



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 55) October 2019

**HUGH JACKMAN**  
receives top honour

**HELPMANN AWARD**  
winners

Composer wins  
**2019 BAFTA**

**PLUS**  
Awards, prizes and  
**NEW** scholarships





## WELCOME...

In the short time I've been at WAAPA, I've been hugely impressed by what I've seen: the students are so accomplished, so skilled and confident, and the staff are incredibly dedicated to providing the best performing arts training possible.

I am extremely excited about helping to enhance WAAPA's profile, especially internationally, so that we are recognised worldwide for the outstanding training opportunities we provide. Hugely respected nationally, it is now time for WAAPA to enter the international stage and claim its place as one of the world's pre-eminent centres for performer training and innovative research practice.

There's something extraordinary about the creative energy and the dynamic synergies at WAAPA – I look forward to celebrating and proclaiming the work of our students and graduates at every possible opportunity.

*David Shirley*

**Professor David Shirley**  
Executive Dean  
WAAPA, Edith Cowan University

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# HELPMANN HONOURS

## FIVE WAAPA GRADUATES WIN AUSTRALIA'S TOP PERFORMING ARTS AWARD

**C**ongratulations to five WAAPA graduates who won 2019 Helpmann Awards, announced at two black-tie events held on July 14 and 15 at Arts Centre Melbourne.

The Helpmann Awards recognise distinguished artistic achievement and excellence across Australia's live performing arts.

Under artistic director Eamon Flack, Sydney's Belvoir theatre company garnered a massive 13 Helpmann Awards, including Best New Australian Work and Best Play for *Counting and Cracking* and Best Musical for *Barbara & the Camp Dogs*.

Flack, who graduated from WAAPA's Acting course in 2003, won Best Direction of a Play with S. Shakthidharan for *Counting and Cracking*.

Tim Minchin, a 1998 Contemporary Music graduate, took out the award for Best Australian Contemporary Concert for *Back*. After touring Australia and New Zealand earlier this year, the show is touring the UK until November.

2008 Acting alumnus Brent Hill won Best Male Actor in a Musical for his role as Dewey Finn in *School of Rock the Musical*.

Ursula Yovich, a 1996 graduate from the Aboriginal Performance course, was awarded Best Female Actor in a Musical for her role as Barbara and, with Alana Valentine and Adm Ventura, Best Original Score for Belvoir's *Barbara & the Camp Dogs*.

All four dancers nominated in the Best Female Dancer category were WAAPA graduates, with Tara Jade Samaya taking line honours from Carina Roberts (WA Ballet's *Dracula*), Charmene Yap (Sydney Dance Company's *Cinco*) and Ashley McLellan (Dancenorth's *Dust*). Samaya was named Best Female Dancer in a Ballet, Dance or Physical Theatre Production for her work in Chunky Move's *Common Ground*.



Above from left: Brent Hill and Ursula Yovich.  
Left: Eamon Flack with S. Shakthidharan.  
Photos by Rocket Weijers



# JACKMAN RECEIVES ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

On Friday 13 September, Hugh Jackman received his medal as a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) at an investiture ceremony at Government House in Canberra.

The Hollywood and Broadway actor and singer was recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list in June for "eminent service to the performing arts as an acclaimed actor and performer, and to the global community, particularly as an advocate for poverty eradication".

The star of *The Boy from Oz* and *X-Men* is a global adviser to the Global Poverty Project, a World Vision ambassador and launched the Laughing Man Coffee Company in 2011.

Jackman's philanthropic efforts also include work with the Fight Cancer Foundation and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS.

"Mr Jackman's distinguished career, his compassion and his heartfelt patriotism have brought great credit to Australia and he is deserving of our highest praise," the Governor-General's secretary Paul Singer said.

Jackman, who graduated from WAAPA's Acting course in 1994, is currently on his 2019 world tour performing hit songs from *The Greatest Showman*, *Les Miserables* and *The Boy from Oz*.

Jackman said he was "very honoured and very humbled" to be awarded Australia's highest civilian honour and thanked his family and the people who had supported him.

"The countless teachers, mentors, institutions who have supported me along the way are immeasurable, and I will always be in my country's debt."

Hugh Jackman with His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia  
Photo by Irene Dowdy, idphoto.com.au

## BEST OFF BROADWAY

"Carmel Dean's melodies make the poetry soar," wrote *The New York Times* of the original new musical, *Renascence*, which premiered Off Broadway in New York City late last year.

Dean, a 1999 WAAPA Music graduate, wrote the score for *Renascence*, which won the 2019 Off-Broadway Alliance Award for Best New Musical.

"It was such an honor to receive this award, as there are so many new and exciting musicals that are produced every season, and to be included in and recognized as a part of this community is a great privilege, especially as someone coming from the other side of the planet!" emailed Dean from New York.

"*Renascence* is the story of the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Edna St. Vincent Millay, a young woman from rural Maine who was defiant, brave and brilliant."

The score consists of many of St. Vincent Millay's poems set to music by Dean, including the title work, an epic poem that provides a 20-minute musical opus for the show's finale.

In 2001, after working on the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games Opening and Closing Ceremonies, Dean was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship that took her to New York University to complete a Master of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre Writing.

Since then, Dean has worked on the Broadway musicals *American Idiot*, *Hands on a Hardbody*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and was musical director/conductor of *If/Then*, starring American music theatre star Idina Menzel. Dean performed with Green Day and the cast of *American Idiot* at the Grammy Awards in 2010.



## MUSIC GRADUATE CARMEL DEAN SCORES OFF-BROADWAY AWARD

# NIGHT MUSIC MAGIC

## JAZZ SAXOPHONE RELEASE EARNS RAVE REVIEWS

WAAPA's Coordinator of Jazz Studies Dr Jamie Oehlers released his new album *Night Music* earlier this year to rave reviews.

Nikos Fotakis in *AustralianJazz.net* wrote: "By now we have established that Jamie Oehlers is a national treasure, one of our most important jazz saxophonists, soloists, composers, improvisers and educators. Anyone needing further proof of that should look no further than his latest album, *Night Music*... Oehlers presents yet another collection of memorable tunes, delivered with passion, urgency and vigour."

A graduate of WAAPA and Boston's Berklee College of Music, the internationally acclaimed saxophonist recorded *Night Moves* with four fellow WAAPA alumni: Ricki Malet on trumpet, Harry Mitchell on keys, Zac Grafton on bass and Ben Vanderwal on drums.

Dr Oehlers wrote much of *Night Music* as part of his WAAPA PhD thesis that explores the interaction of melody within improvisation. He intends to use the findings of his research to teach jazz musicians to be better improvisers.

"I've always wanted to find a unique approach to improvising, seeing as though the majority of what we do as jazz artists is making it up, so to speak," he explains.

"I have a really deep interest in how that occurs, in finding out how much is made up and how much is determined by what we practice."

He describes how his PhD explores ways of creating melodies outside of the normal pathways taught to jazz musicians, which is usually related to scales and chords.

"It doesn't mean that it creates music that's totally abstract and unrecognisable, it's just a different approach to creating it."



# UK OPPORTUNITY

## JOINT ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS WILL ENABLE TWO CLASSICAL MUSIC STUDENTS TO FURTHER THEIR STUDIES IN THE UK

Through Edith Cowan University's ongoing partnership with one of the world's leading conservatoires, WAAPA's Classical Music students now have the opportunity to broaden their horizons through substantial scholarships for overseas postgraduate studies.

WAAPA and the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) are providing joint scholarships, worth £10,000 (A\$18,600) each, to enable two of WAAPA's graduating classical music students to undertake a year of postgraduate study at the RNCM in Manchester.

The inaugural scholarships will be awarded at the end of this year, with the recipients commencing their postgraduate studies in the UK in September 2020.

This initiative is part of an ongoing collaboration between WAAPA and the RNCM, following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2017. Since then, both institutions have been engaged in building collaborative research and joint performance opportunities, as well as placements and exchanges for staff and students.

The RNCM is a leading international conservatoire that boasts around 320 teaching staff and over 800 students from 60 countries. In 2014, the RNCM was rated the UK's leading music college for

research, and is the recipient of Times Higher Education Awards for Excellence and Innovation in the Arts (2015) and Outstanding International Student Strategy (2016), and a Global Teaching Excellence Spotlight Award (2018).

"The RNCM has enjoyed a strong relationship with WAAPA for a number of years, and I am thrilled that we are developing this further through two substantial joint scholarships alongside smaller bursaries and opportunities for staff and student exchange," said Professor Linda Merrick, RNCM Principal.

"International partnerships such as this form a significant part of conservatoire training, enabling us to share best practice, explore collaborative projects and further enhance the student experience."

The high-calibre arts training provided by the RNCM is renowned the world over and has, for many years, been a highly sought-after postgraduate destination for WAAPA's Classical Vocal graduates.

WAAPA graduate Daniella Sicari applied to the RNCM for postgraduate training because of the range of performance opportunities on offer: self-devised lunch-time recitals, opera scenes, opera production auditions, and external opera company residencies and mentorships.

Sicari, who graduated from the RNCM in 2018, said: "The RNCM is known for its friendliness and welcoming nature; this is absolutely true and it made such an impact on my time there. The people I met inspired me and I learnt many important lessons from the teachers and guest artists who visited the College."

One of these teachers is renowned English soprano, Professor Lynne Dawson, Head of the School of Vocal Studies and Opera at the RNCM. In May, Professor Dawson was a visiting guest artist at WAAPA, holding a series of inspirational masterclasses for the Classical Vocal students.

The ongoing relationship with the RNCM is helping to strengthen WAAPA's growing international profile as a world-class music conservatoire.

Professor David Shirley, Executive Dean of WAAPA, said: "Our continuing relationship with the RNCM and the unique opportunities afforded by the joint scholarship scheme represents a very exciting phase in the development of the partnership between WAAPA and the RNCM. I am delighted with this wonderful initiative and I very much look forward to further collaborations in the future."

For more information please email [enquiries@ecu.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@ecu.edu.au).

# GUILDHALL GOLD

Soprano Samantha Clarke has won the 2019 Guildhall School of Music Gold Medal, the school's most prestigious prize for outstanding soloists.

Since 1950, the London performing arts conservatoire has been awarding the prize to singers and instrumentalists in alternate years, with previous winners such as bass-baritone Nathan Berg, violinist William Primrose and cellist Jacqueline du Pré.

This year's final took place at Barbican Hall before a distinguished panel of judges including Sir Bryn Terfel, a Guildhall alumnus who won the Gold Medal in 1989.

Clarke commented: "I was in total disbelief when I heard my name read out, but I am completely buzzing and over the moon to have won the Gold Medal. What an honour! "I felt very privileged to be performing on the Barbican stage and the support from the audience was so encouraging."

This outstanding achievement, which the 2013 WAAPA graduate described as 'the best way to wrap up my conservatoire training', marks the end of Clarke's time studying at the Guildhall with renowned soprano Yvonne Kenny AM.

Before attending Guildhall, Clarke completed an Advanced Postgraduate Diploma and Intensive Masters of Music at the Royal Northern College of Music, under the tutelage of Mary Plazas, where she was awarded that institution's Gold Medal in 2017.

Clarke, who is now represented by the internationally renowned arts management company Askonas Holt, performed the lead role in the world premiere of *Georgiana* at the Buxton International Festival in July and debuted as Musetta in *La Bohème* for Opera North in October.



# WINNING SOUNDS

## AWARD-WINNING COMPOSER MATT MCLEAN ENJOYS BEING A 'JACK OF ALL TRADES'

Composer, sound engineer and producer Matt Mclean was part of the team that won a 2019 BAFTA Games Award and an Australian Game Developer Award for the interactive video game, *Florence*.

*Rumu*, for which he composed the original sound track (OST), also won an Australian Game Developer Award this year.

Graduating from WAAPA a decade ago with an Advanced Diploma in Contemporary Music (Keyboard) and a Bachelor of Music in Composition and Music Technology, Mclean combines his skills in composition and sound engineering under the alias feeding | ear. Mclean also performs live with electronic/alt pop ensemble, Lilt, and tours as a stage technician with internationally acclaimed act, Tame Impala.

Here he talks to **IW** about all things sound:

**IW: How did your WAAPA studies help set you up for your career?**

**MM:** The Composition degree was a real turning point in my studies, as the freedom to express individuality was highly encouraged and nurtured, and the exposure to a breadth of historically

important and influential forms of niche music informed and helped my composition process greatly. Stuart James, my principal study teacher, was also invaluable in providing workplace and educational opportunities after I graduated.

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

**MM:** Meeting and working with other composers and creating a strong and lasting professional network. I also enjoyed the healthy level of competition and inspiration from the other students, being constantly amazed by the quality of work, as well as the chance to publicly showcase your work throughout the course and engage in cross-disciplinary work.

**IW: Is there one facet of your career that you enjoy more than the others or do they provide a good balance for each other?**

**MM:** Becoming a composer was my end goal when returning to WAAPA, so to be finally working on a professional level and also receiving some accolades as a video game composer has been fantastic.

I see all forms of work in the industry as entwined; whether it's learning studio techniques and operation, mixing,

electronic production or how to do some simple live sound engineering – they all feed in and inform my practice as a composer and vice versa. I strongly believe being a 'jack of all trades' and constantly self-learning is vital to working in a fluid and ever-changing industry.

I've also been thoroughly enjoying my role as a lecturer and tutor in audio and electronic production at Murdoch University, as well as guest lectures at WAAPA and SAE.

**IW: You were part of the development team that won a 2019 BAFTA Games Award for the interactive video game, *Florence* ...**

**MM:** I mixed the OST and mastered the in-game sound track of *Florence*, which was composed by another Composition graduate Kevin Penkin. He's not only a truly amazing world-class composer but also a close friend, collaborator and mentor. The OST was recorded in Perth and performed by WAAPA graduates. We've worked together on several games and animes in various roles, and have some upcoming works including a new anime series which I am really excited about contributing to!

**IW: What is it like working with Tame Impala?**

**MM:** I've been working with Tame Impala for around two years now in an audio backline tech role. It's an incredibly challenging and often daunting prospect to jump in and work with a team of truly top-tier professionals, but it's fantastic to work with people whom you can constantly learn from and aspire to. This year we headlined Coachella, Glastonbury, and had sold-out shows in New York's Madison Square Garden and London's O2 Arena, as well as a string of festival dates around the world.

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

**MM:** I've got a few more weeks touring with Tame Impala, and am in the process of looking for my next game project, working on this upcoming anime and seeing what comes up next!

**IW: What advice would you give to recent graduates?**

**MM:** Give people your time, throw yourself in the deep end, ask for opportunities and try to always be a friendly, enthusiastic person to work with and just do your best – these traits will open doors for you.

“The Composition degree was a real turning point in my studies, as the freedom to express individuality was highly encouraged and nurtured.”

## FILM FESTIVAL AMBASSADORS



**Sophia Forrest**

WAAPA Acting graduates Sophia Forrest, Alex Williams and Travis Jeffery were the ambassadors for this year's CinefestOZ Film Festival, held from August 28 to September 1 in WA's South West region.

CinefestOZ Chair Helen Shervington said: “Having WA-trained gems like Sophia, Alex and Travis at the forefront of CinefestOZ is a testament to the incredible growth and burgeoning talent within the Australian film industry.”

Sophia graduated from WAAPA in 2016 and went on to tour internationally with the theatre productions *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* and *Coriolanus*.

Her film credits include Rachel Griffiths' *Ride Like a Girl*, which screened at the festival, *Reaching the Distance* and *Aquaman*.

Since graduating from WAAPA in 2011, Williams has appeared in *Underground: The Julian Assange Story*, *Paper Planes*, *Never Tear Us Apart: The Untold Story of INXS*, *Underbelly Files: Chopper* and *The Heights*.

Jeffery, who graduated in 2012, has logged numerous credits including Kriv Stenders' *Danger Close: The Battle Of Long Tan*, *The Heights*, season four of the AMC series *The Preacher*, Angelina Jolie's *Unbroken* and Disney's *Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales*.

More than 150 films were showcased at CinefestOZ 2019, including 15 world, 11 Australian and 53 WA premieres.



**Alex Williams**



**Travis Jeffery**



## BLAKE ROSE HEADS TO LA TO PURSUE HIS MUSIC DREAM

## ROSE ON THE RISE

From humble beginnings busking on Perth's streets, singer, songwriter and producer Blake Rose is being touted as the next big thing on the music scene.

In May, US pop superstar Taylor Swift included Rose's second single *Lost* on her personal Apple Music playlist. With Swift's seal of approval, *Lost* raced past 6.5 million streams, firmly planting Rose as potentially WA's biggest pop export since Troye Sivan.

The 2016 Diploma of Music (Contemporary) graduate, who taught himself guitar at age 14, records in a bedroom studio at his parent's Booragoon home.

Last year, Rose signed with top US independent music publisher, Kobalt Music Group and LA-based manager, Brandon Goodman, who is known for guiding the career of chart-topping international star Billie Eilish.

In April, Rose released his single *Best of Me*, a song written for a friend who battled drug addiction. He's now planning a permanent move to the US; while he waits for his visa, he will continue writing music and releasing songs.

Rose maintains that studying at WAAPA played a crucial role in what he's achieved so far.

"In addition to learning valuable musicianship skills, I also formed a network of friends at WAAPA who have had a significant impact on my career... WAAPA puts you in an environment where you are completely surrounded by like-minded and incredibly talented people, so progress is inevitable."

Rose's advice to aspiring singer/songwriters is simple: write lots of songs.

"Seems obvious but there are a lot of singers out there who aren't writing or aren't writing enough," he says.

"I used to do covers and that was okay for a bit but as soon as I began to see some traction from it, I realised that very quickly you start to be seen as a cover artist and it's hard to shake. If that's what you're going for long term then that's cool but I think a lot of people use it as a platform."

"I took a step back from that and instead focussed on writing and production. As soon as my songs starting getting good, that's when everything changed for me – all of a sudden I started getting in the 'right rooms' and meeting the 'right people'. Everything starts from a good song so in my opinion, that's where you should put your focus."



Performance piece of 'So Speaks the Land' at the Parodos Festival with WAAPA lecturer Simon Stewart at right.

## CANADIAN COLLABORATION

An exciting collaboration between WAAPA and Ryerson University in Toronto culminated in six WAAPA students and staff travelling to Canada in June to present the world premiere of an original theatre piece.

*So Speaks the Land*, which examines issues of identity, migration and diversity, was performed at the multicultural Parodos Festival, hosted by Ryerson's School of Performance from June 13-16.

WAAPA Acting students Kaya-Marley Jarrett, Domino McCathrion and Darius Williams performed *So Speaks the Land* with Blessing Adedijo and Pablo Ogunlesi from Ryerson's Acting course. WAAPA's Aboriginal Performance lecturer Simon Stewart, who provided cultural information and support on the project, was also in the cast.

The new work was written by American playwright Dr Velina Hasu Houston, based on the biographical stories of its cast. It was directed by WAAPA's Associate Dean of Performance, Associate Professor Andrew Lewis, and produced by Dr Peggy Shannon, Chair of the School of Performance at Ryerson.

Bachelor of Performance Making graduate Jessica Russell, currently undertaking her Masters at the WA Screen Academy, travelled with the WAAPA group to make a documentary

about the project. Dr Shannon and Associate Professor Lewis will co-author a research journal article about the project's outcomes.

"It was wonderful to witness the Canadian and Australian students share their life experiences and stories of race with each other," said Associate Professor Lewis. "They bonded through the rehearsal process and created a profound piece of theatre which provoked great discussions with the audience."

During the Q&A sessions conducted after the shows, audience members described how they identified with the material and commended the performances for being sensitively realised.

"These were profound encounters, with many audience members sharing their responses to race and identity after being moved by the stories they saw on stage."

*'So Speaks the Land' is part of The Crossing Borders Project, a creative research endeavour funded by grants from the Partnership for Change: RBC Immigrant, Diversity, and Inclusion Project, and Ryerson International Experiential Learning Initiative Fund, with Ethics Approval by Ryerson University and Edith Cowan University.*

## YIRRA YAAKIN'S NEW LEADER



Eva Grace Mullaley, who graduated from WAAPA's Aboriginal Performance course in 2003, was appointed artistic director of Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company in April.

Mullaley has enjoyed a long association with the company, since being an assistant to the then artistic director David Milroy on his play, *Windmill Baby*.

She went on to direct her own plays, and has worked around Australia as an associate artist, administrator, stage manager, tour manager, producer, event manager, actor, dramaturge, lecturer and workshop collaborator.

Mullaley, a Widi woman from the Yamatji nation in the mid-west of WA, returned to Perth to take up the Yirra Yaakin appointment after three years in Hobart and Melbourne.

During that time, she established Blackfulla Performing Arts Alliance in Tasmania as an umbrella organisation for people working in Aboriginal performing arts, and completed her Masters in creative writing at the Victorian College of the Arts.

"Yirra Yaakin has, for years, been my cornerstone of theatrical integrity and community engagement. I look forward to continuing such an inspirational legacy and building on the shoulders of those who came before me to lead Yirra Yaakin into a new era," says Mullaley.

## WINNING WINTER SUITE

Music Honours student Callum O'Reilly bested a strong national field to scoop the 2019 Willoughby Symphony Young Composer of the Year Award.

In addition to \$5000 prize money, O'Reilly had his work *Winter Suite for Solo Trumpet and Orchestra* premiered in June by the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra in Sydney, with the performance recorded for future broadcast.

The 22-year-old emerging composer beat 18 composers to take home the top prize.

"I'm excited and humbled to have been selected from such a strong field across Australia," he said after winning the award.

"I knew for sure that I wanted to compose orchestral music after listening to Mahler's *2nd Symphony*. There is something about

the sound of the orchestra and the concert hall atmosphere which makes me feel at home."

*Winter Suite for Solo Trumpet and Orchestra* was inspired by 70s jazz, hip-hop, minimalism and classical music. Its three sections represent O'Reilly's three favourite aspects of winter: wind through leaves, rain and warmth from friends.

O'Reilly was one of four composers to take part in the West Australian Symphony Orchestra's Composition Project in 2018. In addition to writing his Honours thesis at WAAPA, he co-arranged music by The Doors for the Perth Symphony Orchestra concert in August, *Love Him Madly: The Doors Reimagined*.



# BACKSTAGE TAKES WORLD STAGE

## PRODUCTION & DESIGN STUDENTS CREATE COLLABORATIVE INSTALLATION FOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Eleven of WAAPA’s Production & Design students travelled to Prague in June as part of a collaborative project between Australia’s top three performing arts institutions for the 2019 Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space.

The Quadrennial, which this year ran from June 6-16 at the Prague Exhibition Grounds, is the world’s largest international festival of theatre and performance design, attracting approximately 180,000 visitors from 78 countries.

Design and Costume students from WAAPA, the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) and the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) created an installation representing the three Australian institutions for the Student Section of the Quadrennial’s Scenography Festival.

The WAAPA students – four designers, four costumiers, two stage managers and a Props & Scenery student – travelled to the Czech Republic with Leaf Watson, WAAPA’s Coordinator of Design, and wardrobe assistant Megan Parker to install the exhibit and attend the Quadrennial’s performances, exhibitions, workshops and lectures.

This is the third time a WAAPA Design contingent has attended the Quadrennial, following trips in 2011 and 2015. However, this year marked the first national collaborative installation.

The process began with a creative development phase in July last year, with a design concept agreed on by the end of the year.

Entitled *Swag*, the installation invited its audience to experience “the ambivalence of the Australian dream... Lie down on our hand-worked patchwork quilt of backyard textures under an Australian evening sky and look up into fragments of childhood memory floating above.”

In first semester this year, the WAAPA students embarked on the construction phase to create an immersive environment which explored and reflected the Aussie backyard. To achieve this, the students used an abstract blending of sourced, constructed objects and surface treatments to create a textural understory for the installation.

On June 3, the three components of the installation arrived in Prague from Perth, Sydney and Melbourne, ready for installation on June 5 before the first official day of the Quadrennial.

“The installation day was the first time we had seen each institution’s contribution, other than images and plans shared towards the conclusion of the construction phase,” explains Leaf Watson.

“We were very excited about the opportunities for international exposure this event provided, meeting students, educators and practitioners from all over the world.”

*Funds to support staff and student travel and accommodation was obtained via the Endeavour Leadership Program.*



Design elements from WAAPA’s contribution to the Prague Quadrennial by our Production & Design students

# A COMPOSING FELLOW

## MUSICIAN JOSTEN MYBURGH WINS PRESTIGIOUS COMPOSITION FELLOWSHIP



As the recipient of the 2019 Schenberg Music Fellowship in Composition, WAAPA PhD candidate Josten Myburgh has embarked on a six-month study tour, working with renowned artists in electro-acoustic music making and creative sound recording in Australia and overseas.

The Fellowship, worth \$30,000, is awarded to a talented WA tertiary student or recent graduate for the opportunity to further their studies in composition.

Myburgh has also been awarded an Ian Potter Cultural Trust grant and a Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries creative development grant.

The 25-year-old composer writes music for instruments and electronics, and performs improvised music on saxophone, drums and laptop. He is part of the management of the label Tone List, the Perth-based label for exploratory music, and curates their annual Audible Edge Festival and the Sounding Together mentorship/residency. He also works for Tura New Music on their improvised music and festival programming, and lectures at WAAPA.

“Josten is one of the most gifted composers that we have had in the Composition and Music Technology course,” said course coordinator Dr Lindsay Vickery.

“During his time at WAAPA he set up very successful collaborative concerts featuring work from ECU and UWA Composition students, and has, in a short period of time, gone on to become one of the prime-movers in the Perth new music scene.”

Myburgh's Fellowship study tour began in June at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), where he undertook a month-long mentorship with California-based guitarist and composer Michael Pisaro.

“I am deeply inspired by Pisaro’s ethics and attitude towards music, as well as the aesthetics of his work and the compositional processes it involves,” Myburgh explains.

“His writing on the materiality of sound, and how this can be related to as a listener, has had vast consequences on my own understandings of sound’s ontology and has profoundly influenced my music, perhaps more so than any other composer.”

Myburg was also involved as a performer and composer in the Dog Star Orchestra Festival of Experimental Music, an annual event held every summer in Los Angeles.

While in North America, Myburgh performed concerts in New York and Montreal before heading to Arles in France to participate in the five-day Phonurgia Nova radio art summer school, directed by leading radio artist Alessandro Bosetti.

This was followed by a week in Germany developing and recording new improvised works with Emilio Gordoa, Improviser in Residence for the 2019 Moers Festival. Myburgh has worked with the Mexican composer, vibraphonist and percussionist on numerous projects since they met in Berlin in early 2015.

Myburgh and Gordoa then toured with performance artist Lena Czerniawska and percussionist Michael McNab to Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Canberra and

Sydney, performing in various settings with their new project, *Mahagonny*.

In September, Myburgh participated in the Australian Art Orchestra’s Creative Music Intensive, held in Tarraleah in Tasmania.

This annual 10-day residency offers lectures and workshops with master musicians from Arnhem Land and Seoul, along with some of the most influential improvising musicians on the Australian scene.

“It’s been a dream of mine, to study with Yolngu musicians,” says Myburgh.

The young composer is spending the month of October at the Melbourne Electronic Sound Studio (MESS), extending his practice of composing with synthesizers. He will also collaborate with Melbourne’s experimental, improvised and new music artists.

Myburgh’s final trip takes him to South Africa in November to participate in the Sonic Mmabolela workshop, directed by leading field recordists and musique concrete composers Francisco Lopez and Barbara Ellison.

“It has been and continues to be a great privilege to spend so much time learning from mentors, from people around me, from new places and ecologies,” says Myburgh.

“To be making music constantly is also a great joy: given that there is relatively little infrastructure for experimental music-making in Perth, I’m cherishing the myriad opportunities to play in new contexts.

“I’m also thinking excitedly about home, and the new ways of making music I can bring to encounters with my friends once I return.”



## RESTORING OUR MUSICAL HERITAGE

The First Fleet piano, part of ECU/WAAPA's Founding Pianos collection, was flown to the UK earlier this year for restoration.

Regarded as one of Australia's most significant musical instruments, the piano left Britain more than 230 years ago onboard HMS Sirius, the flagship of the First Fleet, bound for Australia. It arrived at Botany Bay on 26 January 1788 after eight months at sea.

In 2016, the Frederick Beck square piano was donated to ECU by Sydney collector Stewart Symonds, along with 139 other historical keyboard instruments that now form one of the world's most significant collections of 18th and 19th century pianos.

The First Fleet piano is being restored by internationally renowned square piano expert, Lucy Coad.

Over the next 10 months, Coad will strip the instrument down, replace lost parts and put the piano back together in her Bath workshop.

The painstaking restoration work involves Coad using materials that are as true to the original as possible, such as sourcing leather tanned using the same methods as employed by 18th-century craftspeople

and using animal glue (Coad's will be made from fish). Fortunately, the ebony and ivory of the keys are intact.

"I'm really excited about restoring the First Fleet square piano and forging a link with Australia on this project," said Coad.

"Edith Cowan University understands the importance and the need for preserving these early instruments for both historic interests and for teaching purposes at the university."

With only a handful of global experts still practising the dying art of keyboard restoration, ECU's Founding Pianos project is committed to offering scholarships and training programs to link Australian students with European piano restorers.

In addition, this year ECU launched the world's first PhD program devoted to keyboard instrument restoration, which will research and document current methods of maintaining the vitality of these precious instruments.

The First Fleet piano will return to Australia next year, in time for the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth and the 250th anniversary of Captain Cook setting foot on Australian soil.

## HISTORICAL INSTRUMENT EXPERTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD GATHER AT MOUNT VERNON



## HARPSICHORD CONNECTIONS

Professor Geoffrey Lancaster AM, who facilitated the procurement of the Stewart Symonds Keyboard Instrument Collection for ECU/WAAPA, was invited to present a paper at an international harpsichord symposium held at George Washington's Mount Vernon estate in Virginia on August 3.

Located 20 kilometres south of Washington DC, the Mount Vernon mansion is home to a Longman & Broderip harpsichord that George Washington acquired in 1793 for his step-granddaughter, 14-year-old Eleanor 'Nelly' Custis.

Harpsichord maker John Watson, recently retired from his role as conservator and curator of musical instruments at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, has spent the last two and a half years creating a working replica of this famous harpsicord.

The symposium, *The Keyboard in Washington's America: Celebrating Mount Vernon's Harpsichord and its Reproduction*, was held to celebrate both instruments, old and new.

"John Watson gave a fascinating paper on a subject that is very close to WAAPA's heart, that is the philosophies and the practices associated with making replicas

of late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century keyboard instruments," says Professor Lancaster.

"As a researcher here at WAAPA, I had the good fortune to spend time with John last year seeking data on the instruments in the Colonial Williamsburg collection that were made by Thomas Culliford, who was a master maker of harpsichords, spinets and pianos in London in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century."

Professor Lancaster was researching material for his 2018 book, *Culliford, Rolfe and Barrow: A Tale of Ten Pianos*, and was invited to present a paper on Culliford in the Mount Vernon symposium.

Other experts at the symposium included Englishman Michael Cole, an internationally acclaimed expert in the development of the piano in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, who presented a paper entitled *Ladies at the Keyboard*; and Laurence Libin, the now retired curator of the musical instrument collection at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, who gave a talk on keyboard instruments as aspirational goods in American homes from the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century through to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

The symposium was bookended by two concerts performed on John Watson's replica harpsichord. The opening concert

comprised solo repertoire from the library of Nelly Custis and the closing recital featured songs and chamber music that would have been performed for the Washingtons in their home.

Professor Lancaster describes how his participation in the symposium has not only strengthened WAAPA's ties with George Washington's Mount Vernon, but also forged relationships with many of the internationally renowned attendees.

"These esteemed curators and instrument makers are very interested in the developments that are taking place here at WAAPA in relation to historical keyboard art, and are keen to be involved in whatever way they can be to aid us in our long-term plans."

Another outcome of the symposium is an offer from Thomas Strange, one of the world's greatest historical keyboard instrument makers and restorers, to make a replica of one of the rarest instruments in WAAPA's collection.

"We live in the very real expectation that we'll be able to commission him to undertake this work," says Professor Lancaster.



Paul Tunzi (left) at Buckingham Palace with David Winston, the piano technician responsible for maintaining the Erard grand piano made for Queen Victoria.  
Photo used with permission of Royal Collection Trust ©Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

## INSTRUMENTAL MOVES

Paul Tunzi, WAAPA's piano tuner for over 30 years, is the recipient of the inaugural ECU Vice Chancellor's Founding Pianos Masters Scholarship.

This will allow the Perth-based master piano technician to document the restoration of the First Fleet piano (*see story page 12*) for his Master of Arts. He will also continue to develop skills and resources collaboration with historical keyboard experts around the world.

This latest scholarship follows on from the work Tunzi achieved after being a Churchill Fellow in 2017. He spent three months investigating advanced conservation techniques and the maintenance of historical keyboard instruments in the UK and Europe.

Here Tunzi shares the extraordinary opportunities he experienced while undertaking his Churchill Fellowship:

"My research took me to the 'motherlands' of keyboard instrument development and production: Italy, Vienna and London – all representing important keyboard milestones, from the invention of the piano in Florence to the popularisation of the domestic English square piano.

One of the highlights of my journey was the chance to view the gold Érard grand piano built for Queen Victoria housed in Buckingham Palace, seen in the background of the Queen's 2018 Christmas message.

The Churchill Fellowship opened for me the most important venues and access to priceless keyboard instruments and the pre-eminent experts that would not normally be accessible. This gave me the privilege of touching the very instruments once owned or played by Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt and Brahms.

I was also able to experience the manufacturing processes of new fortepianos and harpsichords, and how these instruments are duplicated as close to the original instrument. This allows the musician to play on an instrument suitable for regular use rather than adding any additional wear to priceless original instruments.

On my return to Perth I received many letters of support from venues including Buckingham Palace, The Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, and Laboratorio di Restauro del Fortepiano in Florence.

My aim is to develop a restoration program that will link Australian technicians with world-leading artisans and to capture the rare art of fine restoration, and forward these skills on to the next generation."

## NEW KEYBOARD SCHOLARSHIP

Applications are now open for a new \$100,000 scholarship in historical keyboard performance.

The Simon Lee Foundation Scholarship will enable a gifted and committed commencing student studying a Bachelor of Music in Classical Performance (Instrumental) at WAAPA to study all facets of historical keyboard performance.

In addition to studying a common core of history and theory, the recipient will follow a specialised performance-based curriculum in their chosen area.

While it is envisioned that the successful candidate would come from a background in modern piano, they would be required to display a flair for and a keen interest in historically-informed performance practice.

The Simon Lee Scholar will study under the guidance of an existing core team of experts and will have access to national and international visiting artists of the highest calibre.

The scholarship is four years in duration, with each year being worth \$20,000 (\$80,000). A further \$20,000 will be allocated in the final two years to enable the recipient to study keyboard in Europe.

Applications close on 1 December, 2019. For more information: [enquiries@ecu.edu.au](mailto:enquiries@ecu.edu.au)



## THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR

### JOINING WAAPA'S FRIENDS BRINGS MANY BENEFITS

For more than 35 years, the Friends of the Academy have provided support for WAAPA's talented students on their journey towards a successful career in the arts.

"The Friends of the Academy provide remarkable support for WAAPA and its students," says Professor David Shirley, WAAPA's Executive Dean.

"Their loyalty, dedication and support on many levels prove invaluable in enabling the next generation of musicians, performers, designers and technicians. All of us at WAAPA are hugely indebted to the Friends and we are very grateful indeed for everything that they do for us."

Grants provided by the Friends are used across all disciplines at WAAPA, particularly to supplement travel and accommodation expenses for final year students undertaking work experience secondments in Australia and overseas.

The friends also help fund the annual Showcase tour that allows the final year Music Theatre and Acting students to demonstrate their talent to agents, directors and producers in Sydney and Melbourne.

"An exciting initiative that the Friends supported financially last year was the inaugural Acting Showcase trip to Los Angeles," said Kevin Button, President of the Friends of the Academy.

"We were delighted to hear how well the Showcase was received and how this helped launch the graduating actors into their professional careers."

**"All of us at WAAPA are hugely indebted to the Friends and we are very grateful indeed for everything that they do"**

The Friends also provide annual grants to assist with the running of LINK Dance Company, WAAPA's pre-professional dance company, and for the Aboriginal Performance program.

In addition to providing grants, the Friends of the Academy purchase much-needed equipment and musical instruments, from lighting hoists for the theatres and high-tech portable sound and lighting desks to electronic keyboards and drum kits, among many others.

While the Friends' annual membership fee provides the basis of this financial assistance, it is boosted by fundraising activities such as hosting behind-the-scenes tours of the Academy, and providing food and drink at WAAPA's annual Open Day.

Throughout the year, the Friends host special 'Friends Events' with complimentary refreshments after selected WAAPA performances. These events provide members with a unique opportunity to meet and chat with the cast, crew and staff.

Friends of the Academy also receive significant membership discounts and preferential bookings to all WAAPA performances.

"The Friends realise how important it is to stay relevant and up to date," said Kevin. "So we're always thinking of new ways to improve our communications with members such as video clips and student interviews on our website."

If you would like to become a Friend of the Academy and support the stars of tomorrow, please ring (08) 9370 6895 or go to: [friendsoftheacademy.org.au](http://friendsoftheacademy.org.au)

Friends of the Academy enjoy a Lifetime Membership luncheon held in July in The Edith Spiegeltent.



Photo by Kathy Wheatley

# AWARDS & PRIZES

## DANCE HONOURS

Six WAAPA dancers took out honours at this year's Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) WA's Festival of Dance, held from May 30 to June 3 at John Curtin College of the Arts in Fremantle.

More than 400 young dancers from ballet schools across Perth competed in the festival, which is a springboard for WA's aspiring and pre-professional dancers.

WAAPA dance student Portia Secker won the Pre-Professional Award while Brandon Hardie took out the 16+ Contemporary Award. Maddison Carr was the recipient of the Lynley Wilson Artistic Scholarship, with

Beatrice Manser named as runner up. Ada Sayasane and Brent Carson received a commendation for the Linley Wilson Award.

This year the Festival was adjudicated by David McAllister AM, Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet, as part of a team of industry professionals that also included Aurélien Scannella, Artistic Director of West Australian Ballet.

The festival finished with a gala performance on the final evening on WA Day, which featured guest performances by the West Australian Ballet and WAAPA's Dance students.

Portia Secker, winner of the RAD Pre-Professional Award

## CLASSICAL MUSIC AWARDS

Six of WAAPA's leading final year Classical Music students performed a concert of dazzling showpieces as they competed for the inaugural Richard Gill Award on August 13.

Named in honour of one of Australia's pre-eminent and most admired music educators and conductors, the award concert was attended by Richard's widow Maureen and daughter Claire, who had flown from Sydney to Perth for the event.

The students performed on the Richard Gill Auditorium stage next to Marek Szyler's magnificent painting of Richard, who was Dean of Classical Music at WAAPA from 1985 to 1990.

Xiao Song Liu (piano), Sean Hayes (saxophone), Daniel Price (violin), Alessia Pintabona (voice), Ewan Potter (bass trombone) and Pavan Kumar Hari (vibraphone) all performed magnificently, as WAAPA and its students celebrated Richard's astonishing life and works.

At the conclusion of the concert, Maureen Gill presented the new award to Pavan Kumar Hari.

"I feel extremely honoured to have won this award, and grateful for being able to perform in such a beautiful, meaningful concert in commemoration of Richard Gill," said Pavan. "It was as if Richard himself was there, looking down on us."

"Perhaps no other musician has had such a profound effect on music in Australia," says Tim White, WAAPA's Classical Music Coordinator. "Richard inspired literally thousands of people to embark on professional careers in music. We are all grateful for the goodness and beauty that Richard brought to our lives, and WAAPA's most prestigious classical music award is now named in his honour."

"As Richard would have said, 'Music is good, and it's all about love, joy, beauty, creativity and community'."

*WAAPA thanks Alan and Delys Newman for their generous support of the Richard Gill Award.*



From left: Maureen Gill, Claire Gill, Classical Music Coordinator Tim White and Richard Gill Award winner Pavan Kumar Hari.

## BENDAT BENEFICIARIES

Cate Creedon and Alexander Griffin have been named as the recipients of the inaugural Bendat Excellence Scholarships.

Creedon is a Bachelor of Arts (Arts Management) student while Griffin is studying an Advanced Diploma of Live Production and Management Services.

Presented in May by Laura Machlin, daughter of Jack Bendat, and Professor David Shirley, Executive Dean of WAAPA, the scholarships recognise talented 2nd Year students from WAAPA's Arts Management and Production & Design courses.

*WAAPA thanks the Bendat family for their generous support and commitment to the future of the performing arts.*



From left: Laura Machlin, Cate Creedon, Alexander Griffin and WAAPA Executive Dean Professor David Shirley

## WARNOCK AWARD

In June, Music Theatre student Emily Wood was awarded the prestigious Bill Warnock Scholarship. The award was announced at the conclusion of the preview performance of WAAPA's mid-year musical *Strictly Ballroom* at the Regal Theatre.

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

The award was presented by Bill's wife, Diana Warnock AM, with Bill's daughter Kylie Warnock and his granddaughter Greer Dalrymple.

*WAAPA thanks the Warnock family for their generous support of the Bill Warnock Award.*



From left: Diana Warnock AM, Emily Wood, Kylie Warnock and Greer Dalrymple.

## ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

On July 30, WAAPA's graduating Acting students performed their favourite Shakespearian text in the Roundhouse Theatre as they competed for the annual Vice Chancellor's Shakespeare Awards.

Jessica Veitch won Best Performance by an Actor (Female) for her work as Viola in *Twelfth Night* and Hamish White won Best Performance by an Actor (Male) as Richard III from *Richard III*. Both students took home \$3,000 each.

For the first time, a People's Choice Award was presented. The inaugural winners were Lachlan Stevenson and Hamish White who won over the audience – and \$2,000 prizemoney – with their scene from *Richard III*.

*WAAPA thanks ECU Vice Chancellor Professor Steve Chapman CBE for his generous support of these awards.*



2019 Vice Chancellor's Shakespeare Award winners with ECU Vice Chancellor Professor Steve Chapman CBE

## CABARET KUDOS

3<sup>rd</sup> Year Music Theatre students Conor Neylon and Jackson Peele have won the 2019 Julie Michael Award in Musical Cabaret for their self-devised piece, *The Beep Test*.

The annual award, worth \$1,500, is presented to the WAAPA student (or team) who writes and delivers the best musical cabaret piece at a gala performance night.

Ruby Voss, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Music Theatre student, took out second prize of \$500 for her piece, *Seat Filler*.

The 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.

This year's cabaret pieces were adjudicated by Mark Coughlan, Chief Executive Officer of the WA Symphony Orchestra; WAAPA graduate and performer Thomas Papathanassiou; actor Rebecca Davis; Michael Lavine and WAAPA's Executive Dean Professor David Shirley.

*WAAPA thanks the Government House Foundation for their generous support of the Julie Michael Award in Musical Cabaret.*



2019 Julie Michael Award winners with the judging panel.

# STUDENT TOURS

During the mid-year break, students from WAAPA's jazz and dance courses travelled overseas to extend their learning in an international setting.

## DANCE STUDENTS IN BEIJING

Fifteen dance students, accompanied by WAAPA's Dance Coordinator Nanette Hassell, attended the 2019 Beijing Dance Festival, held from July 16-28. The festival is one of the biggest celebrations of dance in China, attracting dance artists and students from around the world. The WAAPA students participated in six days of intensive training in contemporary dance styles by internationally renowned dance teachers. In the second week of the festival, they attended performances by companies from across Asia and Europe.



## LINK STUDENTS IN EUROPE

LINK Dance Company, WAAPA's pre-professional dance company, embarked on their annual European tour at the end of June. The company members, accompanied by LINK Artistic Director Michael Whaites, participated in a study tour to Montpellier, Grenoble, Paris and Marseille. The students performed, participated in masterclasses and workshops, and were able to see world-class dance performances.

Here LINK dancer Giorgia Schijf recounts her impressions of the tour:

"The LINK European tour was an unforgettable, invaluable experience. The tour began in with eight days in Montpellier, where we had the opportunity to watch many dance performances at the Montpellier Dans Festival. The highlight was Peeping Tom's *32 rue Vandenbranden*, one of the most influential, breathtaking works we had ever seen.

We performed at Didier Theron's studio, a place where many LINK dancers had performed before us. Dancing in both indoor and outdoor venues, and for a variety of audiences from primary school children to adults, challenged us and helped us grow as performers.

The next stop was the city of Grenoble, located at the base of the French Alps. Our hotel was nestled in the mountains overlooking the beautiful French countryside; we felt like we were in *The Sound of Music*! It was definitely one of our favourite parts of the whole tour.

We performed in the small town of Uriage, just outside of Grenoble, as part of the Uriage Dance Festival. We danced on an outdoor stage in a park with the mountains as a backdrop to a beautiful community of families and dancers from the area. We were privileged to have experienced this strong sense of community in dance in such a remote area, and witness the way in which dance can bring people together from all parts of the world.

We then travelled to Paris to watch Pina Bausch perform *Bon Voyage Bob*, another impeccable performance and an honour to witness. Thank you to Michael Whaites and his connections with the Pina Bausch Company for allowing us to be a part of such a precious experience.

Our last stop on the tour was Marseille, again in the south of France, where we worked on our upcoming season *In the Dark* and were involved in the Faires de la Danse Festival organised by French choreographer Christine Fricker.

We performed LINK repertoire in the festival, but were also involved in two new projects. In the first, we collaborated

with dancers from Christine's company on a devised improvisation titled *Packing and Unpacking* that was performed in a marketplace.

The second collaboration involved working with amateur dancers. This was an unfamiliar experience for many of us but we learnt a lot through this structured improvisation. Again, we felt a strong sense of community in dance at this festival, something many of us are passionate about bringing back into the Australian dance scene.

For the remaining three weeks we embarked on our own solo travels to countries such as Italy, the Netherlands, England, Hungary, Germany, Denmark, Switzerland and Croatia, with some of the LINK dancers involved in dance workshops such as the Henny Juriens workshops in Amsterdam and the week-long Hofesh Shechter in Turin.

Overall it was an extremely memorable experience that has helped us grow as dancers and performers. We have learnt many valuable lessons that we can bring with us into our future careers."



# EXPERT TRAINING RAISES BAR

Integral to WAAPA's performing arts training is giving students the opportunity to learn from professionals at the top of their field. Here's a snapshot of the visiting artists who have brought their expertise to WAAPA over the past few months:

## ACTING



### Dr Cynthia Ashperger

A specialist in the acting techniques of Michael Chekhov, Dr Cynthia Ashperger spent three weeks at WAAPA giving masterclasses and tutorials for the Acting, Music Theatre and Bachelor of Performing Arts students.

Dr Ashperger, who is Professor of Performance Acting at Ryerson University in Toronto, was impressed by the quality of training at WAAPA: "It's a very strong team here and everybody's working towards giving the students the best possible education they can get."



### Priscilla Jackman

Sydney-based director Priscilla Jackman was a guest artist at WAAPA in August to direct the 3rd Year Acting students in Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*.

Jackman was the inaugural winner of the Ensemble Theatre's Sandra Bates Directing Award in 2016 and, as the recipient of

the Berlin New Music Opera Award in 2017, worked at the Komische Oper Berlin under renowned Australian opera director Barrie Kosky.

Her many theatre credits include writing and directing the Sydney Theatre Company's 2018 world premiere of *Still Point Turning: The Catherine McGregor Story*. This October she directed another Australian STC premiere, *White Pearl* by Anchuli Felicia King.

"I was delighted to work with WAAPA students on *An Ideal Husband*, and feel very rewarded by the quality of the work we achieved, and the depth of our creative process across all aspects of the production, including acting, lighting, design and stage management," said Jackman.

"I found the students exceptional, and have recommended them widely – to colleagues who I am currently working with at Sydney Theatre Company and National Theatre of Parramatta.

"I hope to work with the students in years to come, as they embark on their careers in the industry."

*Priscilla Jackman's visit to WAAPA was generously supported by the D'Arcy Slater Foundation.*



### Michael Jenn

English actor and director Michael Jenn directed the 3rd Year Acting cohort in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* for a week-long season at the Studio Underground, State Theatre Centre of WA in March.

"WAAPA is without doubt the best of all the institutions that I've worked at and I would

say that the level of talent in the cast, and the crew and the stage management is exceptionally high," he said.

3rd Year Acting student Camila Ponte Alvaraz, who played Tybalt in *Romeo & Juliet*, said that working with Michael Jenn was 'challenging but wonderful'.

"Michael respects you as your own artist. In our second year of training you're guided through your process but as a final year student you have to take responsibility for your own work, and Michael gave us that freedom. He pushed us and gave us the space to be in charge of our own process and character."

*Michael Jenn's visit to Perth was proudly supported by the Minderoo Foundation as part of WAAPA's Visiting Artist program.*



### Dr Peggy Shannon

"Everyone should see this production," wrote Steven Cohen in *Seesaw Magazine's* 5-star May review of *When the Rain Stops Falling* by Andrew Bovell. "Not just for the melancholy yet uplifting story, but to rest their minds that the future of theatre is in exceptional hands."

Those 'exceptional hands' were the 3rd Year Acting students supported by WAAPA's Production & Design students, under the direction of Canadian visiting artist, Dr Peggy Shannon.

Dr Shannon is Head of the School of Performance at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario.

"Directing *When The Rain Stops Falling* for WAAPA was like being handed an exquisite

gift,” said Dr Shannon. “The script is potent and timely, and the actors are so incredibly talented and hard working. The student design team was also extraordinary. Faculty and staff working with the students and with me directly on the production were all world class.

“The experience was simply wonderful from start to finish. WAAPA is in a class of its own and I was thrilled to spend six weeks in residence with them.”

*Dr Peggy Shannon’s visit to Perth was proudly supported by the Minderoo Foundation as part of WAAPA’s Visiting Artist program.*



**Dr Peter Zazzali**

Visiting American director Dr Peter Zazzali created a high-energy, modern retelling of Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* with the 2nd Year Acting students for four performances in August at the Subiaco Arts Centre.

A director, actor, teacher and published scholar, Dr Zazzali was formerly Associate Professor of the Department of Theatre at the University of Kansas and Artistic Director of Kansas Repertory Theatre. In December, he is due to take up the position of Head of Acting at the LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore.

“It was an absolute pleasure to collaborate with WAAPA’s 2<sup>nd</sup> Year students on *The Taming of the Shrew*,” said Dr Zazzali. “The actors, stage management team, and designers alike were as adept in their craft as they were gracious in their personhood.”

“We managed to revive a challenging play for our times by rethinking it with a contemporary sensibility. I couldn’t have been more proud of this inspiring group of young artists.”

**ARTS MANAGEMENT**



**Kenneth Watkins**

In May, WAAPA’s Arts Management students were given invaluable arts fundraising advice by visiting guest artist Kenneth Watkins, Philanthropy Director at The Australian Ballet (AB).

Over his 25 years with the company, Watkins has worked to ensure the AB has the resources to be one of the pre-eminent ballet companies in the world.

In his presentation, the arts fundraising expert provided an overview of the fundraising and philanthropic achievements of the AB. He also covered key topics such as structuring annual giving and major gift programs, data mining, stewardship and fundraising.

He described how the capacity to fundraise well is essential for all arts organisations, regardless of size.

“Successful giving programs require persistence, dedication and determination,” he said.

2nd Year student Anastasia Beasley described how Watkins showed how vital philanthropy is for Australian arts organisations.

“His talk inspired a lot of Arts Management students to pursue philanthropy as a career because he explained how impactful donations can be and how he’s built incredibly positive, lasting relationships with his donors,” she said.

**CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL**



**Paul Cesarczyk**

Thanks to the generous support of the WA Classical Guitar Society, Polish-born American guitarist Paul Cesarczyk gave a concert in the Richard Gill Auditorium in August.

Described as “an artist of uncommon command and maturity, with a broad and singing tone”, Cesarczyk made his New York City debut at the age of 17 at Carnegie Hall.

Since then, he has built an international reputation as an exceptional soloist and outstanding educator. In particular, through his role as Head of Classical Guitar at Mahidol University’s College of Music in Thailand, he plays an active role in the development of guitar playing in the South Asia region.

Cesarczyk performed solo work and was joined by WAAPA’s Classical Guitar Coordinator, Jonathan Paget, for duets on 19th century guitars.



**Christopher Dragon**

Conductor Christopher Dragon returned to his alma mater in May to conduct the WAAPA Symphony Orchestra with trumpet virtuoso Brent Grapes in a thrilling concert of Russian orchestral masterworks.

*Romantic Tchaikovsky* was performed on May 11 at All Saints’ College Centre for

Performing Arts and the following afternoon at the Churchlands Senior High School Concert Hall.

Dragon, who graduated from WAAPA in 2012 with a Bachelor of Music, has recently been appointed Music Director of the Wyoming Symphony Orchestra and Resident Conductor of the Colorado Symphony. Both appointments begin in the 2019/20 season.



**Mike Cheng-Yu Lee**

The ever-popular *Moonlight* and *Pathétique* sonatas headlined a program of Beethoven piano masterpieces performed in April by visiting guest fortepianist, Mike Cheng-Yu Lee.

Lee, who is an award-winning performer on historical pianos, played WAAPA’s world-class 18th century replica Walter fortepiano in the newly christened Richard Gill Auditorium.

Reviewing the concert for *SeeSaw Magazine*, Sandra Bowdler wrote: “Charisma is a slippery thing, impossible to define, but you know it when you’re in its presence. Mike Cheng-Yu Lee, dressed simply and evincing nothing more than a gentle friendliness, stepped up to the fortepiano and instantly had the audience in the palm of his hand from beginning to end. Playing without a score throughout, his concentration was intense, and the combination of familiar music and somewhat unusual instrument made for a fresh and most rewarding experience.”

*Mike Lee’s visit was generously supported by the Minderoo Foundation as part of WAAPA’s Visiting Artist Program.*

**CLASSICAL VOICE**



**Richard Bonyng AC CBE**

In partnership with the West Australian Opera, WAAPA welcomed Richard Bonyng AC CBE for a week of masterclasses, capped off by a gala concert in the Richard Gill Auditorium.

The legendary maestro inspired WAAPA’s Classical Vocal students with his wisdom, advice, knowledge and experience, entrancing the students with stories of his career and life with Dame Joan Sutherland, Luciano Pavarotti, Marilyn Horne and others.



**Professor Lynne Dawson**

In May, WAAPA welcomed Professor Lynne Dawson, Head of the School of Vocal Studies and Opera at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM) in Manchester, for a week of tutorials and a masterclass for its final year Classical Vocal students.

The internationally acclaimed English soprano was also able to reconnect with a number of WAAPA graduates who have completed postgraduate study at RNCM.

“The opportunity to sing for an artist of such high calibre has been invaluable,” said Alessia Pintabona, one of four students invited to perform for Professor Dawson in the masterclass.

“Lynne was not only able to offer great insight as a result of her knowledge and

experience, but was also incredibly helpful, encouraging and inspiring.”

Fellow student Elena Marcello agreed: “I am grateful for the opportunity to have sung for someone whose knowledge as a teacher, especially in the technique and language aspects of singing, was of immediate benefit in my practice. As a graduating student, the chance to learn from Lynne was a fantastic eye-opener into the international opera world.”

**DANCE**



**Sasha Janes and Lauren Langlois**

Choreographers Sasha Janes and Lauren Langlois were visiting artists at WAAPA for the May dance season, *Rise*.

The US-based Janes, who returned to his hometown of Perth for the *Rise* season, has worked with the Charlotte Ballet in North Carolina since 2003, for eight seasons as principal dancer and for the last decade as the company’s Resident Choreographer.

Melbourne-based dancer and choreographer Lauren Langlois was the winner of a Green Room Award for Best Female Dancer in 2015 and the prestigious Tanja Liedtke Fellowship in 2017.

*Sasha Janes’ visit to Perth was proudly supported by the Minderoo Foundation as part of WAAPA’s Visiting Artist program.*



### Niv Marinberg, Raewyn Hill and Scott Elstermann

A choreographic line-up of local and international talent created an impressive triple bill on WAAPA's LINK Dance Company for their May season, *The Body Politic*.

The choreographers included Niv Marinberg, former rehearsal director and tour manager for the Israeli dance ensemble L-E-V Company; Raewyn Hill, artistic director of WA's state flagship contemporary dance company, Co3 Australia; and 2014 WAAPA graduate Scott Elstermann, who last year became the first Australian recipient of a Pina Bausch Fellowship for Dance and Choreography.

Nina Levy in *Seesaw Magazine* described the performance as "a credit to LINK Artistic Director Michael Whaites... the pacy and engaging program showcases the considerable talents of this year's LINK dancers."

The LINK Dance Company then toured the show to France in the mid-year break.

## JAZZ & CONTEMPORARY



### Sheryl Bailey

In August, WAAPA was delighted to host the incredibly talented American jazz guitarist, Sheryl Bailey for a workshop in The Edith Spiegeltent.

Bailey has performed and recorded with internationally renowned musicians such as Richard Bona, John Zorn, Irene Cara, David Krakauer's Ancestral Groove, and George Garzone, among many others.

Bailey, who is Professor and Assistant Chair of Guitar at the famed Berklee College of Music in Boston, performed and shared her knowledge with the students, staff and the broader jazz community of WA.

*Sheryl Bailey's visit was generously supported by the Minderoo Foundation as part of WAAPA's Visiting Artist Program.*



### Katie Noonan

In April, the much-loved Australian songstress Katie Noonan performed three outstanding concerts with WAAPA's Jazz students.

The multi-award-winning singer/songwriter performed the music of Lennon and McCartney, plus a selection of her own compositions, backed by WAAPA's Jazz singers and instrumentalists.

Jamie Oehlers, WAAPA's Coordinator of Jazz, described how rehearsing and performing

with an artist of Noonan's calibre was an enlightening experience for the 40 students who took part.

"Katie's direction to them was precise, encouraging and infused with creativity – which in turn filled the students with confidence and a sense of trust within their team of performers. Katie's presence drew a higher level of performance out of the students," he said.

Daisy Fanning, a 4th Year Jazz Vocal student, agreed: "Katie Noonan's work ethic and musical skill were inspiring. She brought a calm to the production process that helped everyone perform at their best level. Most of all, she was warm and approachable, radiating good grace."

4th Year Jazz Saxophonist Max Wickham described the experience as "a fantastic insight into the standard of musicianship and professionalism required in the industry."

While at WAAPA, Noonan also generously participated in a 'Q&A' masterclass, offering invaluable knowledge into the current state of the jazz industry.

"Katie's roles as festival director, performer and art ambassador allowed her to impress upon the students the importance of developing their unique creative identities in order to stand out from the crowd and to pursue their careers with vigour, rather than waiting for a career to present itself," explained Oehlers. "Her advice on drawing inspiration from other great artists of all art forms, and especially her inclination to explore the work of other Australian artists, was inspirational."

On her Facebook page after the event, Noonan posted:

"Last week I went to WAAPA... making music with an awesome bunch of legends ... such a rad bunch of special young souls making beautiful notes. Thank you for bringing your hearts to my tunes and for sharing in the magnificence of Lennon and McCartney... the future of jazz in Australia is bright."

*Katie Noonan's visit to WAAPA was generously supported by Brigid and Ronald W. Woss AM of the Woss Group of Companies.*



### Troy Roberts

New-York based saxophonist Troy Roberts returned to his alma mater in May to conduct a free jazz masterclass.

Since graduating from WAAPA in 2002 and completing a Masters degree at the University of Miami, Roberts has garnered a world-class reputation for his impeccable jazz technique and improvisational skills.

The jazz saxophonist has two Grammy nominations under his belt and has shared the stage and studio with musical luminaries such as Aretha Franklin, Van Morrison, Joey DeFrancesco, Christian McBride, Orrin Evans, and Dee Dee Bridgewater, among many others.

*Troy Roberts' visit was generously supported by the Minderoo Foundation as part of WAAPA's Visiting Artist Program.*



### Robert 'RAab' Stevenson

WAAPA partnered with Joy is in the House School of Music to bring renowned US vocal coach Robert 'RAab' Stevenson to Perth for a week of masterclasses earlier this year.

RAab is the vocal coach for high-profile performers such as Justin Timberlake, Rihanna, Dave Matthews, Kelly Rowland, Pharrell Williams and Kelly Clarkson, among many others.

RAab conducted masterclasses with WAAPA's Contemporary and Jazz vocalists, a choral workshop with the WAAPA Gospel Choir, and an evening public event that was attended by over 200 members of the Perth singing community.

In addition to giving advice on vocal technique and health, vocal arranging and industry advice, RAab also generously gave the students free microphones, in-ear monitors, audio interfaces and t-shirts.

2nd Year Music student Melissa Da Silva said: "He has ignited a new flame in me to chase what sets my soul on fire and to work hard to reach goals I'd never dreamed were possible...What an experience!"

*WAAPA thanks Ayodele Hunter from Joy is in the House School of Music for facilitating RAab's visit to Perth.*

## MUSIC THEATRE



### Shaun Rennie and Michael Ralph

The 3rd Year Music Theatre students gained the expertise of two visiting guest artists for their production of *Sweet Charity* in August. Director Shaun Rennie and award-winning choreographer Michael Ralph created 'a wonderfully energetic and even inspired version' of the classic Tony-Award-winning musical, according to reviewer Ron Banks.

Rennie, who was the recipient of the 2017 Sandra Bates Directors Award at the Ensemble Theatre, this year directed *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*, starring Caroline O'Connor and WAAPA graduate Geraldine Hakewell, for The Darlinghurst Theatre Company.

Michael Ralph is a rising young choreographer, with credits including *Georgy Girl The Musical* and *West Side Story* for The Production Company, who is sought after for his dynamic, unique style.

## PRODUCTION & DESIGN



### James Browne and Trent Suidgeest

Production & Design students were given the opportunity to train under set designer James Browne and lighting designer Trent Suidgeest on WAAPA's mid-year musical, *Strictly Ballroom*, which enjoyed a sold-out season at the Regal Theatre in June.

Both designers are WAAPA alumni, with Browne graduating in 2001 and Suidgeest in 2008.

Browne has designed for Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Dance Company, Jamie Oliver's live stadium show in Melbourne, and Just for Laughs at the Sydney Opera House starring John Cleese, among many others.

Suidgeest has established himself as one of Australia's most sought-after young lighting designers. This year alone he has worked on *Muriel's Wedding The Musical* and the encore season of *Calamity Jane* in Melbourne, *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company in Sydney, and the world premiere of *Mimma The Musical* in Perth.

*James Browne and Trent Suidgeest were guest artists at WAAPA thanks to the generous support of the Minderoo Foundation.*

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An Ideal Husband



Defying Gravity



Katie Noonan



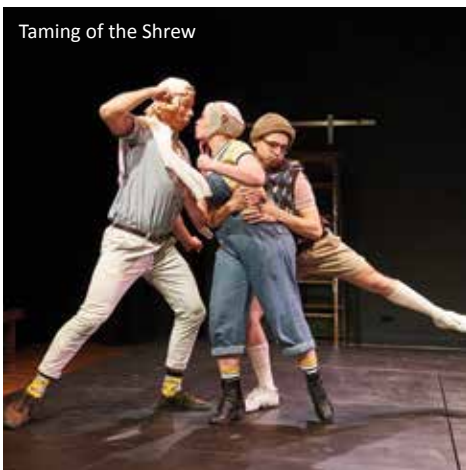
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