

waapa

Edith Cowan University

INSIDE WAAPA

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY
OF PERFORMING ARTS

Official newsletter of the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, Edith Cowan University (Issue 53) September 2018

FROM PAGE TO STAGE

Student creatives shine in
Sondheim masterpiece

MAT VEREVIS WINS
Helpmann Award

DAINA REID DIRECTS
The Handmaid's Tale

CONSTANZA HERRERO WINS
John Lennon Songwriting Contest





Mat Verevis as Barry Mann and Lucy Maunder as Cynthia Weil in 'Beautiful: The Carole King Musical'
Photo by Ben Symons

A BEAUTIFUL WIN FOR VEREVIS

FROM THE VOICE TO A HELPMANN AWARD, MAT VEREVIS IS GETTING NOTICED FOR ALL THE RIGHT REASONS



Photo by James Morgan Photography

At a ceremony at the Sydney Town Hall on 15 July, singer, songwriter and actor Mat Verevis took out the 2018 Helpmann Award for Best Male Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical.

The 2012 WAAPA Music Theatre graduate won for his portrayal of songwriter Barry Mann in the Australian production of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*.

The Helpmann Awards are Australia's most prestigious annual accolades for live entertainment and performing arts.

When *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* opened last September at Sydney's Lyric Theatre, it marked Verevis' professional music theatre debut.

"It's been a wonderful and deeply rewarding experience," says Verevis. "The show itself was a joy to do but really the people who I worked with made it so enjoyable."

Fellow WAAPA graduate Lucy Maunder joined the show for its Melbourne season, replacing Amy Lehpamer as Verevis's onstage wife, Cynthia Weil. Prior to this role, Lucy was a

perfectly cast Miss Honey in *Matilda: The Musical*, a performance which earned her a 2017 Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role in a Musical.

Other WAAPA graduates in *Beautiful* included ensemble members Jason Arrow (2016), Stefanie Caccamo (2016), Andrew Cook (2011) and Julia Dray (2013).

In 2014, Verevis gained national recognition as a contestant on the third season of *The Voice Australia*. After finishing in the top four on team will.i.am, he was offered a major recording/publishing deal with Universal Music Group.

He describes WAAPA as being a supportive environment where he could try things without the pressure of having to succeed.

"It's not about being perfect at WAAPA – it's really about starting to find who you are as an artist and performer," he explains.

"Being at WAAPA gave me the opportunity to hone my skills and get them industry ready. It gave me an understanding of how the industry works and the work ethic you need to be successful in it."



DIRECTOR'S CUT

AUSTRALIAN ACTOR-TURNED-DIRECTOR DAINA REID ENJOYS INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS

Highly sought-after Australian film and television director Daina Reid scored her first overseas television series earlier this year on the critically acclaimed drama, *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Reid was invited to direct episodes 11 and 12 in the second season of *The Handmaid's Tale* on the strength of her previous work in the ABC's *The Secret River*.

"If you look at the way *The Secret River* is shot and the way that *Handmaid's* is shot, there are similarities in the way we approached it," Reid explained in a recent interview.

Reid, who graduated from WAAPA's Acting course in 1990, started her career in the film and television industry as a comedy writer and actor.

She began directing television shows in 2002 and directed her first feature film, *I Love You Too*, in 2010, starring Brendan Cowell, Peter Helliar, Peter Dinklage and Yvonne Strahovski. Eight years later and on the other side of the world, Reid again directed Strahovski, this time in her Emmy-nominated performance as Serena Joy Waterford in *The Handmaid's Tale*.

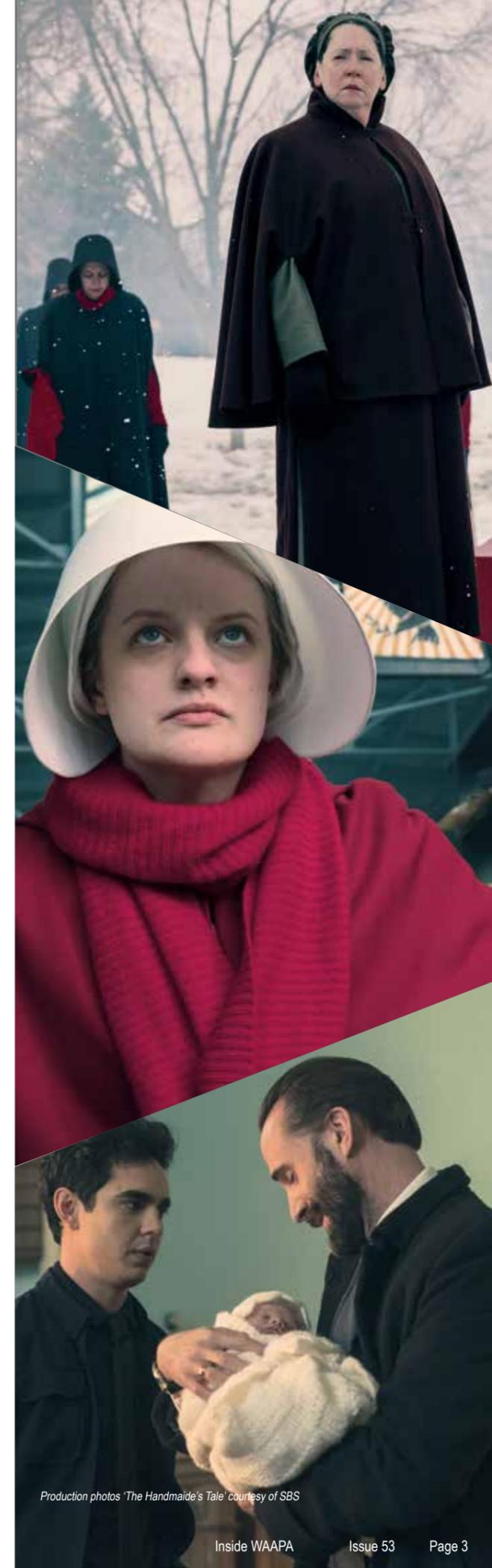
In addition to *The Secret River*, Reid's other Australian television directing credits include *Offspring*; *The Wrong Girl*; *Nowhere Boys*; *The Dr Blake Mysteries*; *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*; *Satisfaction*; *Rush* and *City Homicide*, among many others.

Reid is a frequent collaborator of award-winning producer John Edwards. Their collaborations include *Paper Giants: The Birth of Cleo* and *Howzat! Kerry Packer's War*, both of which received AACTA award nominations for Best Direction. Following the success of *The Birth of Cleo*, Reid directed the follow-up *Paper Giants: Magazine Wars*.

Reid's most recent directing credits include stints on *The Spanish Princess* for Starz; the series remake of the classic Australian film *Romper Stomper*; *Hunters*, an alien conspiracy series based on the best-selling novel, *Alien Hunter*; and the award-winning *Sunshine*, a four-part miniseries which won Reid the Australian Directors' Guild (ADG) Award for Best Direction.

In 2017, Reid received the Michael Carson Award at the ADGs, in recognition of her excellent contribution to television drama directing.

Following the success of *The Handmaid's Tale*, Reid is now in demand internationally, working on a television project in the UK and in development on a thriller feature for Carver Films (*The Snowtown Murders*).



Production photos 'The Handmaid's Tale' courtesy of SBS

Photo by Marnya Rothe Photography



MEYNE MAKES HIS MARK

In June, WAAPA graduate Meyne Wyatt starred alongside Aaron Pedersen and Judy Davis in the ABC's critically acclaimed series, *Mystery Road*.

Wyatt played the role of Cedric Thompson, the brother of one of the boys whose disappearance kick-starts the gripping crime drama.

This was the latest credit for the 28-year-old actor whose consistent work across stage and screen includes playing Edmund in the Neil Armfield-directed production of *King Lear* for the Sydney Theatre Company in 2016; his trailblazing role as the first Indigenous actor on *Neighbours* in 2014; his Logie award-nominated work in the second series of the ABC's *Redfern Now*; and his turn as Jimmy Middleton in the 2012 hit film, *The Sapphires*.

Wyatt is certainly fulfilling his promise as the winner of the 2011 Sydney Theatre Awards for Best Newcomer.

Originally from Kalgoorlie, Wyatt auditioned for what was then known as WAAPA's Aboriginal Theatre program after a chance encounter with the course coordinator, Rick Brayford.

"I think the course gave me the confidence to be more forthright, I just gave everything a go," says Wyatt.

WAAPA's Aboriginal Performance course is the only Australian tertiary course for

Indigenous performers that focuses entirely on acting.

"The major focus is on acting for stage and screen but it has a hefty components of contemporary indigenous dance, movement and singing," says Brayford.

"The special thing about this program is that the writing and plays we use for the students' showings, productions and screen work is usually all written by First Nations Australians. So what we are able to do in this rather white institution is put the Aboriginal voice right here in the middle."

After his time at WAAPA, Wyatt went on to win a coveted spot in NIDA's three-year acting degree, graduating in 2010.

This year's cohort of Aboriginal Performance students will be directed in their end-of-year production by Rachael Maza, artistic director of Australia's longest running Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander theatre company, Ilbjerri. Their production of *Fever*, four short plays by Andrew Bovell, Christos Tsiolkas, Melissa Reeves and Patricia Cornelius, will open on 16 November in WAAPA's Enright Studio.

WAAPA's Aboriginal Performance course is a one-year, full-time intensive course that prepares Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students for entry into theatre, film, television and radio work, or to audition for ongoing, high-level training.

A LOVE OF LIGHTING



A PASSION FOR LIGHTING DESIGN PROPELLED BENJAMIN CISTERNE INTO A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL CAREER

In The Australian Ballet's season of *Spartacus*, which opened on 18 September at the Arts Centre in Melbourne, Benjamin Cisterne proved yet again why he is one of Australia's leading lighting designers for theatre and dance.

The 2002 WAAPA graduate has worked as a lighting designer for 20 years.

"When I was a kid, I really enjoyed pulling things apart and working out how to put them back together," explains Cisterne. "I was really interested in the mechanics and technology of how something worked."

"By the time I was 14, I was doing the lighting at school for the drama productions... so it all really started by me following what I was naturally interested in doing."

After working as a general technician doing lights and sound for independent theatre companies in Sydney, Cisterne was encouraged by lighting designer and former WAAPA lecturer, Joe Mercurio, to study lighting design at a tertiary level.

Cisterne was accepted into WAAPA where he trained under Mark Howett and Eferpi Soropos.

"The WAAPA course was well rounded and I entered the industry with a solid base knowledge of the roles I could fulfil," he says. "When I graduated, I spent my first five years

in the industry as a junior, building on that learning and increasing my knowledge and skill set. Later with my move into the design field I found myself often referring back to those basic principles taught at WAAPA when beginning a project."

Cisterne now runs his own lighting design and consultancy business, working as a designer and design manager on projects throughout Australia and the world. In addition to his work with performing arts companies, he is renowned for his lighting designs and installations for museums, exhibitions and architectural projects.

His most recent work with the Australian Ballet on *Spartacus* is his sixth collaboration with the national company. He has also lit numerous shows for Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir, Sydney Dance Company, Chunky Move and Balletlab, and has worked with many of Australia's finest dance artists and performing arts companies.

Of his extensive portfolio of museum lighting, Cisterne is particularly proud of his work as the lead lighting design consultant on the upgrade to the First World War galleries at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. This was a four-year project that included a complete refit of the galleries, including new lighting designs to the dioramas.

Cisterne describes how diverse his working day can be, taking him from discussing an upcoming production with a choreographer in a dance studio, to running through cues with a director of a theatre work that's bumping in, to meeting with a construction manager on a building site to pass on instructions for the electrical contractor.

Cisterne's advice to budding lighting designers is to become a part of the industry by taking in everything that's available.

"See every performance you can. Go to every art gallery and museum, and see every film you can. Start building a library of 'intel' in your head and start collecting imagery that interests you for any reason," he recommends.

"If you can, go to university. Once out of uni, take some time to travel. There are so many opportunities to go on tour and spend time in Europe, Asia or the US. It will enable you to see more of the world. Your career will naturally unfold if you're interested in the industry and become a part of it."



Spartacus Photo by Jeff Busby



Production photos 'Mystery Road' courtesy of ABC



Photos by Jack Frieis



SONGWRITER SCORES A HIT

On 1 September, Australian/Chilean singer and songwriter Constanza Herrero was announced as a Grand Prize Winner in the 2018 John Lennon Songwriting Contest.

The 2015 Bachelor of Music (Contemporary) graduate took out the top award in the Latin category of this international competition for her song, *Me Voy*.

Founded in 1997, the John Lennon Songwriting Contest is open to amateur and professional songwriters who submit entries in any one of 12 categories.

Herrero's prize includes over \$8,000 in project studio equipment and a one-year music magazine subscription.

"It is a huge honour and I am so thankful," says Herrero of her win. "I've been writing since I was a teenager and the journey hasn't been easy. So receiving recognition for my music from such prestigious judges is a tremendous

encouragement, not only to continue working hard and not give up, but to reaffirm that it's been worth it."

Writing and singing in both English and Spanish, Herrero combines her Latin American musical roots with a pop, folk style. In November last year she launched her self-titled EP, produced by WAM award-winner James Newhouse.

Herrero plans to travel to the US to promote her EP: "I want to let my songs fly wherever they are meant to be heading and I want to continue to use my voice as an instrument to bring an honest and encouraging message to the world."

During her time at WAAPA, Herrero enjoyed being able to collaborate with other departments, singing with the percussion ensemble Defying Gravity and becoming the first vocalist to perform with the Latin Jazz Ensemble.

To hear Herrero's award-winning song, please go to: https://jlsc.com/winners/2018a/audio/Me_Voy.m3u

CHOREOGRAPHING FOR BIENNALE

In June, 2014 Dance graduate Ezgi Gungor was one of three young choreographers selected to create a new work for the 2018 La Biennale di Venezia Biennale Danza.

Gungor spent two months in Venice, undertaking a six-week creative process that culminated in a showing of her work at the Biennale Danza, the 12th International Festival of Contemporary Dance, which ran from 22 June to 1 July.

The Biennale promotes new talent by giving emerging choreographers and dancers the opportunity to work closely with experts in the profession to develop original works.

This year's emerging choreographers were chosen by internationally acclaimed Canadian dancer, choreographer and dance company director, Marie Chouinard.

In addition to studying creative process with Chouinard, Gungor was mentored by Isabelle Poirier, ballet master of Compagnie

Marie Chouinard; Belgian dance dramaturg Guy Cools; and Italian theatre director Simone Derai.

Gungor created her 20-minute work, *It carried with it salt lakes and crimsons sands*, on seven professional dancers. Original music for the piece was composed by Azariah Felton, a current Composition and Music Technology student in his Honours year at WAAPA.

"The short creative period meant that the process relied heavily on trust; trust between all of the collaborators and trust in the vision," says Gungor. "Our movement research started from day one and continued right through to the performances."

"To be involved in such a prestigious festival, presenting work alongside artists such as the American dancer/

choreographer Meg Stuart [founder of Brussels-based dance company, Damaged Goods] and Marlene Monteiro Freitas [co-founder of the Compass dance group] was an incredible opportunity that still feels surreal."

Gungor is now based in London as an independent dance artist, where she has recently worked on London Fashion Week.



BACKSTAGE AT THE BALLET

Inside WAAPA recently caught up with 2014 graduate Christabel Fry, who is currently assistant stage manager with The Australian Ballet.

IW: What have you been up to since you graduated?

CF: I spent a few years freelancing, working on a variety of productions which was fantastic. I got to work on ballet, opera, musicals, theatre, creative developments and festivals, and the diversity of these experiences enabled me to work out what I was most passionate about pursuing. I've been privileged to work for companies such as The Australian Ballet, Black Swan State Theatre Company, Kay and McLean Productions, Ambassador Theatre Group, Lost and Found Opera and BIGhART.

IW: How did your position at The Australian Ballet come about?

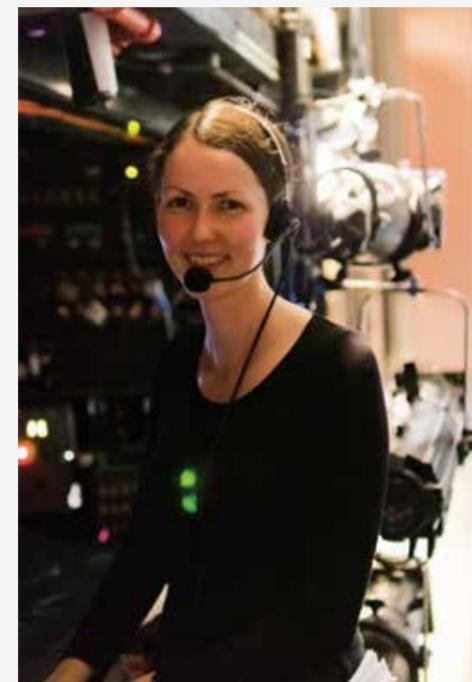
CF: I first worked with the AB in 2015 as a seasonal assistant stage manager on their annual regional tour. We spent six weeks touring a triple-bill program around regional New South Wales and Victoria with a crew of five and I had a ball. I discovered that ballet really is a world of its own and loved getting to know it. It was a busy tour schedule but it was a lot of fun and it was hard to say goodbye to my new production 'family' at the end of the tour.

The following year I was offered the stage management position for two *Storytime Ballet* tours and the 2016 regional tour of *Giselle* so it became a busy year of ballet and travel.

After working as a contractor with the company for two years, a full-time assistant stage manager position became available at the start of 2017 – they don't come up very often so it was an opportunity too good to miss!

IW: What do you enjoy most about working for the company?

CF: I love that I get to work on productions that are a part of the company's history, as well as getting the opportunity to be involved in new works, knowing that they will be performed again in the future.



IW: How did your training at WAAPA help prepare you for your career?

My training was very hands-on, focusing on putting into practice what we were learning, and developing a wide range of skills and knowledge. It gave me the opportunity to work on numerous productions across an array of genres, a chance to really sample all forms of theatre.

My training set me up to make connections with theatre professionals and really prepared me for what to expect in the theatre world. It certainly drilled into me just how crucial good communication is, of which I have been constantly reminded throughout my career so far!

It also encouraged me to appreciate diversity and to be adaptable. When you are constantly working with new and different personalities it can sometimes be challenging – you may all have a common goal but everyone works differently, so it was good practice at WAAPA learning to collaborate and to be adaptable, especially in those challenging situations.

IW: What qualities do you think are needed for someone wanting a career in stage management?

CF: In my experience, productions run most efficiently when communication is clear and open. Being a good communicator is so important. The best stage managers I have worked with are the ones who are team players, proactive and organised.

IW: What do you love about being a stage manager?

CF: I love that the work I do constantly offers new challenges and experiences; each production I work on is unique. I use the same core skills and training but apply them differently with each new production.

As a stage manager, I am constantly stretched and challenged – whether it be by a new production, a new venue or a new team to work with (or all three!). I'm not cut out to be a performer but I like that I can use what I am good at to contribute to an art form I love.

A WINNING MIX OF OPERA AND JAZZ

On 13 September, seven time Helpmann Award-winning soprano Emma Matthews starred in the world premiere of a new song cycle written for her by composer/jazz pianist Paul Grabowsky and librettist Steve Vizard.

The Space Between, which was inspired by Matthews' own experiences as an artist, is a tribute to the history of the operatic heroine.

Matthews, who is WAAPA's new Head of Classical Voice, performed the show in the Fairfax Studio of the Arts Centre Melbourne alongside Grabowsky on piano and WAAPA's Head of Jazz, Jamie Oehlers on saxophone.

"Jamie is the king of jazz, the most amazing saxophone player and somebody I went to WAAPA with," says Matthews. "To sing with saxophone is really interesting because Jamie plays the tenor saxophone and my voice is in such a high soprano register. The two colours work beautifully together."

In her review for *The Age*, Bridget Davies wrote that "Matthews is an absolute powerhouse... delivering dazzling coloratura and crystal-clear top notes."

Emma Matthews and Jamie Oehlers (saxophone) in ACM's 'The Space Between'. Photo by Mark Gambino



RISING UP THE RANKS

Mia Thompson in The Scottish Ballet's production of 'The Fairy's Kiss' Photo by Andy Ross

In July, dancer Mia Thompson was promoted to First Artist with the Scottish Ballet.

"I worked really hard to achieve this goal and was extremely happy to be promoted," writes Thompson from Glasgow, where the company is based. "We get amazing opportunities here to perform in various different styles which I love to do."

Towards the end of her final year at WAAPA in 2013, Thompson was offered positions at both the West Australian Ballet and Queensland Ballet – however with her family home in Queensland, she chose the latter.

She danced with the Queensland Ballet for three years before moving overseas to join the Scottish Ballet.

The Scottish Ballet is the national ballet company of Scotland and one of the four leading ballet companies in the UK.

Thompson's notable performances with the company include the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in Peter Darrell's production of *The Nutcracker* and the Gypsy in Kenneth Macmillan's *The Fairy's Kiss*.

The 26-year-old dancer also features in a new film by the Scottish Ballet's in-house designer and filmmaker Eve McConnachie. *Haud Close Tae Me* has been selected for showings at Light Moves Festival of Screendance, Ireland's international festival dedicated to dance on film, and the UK-based Aesthetica Short Film Festival.

Next up, Thompson will be performing the roles of Cinderella and the Fairy Godmother in Christopher Hampson's production of *Cinderella*, which is opening at the Edinburgh Festival Theatre before touring in January to Glasgow, Aberdeen, Inverness in Scotland and Newcastle in England.

Thompson believes that her WAAPA training placed her in the perfect position to launch her career.

"The teachers pushed me further than I believed I could go, they pushed me out of my comfort zone and made me explore styles I never thought I would like," she writes. "WAAPA helped prepare me for my future as a professional and I've never been more grateful."



A HOPEFUL START

WAAPA's 1st Year Acting students at the workshop for 'The Hope Fault'

Earlier this year, WAAPA acquired the stage rights to the novel *The Hope Fault* by Perth-born writer, Tracy Farr, the initial step in a commission generously supported by the Minderoo Foundation to develop a new Western Australian play.

Published by Fremantle Press, Farr's novel describes a weekend gathering of an extended family during which their frailties and secrets are revealed.

Using an adaptation penned by local actor/playwright Andrew Hale, the first workshop of the stage play was held in late August with WAAPA's 1st Year Acting students.

This provided an opportunity for the students to explore the text and a chance for Hale to glean some feedback for his next draft.

"The students I saw in the workshop will be the company that performs the stage play when it opens in 2019. And what a gifted bunch they are," said Jane Fraser, CEO of Fremantle Press. "I was deeply impressed by their talent and commitment, and excited to get a glimpse of just how wonderful the finished production is shaping up to be."

Stay tuned for the next phase of this exciting project, with a production slated for October next year.



A SCHOLARSHIP SECONDMENT

Fion Nutter, a 3rd Year Props and Scenery student, travelled to London in July for work experience as part of an Australia to Britain Secondment Scholarship. She was seconded to the internationally renowned Neal Scanlan Studios, working on an upcoming feature film for Lucasfilm, the entertainment company famous for its *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* franchises.

Neal Scanlan is an Academy Award-winning British special effects artist and make-up artist, best known for his work on the *Star Wars* sequel trilogy and *Anthology* films.

Based at London's famous Pinewood studios, Nutter writes:

"I have now been here for over two months and in that time I have learnt so much. I am working directly with Alan Murphy and Neal Scanlan who have so much to teach me.

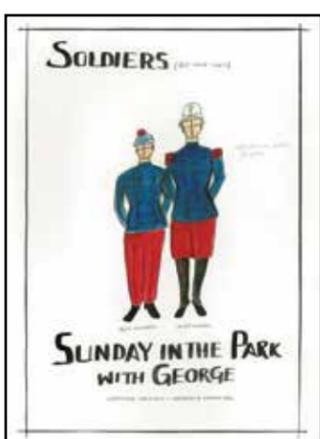
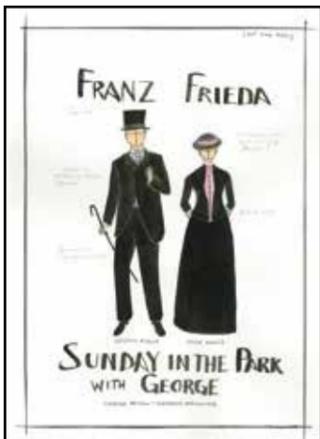
We are currently making a series of puppets that involve using woodworking, soft fabrication, anamatics, leather work, casting, and moulding techniques. There are so many different departments within CFX – it's very much like theatre where

everyone works together and communication is so important.

In England they have different names for the materials, so I have found myself a couple of times explaining what I'm looking for which has been funny. Already I've made a lot of friends and have discovered I'm not the only Aussie, as everyone has come from around the globe.

WAAPA has taught me about working under pressure in short time frames that has been very helpful, as well as problem-solving on the go. The Props and Scenery Lecturers have taught me so much so it's great to be able to use all that knowledge and practical experience here in the UK. Soon all the puppets will be put together and I can't wait to see them all being puppeteered and brought to life."

The Australia to Britain Secondment Scholarship, offered by the Australia Britain Society, is open to an outstanding final year Bachelor of Performing Arts (Production and Design) or Bachelor of Arts (Arts Management) student undertaking further studies or a secondment in the United Kingdom.



Photos courtesy of Production & Design students

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

BRINGING CHARACTERS TO LIFE

WAAPA's August production of Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George*, directed by WAAPA graduate Tyran Parke, showcased not only the talents of the 3rd Year Music Theatre students but the exceptional work of the Production & Design students. From the complex lighting and audiovisual design elements to the period-inspired costumes and set, this was a technically challenging show that demanded the best of the students.

Here 3rd Year Design student Georgia Manning, who designed the costumes, describes just what it takes to go from page to stage...

"I did a fair amount of research on the fashions of the 1880s, the setting of Act 1 of the play, and the 1980s clothes required for Act 2. About four months before the show opened, Maeli Cherel, a fellow Design student who was the set designer, and I had our first phone meeting with our director, Tyran, to discuss the design. As Tyran was interstate until rehearsals began, we had regular phone and email contact with him leading up to our final design presentation.

I also organised a meeting with costume staff to clarify budgetary and labour constraints. This was an important step in the process as we were given details of how many costumes we could make from scratch and how many we needed to source from existing stock.

Once the designs were finalised, we started with corset and petticoat fittings for all the female characters. Patterns were drafted for the costumes we were making and

work began on the toiles, calico versions of the costumes to ensure the style and measurements are correct. With the toiles completed and the fabrics purchased, work then began on the final costumes.

In addition, many hours were spent sourcing pieces for the Act 2 1980s costumes and for some of the costumes of the Act 1 ensemble characters. Final touches of buttons, trims and jewellery were decided in pre-production and production week.

From drawings on a page to seeing designs on stage in tangible three dimensions is a surreal experience that never ceases to amaze me."

3rd Year Costume student Monika Telkamp, who made the 1890s period garments for the lead female character of Dot, describes her part of the process...

"I worked under Bec McIntyre who was my Head Cutter and drafted the pattern for Dot's dress alongside other pieces. I find the experience of taking a garment from fabric to fittings very rewarding and our team works very hard to support each other. We make sure our costumes reach their full potential and fulfill the designer and director's vision.

Before we can cut out our pattern from its chosen fabric we make sure that the fit of the garment is correct by creating a toile in calico. After we make alterations to the pattern, if needed, we cut and construct the garment. We fit the garment while there is the time to fine-tune any other alterations. Our next stage is to take our garment to dress parade and present

it to our director and get the go-ahead to take it to completion.

Sending a garment you have made from a pattern on stage is very satisfying and is one of my favourite aspects of working on WAAPA productions."

"This production, directed by returning WAAPA alumni Tyran Parke, is fresh-faced and committed, bursting with talent... Parke is aided by some nifty work from David King's 14-piece band and visuals from a student design team who manage to match the whizbangery of the Broadway show without a Broadway budget." – David Zampatti, *The West Australian*

"Fittingly for a show about visual art, Maeli Cherel's set is delightfully pictorial. Using digital media, the locations are depicted in watercolour beauty, as is Seurat's seminal painting. Georgia Manning's clever costuming represents both the 1880s and 1980s with aesthetic cohesion." – Claire Trolio, *Seesaw*

"As Georges Seurat's pointillist masterpiece *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* comes to life, live action meets exquisite projection, beautiful costuming and notable lighting in a seemingly seamless collaboration between director and student led creatives." – Kimberley Shaw, *Stage Whispers*



LEARNING FROM THE BEST

VISITING GUEST ARTISTS ADD EXPERTISE TO WAAPA'S STUDENT TRAINING



JASON LANGLEY, CAMERON MITCHELL AND TRUDY DALGLEISH

Thanks to the generous support of the McCusker Charitable Foundation, WAAPA's mid-year musical for 2018 was helmed by three top Australian theatre professionals: director Jason Langley (*Dusty - The Musical*, *Loving Repeating*), choreographer Cameron Mitchell (*Big Fish*, *Calamity Jane*), and lighting designer Trudy Dalglish (*Hairspray*, *Georgy Girl - The Seekers Musical*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*).

Students from across WAAPA's Music, Music Theatre, and Production & Design courses gained valuable experience working with these outstanding industry practitioners as they mounted Rogers and Hammerstein's *Carousel* at the Regal Theatre from 16-23 June.

"Being able to work with professional creatives is one of the most valuable opportunities we get at WAAPA," says 3rd Year Music Theatre student Andrew Coshan, who played *Carousel's* lead male role, Billy Bigelow.

"They give us a direct insight into the industry and what we need to focus on to become industry-standard professionals. Cameron and Jason were a pleasure to work with, and I'm a far better and more professional performer for having worked with them."

"Working with Jason and Cameron was an experience and a half!" agrees fellow student Pru Daniel. "The depth of understanding and passion for the work they shared made for a highly enjoyable experience for both cast and crew. It always felt like a team effort in the rehearsal room."

While the students performing onstage relished working with Langley and Mitchell, behind the scenes the Lighting students were fortunate to be mentored by a multi-award-winning lighting designer.

"Having access to a professional lighting designer with the expertise and industry credentials of Trudy Dalglish is immensely beneficial to the students from all streams," says Leisa Landre-Ord, WAAPA's Associate Professor of Production.

"Trudy is generous and thoughtful in her dealings with the students. She is also extremely supportive of WAAPA graduates and is a great advocate for WAAPA in general."

WAAPA is extremely grateful to the McCusker Charitable Foundation for making these guest visits by industry professionals possible.

RAKA MAITRA

Raka Maitra, founder and artistic director of CHOWK Productions in Singapore, spent two weeks at WAAPA in July working with students from across the Bachelor of Performing Arts, Dance and Aboriginal Theatre courses.

Maitra's ability to meld traditional dance forms with her own language of contemporary dance has seen her described by international dance magazine, *Dance Europe*, as "without doubt a dancer of the 21st century".

Her choreography is informed by her intensive training in martial arts and the classical Indian dance forms of Odissi and Serrakella Chhau.



GREGG T. DANIEL

American actor/director Gregg T. Daniel was at WAAPA in August to direct the 3rd Year Acting students in David Hare's political drama, *Stuff Happens*, as part of the Minderoo Foundation's visiting artist program.

A graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, Daniel is an accomplished actor with appearances in over 100 television and film roles, including the recurring role of Reverend Daniels on the HBO hit series, *True Blood*. He is a founding member and Artistic Director of Lower Depth Theatre Ensemble and was the recipient of a 2016 NAACP Best Director Award for the International City Theatre's production of *Fences* by August Wilson. Daniel is a faculty member of the University of Southern California's School of Dramatic Arts.

Of his time spent at WAAPA, Daniel says: "The student actors at WAPAA are a wonderfully gifted, versatile and intelligent bunch. They clearly have spent time and energy honing their craft."



GERRARD MCARTHUR

Thanks to the generosity of the Minderoo Foundation, the 2nd Year Acting students were privileged to work with English actor/director Gerrard McArthur on their mid-year production of Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*.

McArthur has a long and distinguished career as an actor and director, starting as a drama student when he was awarded the Beerbohm Tree Prize for his performance as King Lear at London's famous Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA). McArthur enjoyed an extensive association as a leading player with the renowned Scottish theatre, The Citizens Theatre in Glasgow, and became a principal Associate Artist of playwright Howard Barker's company, The Wrestling School.

"I had a really marvelous experience with my 2nd Year group doing their first Shakespeare," says McArthur. "I was so taken with their energy, preparedness and creative openness – traits that never, ever wavered from the time we began to work, to the time we had made the show together. "I have been so impressed with the endeavour, spirit and sheer talent of the group; I knew very quickly that I had landed in a special place, with a training and attitude to achieving the highest quality that places it among the very best in my experience of international comparison."

"It has been a terrific and enriching experience to have travelled half the world and spent this time here with these fantastic young, developing artists. Thanks also to the deeply impressive and welcoming staff who so intelligently and generously create the conditions for work of the quality I have witnessed here, and have enjoyed so much to be a part of. It's been a real pleasure."



TYRAN PARKE

In 2007, WAAPA graduate Tyran Parke's lead performance in the Australian premiere of Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's Pulitzer Prize-winning musical, *Sunday in the Park with George*, was described as 'flawless' and 'stellar'.

In August this year, thanks to the generosity of The Holly Wood Trust, Parke returned to the show and his alma mater, this time as director on WAAPA's 3rd Year Music Theatre production of the show.

"As the WAAPA technical and design students will attest, this is a piece of epic proportions, encompassing two different time periods and placing huge demands on the various creative teams," says Parke. "I'm very grateful to the many people who worked tirelessly to create our final composition."

"I am also thankful to all at WAAPA for welcoming me, especially Head of Music Theatre, David King and the remarkable cast, crew and design team on the precipice of wonderful careers themselves."

MID-YEAR ADVENTURES

During the mid-year break, WAAPA students from our Jazz and Dance courses travelled overseas to extend their learning.



JAZZ STUDENTS IN PARIS

In July, 24 students spent two weeks in Paris at the New York University's Jazz Summer School where they attended workshops, and theory and ensemble classes directed by some of the world's leading jazz musicians and educators. In addition to recording sessions, the students gave three performances, two of which were at Le Caveau des Oubliettes, an old dungeon that has been turned into a live jazz and blues venue, and one performance at Sunset Jazz Club, one of the premier jazz clubs in Paris.



DANCE STUDENTS IN BEIJING

At the end of July, 11 dance students travelled to Beijing to participate in the annual Beijing Modern Dance Festival. Held over two weeks, the Festival attracted over 300 students from across the globe and included a week-long workshop with international teachers and dance makers, followed by a series of performances by emerging and established

artists and companies from Europe, Asia and Australia. A particular highlight of the trip was a collaborative performance by Australian contemporary powerhouse Expressions Dance Company with City Contemporary Dance Company Hong Kong, in which WAAPA graduates Jake McLarnon and Scott Ewen wowed the Beijing audience with their technical and artistic skills. The tour was made possible through the Federal Government's New Colombo Plan Mobility Program.



LINK STUDENTS IN EUROPE

At the end of June, WAAPA's pre-professional dance company, LINK, embarked on their annual European tour. Company members, accompanied by LINK Artistic Director Michael Whaites and 3rd Year Lighting Designer Mai Han, participated in a four-week study tour to Marseille, Montpellier, and Amsterdam. The students took part in master classes and workshops, performing and learning from leading professionals in the dance industry whilst observing cutting-edge contemporary dance performances.

In Montpellier, LINK were invited to participate in Mouvements Sur La Ville during the Montpellier Dance Festival, performing new works by Emma Fishwick, Michael Whaites, Tobiah Booth-Remmers and Ori Flomin at the premises of the Didier Theron Dance Company as well as on an outdoor stage. Whilst in Amsterdam the students premiered a new work at Openluchttheater in the city's main public park, Vondelpark.

WAAPA, LINK and ECU would like to thank the Australian Government, through the Endeavour Mobility Program, for their support of this tour.

AWARDS AND PRIZE WINNERS



Xiao Song Liu (centre) with Head of Piano Studies Anna Sleptsova

WARANA WINNER

Congratulations to pianist Xiao Song Liu who has won the 2018 Warana Prize for best concerto performance by a student in WAAPA's Classical Music program.

Xiao Song won with an outstanding performance of the first movement of Rachmaninov's *Piano Concerto No. 3*, accompanied by the Faith Court Orchestra under conductor Jessica Gethin, in two sold-out concerts on 7-8 September.

Xiao Song is in her 3rd year of a Bachelor of Music studying with WAAPA's Head of Piano, Anna Sleptsova.



Deb Mitchell (centre) with prize winners Lachlan Stevenson and Mariama Whitton

ACTING POETRY WINNERS

This year's winners of the 2nd Year Acting Poetry Prize are Mariama Whitton and Lachlan Stevenson. The students were each presented with a cheque for \$500 by Deb Mitchell, President of the Speech and Drama Teachers

Association of WA, in the Roundhouse Theatre on Monday 3 September.

WAAPA appreciates the generosity of the SDTAWA throughout their nine-year association with the Academy and looks forward to continued collaboration in the future.



BASSOONIST TAKES TOP PRIZE

WAAPA is pleased to announce that 3rd Year Bachelor of Music student Stephanie Sheridan has been awarded the 2018 Barbara MacLeod Scholarship.

The talented bassoonist will use her \$10,000 prize to participate in the 2019 International Double Reed Society Conference in Tampa, Florida and the 2019 Academia Internacional de Musica Solsona in Spain.

"I'm feeling amazed and extremely excited that I've been chosen as the recipient of this award," says Sheridan. "This will be a life-changing experience!"

After attending the conference in Florida next July, Sheridan has lined up bassoon lessons in New York before she heads to Spain for the Academia Internacional de Musica Solsona. There she will participate in chamber classes, play in orchestras and receive more bassoon lessons.

"I look forward to sharing my knowledge with Perth's double reed community in organizing double reed events for other oboe and bassoon players. I know this trip will benefit me in my goal to be a principal bassoonist in a professional orchestra one day."

Congratulations also to the other four superb finalists who competed for the scholarship: violinist Teresa Vinci, cellist Miranda Murray-Yong, and vocalists Shania Eliassen and Teya Jerman.



From left: Dr Ken Michael AC, Amy Fortnum, Maverick Newman and Jessica Clancy. Photo by Georgia Manning.

CABARET AWARD WINNERS

Jessica Clancy, Amy Fortnum and Maverick Newman have won this year's Julie Michael Musical Cabaret Award. The three 3rd Year Music Theatre students presented their award-winning piece, *Golden Age Girls*, as part of an adjudication evening held on 18 September.

Sara Reed and Conor Neylon were named runners-up, while Aiden Puglielli was given an Honourable Mention.

The Julie Michael Musical Cabaret Award was established in 2009 by the Government House Foundation to recognize the support that Julie Michael gave to nurturing and extending the cultural life of Government House. The prize is open to selected students who must write and present their ideas for a musical cabaret act.

Previous winners include Gillian Cosgriff who has gone on to win best comedy and cabaret awards at Perth, Sydney and Melbourne Fringe Festivals, as well as a Green Room Award; DuToit Bredenkamp (*The Sound of Music*); and Patrick Whitbread (*Cats*).

Special thanks to the Government House Foundation for their generous support of the Julie Michael Musical Cabaret Award.



DID YOU KNOW...?

In 2018, Edith Cowan University was rated Australia's top university for overall education experience and for teaching quality in the Creative Arts discipline.

The Australian Government's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT) website helps prospective students compare universities around Australia. In 2018, and for the second year in a row, ECU received the top student experience rating of all public universities in Australia. ECU was also the top-rated public university in Australia for teaching quality, skills development and student support.

Stuff Happens



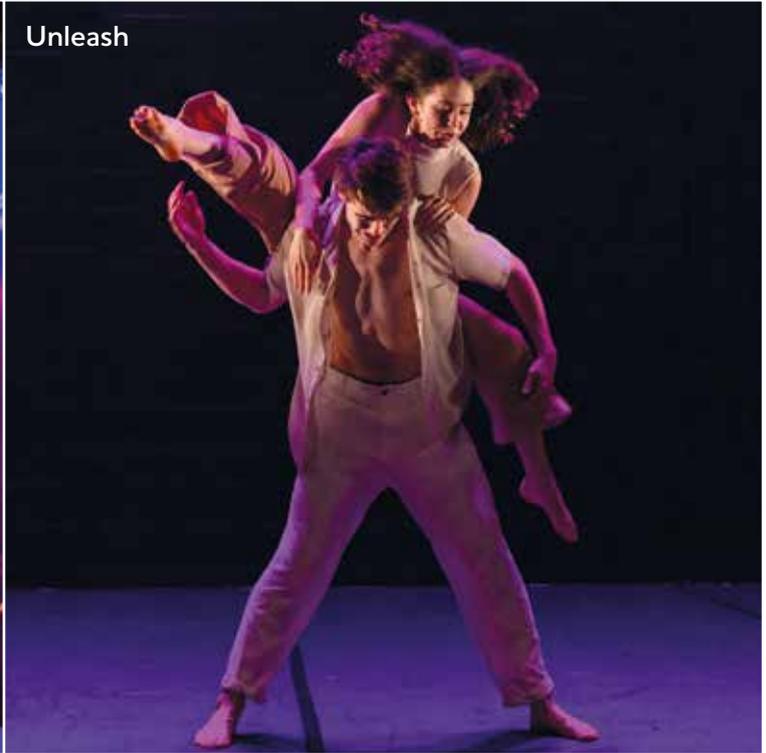
Tilt



Radio Active



Unleash



waapa.ecu.edu.au

Cover Credits

Front Cover
Sunday In The Park With George, photo by Georgia Manning
 Back Cover
Stuff Happens, photo by Jon Green
Tilt, *Radio Active* & *Unleash*, photos by Stephen Heath

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



Principal Partner



International Travel Partner



Major Partner



Supporting Partner



Instrument and Equipment Partners:



Performance Partners



Hospitality Partners



Civic Partner



Community Partner



Philanthropic Supporters

- Bendat Family Foundation
- McCusker Charitable Foundation
- John and Margaret Winstanley Family Trust
- Bravo Donor Circle
- D'Arcy Slater Foundation
- Holly Wood Trust
- Brigid and Ronald W Woss AM of The Woss Group of Companies
- McClements Foundation
- Bass Family Foundation