

# INSIDE WAA PA

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**Plus**

Scholarships,  
Awards and much  
more!



Xiao Xiong Zhang (centre) with WAAPA and BNU Dance students

## BEIJING BOUND

### WAAPA DANCE DEPARTMENT FORGES RELATIONSHIP WITH TOP CHINESE UNIVERSITY

In 2012 WAAPA Head of Dance Nanette Hassall was invited to attend the inaugural International Creative Dance Seminar (ICDS), hosted by the Dance Department of the School of Art and Communication at Beijing Normal University (BNU) in China. While there, the seeds of an idea were sown – an ambitious collaboration between the dance departments of the two universities.

Beijing Normal University is ranked as one of the top ten universities in China. “Unlike many other Chinese university dance programs which focus entirely on traditional forms of dance, BNU is committed to building an outstanding contemporary dance program,” said Hassall. “To have an ongoing collaboration with them opens up exciting possibilities for future ventures.”

The project got underway in April of this year when choreographer Xiao-Xiong Zhang travelled to Perth to rehearse 34 WAAPA dance students in the second half of *The Rite of Spring*. Honouring the 100th anniversary of Stravinsky’s masterful score, the piece was performed in May in WAAPA’s Geoff Gibbs Theatre as part of the student dance show, *Rites*.

In September, the student dancers travelled to China to participate in the 2013 ICDS. They were accompanied by Nanette Hassall, Classical Dance Lecturer Kim McCarthy, Associate Professor Maggi Phillips and PhD candidate Min Zhu. The latter two were guest speakers at the seminar,

presenting a paper entitled ‘The Chosen One’s Death/Life Lunge’.

For eight days, the WAAPA dancers enjoyed workshops and rehearsals. However the highlight of the trip was two evening performances of *The Rite of Spring* that played to packed houses. The Australian students shared the stage with their Chinese counterparts: the first half of the work was performed by BNU dancers under the direction of the university’s Head of Dance, Xiao Xiangrong and the second half was performed by the WAAPA students. The program also included *Violins*, choreographed by Kim McCarthy and featuring 16 of the WAAPA dancers.

“It was a wonderful experience for our students,” said Hassall on her return to Australia. “The Chinese staff and students couldn’t have been more hospitable.”

Next year, the collaboration between the two universities will be further strengthened when 15 BNU dance students will travel to Perth to engage in a week-long program with the WAAPA and LINK dancers.

*The WAAPA Dance trip to Beijing was made possible through funding from Edith Cowan University, the Department of Culture and the Arts, Allens and an AsiaBound Mobility grant.*

Congratulations to final year dance students Genevieve O’Keeffe, Emily Luxton and Liam Green, who have been signed as Young Artists with the West Australian Ballet.



# REALISING YOUR ARTS DREAM

## ARTS MANAGEMENT GRADUATE APPOINTED FESTIVAL HEAD FOR AWARD-WINNING UK MUSIC PROMOTION COMPANY



DHP Family manages some of the UK's longest running and most successful music venues including Rock City and Bodega. They also run a range of live music festivals including Splendour, Dot to Dot, Gathering and Everywhere, covering all genres from folk and indie to rock, metal, hard-core and all types of electronic music.

During her studies and since graduating from WAAPA, McLean has been highly proactive in her approach to forging a career path.

"When I decided to pursue a career in the music industry, Arts Management was the perfect way to get there. The combination of management and commerce subjects, all targeted towards creative industries, provides the ultimate foundation for a successful management level career in the creative industries."

"I also volunteered on community radio and television, covered local and Aussie music, managed a band and landed my first job with a promoter working on Big Day Out and Soundwave festivals and repping local tours for

Chugg Entertainment and Soundwave Touring," she said.

She worked in a variety of roles for festivals such as Southbound, West Coast Blues 'n' Roots, Laneway Festival and Stereosonic.

By 2009, McLean was offered a position where she was responsible for planning and managing festivals and outdoor concerts for up to 40,000 people with partner brands and promoters Future Music Festival, Summadayze, A Day on the Green, Frontier Touring and Michael Coppel Presents.

But a career in the United Kingdom beckoned.

"To me UK has the best festivals in the world, and I wanted in, so I made the move, spent a year working on the biggest event in the world, *London 2012*, and am extremely excited to be now working on plans for new and exciting festivals with DHP Family," McLean said.

"The skills I learned at WAAPA doing the Arts Management course have enabled me to be in the exciting position where, five years after graduating, I am responsible for producing and running music festivals in one of the most creative festival markets in the world."

Ali McLean knew she had always loved music, but it took a special moment in the mountains of a ski resort outside of Tokyo, experiencing the magic of the 2004 Fuji Rock Festival, when she decided she wanted to be a festival promoter.

That experience inspired McLean to enrol in WAAPA's Bachelor of Arts Management degree, which she completed in 2007.

McLean is now realising her dream, having recently been appointed to the newly created Head of Festivals position at award-winning UK music promotion company, DHP Family.



(Left to right) ECU Pro-Chancellor Denise McComish, Lisa McCune and Vice Chancellor Professor Kerry O. Cox

## HONORARY AWARD FOR LISA McCUNE

### STAR OF STAGE AND SCREEN HONOURED AS A FELLOW OF WAAPA

In September WAAPA graduate and *Blue Heelers* and *Sea Patrol* actor Lisa McCune was honoured as a Fellow of WAAPA in recognition of her outstanding acting talents and creative excellence.

McCune graduated from WAAPA's Music Theatre course in 1990 and became one of the most recognisable faces on Australian television playing Constable Maggie Doyle in the police drama *Blue Heelers*.

She won four consecutive Gold Logies for Most Popular TV Personality and five consecutive silver Logies for Most Popular Female Actress in the late 1990s.

McCune joins an illustrious list including fellow WAAPA graduates Hugh Jackman and William McInnes in receiving the honorary award.

She said it was a profound honour to be presented with the award and encouraged new

graduates to continue their education after leaving university.

"We must never ever stop learning, we must be seekers of knowledge and always open to its continuance because education is a great gift to receive and to give to others," McCune said.

Lisa McCune will be performing on stage in Perth in the role of Nellie Forbush in Opera Australia's production of *South Pacific*, which opens at the Crown Theatre on November 10.

# GRADUATES LIGHT UP SMALL SCREEN

## TWO OF WAAPA'S ACTING GRADUATES STAR IN TV DRAMA SERIES

Acting graduates Elise Jansen and Anna Bamford have made their mark on the small screen in two new Australian television drama series.

From July to September, 2008 graduate Elise Jansen appeared in the Nine Network crime drama series *Underbelly: Squizzy*, playing the role of Squizzy Taylor's wife, Lorna Kelly.

Jansen was named Best Actress at the 2009 WA Screen Awards for her role in the short film *Misconception*. She has also guest-starred in *Neighbours*, *Winners & Losers* and *City Homicide* and appeared in the 2011 feature film *CrawlSpace*.

Over on Network Ten, 2011 graduate Anna Bamford stars as Miranda Beaumont in the romantic drama series *Wonderland*, alongside Michael Dorman and Brooke Satchwell. Set in an



Elise Jansen as Lorna Kelly in 'Underbelly: Squizzy'



Anna Bamford as Miranda in 'Wonderland'

apartment block in a Sydney beachside suburb, the series revolves around four couples at different stages of life.

Bamford's character Miranda is an aspiring photographer who has called off her engagement and moved from rural Queensland to Sydney where she becomes the flatmate of charming bachelor Tom Wilcox [Dorman].

"Absolutely everyone in the cast has been so warm and open and because it's my first

gig everyone's been lovely," Bamford said in a recent interview.

Originally from Sydney, Bamford relocated to Perth to undertake WAAPA's three-year Acting course.

"It's just such a great school – the teaching staff, all the areas that are covered, and the broad range of styles," she said. "When I heard about WAAPA and spoke to graduates I knew that's where I wanted to go."

# SWELL PARTY IN DUBLIN

## 3RD YEAR ACTING STUDENTS SHOWCASE DEVISED WORK IN IRELAND

In September, Senior Lecturer in Acting Chris Edmund travelled to Dublin with the 3rd Year Acting students and two crew to present *The Swell Party*, a devised work that Edmund directed, at the Smock Alley Theatre.

The company was joined in Ireland by Ryan McGaw, a current Production student who was on secondment at Smock Alley. McGaw was invited by the Smock Alley Theatre's Artistic Director Patrick Sutton after he production managed WAAPA's *The Cripple of Inishmaan* earlier this year, which Sutton directed.

The Australian Embassy in Ireland held a reception in honour of the WAAPA contingent after the opening night performance.

"We were there for over a week and gave five performances, all of which were wonderfully well received. All in all it was a joyous event and enormously profitable to the students who will soon be graduating," said Edmund.

3rd Year Acting student Ayeesha Ash described her time in Dublin as "an incredible experience that I will remember with a big smile for the rest of my life".



3rd Year Acting students performing in Dublin's Smock Alley Theatre

"Dublin is a city filled with music, art and expression and it was wonderful to be able to contribute to the creative atmosphere with our original work, *The Swell Party*. The play has been our theatrical baby for three years, and naturally we were nervous and excited to see how it would be received by an overseas audience. Finding ourselves in an unfamiliar space, sourcing various costumes and props, rehearsing and advertising our show whilst combatting jet lag was a rewarding challenge. Our audiences were welcoming and engaged – we received positive and encouraging feedback from the general public, reviewers and students of The Gaiety School."

"The 3rd Year actors would like to thank our wonderful stage manager Tara Bennett, lighting designer Tegan Evans, and production manager Ryan McGaw. We would also like to thank

everyone who donated to our Pozible campaign - we are so appreciative of your generosity; without your help this trip wouldn't have been possible. And finally, a huge thank you to the love of our lives, our swell director, Chris Edmund. We couldn't have done it without you!"

While her peers were in Dublin, 3rd Year Acting student **Grace Smibert** travelled to London to join the cast of *The Love Girl & The Innocent*. The Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn play, adapted and directed by Matthew Dunster, was performed at London's Southward Playhouse from October 10 to November 2. Dunster was a visiting director at WAAPA earlier this year for the 3rd Year Acting production of *Love and Money* – and was so impressed by Smibert that he invited her to join his production in London.

# LITTLE WOMEN MAKES BIG IMPRESSION

## WAAPA STUDENTS RISE TO THE CHALLENGE OF OPERA BASED ON BELOVED AMERICAN NOVEL



Photo by Jon Green

Every October, WAAPA presents a major opera, fully staged and featuring a large cast and the Faith Court Orchestra. This year the WAAPA Classical Voice students performed the WA premiere of American composer Mark Adamo's *Little Women*.

Based on Louisa May Alcott's enduringly popular novel about the adventures of Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy in civil-war era New England, Mark Adamo's opera *Little Women* has enjoyed more than 70 national and international engagements since its 1998 premiere by Houston Grand Opera.

Linda Barcan, Lecturer in Voice, said that Adamo's challenging opera offered meaty

roles that the students could really sink their teeth into.

"We have a surfeit of talented young women in our current Graduate Diploma course. With this opera they each had the marvellous opportunity to bring to life a strong female character with her own, distinct, emotional journey. To do this they drew upon all the elements of their training at WAAPA."

*Little Women* was directed by Adam Mitchell, whose recent credits include *When The Rain Stops Falling* and *Death of A Salesman* for Black Swan State Theatre Company.

In his review for *The West Australian*, Neville Cohn wrote that: "Adamo's opera makes ferocious

demands on both singers and instrumentalists — and the WAAPA students were well to the fore in meeting the score's many challenges."

"All credit to director Adam Mitchell for skilled, meaningful deployment of his young cast. Sally Phipps' all-purpose set design was a model of ingenuity, while Rebecca Davidse's lighting and Phillipa Nilant's costume designs did much to establish and enhance mood."

"David Wickham did wonders from the podium; his sure and steady beat drew the best from the young instrumentalists of the Faith Court Orchestra who came up trumps despite an often villainously tricky score."

## AIMEE SCORES DREAM AWARD

### DANCER AIMEE SMITH GETS TO REALISE HER ARTISTIC DREAM IN THE UK

On October 24 at Sydney's Oxford Art Factory, dancer Aimee Smith was announced as one of five winners of a British Council Australia's Realise Your Dream Award for 2013. This year's competition attracted more than 700 applications from across Australia, from which 15 finalists were shortlisted.

Realise Your Dream (RYD) is Australia's most recognised and long-running professional development platform in the creative industries. It nurtures and supports highly talented emerging practitioners in the first ten years of their practice, working across any discipline in the creative sector.

RYD 2013 provides five emerging Australian creatives with return flights to the United Kingdom, courtesy of Virgin Atlantic, and \$5000 each to make the most of their time away. The British Council then tailors a unique professional development program with the

winners, connecting them to UK industry experts, leaders and practitioners who will expand their networks and inspire them to build sustainable and successful careers.

Smith, who graduated from WAAPA in 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Dance, has forged a successful career working between the fields of dance and sustainability. Her projects and performances have taken her to the Arctic Circle, India, Japan and Taiwan. She has received numerous awards, including the 2007 WA Dance Award for Emerging Artist and Most Interesting Australian Artist in the 2007 and 2010 Dance Australia Critic's Survey.

Along with the four other winners, Smith will now meet with the British Council and UK-based arts consultant Nicola Turner to fine-tune her individual professional development program. Then she's off to the UK to realise her dreams.



Photo courtesy of Studios British Council 2013



(Left to right) Sarah Guilmartin, Lochlan Brown and Caitlin Cassidy

The West Australian Opera's Young Artists for 2013 – three WAAPA graduates – enjoyed a two-week artists' residency in New York in September.

The trip was made possible through scholarships awarded to each of the Young Artists: soprano Sarah Guilmartin and mezzo soprano Caitlin Cassidy are both recipients of Wesfarmers Scholarships and pianist Lochlan Brown is the recipient of a Bendat Scholarship.

The aspiring opera stars were accompanied to New York by the Artistic Director of the West Australian Opera, Joseph Colaneri. Colaneri is also the Director of Opera at Mannes New School for Music in New York.

The residency included opera and acting classes, and diction lessons in French and Italian, with internationally renowned coaches including Ruth Falcon (Mannes School of Music), Vlad Iftinca (Metropolitan Opera) and Nicholas Muni (Bard College, Cincinnati Opera). The three Young Artists also had the opportunity to perform for Gayletha Nichols, Head of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and operatic agent Ken Benson. This experience enabled them to receive valuable feedback on their audition techniques and resumes, and advice on repertoire and roles.

In addition to the specialised coaching, Colaneri was keen to expose Guilmartin, Cassidy and Brown to the heady musical milieu that

surrounds New York's Metropolitan Opera, of which Colaneri is a veteran conductor. "It was a wonderful experience, for them and for me," he said in a recent interview. "I think there's a lot of talent here in this country. I think we have to find a way to develop that."

A highlight of the trip – though a daunting one – was when the Young Artists were invited to perform at the New York Metropolitan Opera Club.

"The Metropolitan Opera Club is a very prestigious, private club of Met Opera lovers and supporters," explains Brown. "They happened to hold their annual dinner on our second day in New York, so Joseph [Colaneri] suggested they have us perform a few arias at the event. The stakes were high but the evening was fantastic – we performed two arias and a duet between courses. We were very warmly welcomed and spent hours chatting."

The Young Artists attended dress rehearsals of the Metropolitan Opera's *Eugene Onegin* starring Anna Netrebko, and *The Nose* starring WAAPA graduate Alexander Lewis. They were also able to explore some of New York's famous sights such as Central Park and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and take in several shows on Broadway, including *Matilda The Musical*, with music and lyrics by another WAAPA graduate, Tim Minchin.

Cassidy describes her time in New York as "a highlight of my life so far...being in the studio

with artists of that calibre was extraordinary. It was an unforgettable two weeks."

Guilmartin nominates meeting the soprano star Netrebko as one of her most unforgettable moments.

All three Young Artists believe that their training at WAAPA provided them with the necessary skills to embrace the opportunities now offered by the WA Opera. Guilmartin says that WAAPA allowed her "to discover and explore my vocal and emotional development as an artist," while Cassidy credits the "incredible intellects and musical imaginations" of lecturers Patricia Price and David Wickham in shaping her as an artist.

Brown describes how his desire to work with opera singers was satisfied by WAAPA's multi-disciplinary artistic environment: "The reason I came to WAAPA was not only to study as a pianist but more specifically, to work closely with singers. Every chance I had to play for vocal workshops or recitals were my favourite moments. I like making music *with* people – music is a collaborative experience and I get bored or lonely as a soloist. The ultimate best moments for me at WAAPA were rehearsing the big productions."

In 2014, Guilmartin and Cassidy will make their main stage debuts as First Lady and Third Lady respectively in the WA Opera's *The Magic Flute*.

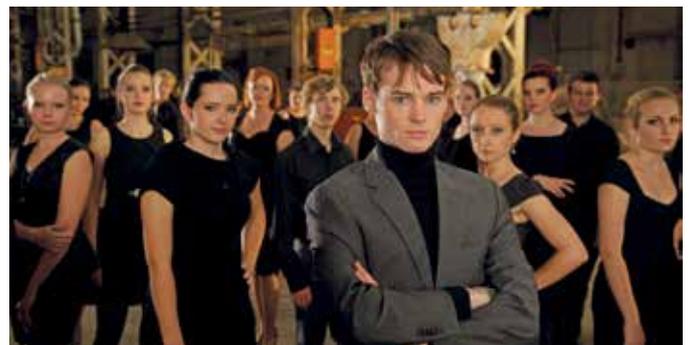
## CHORALE HITS RIGHT NOTES

Conductor Adam Brockway describes Naya Chorale as "the choir he's always wanted to direct". Founded by the WAAPA graduate in 2012 with business manager Jeremy de Vries-Turnell, this new a capella ensemble on the Perth music scene is making a name for itself with its dynamic performances.

Naya Chorale's debut concert was described by *The West Australian's* Rosalind Appleby as "a program of choral gems that had the audience enthralled... If you combined cathedral crispness with barbershop blending and gospel dynamism, then you would come near to what this group is about."

This year, among its many engagements, the chorale has performed as part of a mass choir in New York's Carnegie Hall and back home in WA at the Denmark Festival of Voice.

Brockway began playing the violin at the age of six. In 2003 he was awarded a WA Youth Orchestra Scholarship and three years later, on graduating from Perth Modern School, he won the Most Outstanding Instrumental Student Award and the Dettman Scholarship.



Adam Brockway with the Naya Chorale

In his first year at WAAPA Brockway won the Faith Court Award for the most outstanding first year violinist. He studied choral conducting under Micheál McCarthy, completing his Bachelor of Music in 2011.

# BOARDROOM BEAT

## PERCUSSION MAESTRO TIM WHITE PERFORMS FOR WAAPA'S SUPPORTING PARTNER

In August, Allens, WAAPA's Supporting Partner – Contemporary Practice invited Tim White, Senior Lecturer, Classic Performance (Percussion) to speak at their boardroom lunch.

Attended by leading figures from the West Australian corporate sector, the engagement included an enlightening and engaging presentation from Tim about the history of percussion. Encompassing his own experience as a professional musician and as a passionate educator, not only has Tim overseen WAAPA's classical percussion program since 1994, but he was also principal percussionist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra for 28 years.

Tim White holds two Masters degrees in music performance, won a Churchill Fellowship in 1999 and a German Government Scholarship in 1992, and directed ANAM's 'Rhythms of Life' percussion festival in 2003. Tim tutors frequently for the Australian Youth Orchestra and the WA Youth Orchestra, and was appointed Musical Director of the AYO's 2010 National Music Camp. Tim has performed with many of the world's leading artists, including Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, José Carreras, Ray Charles, Dame Joan Sutherland, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Nigel Kennedy, John Williams, Ben Folds, Chick Corea and Tim Minchin. Needless to say Tim is an amazing speaker and he had everyone enthralled with his insights into the world of percussion, its rich and diverse history and its importance in the area of contemporary classical composition.

Tim brought a selection of weird and wonderful percussion instruments with him, performing a remarkably beautiful piece for kalimba and temple bowls, *The Gentle, The Penetrating* by Danish composer Per Norgard



Tim White (front right) with Defying Gravity

Photo: Marcus Whisson, courtesy of Community Newspapers Group

and demonstrated his orchestral triangle in a piece by Alvin Lucier, *The Silver Streetcar of the Orchestra*, all the while highlighting the power of music to bring people together and expose us to other cultures and philosophies from around the world.

Allens, as part of their continued patronage of WAAPA, presented Defying Gravity Percussion Ensemble's sold out *Drumming Up A Storm* concert series, featuring guest musician Ric Eastman on 19, 20 and 21 September at ECU, Mount Lawley. Sparks flew as Eastman and Tim White led Defying Gravity through an electrifying celebration of the art of percussion - playing instruments ranging from marimbas and vibraphones through to drums, gongs and brooms. The concert featured music by an eclectic mix of composers: Frank Zappa ('The Black Page'), Henry Mancini ('Peter Gunn'), George Green ('Xylophonia'), Iannis Xenakis and David Pye. Overflowing with energy, rhythm, melody and groove, each performance lifted the roof off the Music Auditorium and left the audience shouting for more. This was a totally exhilarating and uplifting performance that was thoroughly enjoyed by all the audience, including Allens' staff, clients and special guests.

Allens is an international law firm with offices throughout Australia and Asia. On 1 May 2012, Allens formed an integrated alliance with Linklaters. This has resulted in the two firms working together closely for the benefit of clients around the world. Allens work with many of the world's leading organisations - including 55 of the world's top 100 companies and more than 75 of Australia's top 100 companies. Allens has long history of involvement with Australian cultural and sporting organisations and currently supports a host of arts, humanitarian and community organisations including WAAPA, Malthouse Theatre, Sydney Theatre Company and CEDA.

After 28 years, **Tim White** retired earlier this year from his position as Principal Percussionist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. Congratulations to **Robyn Gray**, a 2000 WAAPA graduate and previous member of Defying Gravity, who has now been appointed to the position.

## VIZARD AND GRABOWSKY WORKSHOP NEW MUSICAL



Paul Grabowsky (left) and Steve Vizard at WAAPA

Photo by Kathy Wheatley

In September, lawyer/comedian/entrepreneur Steve Vizard and his long-time collaborator, musician/composer Paul Grabowsky, spent ten days workshoping their new musical with the WAAPA 3rd Year Music Theatre students. On hand to provide assistance were Head of Department David King and resident director Crispin Taylor. The piece, which has the working title of *Centenary*, is being written to coincide with the Gallipoli 100th anniversary in 2015. The premise of the show is that an unlikely team is assembled to create a concert to acknowledge the occasion. Musically eclectic, it is presented as a 'show-within-a-show', allowing for a

mixture of vaudeville, farce and poignant elements.

"Steve and Paul were incredibly impressed by the talents and skills of the soon-to-be graduating class, and so appreciative of WAAPA's generosity," said Taylor. "For the students it was a tremendous opportunity to work alongside two industry heavyweights and to have the chance to contribute to and help shape a brand new musical in its infancy."

"The workshop concluded with a modest presentation to an invited audience of writers, directors and producers. Look out for the finished product in 2015!"



## US JAZZ VOCAL STAR VISITS WAAPA

### ONE OF NEW YORK'S FINEST JAZZ VOCALISTS INSPIRES STUDENTS

Alison Wedding is one of New York's finest jazz vocalists and, as a long-term teacher at Berklee College of Music, is also an internationally recognised educator.

In August, WAAPA's jazz students were able to experience first-hand the brilliance of Wedding's talents during her time at the Academy as a visiting artist. She conducted two workshops with the jazz students: a vocal workshop with the jazz vocal students that focused on specialised vocal techniques, performance practice exercises and jazz specific stylistic nuances; and a workshop with the entire jazz cohort on ensemble skills, focusing on melodic development and the abilities of the students to emote with reference to the lyrics.

The visit culminated in an evening performance with six of WAAPA's top

jazz students, under the musical direction of WAAPA Jazz Coordinator Jamie Oehlers.

"Wedding's vast experience in running ensembles shone through as she rehearsed with the students, giving advice along the way," said Oehlers. "This performance opportunity was greatly appreciated by the students and it is one they will remember and draw experience from in the future."

WAAPA was thrilled to welcome the US Consul General, Ms Cynthia Griffin to the concert. It was one of Ms Griffin's first official engagements as Consul General Perth. WAAPA is grateful to the US Consulate General Perth for assistance with Ms Wedding's visit.

## CALLING ALL SINGERS

### WAAPA SET TO HOST INAUGURAL INTERNATIONAL ART SONG FESTIVAL NEXT YEAR

In July next year the corridors of WAAPA will ring with the sound of song as the inaugural International Art Song Festival gets underway.

An initiative of WAAPA's Classical Music department, the festival aims to promote the training and performance of art song (poetry set to music, sung in a classical style) in order to better prepare young Australian singers for an international career. To facilitate this, WAAPA will invite international artists of the highest calibre to mentor the aspiring singers and pianists in a week-long series of masterclasses.

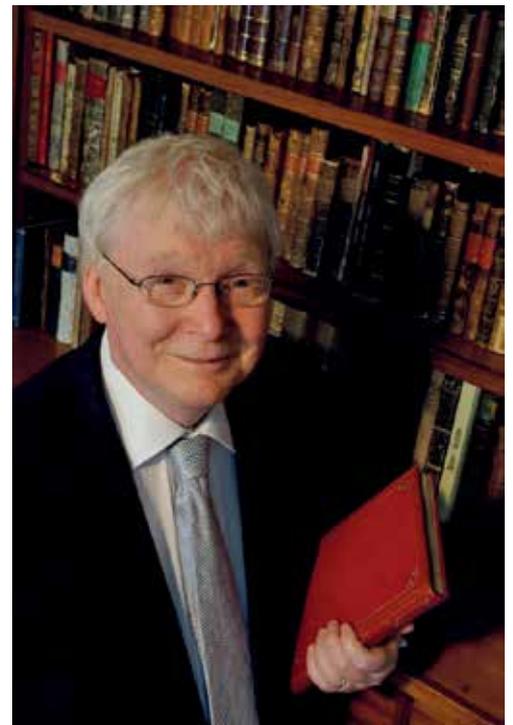
Next year's inaugural event, due to run from July 13-20, will celebrate the songs of Franz Schubert. WAAPA is delighted to have secured two exceptional artists as Master Teachers for the 2014 Art Song Festival: renowned accompanist and Schubert expert Dr Graham Johnson and international voice teacher Deborah Birnbaum.

Dr Johnson is a protégé of accompaniment doyens Gerald Moore and Geoffrey Parsons. Dr Johnson has had a distinguished career

marked by frequent concert appearances in the greatest recital halls of the world. In both the recording and recital arenas, Dr Johnson has received many honours and awards, including an OBE, the prestigious Wigmore Hall Medal and the title of Chevalier of the *Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*.

Deborah Birnbaum is an internationally established teacher and performer whose studio includes many of the world's greatest singers. Her expertise in breath management technique originates from her own vocal studies with renowned soprano, Montserrat Caballé. Widely sought after as a teacher, Birnbaum is regularly scheduled for guest teaching engagements at the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera Studio, Wolf Trap, Glimmerglass Opera, Rice University, Los Angeles Opera and the Washington Opera.

To register your interest in attending the festival please email Linda Barcan at [l.barcan@ecu.edu.au](mailto:l.barcan@ecu.edu.au).



Schubert expert Dr Graham Johnson



Photo by Jon Green

## RADIO ACTIVE ON TOUR

**M**ike Eastman, Ric Eastman and Paul Pooley, Lecturers in Contemporary Music, visited schools in Albany in May of this year to work with the students of Great Southern Grammar and Albany Senior High School in preparation for a performance at the Albany Entertainment Centre in August. The visits to the schools saw over 100 students performing and attending workshops. Many of the students had the opportunity to play alongside the lecturers and several performed original songs.

In August, the three lecturers and 11 selected students from the Contemporary Music course ventured south again to work with the

Albany students for a week of workshops and rehearsals. They were accompanied by four students from WAAPA's Production & Design course as crew.

The week culminated in a one-night performance at the Albany Entertainment Centre, which featured the high school students along with WAAPA staff and students. Additionally, students from Albany with an interest in backstage areas such as lighting, sound and stage management also had the opportunity to work with the WAAPA production students on the show.

"This was easily the best combined performance we have undertaken," said

Mike Eastman. "The standard of musicianship was excellent and we performed to our biggest house yet, confirming that the residency is fulfilling its aims and growing with every year."

This fantastic event was made possible with the amazing support of Kosmic Sound who supplied all the equipment.

WAAPA's Contemporary Music students also performed their annual *Radio Active* concert in the Geoff Gibbs Theatre in September. The program featured a diverse repertoire covering all musical bass from pop to rock, R 'n' B to soul and funk classics in three spectacularly produced concerts with a cast of talented young musicians and singers.

## SNIPPETS

On September 2, jazz pianist **Konrad Paszkudzski** performed with his eponymous trio at the prestigious Dizzy's Jazz Club at the Lincoln Center in New York. The trio is made up of Paszkudzski on piano, Hassan Shakur on double bass and Dag Markhus on drums. The 2007 WAAPA graduate has been described by jazz legend Wynton Marsalis as having "a pearly touch, a sense of history, a sense of drama, a love of the blues, and an elegance which is borne of high minded dedication."

Saxophonist **Troy Roberts** performed from September 3-8 with the Jeff Tain Watts Group at one of the most revered jazz venues in the world, the Village Vanguard in New York City.

The WA Youth Jazz Orchestra (WAYJO) celebrated its 30th anniversary with a Gala evening on September 20, held at the Astor Theatre in Mount Lawley. The three current WAYJO bands – the Big Band, Swing Band and Composers Ensemble – and an all-star Alumni Band performed. WAYJO's Artistic Director, WAAPA graduate **Mace Francis** was delighted with the result: "Each band really played to their very best on the night and was able to showcase their strengths and the range of big band music we play." The three WAYJO bands boast numerous WAAPA students and graduates while the Alumni Band was made up almost entirely of Academy graduates and lecturers.

## WIN FOR COMPOSITION GRADUATE

WAAPA Composition graduate Kevin Penkin is the winner of the 2013 Dr Harold Schenberg Music Prize for Composition. The annual prize, awarded by the School of Music at the University of Western Australia, provides a high achieving tertiary student or recent graduate from a recognized WA tertiary institution with the opportunity to undertake further musical studies in composition outside of WA or overseas.

Penkin is using his \$15,000 prize to undertake a Masters of Composition for Screen at the Royal College of Music in London. Moving to London and starting the course in September, he describes the first four weeks of his studies as "very intense and very hands on".

The young composer, who enjoys writing music for video games, says the highlight of his time so far has been a Q&A session with prolific film composer Hans Zimmer.

"When Hans came to the RCM, he brought his Ambient Music Designer, Mel Wesson with him to give a talk on how they create their soundtracks," said Penkin. "Mel showed examples from various movies he had worked on with Hans, where his 'Musical Sound Design'



took over the function of both music and sound effects within the film. I think there's a lot to be explored with this concept so I hope to expand on this approach in years to come."

Penkin believes that his time at WAAPA was important for exposing him to new types of music. "That exposure was important in order to get a better appreciation for what I was doing as a composer in the 21st century," he said.

"I also met some amazingly talented friends along the way who I'll keep in contact with for years to come."

The Doctor Harold Schenberg Music Prize for Composition, which was first awarded in 2011, has to date been won by three WAAPA students: Ellie Cumming (2011), Rebecca Smith (2012) and Kevin Penkin (2013).

# BEHIND THE SEAMS

## COSTUME DESIGN STUDENTS TAKE OUT TOP HONOURS AT PERTH FASHION FESTIVAL

Costume Design student Melanie Nicholls has won the Top Student Designer award at the 2013 Perth Fashion Festival.

The 3rd Year WAAPA student took out the overall title and the Ready to Wear Women's category at the Perth Fashion Festival's Student Runway Awards on 14 September at the WA Museum.

The Student Runway showcases the work of student designers from Western Australia's top fashion institutions. Judged by a panel of industry experts, a winner is selected from each of the five categories.

In addition to Nicholls' win, fellow 3rd Year Costume Design student Emily Brewer was the winner of the Contemporary Evening Wear category and Edith Cowan University's Contemporary Fashion student Meg-Isabella Hewett won the ECO Design category.

Overjoyed about receiving top student designer honours, Nicholls said the practical experience she gained from exhibiting at the Student Runway had been extremely rewarding.

"It's been a fantastic learning experience. Just being able to take part was amazing and then coming away with a win was the icing on the cake."

Nicholls' design was a dress made from the wet suit material neoprene.

"The idea came about from a picture I saw of boot covers made of neoprene and I thought why not make a whole outfit from that fabric. I'd never used that medium before so I wanted to push the boundaries and design something a little different. I also love the beach, so I thought I'd try and design something you can wear from beach to bar."

"Fashion was my first love, but the theatrical side of costume got me hooked, therefore studying at WAAPA was the perfect outlet to learn and develop my skills."

"I feel like the knowledge and experience I've gained through this course has given me lots of options. I'd love to stay in the fashion industry and am so excited that there are lots of doors open to me right now," she said.



Photo Robert Durcan, courtesy of The West Australian

Melanie Nicholls (left) being applauded by her model wearing the award winning design

## SECONDMENT STORIES

### COSTUME DESIGN STUDENTS ENJOY WORK EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS IN NEW YORK

In July, three 3rd Year Costume Design students were given the incredible opportunity to undertake work experience in New York. Ruth Mongey worked as a costume assistant on *Peter and the Starcatcher*, Osha Shealey was seconded to the New York Theatre Workshop and Melanie Nicholls had her placement in the theatrical costume shop, Eric Winterling Inc.

Costume designer Paloma Young, who supervised Ruth Mongey's secondment, said that she would have no hesitation in hiring Ruth if she were in New York as her "instincts, pace, attitude as an assistant are spot on."

When asked what areas of work Osha Shealey should develop, Jeffrey Wallach, the costume shop manager overseeing Osha at the New York Theatre Workshop, commented that the only one

she was lacking was "her ability to stay in New York longer." He said that Osha impressed with her "wonderful skills and craftsmanship... I have already recommended her for work coming from the US to Australia on a Broadway-bound show."

Melanie Nicholls, enthusiastically endorsed by her workroom supervisor as "always early and a very hard worker", describes her experience:

"I was with Eric Winterling Inc. for four weeks in July working on various shows including *Wicked* (Mexico City tour), *The Lion King* (Australian tour), *The Book of Mormon* (Broadway and US tour) and *Love's Labour's Lost* (Shakespeare in the Park, Central Park). I was involved in the cutting and drafting of patterns for these shows as well as finishings on *The Book of Mormon* Rockstar and Townspeople shirts. My biggest

project was cutting, arranging and pinning endless amounts of leaf shapes out of various fabrics to create the fabric for Elphaba's Wicked Witch bodice in *Wicked*."

"The highlight of my placement was being invited backstage at *The Book of Mormon* on Broadway. I got the chance to see the costumes that I had been working on up close as well as many others that are used in the show. It was also a great experience to compare backstage at Broadway to the backstage area and facilities on *Jersey Boys* at Crown Perth, which I had been involved in up until the end of June."

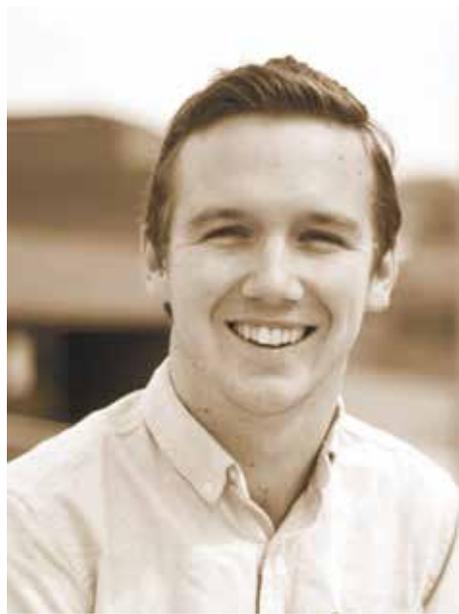
"Working in New York definitely gave me a new appreciation for the industry in Australia and the high standards and professionalism that we have in this country."

# LIGHTING THE WAY

## GRADUATE MITCHELL FENTON DESCRIBES HIS EXPERIENCE AS THE FIRST LIGHTING EXCHANGE STUDENT AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

"In January of this year, I spent a month in New York City interning with Broadway lighting designer Ken Billington on three musicals: *Chaplin* (workshop), *Merrily We Roll Along* (Off Broadway) and *Shatner's World* (Broadway). While in New York, I met with David Grill, Assistant Professor of Theatre Design/Technology at the State University of New York, Purchase (SUNY). I told Dave I wanted to do an exchange from WAAPA to SUNY, completing my senior year under his supervision. Dave was happy to have me join the program for one year.

In August I moved to New York to study at SUNY through an exchange program that ECU helped me establish. Being SUNY's first exchange student in the Design and Technology program was a great privilege. I took classes and lectures from many established and well known Broadway set, costume, sound and lighting designers as well as producers, directors, technical directors, stage managers and production managers. While at SUNY I designed a show written by Suzan Lori Parks and directed by Dennis Hilton-Reid.



After completing the exchange program and graduating from WAAPA and SUNY, I spent a year interning with Ken Billington, at the end of which he offered me a job as his full-time assistant

lighting designer. I now assist Ken in the office with prepping the paperwork for his shows and I was the assistant lighting designer on his off-Broadway show *Little Miss Sunshine the Musical* directed by James Lapine, which opened in New York City in October.

I am also assisting Jason Kantrowitz who is both a lighting designer and creative producer at Busch Gardens, part of Seaworld Theme Parks, in Williamsburg Virginia. A month ago I was in Michigan lighting two dance pieces for a New York based dance company Satellite Collective. Autumn (or 'fall' as they call it here) will be really busy as Ken has productions happening in New York, Off Broadway and Broadway as well as many shows outside of the country.

I have now seen many universities in the USA and met a lot of undergraduates and graduates from their programs. Nothing comes close to the level of experience and knowledge that WAAPA students leave WAAPA with, especially the lighting students. The best way to learn theatre is to do it! I tell everyone here to pack their bags and move to Australia to study at WAAPA."

### SNIPPETS

Two WAAPA graduates were among the winners announced at the 2013 Melbourne Fringe Awards on October 6. **Ian Michael**, who graduated from the Aboriginal Theatre course in 2008, won Outstanding Indigenous Artist for his performance in the play *Laika & Wills*, and **Gillian Cosgriff**, 2010 Music Theatre graduate, won Best Cabaret for her self-devised show, *This is Why We Can't Have Nice Things*.

**Helen Shanahan**, who graduated from WAAPA with a Bachelor of Arts in Contemporary Performance (Voice) in 2011, has won top honours in the songwriting category of the Telstra Road to Discovery program.

Telstra Road to Discovery has been supporting independent Australian musicians for the past 11 years, fostering opportunities for emerging talent to develop and establish themselves in the music industry. It does this by putting artists in touch with influential figures on the music scene, extending their music to a wider audience and increasing their media exposure. The inaugural winner of the program was Jessica Mauboy.

Shanahan's prize includes a \$14,000 development fund, a mentorship with Mushroom Records and a trip to Nashville to play at the Americana Music Festival.

Shanahan said she would use the cash to promote her first studio album *Driftwood*, released late last year.



"Covenant under question?" by Matt McVeigh

## MCVEIGH GOES SOLO

In October, 2010 design graduate Matt McVeigh held his first solo exhibition at Perth's Linton & Kay Galleries. 'Mine' is based on the four years McVeigh spent working in WA's Pilbara region as an artist with the Education Department, mining sector and indigenous communities.

McVeigh is a multi-disciplinary artist whose practice mainly focuses on sculpture, community art and design for theatre. He has

worked as a theatre designer for companies such as Steamworks Arts Productions, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre, Deckchair Theatre, WA Youth Theatre, Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Theatre, Ochre Dance Company and has assistant designed on productions for the Australian Ballet and Victorian Opera.

In 2014 McVeigh will undertake a four-month residency in Beijing.

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A glimpse of what's been happening on stage at WAAPA



Little Women



Hanging Space



Hour of the Wolf



Little Women



Reefer Madness

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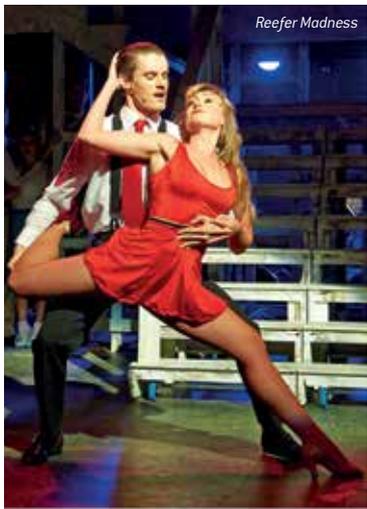
The Jackman Family Foundation



Little Women



Hour of the Wolf



Reefer Madness



Reefer Madness



Hanging Space