned, and new ideas are being tried out that no one has ever seen before."

Aiyun Huang, Head of Percussion at McGill University in Montreal, is a specialist in percussion theatre. Her piece, *Cooking with Alice*, was inspired by one of the bestselling cookbooks of all time, *The Alice B. Toklas Cook Book*.

The work involves the playing of pre-recorded sounds while Huang 'played' a range of kitchen implements including two meat cleavers on a cutting board.

"She was effectively making a meal on stage and talking as she went," laughs Tim.

Tim and his students were especially struck by Kuniko Kato's performances.

Considered to be one of the most gifted and significant percussionists of her generation, Kato is renowned for her astonishing virtuosity, exquisite musical insight and expressive yet elegant performance style.

Her performance of a Bach chorale on the marimba "absolutely bedazzled everyone and made people cry," says Tim. "She also played the Iannis Xenakis multi-percussion solo pieces – works which are the staple of our multi-percussion solo repertoire, kind of like Bach for percussion – and she played them with an energy and a style that was just astonishing."

Another of Kato's works performed at the APG was the result of a year-long video project in which Kato has videoed herself playing all six parts of Xenakis's *Pléiades*, a huge percussion work for six instruments in four movements. She then uses a split screen to show the six versions of herself simultaneously performing all six parts.

Tim gave a paper on Baroque timpani and played a French timpani solo from 1695 by Jacques Philidore – which he describes as a surprise for many people who weren't aware there were any timpani solos written before 1950.

Tim's students, all members of WAAPA's award-winning percussion ensemble Defying Gravity, performed three times. Their main performance was a piece by WAAPA student Tao Issaro called *Trikaal*. With all 19 of WAAPA's students performing, Defying Gravity had far more players on stage than any of the other ensembles. ▶▶

ART SONG SUCCESS

WAAPA'S ART SONG ACADEMY ATTRACTS AUSTRALIA-WIDE INTEREST



Photo by Stephen Heath Photography

Trikaal uses darkness and lighting, percussion and singing, moving performers and three-dimensional soundscapes was quite different from many of the other tertiary offerings.

The first eight minutes of the piece is performed in complete darkness, in which a soundscape created by bells, aluminium tubes, cymbals and whirly tubes envelopes the audience. With the sound of vibraphones a tiny pool of light appears on stage that gradually widens to reveal the 19 percussionists.

"*Trikaal* starts so softly and ends with an absolute roar of sound, using this growing pool of light, sound and harmonic intensity," explains Tim. "It was something very different from traditional percussion ensemble repertoire."

Also performing from Western Australia was Kaboom Percussion, made up of ex-Defying Gravity members Catherine Betts and Joshua Webster. Accompanied by Defying Gravity, the duo performed their new work *Doomsday*, a 30-minute percussion piece based on a cartoon story about Superman.

The rich diversity of performances at the APG opened the WAAPA students up to new ways of thinking about percussion.

"The students' techniques got better and their musicianship improved but the big benefit was expanding the boundaries in their minds of what 'percussion' is; what kind of ideas you can share through percussion because they're not just musical ideas," says Tim. "And then outside the musical side of it, our students had a socially fantastic time, they took the most they possibly could from the whole event."

Next September marks Defying Gravity's 30th anniversary and Tim and his students are thrilled that Kuniko Kato has accepted their invitation to be the group's guest soloist for an 11-day residency.

"Rather than just see a player like Kuniko or Aiyun perform briefly up on a stage and then they're on a plane the next day, we got the chance to spend six days of quality time with them," says Tim. "And on the last night a group of Defying Gravity students and I talked late into the night with Kuniko, and shared a bite to eat with her and her husband Andy. Where else in the world could you hang out and spend quality time with one of the world's best players in such a great atmosphere?"

"We came back, our lives transformed. It was astonishing and wonderful."

Defying Gravity's tour was assisted by the generous support of the Friends of the Academy. ■

Celebrated British accompanist and vocal coach Dr Graham Johnson OBE and internationally renowned soprano Dame Felicity Lott were artists-in-residence from 2-10 July for the 2016 WAAPA International Art Song Academy.

WIASA aims to promote the performance of art song – poetry set to music, sung in a classical style – by bringing together internationally renowned practitioners with promising singers and pianists from Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

In their 40-year partnership, Dr Johnson and Dame Felicity have established themselves as the foremost English proponents of art song.

The two experts gave masterclasses and one-on-one lessons to WIASA's 26 participants: 21 singers and five pianists from Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Singapore. Dr Johnson specialised in the works of Schubert and Brahms while Dame Felicity Lott focussed on French repertoire from various periods.

For Dr Johnson, this is the third consecutive year that he has taught at WIASA.

"As I work with the singers, who increasingly come from all over Australia, I am struck by the fact that the raw talent presented here is on a par with what one may find in the UK or Germany within the same age-group," said Dr Johnson. "Indeed, the preparatory work at WIASA, particularly for those wishing to go on to post-graduate studies overseas, is fully the equal of any matching organisation in Europe or the USA – and in this field there are not many!"

WIASA concluded with a gala concert at Government House Ballroom, featuring the Academy participants accompanied by Dr Johnson on piano.

As in previous years, the feedback from those attending WIASA was unanimous in its praise.

Louise Hurley found the intensive program to be unlike anything else offered in Australia. "It is a unique opportunity for the aspiring artists of tomorrow to find growth year after year from the already spectacular roster of teachers WIASA has hosted," she said.

Fellow singer Emma Ashton described her experience at WIASA as transformative. "I cannot stress the importance of WIASA enough. To participate in a program of this level would usually require travelling halfway around the world."

In addition to meeting and performing with fellow singers and pianists from across Australia and beyond, Emma said that sharing the stage with Dr Johnson and her fellow participants in the gala concert was "a dream come true and a major highlight of my performing life so far!"

Brisbane pianist Mark Connors found the experience to be immersive and revelatory. "The depth of sincerity and emotional involvement in performance demanded of us by Dr Graham Johnson, as well as the tremendous depth of knowledge and insight about the repertoire which he shared with us, has inspired me to make more sensitive musical decisions and to respect the context for the creation of each work.

"A true highlight of the Academy for me was the chance to perform alongside Graham in duet for the gala concert; it was impossible not to be moved by his intense musical energy."

WIASA is generously supported by the Jackman Furness Foundation for the Performing Arts.



Photo by Jacques Roberts

CANADIAN CLASSICS

SIX MUSIC STUDENTS TOUR WITH CANADA'S ORCHESTRE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

In July and August, six Classical Music students travelled to the far side of world to perform and tour with Canada's Orchestre de la Francophonie.

Teresa Vinci (violin), Madeleine Antoine (violin), Alix Hamilton (viola), Daniel Price (viola), Andrea Sitas (double bass) and Thomas Robertson (percussion) were invited to tour with the OF, a Montreal-based orchestra for young musicians on the cusp of careers in national and international orchestras.

OF comes together for only seven weeks of the northern hemisphere summer under chief conductor and artistic director Jean-Philippe Tremblay.

Tremblay and Da Costa have long been friends. They studied together as violinists and continue to work together, with Da Costa performing as a guest soloist with the OF more than 40 times in its 15-year history.

Now, as WAAPA's Head of Strings, Da Costa is forging an exciting new partnership with Tremblay – the opportunity for the best of WAAPA's classical music students to play with the OF for its annual summer program.

Da Costa describes the OF as 'the real deal' – it being highly competitive to win a place and once in, the six-week touring schedule packs in some 30 pieces of different repertoire to be performed at up to 20 concerts.

"Invitations are made to candidates all over the world, they have to send a recording to be selected and then they have to audition on site for the position they will hold," explains Da Costa. "This year there were musicians from the United States, Brazil, Argentina, Canada,

France, Germany, so many countries where music is very high on the priority list."

Da Costa is justly proud of his students, believing that all six are "very, very good representatives of what we do here at WAAPA".

In particular, postgraduate students Teresa Vinci, Madeleine Antoine and Alix Hamilton were all invited to be the principal players in their sections, with Teresa chosen to be concertmaster (leader of the first violin section) for several of the programs.

"That's the highest ranking position you can possibly get in such an orchestra so we were very proud of her," says Da Costa.

Viola player Daniel Price was also impressed at how WAAPA's three postgraduate students shaped up against the other players from around the world.

"The three postgraduate students took the seats of principal violist, first violinist and concertmaster which has given me a new found respect for both my peers and little old Perth, we have some great talent!"

The OF tour, which started in its home base of Montreal, took in venues across the east coast of Canada, including Quebec City, Ottawa and Toronto.

Daniel found the hours spent on buses travelling to venues had a wonderful upside: plenty of time for musical discourse. "It was an amazing wealth of collective knowledge that I was given the chance to tap in to," he says. "Now I know the best way to learn more about music: talk to those who are passionate about it."

Not only were these musicians passionate, they were highly skilled. The youngest member, who had just turned 18, was about to start his studies at Julliard while older members of the orchestra were already playing part or full time with professional orchestras around the world.

"It was an inspirational standard to aim for and an insight as to what having an orchestral job would feel like," says Daniel.

Percussionist Thomas Robertson, who was recently awarded the Helen Court Prize for most outstanding graduating Classical Music student, says the musicians in the orchestra were amazing to work with and that he learnt how to put large amounts of repertoire together in a short amount of time.

Beyond the obvious benefits for the students, Alexandre Da Costa believes the bigger picture for WAAPA is bright. "It was great for the students of course but it was also a good thing for us to just show the world what we do here at WAAPA and how much talent we have."

Once the six students were back at WAAPA and the news of their Canadian travels spread, the next aspiring hopefuls were lining up to audition.

"The students have already asked me when I will select next year's candidates!" laughs Da Costa.

"I hope this will become a tradition, something that we can offer every year. I hope also that the students will take this as a bit of a perk to be at WAAPA."

Thanks to the Friends of the Academy for their support of the Canadian tour.

BERLIN BOUND

SAM ROBERTS-SMITH WINS TO SING AT ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT OPERA HOUSES



West Australian baritone Sam Roberts-Smith is the inaugural winner of the Deutsche Oper Berlin Award from the Opera Foundation for Young Australians.

Although this is the 27th year that the Foundation has offered a German Opera Award, it is the first time that the award has been offered by the Deutsche Oper Berlin.

This award contracts the winner as a member of the Deutsche Oper Berlin for a period of ten months for the 2017-18 season.

"I feel very grateful being the first ever recipient," says the 2008 WAAPA graduate of his win. "The Deutsche Oper Berlin is one of the greatest opera houses in the world. This is a life-changing opportunity."

Since completing his studies at WAAPA, Sam has won numerous competitions and awards including the Australian Singing Competition, the Joan Sutherland Vocal Scholarship, Symphony Australia Young Vocalist Award, and winner of multiple prizes at the International Paris Opera Awards held in Paris, France.

Sam was a member of Opera Australia's Young Artist Program before joining the Principal Artist roster. Last year Sam returned to Perth as one of West Australian Opera's inaugural Mentored Artists. He also performed in China with the Australian International Opera Company and toured North America with Australia's premier classical-

crossover group, The Ten Tenors.

In October, Sam makes his role debut as *Zurga* in *Les Pêcheurs de perles* for WA Opera.

Sam sees winning the Deutsche Oper Berlin Award as offering unparalleled access to European contacts. First duty though before he takes up his contract is a month-long intensive German language course.

"This is just the beginning of an exciting new chapter for me on the international stage."

Congratulations to three 2014 graduates of WAAPA's Graduate Diploma (Opera) course who have won awards from two of the UK's finest institutions for classical music.

Soprano Corinne Cowling, studying for her Masters of Music in Vocal Performance at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, was a prize winner at the Franz-Schubert-Institut Competition, receiving a scholarship for the 2016 Franz-Schubert-Institut Master Course in Baden Bei Wien, Austria.

Samantha Clarke, who is completing her Masters of Music at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, has been awarded the Dame Eva Turner Award, and the Joyce and Michael Kennedy Award for the singing of Strauss.

Daniella Sicari, also completing her Masters at the Royal Northern College of Music, has been awarded the Amanda Roocroft Prize.

RESEARCH EXCHANGE

In July, WAAPA welcomed three German academics from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg as part of a prestigious exchange program.

Professor Georg Hadju, Dr Jacob Sello and PhD student Xiao Fu spent two weeks at WAAPA for the first phase of the Australia-Germany Joint Research Co-operation Scheme.

Made possible through a partnership with Universities Australia and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Germany's national agency for the support of international academic cooperation, the scheme aims to foster research collaboration of the highest quality between Australian and German researchers and academics.

The scheme will support exchanges between the two countries for academics working on joint research projects. The support of early career researchers and junior scholars is a significant focus of this scheme.

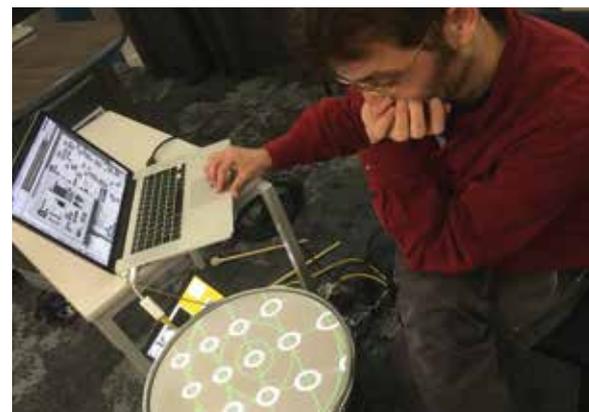
While at WAAPA the visiting academics worked closely with WAAPA exchange partners Associate Professor Cat Hope, Dr Lindsay Vickery, Dr Stuart James and PhD student Aaron Wyatt.

The projects collaborated on included: developing internet capacity for the WAAPA commercialised research project; the Decibel Score Player; internet performance hook ups with Stanford University and the Hamburg Hochschule; and the creation of new work using Hamburg's Quintet.net and MaxScore programs.

Three world and two Australian premieres were showcased in a *Sound Unbound: Music From Visitors Concert* in July with members of the Decibel new music ensemble and guest dancer/LINK graduate Laura Boynes performing works by Hadju, Fu, Sello, Hope and Vickery.

The visitors also gave a presentation at a composition workshop and attended a performance by Stuart James (ECU) and Louise Devenish (UWA) at the State Library of WA as part of the Western Australian New Music Archive Series.

The WAAPA researchers will travel to Hamburg in November 2016 and the Hamburg academics will return to Perth in March 2017.



Visiting German academic Jacob Sello with his interactive drum

LINK IN EUROPE

WAAPA's contemporary dance company LINK set off on June 20 for its annual month-long overseas tour.

Members of LINK, accompanied by LINK Artistic Director Michael Whaites, participated in workshops and performed in Marseille and Montpellier in France. Their final destination was Amsterdam, where their three-day stay culminated in a performance at the Vondelpark Openluchttheater (Open Air Theatre) to an audience of 500 people.

Dancer Tanya Brown describes the tour: "What an opportunity to experience, learn, meet people, and dance, dance and dance. For some of us it was our first time to Europe, and what an incredible first time it was!

Landing in France, performing and workshoping in Marseille and Montpellier, with renowned artists Didier Theron, Christine Fricker and Léa Canu Ginoux. In Montpellier we were able to soak up Montpellier Dance Festival and its overflow of performances. We would just casually walk past Emmanuel Gat drinking his morning coffee in a cafe, before seeing his show a few hours later.

All of us then ventured with our own itineraries – experiencing the dance in Berlin, others the columns in Rome, others through Italy, Switzerland, London and Wales – before meeting again in Amsterdam. It was here, between the canals and bikes, we performed on an open stage at Vondelpark, to hundreds, with the sunset as our backdrop!

It was then on to participating in workshops: Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, Netherlands Dance Theatre, Maurice Causey, Michael Schumacher at the Henry Jurriens Foundation in Amsterdam and ImPulsTanz in Vienna.

All in all, it was a phenomenal experience and we would all like to thank all those who played a part in making it happen and for the support! It's from experiences like this we grow as artists and as people, thankyou."

The LINK tour was assisted by the generous support of the Friends of the Academy.



From left: Tanya Brown, April Vardy, Anthony Rinaldi and Cheyenne Davis.



The ancient amphitheatre of Epidaurus in Greece.

Photo by Alex Daily

In the mid-year break, the 3rd Year Acting students experienced theatre of a very different kind from their usual shows at WAAPA: they performed Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* in an amphitheatre on the Greek island of Hydra.

The 19 Acting students performed as part of Hydrama, a unique theatre and arts festival in Vlychos, Hydra. They were accompanied on the trip by Assoc. Prof. Andrew Lewis, WAAPA's Associate Dean of Performance, and music student Amelia Jutilane-Maynard, who composed and performed the music in the play.

British actor/director Corinna Seeds, who has lived in Vlychos since 1988, launched Hydrama in 1999 and since then has hosted performing arts students and professional companies from all over the world for her annual summer festival.

Before landing in Greece, half of the WAAPA contingent spent five days at the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, where they performed *Les Liaison Dangereuses*, directed by Crispin Taylor and attended classes with the HKAPA students.

The WAAPA students then enjoyed a week of free travel before rendezvousing with the rest of the cohort in Athens, where they boarded a boat for the hour and a half journey to the island of Hydra.

The students had performed *Coriolanus* earlier in the year in WAAPA's Roundhouse Theatre under the direction of visiting artist Michael Jenn. For Hydrama, the play was edited down from three hours to an 80-minute snapshot version. Through the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation, Michael Jenn spent a week in Hydra rehearsing the cut-down play for the different demands of an open-air venue.

Assoc. Prof. Lewis felt the students became more embodied, both vocally

and physically, in response to the environment. "Suddenly the text became alive in a way that it doesn't in a studio because the actors were performing in the place where theatre was born."

Acting student Will McNeill found the dramatic heft of *Coriolanus* was a perfect choice for the space and audience, as it allowed the students to use all the levels, scenery and ambiance of the open-air venue.

"Often we could hear the larger scenes of the play echoing throughout the mountains behind us – as well as the occasional interruption from the donkey sitting at the top of the amphitheatre," he says.

The performance was attended both by the locals and by students from the other performing arts school at the festival.

"The whole village came out to watch the play, it was a packed amphitheatre and the audience was spellbound," says Assoc. Prof. Lewis. "Some of them didn't speak English but they seemed to understand the story anyway."

One of the highlights of the trip was seeing Aeschylus' trilogy *The Oresteia* performed on the mainland in the ancient theatre of Epidaurus. The amphitheatre, which was built in the 4th century BC, seats up to 14,000 people and is renowned for its exceptional acoustics.

"Being able to see the performing arts in other countries was enlightening and wonderful to experience," says Will. "Experiencing audiences' reactions in different countries was interesting as well – and notably, exploring and witnessing part of the history of Greek theatre in the best way possible."

Michael Jenn's visit to Hydra was made possible through the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation.

LIVING THE DREAM

TWO OF LAST YEAR'S ACTING GRADUATES STAR IN BARRACUDA

It's every acting student's dream to step straight out of drama school into a job. While many have to wait for their big break, the dream did happen for two of WAAPA's 2015 graduates.

Ben Kindon and Andrew Creer both scored leading roles in the four-part Australian television drama series *Barracuda*, which premiered on the ABC in July.

Ben played Martin Taylor and Andrew took the role of John 'Wilco' Wilkinson.

Based on the 2013 novel of the same name by Christos Tsiolkas, *Barracuda* explores Australia's national obsession with sport and the relentless demands placed upon young athletes.

Ben made his television debut in the series while Andrew came to *Barracuda* after having played the role of Kevin Holmes in the television version of *Tomorrow When the War Began*.

After casting 2011 WAAPA graduate Alex Williams as the young Julian Assange in his 2012 television film *Underground: The Julian Assange*, award-winning director Robert Connolly returned to WAAPA last year to audition for *Barracuda*.

Here Ben and Andrew share their thoughts on acting, swimming and drama school:

IW: What was the best thing about working on *Barracuda*?

Ben: *Barracuda* was wonderful for me, I can't imagine a better inauguration into the industry. It's a deeply moving story that I desperately wanted to tell, and I was privileged enough to work with so many veteran actors like Rachel Griffiths, Matt Nable, Helen Morse, Victoria Haralabidou, Jeremy Lindsay Taylor, all from whom I learnt infinite amounts just from watching. At drama school, you only work with people around your age, and that poor guy who always got stuck playing the grandpas with talcum power in his hair, so it was really nice to work with an age diverse cast.

Andrew: Filming on *Barracuda* was a blessing. The freedom Rob gives you as an actor to play and try new and things is such a treat.

IW: How did you prepare for the role - were you required to do swimming training?

Ben: The producers organised a few ex-Olympians to work with us in the weeks leading up to filming to get our

swim stroke looking right. We didn't need to be fast enough to go to Rio, but we did need to *look* like we could for the two or three seconds that the shot is on us. So it came down to fixing up our individual strokes, and we had the lovely Nicole Livingstone and Kenrick Monk working with us a couple of times a week until we were up to scratch.

Andrew: For *Barracuda* we were asked to reach a moderate level of swimming as swim doubles were being provided. We needed to look aesthetically like a swimmer and be able to dive/tumble-turn so the swim doubles could do the rest. However I wanted it to be completely believable that Wilco could in fact be an Olympian. To do this I trained twice a day every day, swimming in the morning before shooting and gym or yoga every night after shooting. I spoke in depth with the Victorian Institute of Sport swimmers about their training program and mimicked it as closely as possible. The great thing was, swimming is a very meditative sport allowing me extensive time to think through characterisation and scene preparation. Making myself wake at 4.30am each morning to swim every day was tiresome but a great way to own the character.

IW: How did your WAAPA training prepare you to step straight into television work?

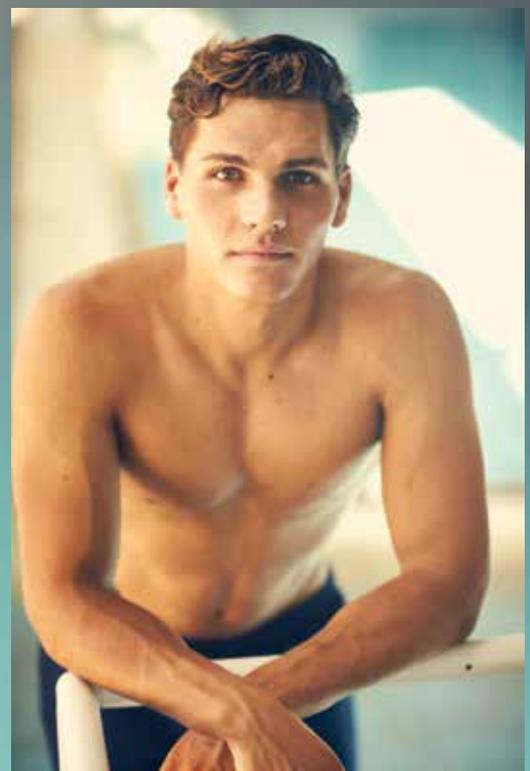
Ben: The most useful thing for me were the films we did in third year when we teamed up with the WA Screen Academy. The way those sets were run is really similar to the way it's done out in the business, so that when I first stepped on to the set of *Barracuda* I didn't feel like a complete fish out of water (pun intended).

Andrew: The short films we do with WASA is a small-scale experience, but still totally relevant experience of what a film/TV set is really like.

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

Ben: Being able to act every day. And I really urge current students to enjoy that and make the most of it, because that doesn't happen out in the real world and it hits you hard.

Andrew: What is most enjoyable is the change you constantly see occurring to those around you and to yourself. It's the joy of trying new things, things you never would have considered yourself to do before, let alone master, that I truly



From top: Ben Kindon and Andrew Creer

Photos by Ben King

enjoyed. Three years of intensive training and the freedom to scrutinise every aspect of the art while also having the opportunity to fail and learn from failure is a gift.

IW: What's next for you?

Ben: The same as everyone else I guess, auditioning and having my fingers crossed!

Andrew: I was in Perth in August working on the short film *Adult School*. Then in September I'm boarding a plane to the USA to start shooting my first feature film.

Barracuda was released on DVD in September.

FLYING HIGH

WAAPA Dance student Jordan Bretherton has been cast in the Australian production of *Lord of the Flies*, to be performed at Melbourne's State Theatre in April 2017.

Choreographer Sir Matthew Bourne is bringing his acclaimed adaptation of the coming-of-age classic to Melbourne next year for its first run outside Britain.

His company, New Adventures, debuted *Lord of the Flies* in Britain in 2011 and brought it to 13 cities, with a different cast each time.

Sir Matthew Bourne OBE is a five-time Olivier Award winner and is the only British director to have won the Tony Award for both Best Choreographer and Best Director of a Musical.

His production of *Lord of the Flies* is based on William Golding's classic 1954 novel about a group of boys who turn on each other after finding themselves on a deserted island. The New

Adventures version swaps the island for an abandoned theatre.

Jordan, who is in his final year of a Bachelor of Arts, will be one of five Australian dancers who will join three UK dancers and the most promising young talent from workshops held in Victoria.

New Adventures' charitable arm, Re:Bourne, has partnered with 25 community organisations across Victoria to hold workshops with teenage boys and young men curious to experience dance and performance.

The Australian production of *Lord of the Flies* will run for five performances.

2015 graduate Scott Elstermann and Linton Aberle also auditioned for *Lord of the Flies*, making it through to the final round.



Jordan Bretherton (centre) in a WAAPA 3rd Year self-devised work with Jack Ryan (back) and Mohammed Berrached.



SALLY BURTON WINNERS

3rd Year Acting students Anneliese Apps and Rory O'Keeffe have won the 2016 Sally Burton Awards.

Nurturing young artistic talent has long been a passion for Sally Burton, the widow of the great Welsh actor Richard Burton. All students in 3rd Year Acting at WAAPA are invited to perform for the annual prizes – one for a male, one for a female – worth \$2,000 each.

The students are required to perform a Shakespearean text monologue or duologue. The judging is based on the ability to speak the verse, connect to the text, interpret the content and present the finished work.

Sally Burton sees it as fitting that funds from her husband's estate – the philanthropic money comes mainly from Richard Burton's film royalties – are being used to support aspiring actors.

Many of the past recipients of the Sally Burton Award go on to achieve success in the film, television and theatre industries. Past winners include James Mackay and Matthew Levett, who both went on to win the prestigious Heath Ledger Scholarship; Abby Earl, who is enjoying a long-running role in the hit TV series *A Place To Call Home*; and last year's winner Ben Kindon, who stepped out of drama school into a lead role in *Barracuda*.

Top: Anneliese Apps, Sally Burton and Rory O'Keeffe.
Bottom: The 3rd Year Acting cohort with Sally Burton.



CULTURAL MOVES

In August, 1st Year Dance student Nadia Martich participated in the Indigenous Dance Residency at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Canada.

IDR brings together acclaimed choreographers and teachers with dancers from across Canada and around the world to share, investigate, and strengthen contemporary Indigenous dance practice. Only 12 dancers are accepted into the program every year.

The four-week intensive program features technique, improvisation, choreographic exploration, cultural process and knowledge, health and fitness, leadership, and the creation of a new short choreographic work that is performed in-studio and on stage.

Nadia, along with Indigenous dance students from New Zealand, Canada and Mexico, spent her month in Banff engaged in daily technique classes in ballet and contemporary dance, fitness and strength building classes, mask workshops, and rehearsals.

At the end of the month, the IDR concluded with the participants performing a program of new works at The Banff Centre. Nadia danced

in a work created by New Zealand choreographer Taane Mete. "I really enjoyed working with Taane as I was thrown in deep end and always felt challenged," says Nadia. "The piece was one of the most physically exhausting works I've ever danced."

In addition to working with internationally acclaimed choreographers such as Mete, Nadia was mentored by established contemporary dancers who were "always giving me tips and pointers and helped me grow in confidence as the month progressed."

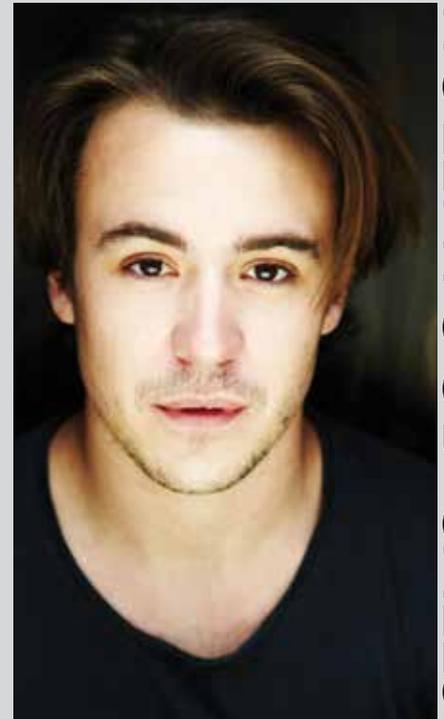
"There was so much to learn and gain from each of the dancers as well as the staff who had so much knowledge to share about Indigenous arts and dance."

Nadia believes the most important benefit of participating in the IDR was making connections with the other dancers. "They were each so passionate about their Indigenous culture and how they could explore and represent that through dance," she says. "I would definitely want to collaborate with them in the future."

Nadia's trip to Banff was generously supported by The Australia Council.



Top photo: Nadia Martich (fifth from left) with participants of the Indigenous Dance Residency in Banff, Canada.
Bottom photo: Performance choreographed by Taane Mete.



HOLLYWOOD CALLS

2011 Acting graduate Ben O'Toole has been cast in director/producer Kathryn Bigelow's upcoming film about the 1967 Detroit Riots.

Kathryn Bigelow is best known as the director of *The Hurt Locker*, which won the 2009 Academy Award for Best Picture and BAFTA Award for Best Film. With *The Hurt Locker*, Bigelow became the first woman to win an Academy Award for Best Director.

For the as-yet-unnamed film, Bigelow will be teaming up again with her *Hurt Locker* and *Zero Dark Thirty* screenwriter, Mark Boal.

Ben will star alongside Will Poulter and Jack Reynor in the crime drama, set during Detroit's devastating riots that took place over five days in the summer of 1967. The release date is set for 2017, the 50th anniversary of the riots.

While Will Poulter (*We're the Millers*, *The Revenant*, *The Maze Runner*) and Jack Reynor (*Transformers: Age of Extinction*, *Sing Street*) are both known to film audiences, Ben is considered the discovery of the ensemble.

Since 2013 Ben has enjoyed a long-running role as Pete in the three series of *Love Child*, and in 2014 made his film debut in Russell Crowe's *The Water Diviner*. He will next be seen in Mel Gibson's film *Hacksaw Ridge*, due in cinemas in November, followed by a role in *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*, due for release in May next year.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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



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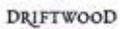
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