



INSIDE WAAPA

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Academy of Performing Arts

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WAAPA WELCOMES NEW COORDINATOR OF ACTING

ACTOR, DIRECTOR AND EDUCATOR

GLENDALINSCOTT

TAKES ON HER NEXT BIG ROLE

Actor Glenda Linscott says that her motto to live by is simple: "Be Kind. Breathe. Count Your Blessings".

Yet it is the Academy's students who will be counting their blessings now that Linscott has relocated from Melbourne to Perth to take up the position of WAAPA's new Coordinator of Acting.

Linscott brings a wealth of acting and teaching experience to her role at WAAPA.

Since graduating from NIDA in 1978, she has worked extensively in theatre, film, television and radio; she has taught at Australia's major actor training institutions; and she runs her own business, Perform with Confidence, which provides training and coaching services to actors and corporate clients.

Linscott is best known for her award-winning performance as tough bikie inmate and top dog Rita 'The Beater' Connors in the iconic Australian television series, *Prisoner*. That was back in 1986-87, yet people still write, approach her in the street, ask for photographs, and want to talk about how much they loved the show.

Linscott describes how an encounter with a *Prisoner* fan turned out to be one of the highlights of her career.

"I once had a very humbling encounter with a *Prisoner* fan, who'd had a tragic early childhood, suffering terrible physical and emotional abuse at home, and grinding poverty," recalls Linscott.

"When she was still a little girl she went to visit her grandmother one holiday. She saw an episode of *Prisoner* with me playing Rita Connors. She told me that she didn't know human beings could be like that – so full of life, so fun, so passionate, so caring – even when they were behind bars. She made up her mind that she would meet me one day. Her grandmother told her if she applied herself and finished school, she would help her with the airfare to Australia."

"Twelve years later she flew out to Australia as part of a UK Fan Club event and met me. We talked as we walked around the Wildlife Sanctuary in Ballarat, held koalas, met goannas



and wallabies. She had finished high school and was studying psychology in the UK. After that day, she decided to emigrate and finish her degree at Ballarat University. We had a deep conversation about how Rita's story – and all the stories told through a piece of low budget Aussie TV soap – had the power to enhance, inspire and engage people to live better lives, and become better human beings."

"That made me very proud to be an actress."

Linscott's long list of television credits also includes regular roles on the drama series *Murder Call* as pathologist Dr. Imogen Soames; on *Neighbours* as Dr. Jessica Girdwood, a surgeon at Erinsborough Hospital; and more recently on *Winners & Losers* as Lily Patterson, Frances' wayward mother.

Among her considerable theatre experience, Linscott has performed lead roles for major theatre companies in plays such as *Steaming*, *Daylight Saving*, *Speaking in Tongues*, *Crimes of the Heart*, and *Dinner with Friends*.

In 2012, she was nominated for a Greenroom Award for Best Actress for *Bad Blood Blues* at Melbourne's Chapel Off Chapel. Last year she

appeared with William Zappa in *Hate* by Stephen Sewell for Malthouse Theatre, and directed *Life of Galileo* and *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* for the Complete Works Theatre Company in Melbourne.

Linscott has also taught at acting institutions such as NIDA, VCA, MEAA, Melbourne University, Swinburne University, Patrick Studios Australia and many private training academies in VIC, NSW and QLD.

"The appointment of such a highly-respected arts practitioner will undoubtedly enhance WAAPA's national reputation," says Julie Warn, Director of WAAPA. "We're delighted to welcome Glenda on board, and look forward to benefiting from her expertise."

Linscott describes herself as being elated about her WAAPA appointment.

"It's the affirmation of a lifetime's work and a very great honour," she says. "I'm very excited about working with and training the next generation of elite actors."

Asked to name who has had the greatest influence on her career, Linscott is at a loss to know where to begin.

"Not fair! So many!" she laughs. "My first acting teacher Aubrey Mellor, Cicely Berry who taught me in early 1980s, Lindy Davies, Nick Enright, Peter Kingston, Rhys McConnochie, ABC Radio Drama! The playwrights! The brilliant actors I've worked with over the years, Maggie King, Geoff Morrell, all the girls on *Prisoner*, Paul Eddington, Julia Blake, William Zappa, Blessing Mokgohloa ... too many!"

When Linscott launched her training company Perform with Confidence in 2008, she wrote herself a mission statement. It reads: "Glenda's intention is at all times to support the realisation of the individual's potential. Allowing the development of imagination, creativity and adventurous story telling in order to develop excellence in communication and performing with confidence; to serve our community by reflecting the value and meaning of our lives."

It seems WAAPA's Acting course is in good hands.

Photo by Yatzek

MEG MAC SCORES TRIPLE TRACKS IN HOTTEST 100

VOCAL POWERHOUSE MEG MAC SCORES THREE TRACKS IN TRIPLE J'S HOTTEST 100 FOR 2014

Since snagging one of the three winning places in the Uearthed Falls Festival competition for 2013, Meg Mac has been making a name for herself with her sophisticated songwriting and velvety-smooth, soulful vocals.

After graduating from WAAPA's Contemporary Music course in 2012, Meg Mac – a shortening of her real name, Megan McInerney – brought out two singles in quick succession to critical acclaim, Known Better and Every Lie, both of which feature her trademark bluesy instrumentation and bursts of passionate vocal power.

Now three of her songs have made it into Triple J's Hottest 100 for 2014: Roll up Your Sleeves was voted in at 24, Grandma's Hands charted at 46 and Bridges (Like a Version 2014) came in at 91.

"Around the time I graduated I had only recorded one song which I had written that year," said McInerney. "Being an unknown and unsigned artist I created a profile on Triple J Uearthed and uploaded my first single, Known Better and put my music out in to the world for the first time. I guess you can say I was 'unearthed' by Triple J because it all started from there. I started getting airplay and support from the station, presenters and the listeners and that all led me to write and record more and now I find myself where I am today."

Behind the scenes, Composition and Music Technology graduate Charlie Daily produced two tracks by Allday that made the Hottest 100 cut: You Always Know the DJ scored at 35 and Right Now was voted in at 65.



DR THOMPSON TAKES CENTRE STAGE

At Edith Cowan University's graduation ceremony on January 31, Australian screen legend Jack Thompson was the recipient of the honorary title of Doctor of Performing Arts honoris causa.

The award recognises Thompson "as one of Australia's most iconic performing artists and for his decades of leadership as an ambassador of reconciliation."

Dr Thompson AM, who lives in Sydney, is a regular visitor to WAAPA. He has held several masterclasses for students and his son Bill graduated from the Acting course in 2013.

Dr Thompson is also the Founding Patron of the Jackman Furness Foundation for the Performing Arts, which was established by WAAPA alumnus Hugh Jackman and actor, producer and director Deborra-lee Furness in 2014.

The Jackman Furness Foundation, with support from the Andrew and Nicola Forrest-founded Minderoo Foundation, has approved

funding for 12 special projects at WAAPA this year.

Included will be a play by leading playwright David Milroy to be performed by the students of WAAPA's Aboriginal Theatre course.



From left: Director of WAAPA Professor Julie Warn, Dr Jack Thompson and Jonny Hawkins
Photo by Paul Santelmann, GFP Studios

SHOWSTOPPERS KICK OFF 30TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

WAAPA'S MUSIC THEATRE COURSE TURNS 30 ... AND KICK STARTS THE YEAR WITH A SHOW-STOPPING FUNDRAISER

Launching a year of celebrations to mark the 30th anniversary of WAAPA's renowned Music Theatre course, the Academy hosted a fundraising gala concert in the Geoff Gibbs Theatre on February 9.

WAAPA Music Theatre *Showstoppers* featured the entire cast of Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of *Les Misérables* – which includes 16 WAAPA graduates – with their Musical Director Geoffrey Castles, members of the orchestra and key technical staff, who all generously donated their time to make the gala possible. *Les Misérables* also celebrates 30 years this year.

All funds raised will benefit WAAPA's hosting of the 2015 Musical Theatre Educators' Alliance (MTEA) Conference, which will be held from June

20-23. Themed Australasian Overtures, this will be the first MTEA Conference to be held in the southern hemisphere.

The conference will bring together musical theatre educators from all over the world to share ideas about curriculum, recruitment, production and professional placement. It will also unite educators with professional theatre artists in their respective fields, with key Australian and international artists being featured. There will be presentations, workshops, discussions and entertainment pertinent to teachers of acting, singing, dance and voice.

Comedian, author, playwright, actor and director Ben Elton, who is patron of the MTEA Conference, spoke at the gala concert about the preparedness and professionalism of the



Music Theatre graduate Kerrie Anne Greenland, who plays Éponine in *Les Misérables*, performing in WAAPA's *Showstoppers* gala concert

Photo by Stephen Heath

WAAPA Music Theatre graduates that he has auditioned and employed. He said the upcoming conference will only build on the department's already outstanding international reputation.



Director of JFFPA Geoffrey Michael and Ben Elton (centre) with the cast of *Les Misérables* and current WAAPA Music Theatre students

Photo by Stephen Heath

DIANA WARNOCK HONOURED

On January 26, former MP, broadcaster and women's rights activist Diana Warnock was recognised in the 2105 Australia Day Honours for her service to the community and to the Parliament of Western Australia.

Every year, at the conclusion of the preview performance of WAAPA's mid-year musical, Diana Warnock and members of her family take to the stage to announce the recipient of

the Bill Warnock Scholarship. Awarded to WAAPA's most promising 2nd Year Music Theatre student, this scholarship honours the passion that Diana's late husband Bill had for the WA performing arts community and in particular, for WAAPA.

WAAPA is proud of its association with the Warnock family and congratulates Diana Warnock on her Australia Day Honour.



Diana Warnock (second from left) with Hugh Dalrymple, 2014 Bill Warnock Award recipient Joel Granger, Greer Dalrymple and Kylie Warnock

Photo by Kathy Wheatley

THE BUSINESS OF PERFORMING

A YOUNG OPERA SINGER COMBINES HER TWIN PASSIONS FOR THE ARTS AND FREE-MARKET ECONOMICS

It's not every opera singer who is passionate about economics. Or who sets up their own film production company. Or who can speak five languages, play six instruments and is a state gold medal-winning Irish dancer. But not everyone is Naomi Brockwell, a 29-year-old dynamo who has spring-boarded her training at WAAPA into a multi-faceted career.

Perth-born Brockwell describes herself as "an actress, film producer, Austrian economics evangelist and opera singer". Now based in New York City, Brockwell works as Program Officer for the Moving Picture Institute, a charitable foundation which supports the production of films promoting freedom. Yet around her day job, Brockwell fits in an extraordinary array of other interests: she is CEO of her own film production company, Rainsworth Productions, where she works as a producer, casting director and actor; she continues to work as a performer; and her interest in economics – mentored by Gene Epstein, economics editor of America's premier financial magazine, *Barron's* – finds expression in a surprising variety of ways.

Here Brockwell talks to Inside WAAPA about her unusual career path:

Tell us about your studies in Perth ... I studied economics at UWA initially, then did a Bachelor of Performance majoring in Acting at Curtin University. In 2008 I studied Musical Theatre at WAAPA in the certificate program, and then graduated with a Bachelor of Classical Performance from WAAPA in 2013. [Two years of opera were completed at Mannes College in New York and two years at WAAPA].

When did you move to New York and what prompted the move? I have been living in New York for almost four and a half years. I wanted to do some training over here, and was inspired by the intensive program that Patricia Price's son, Alexander Lewis undertook. [Patricia Price is WAAPA's Coordinator of Classical Vocal Studies and Opera; her son Alexander graduated from WAAPA in 2004 and is now a professional opera singer based in New York.]

I intended to stay only two months over my summer break, doing singing lessons every day, coachings, Alexander technique sessions, seeing as much opera at The Met [ropolitan Opera] as I possibly could. It was an intensive and exhausting time but I absolutely adored it and so I decided to stay. I thought why not make that my regular routine? And so I dove head first into a life of intensive opera training and loved every second of it.

You made your Off-Broadway debut in 2012, debuted with the New York Lyric Opera in 2013

and last year performed the role of Guinevere in *Camelot* in Vegas. What's next for you as a performer? Last year my first feature film *Subconscious* was released. This year I have a leading role in two more feature films, *BTS* and *Attack on Ashville*, and am also putting together an original one-woman show. I have a new music group with my sister, and we will be recording an album together as a fun side project. We both sing and play many different instruments so we thought it would be a great thing to do. Our grandmother was a singer in the army and she's a great inspiration to us.

Why did you decide to found Rainsworth Productions? I used to make a lot of films with my friends in Perth, and I also produced theatre. When I moved to NYC I began casting and producing features in my spare time, and I auditioned over a thousand actors. This experience gave me a lot to offer actors in helping with their audition technique, and it also introduced me to a lot of very talented people who wanted to work. When I set up Rainsworth Productions, it was not only to make films with this new network of mine, but I also brought in famous casting directors to teach audition masterclasses. I also began teaching singing and giving audition coaching classes, and helped mentor actors who were trying to navigate their way through the acting world here in NYC. I really love business as well as performance, so setting up a production company seemed like a great move.

You have a number of creative roles to your credit: actor, singer, casting director, producer. Is there one that stands out as being your favourite that you'd most like to pursue in the future? I've always wanted to act. Then I discovered singing and fell so madly in love with opera that I could think of doing nothing else. I became a producer to pay the bills and enable other opportunities, but it turns out that I'm actually quite good at it, and there's a certain thrill that comes from managing a tremendous amount of moving parts and putting films together right from the start. I work full-time as a producer at the Moving Picture Institute in NYC and adore my job. I've really never been happier but I'm always making sure that I keep performance an important part of my life.

Your interest in economics is not the usual sideline for an opera singer! What do you love about it? Economics is a great passion of mine. I host an Austrian economics reading group in NYC with economics editor of *Barron's*, Gene Epstein; I'm on the advisory council of the Mannkal Economics Education Foundation; I am the host of the Learn Liberty Academy for



Photo by Rebecca Merz Photography

The Institute for Humane Studies; I'm a policy associate at the New York Bitcoin Centre; and I've taken to rewriting pop songs to be about economics and making parody videos for them. My aim through these endeavours is to educate people about economics. We all want to change the world for the better, but you can't judge a policy by its intentions, you must judge it by its consequences. I want to help people understand about the unintended consequences of their decisions so that we can make better choices as a society, and create positive changes around us.

What are your favourite memories of your time at WAAPA? I loved my time at WAAPA, it had such a profound impact on me. Imagine Disneyland for a performer, that's what it felt like to me. I loved walking into the building in the mornings, seeing dancers stretching in the corridor, the guitarists strumming away on the couch, hearing a jazz band off in one of the studios, seeing people in costumes, carrying beautiful sets around, the singers humming to themselves.

It was the most positive and inspiring place for any creative person to flourish. I was super-lucky to have such wonderful teachers, but also felt that I was at a tremendous advantage having the opportunity to learn from all of the students there in all kinds of disciplines. It allowed me to fall in love with so much more than just my own major, and really helped me grow in my own pursuits. I've always been a curious person, and WAAPA handed all kinds of amazing to me on a silver platter.

What advice would you give to WAAPA students? The most important thing I've learned in my career and in running my film company is that good things don't come to those who wait. Good things come to those who network like crazy, work as hard as they can, and persevere through till the end.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE RATES HIGHLY

PERFORMING ARTS STUDENTS ENJOY OVERSEAS INTERCULTURAL ACTOR TRAINING



3rd year Performance Making students (left to right) Indiana Coole, Mariah O'Dea, Lucy Clements, Melissa Ettler and Elijah Melvin before their final presentation at the end of 6 weeks of training in Japanese Noh Theatre at ITI in Singapore.



(Left to right) Melissa Ettler, Tim Green and Lucy Clements in masks and kimonos for their presentation of Japanese Noh theatre études.



Noh Theatre master Yoshimasa Kanze (centre) of the Kanze School of Noh in Japan, with WAAPA student Tim Green learning repertoire with Japanese sword. Yoshimasa Kanze is the only son of Yoshiyuki Kanze, the fourth head of Kanze Kyuhkoh-kai (Kanze School of Noh), Yoshimasa Kanze was taught and trained by his father, and made his stage debut at the age of three.

On January 1, six students from WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts in Performance Making flew out of Perth to spend six weeks at Singapore's Intercultural Theatre Institute (ITI).

Formerly known as the Theatre Training & Research Program, ITI is an independent theatre school co-founded by its current director, Sasitharan Thirunalan, and the late playwright, theatre director, educator and arts activist, Kuo Pao Kun. Both men have been recipients of the Cultural Medallion, Singapore's highest honour for artists, which recognizes outstanding work in the arts.

ITI's vision of intercultural actor training uses a matrix of traditional Asian theatre systems and theatre-making from different cultures, with a view to producing critically and socially engaged artists who make original, contemporary theatre.

Sasitharan Thirunalan describes ITI as "not a school in the cookie-cutter mould". Its students are encouraged to explore the "whys and wherefores of doing theatre and being an artist" by engaging in different cultural contexts.

The WAAPA students spent their mornings taking voice, movement and Tai chi classes, and in the afternoons studied traditional Japanese Noh theatre. There were also weekly classes discussing culture, intercultural practice and the arts.

BPA student Lucy Clements believes the trip changed her and her fellow students, both as people and as artists. "The Singapore exchange trip at ITI opened and expanded our minds, not just to different styles of theatre, but also to different cultures, values, people and lifestyles," she said. "The trip was a journey with many struggles and hardships, all of which we came through together, resulting in a deeper understanding of the creative process, what it means to make art and what it means to be an artist."

"On our first day we were told that to be a good artist we must learn to be a good person. After six weeks of living and learning with our incredible fellow students, we came home with a new understanding of the meaning and value of this message."

Fellow student Melissa Ettler agrees: "From the first day onwards

the teachers actively encouraged us to think about our culture and listen to and learn from others – from the voice lessons where we had to research where our ancestors come from (skype calls to mums and grandparents were recommended) and where we had to each teach a song in our language to all the other students; to the humanity class where we talked about what we think of culture and what we think makes our culture and makes us who we are; to the daily one hour lunch break where all the students would sit together at a long table, talking and quite often singing, using all sorts of things as instruments – chopsticks, forks, hands, even coconuts! Different accents and people not understanding a word or sentence (because English isn't their first language) was never seen as an obstacle but as an opportunity to learn for both sides."

Thirunalan described the WAAPA students as a "credit to themselves, their teachers and to WAAPA".

"Both as a group and as individuals I witnessed how they grew to always adapt to new and changing situations, and watched as their curiosity and competence developed," he commented after the visit. "The highlight was seeing them grow as persons and actors. I am hoping this is a process that will continue after they return to WAAPA. It must be said that the WAAPA students made deep impact on the ITI students, through their commitment and the sheer joy they brought into the studio process."

As part of the visit, Head of WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts course Dr Frances Barbe spent four weeks at ITI, teaching her intercultural approach to movement and performer training.

Thirunalan has been invited to visit WAAPA later this year to present a talk on ITI's intercultural actor training program. While in Perth, Thirunalan is keen to learn about WAAPA's Bachelor of Performing Arts course and meet the local theatre community of actors, directors and students.

With New Colombo Plan funding already secured to run the study tour again next year, Dr Barbe is hoping to make this exchange between ITI and WAAPA an annual event.

GIRLS GIRLS GIRLS

SWEET TALENT ON SHOW



SWEET CHARITY, WHICH RECENTLY CLOSED AFTER A SHORT SEASON OF TOURING ON THE EAST COAST, HAD CRITICS AND AUDIENCES APPLAUDING.

Produced by Luckiest Productions and Neil Gooding Productions, *Sweet Charity* opened in February 2014 as the first offering from the Hayes Theatre Company. This new company has taken over a tiny theatre space in Sydney's Potts Point, formerly run by the Darlinghurst Theatre Company, to create a home for small-scale musicals and cabaret.

Sweet Charity was an instant hit: reviewers raved, the show sold out and it went on to win three Helpmann Awards. Riding high on that success, in January this year the production relocated to the Sydney Opera House's Playhouse Theatre, followed by short runs in Canberra, Melbourne and Wollongong.

Four of the main players behind this show's success are WAAPA graduates.

Director Dean Bryant won a Helpmann Award for Best Direction of a Musical for his inspired revamp of this classic show.

Bryant, who has previously won two Green Room awards and a Sydney Theatre Award, has a string of directing credits to his name, including being worldwide associate director (under Simon Phillips) on *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert – The Musical*. He has worked for the Melbourne Theatre Company, The Production Company, Red Stitch, OzOpera and CUB Malhouse. His next project is directing Opera Australia and John Frost's production of *Anything Goes*, starring Caroline O'Connor and Todd McKenney, which opens in Sydney in September.

In the starring role of Charity Hope Valentine, 2003 graduate Verity Hunt-Ballard produced yet another knock-out performance, taking out a 2014 Helpmann Award and Sydney Theatre Award. Three years ago she won a Helpmann and a Green Room Award for her 'practically perfect' portrayal of the much-loved magical nanny in *Mary Poppins*.

Green Room Award winner and Helpmann nominee Martin Crewes played all three of Charity's beaux: no good lover Charlie, international movie star Vittorio and odd-ball neurotic Oscar. Crewes, who graduated from WAAPA in 1990, has enjoyed leading roles in *Dr*

Zhivago, *South Pacific*, *West Side Story* and *The Woman in White*, among many others.

2003 graduate Lisa Sontag played Helène, one of the main trio of dance hall hostesses. Sontag, who won the Green Room Award for Best Supporting Actress for 'Frenchy' in *Grease*, has worked regularly with The Production Company, toured with *Mary Poppins* and is now appearing in *Les Misérables*.

Here's a sample of the unanimous praise the reviewers heaped on *Sweet Charity*'s main leads:

"Verity Hunt-Ballard ... is a remarkable mix of pep and pain as Charity. The role is a tough ask, requiring teeth-out goofiness and naivety one minute, heartbreak and wisdom the next – plus a range that can handle the belting highs of *Where Am I Going?* Hunt-Ballard manages all and then some. As her men ... Martin Crewes is her equal." – Joel Meares, *Sydney Morning Herald*

"Verity Hunt-Ballard is gorgeous as Charity, capturing her kookiness, sweetness, sunny optimism and vulnerability ... it's a radiant, endearing performance; sensationally sung, danced and acted, with knockout comic timing. Martin Crewes plays Charlie, Vittorio and Oscar and delineates them with wonderfully detailed performances ..." – Jo Litson, *Scene and Heard*

Verity Hunt-Ballard and Martin Crewes in 'Sweet Charity'



Photos by Jeff Busby

DRUMMING UP SUCCESS

A DYNAMIC DUO IS PASSIONATE ABOUT CREATING AND PERFORMING EXCITING NEW PERCUSSION MUSIC



Catherine Hall and Joshua Webster stand behind two tom-tom drums in WAAPA's Handa Studio, home to WAAPA's extraordinary array of percussion instruments. They each hold drumsticks in their hands, poised in readiness. There's a moment of complete stillness. Then, as one, they begin drumming. What follows is a fun performance of slick, synchronized playing interspersed with tapping, clapping and even juggling, as the two percussionists twirl their drumsticks in the air and to each other, without ever missing a beat.

This is Kaboom Percussion, a pair of young Perth musicians whose aim is to inspire and empower children and adults through their entertaining percussion performances, fun workshops and original compositions.

Kaboom Percussion was officially formed just over a year ago, yet Hall and Webster have known each other and worked together for over ten years. They met as undergraduate students; Hall was studying percussion at the University of WA and Webster was at WAAPA but both were invited to join WAAPA's award-winning percussion ensemble, Defying Gravity. Soon after meeting, they enlisted two other student percussionists and formed their own quartet called Quadraphonic.

Hall and Webster excelled in their respective tertiary environments, picking up numerous awards as they made their way through their degrees, each attaining a Bachelor of Music with first class honours and a Masters.

At UWA, Hall was the recipient the V. H. Cooper Memorial Prize, awarded to the most outstanding first year performance student, and the Lady Callaway Medal for Music, awarded to

the most outstanding student in the final year of a Bachelor of Music degree. She then received an Australian Postgraduate Award to complete her Masters degree in percussion performance.

Webster's talents were equally recognized at WAAPA, being awarded the John & Margaret Winstanley Prize for most outstanding classical music student. In 2009, he won a scholarship to travel to Budapest, Hungary, to study cimbalom with Viktória Herencsár, the President of the Cimbalom World Association. Webster returned to Europe three times, studying with leading cimbalom performers Kálmán Balogh, Sándor Kuti, Giani Lincan, Miklós Lukács, Jenő Lisztes, and Jenő Sörös.

Post university, Hall and Webster enjoyed stints performing and touring both nationally and overseas, mainly as part of Tetrafile Percussion. They have also worked as tutors, ensemble directors, composers and freelance percussionists.

At the end of 2013 Hall and Webster started writing percussion music together. Kaboom Percussion grew out of the idea that they could sell their compositions online.

One of these compositions is a quirky 3-minute percussion duo for red drinking cups, based on Anna Kendrick's 'Cup Song' from the movie *Pitch Perfect*. Hall and Webster filmed themselves performing the piece and posted it on YouTube. 'Cups' has now been viewed 2 million times.

"The site is getting close to half a million views a month, with the lion's share going to the 'Cups' video," says Webster. Sales of their sheet music are also taking off internationally, with

buyers from London's esteemed Royal Academy of Music, the University of Glasgow and from places as far afield as Luxembourg and Japan.

Hand in hand with their composing, Hall and Webster are also building a reputation for their fun, inspirational teaching of children. Last year Kaboom Percussion was commissioned to write a piece for 350 boys from Christ Church Grammar School, the entire cohorts from Years 3 through 6, to be performed at an end-of-term concert.

"At the start of the term, we sent the school the music and YouTube videos of us playing the parts and suggestions on how to build their instruments," says Webster.

"We got them to make their own percussion kits, which was a combination of things like rice taped into plates, little bucket drums, cans with balloons over the top ... and then they decorated their kits in art class."

"The staff and students worked on the project all term, then we came in a couple of days before the concert to see what they had achieved. We put it all together in an hour and half – that was one crazy rehearsal! But the concert was a huge success."

This year they are working on two more school commissions, for the Year 6 cohorts of Perth College and Peter Carnley Anglican Community School, respectively.

"We're trying to write material that's portable – pack small, play big," says Webster. "The school show we're writing at the moment uses everything we have ... so we've got a couple of tables and we play them, we've got a couple of chairs and we play them."

"Then we use the chairs in another piece for people to sit in so everything's got a dual purpose," adds Hall. "It shows kids that everything can be used as a musical instrument."

"We love the immediacy of percussion, kids really pick up on that and it's not like they need to get a teacher to teach them this expensive instrument, it's a cup or it's a chair and they can figure it out for themselves."

In addition to commissions from schools, Hall and Webster have started running summer school programs for percussion students. In the recent school holidays, Kaboom Percussion held a three-day workshop for 26 high school students at WAAPA, which culminated in a concert. The students were all ages, came from various high schools – one student journeyed from Albany to participate – and had vastly different levels of percussion experience. Yet the feedback from parents was glowing, with words like "incredible", "amazing" and "brilliant" peppering the testimonials.

Webster concedes that he and Hall have worked "really, really hard" to get Kaboom Percussion to where it is today. "We've done pretty much everything ourselves so far, all the graphic design, creating the website, filming the YouTube clips, the writing, the playing, the contracting of artists, taking the school bookings."

Yet they are both keen to acknowledge all those who have helped along the way, from their family, housemates, WAAPA staff and in particular, WAAPA's Coordinator of Percussion

and Musical Director of Defying Gravity, Tim White, for his constant enthusiasm and support.

"That's the great thing about the Perth percussion community, it's such a friendly community to be in, everyone wants to help each other in what they're doing," says Hall.

Their ultimate goal would be to make enough money to have their own studio space and hire an admin person. "We'd like to expand into corporate work, and do more writing and workshops," says Webster. "We'd also like to create a small show combining percussion, magic, juggling and comedy that we could tour to international Fringe festivals."

But before any of that, the two musicians have a world premiere to write. At the end of April, they will present their new 35-minute piece *Doomsday* as guest artists with Defying Gravity.

"This is great because it's the opportunity to write for the ensemble that we played in, we

know all the instruments and it's a big scale percussion piece whereas at the moment a lot of music we're writing is small scale," says Webster.

Whether it's the modest quirkiness of 'Cups' or a large-scale percussion composition for 20 players, Hall and Webster as Kaboom Percussion are drumming their way to success.

SEE KABOOM PERCUSSION IN ACTION AS THEY JOIN MUSIC DIRECTOR TIM WHITE AND DEFYING GRAVITY FOR A SUPER-CHARGED EVENING OF PERCUSSIVE ENTERTAINMENT IN *KABOOM!* AT THE WAAPA MUSIC AUDITORIUM ON APRIL 30, MAY 1 AND MAY 2.

Joshua Webster and Catherine Hall (centre back) with high school students at their recent summer school program



Photo by Adam Tan

A GIFT FOR WAAPA

WAAPA is extremely grateful to John Goldsmith, Managing Director of Kosmic, for the gift of 13 brand new Yamaha drum kits which will take pride of place in WAAPA's ensemble rooms, jazz teaching rooms and practice rooms.

This is an amazing act of philanthropy from Kosmic. The combined value of the instruments is over \$38,000. Kosmic have been generous supporters of WAAPA for several years and in that time they have gifted hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of musical equipment to the Academy. Kosmic have a massive store in Osborne Park and also an online store at kosmic.com.au and we encourage all our students and supporters to support this fine Western Australian owned business.



John Goldsmith, Managing Director of Kosmic with a new Yamaha kit
Photo by Kathy Wheatley

A FRIEND FOR 30 YEARS

Jill Clarke, who served for 30 years as a committee member of the Friends of the Academy, retired from her position earlier this year.

During her years on the Friends committee, Jill was responsible for significant Friends initiatives including the establishment of an annual grant for Aboriginal Theatre students and the 'meet and greet' for new WAAPA students moving from interstate.

To acknowledge Jill's three decades of dedicated service to the Friends and WAAPA, Friends of the Academy Chairman Kevin Button presented Jill with a certificate of appreciation and a 'key' to attend any WAAPA performance free of charge in perpetuity.



Jill Clarke receiving her 'key' and certificate of appreciation from Friends of the Academy Chairman, Kevin Button.

The Friends of the Academy and everyone at WAAPA sincerely thank Jill and wish her all the best for the future.

SECONDMENT SEGUES TO DREAM JOB

AN ARTS MANAGEMENT GRADUATE STEPS STRAIGHT FROM STUDY INTO A JOB CREATED FOR HER AT OPERA AUSTRALIA

Like many young girls, Katherena Lambetsos dabbled in music and drama at high school. She loved the experience so much she decided to pursue a career in the arts. Yet after ruling out being a performer, Lambetsos wasn't quite sure what she wanted to do. A school drama trip to Melbourne, which included tours of the city's main theatre venues, set Lambetsos on a path that eventually led her to WAAPA's Arts Management course.

"I realised I wanted to work in and hopefully one day run a performing arts company," says Lambetsos. "This led to me contemplate studying a business or marketing degree but I was disappointed with these prospects as I didn't want to give up an involvement in the arts."

Lambetsos heard about the Arts Management course through her older sister, who was studying at the Western Australian Screen Academy at the time.

"WAAPA is the only institution in the country that offers a Bachelor of Arts in Arts Management. I really wanted to study in this area and loved the fact that I could do it in a setting where I was immersed in the arts."

"The course has such a strong history of successful graduates and large network of alumni, so I knew I would be in great company and receive an excellent platform to launch a career in the arts."

When Lambetsos graduated at the end of last year, she found herself well and truly launched – straight into a new position created for her in the Corporate Partnerships and Events department of Opera Australia.

Describing herself as being "in the right place at the right time", Lambetsos was offered her job as Partnerships and Events Assistant on the final day of a 12-week secondment with Opera Australia. The position was created for Lambetsos to fill the growing demands of the department. "I accepted the role minutes before my farewell, flew home to Perth that night and was back in Sydney and at work the following Monday," she laughs. "It was a little crazy!"

Lambetsos is ecstatic about being an Opera Australia employee. Seeing her first opera at the Sydney Opera House was "magical", yet it is the joy of working in Opera Australia's headquarters at the Opera Centre in Surry Hills that thrills her most. "The Opera Centre is a multi-level warehouse," she explains. "In this one building we have our admin staff, costume, set and props team and rehearsal venues so there is always something beautiful being created in the building."

In the Corporate Partnerships and Events team, Lambetsos works alongside two other WAAPA Arts Management graduates: Amanda Michetti, who is the Corporate Partnerships Manager, and Erin Nottage, Corporate Partnerships Assistant.

While she considers herself "lucky" to be working at the Opera Centre so soon after graduating from university, Lambetsos is convinced that the skills she gained during her three years at WAAPA helped her make the most of her secondment.

"Arts Management taught me the practical skills to work and think like an arts professional," she says. "This level of understanding allowed me to approach my internship head on and get the most out of the experience."

“ Arts Management taught me the practical skills to work and think like an arts professional ”

To these skills, Lambetsos added her own passion and drive to succeed. "I entered my secondment with the intention to treat it as a job and not 'just an internship' and take any opportunity that presented itself. I think it was a combination of the opportunities they presented and my approach to the internship that led to my employment."

Lambetsos believes that being exposed to industry professionals throughout her undergraduate course was another important factor in making her 'industry ready'.

"Every member of staff at WAAPA that I engaged with was an industry professional in some capacity," she says. "The course is also excellent in providing students with guest lecturers who are currently working in the industry. This not only gave me a greater understanding of the arts and the current arts climate, but it allowed me to start building a professional network which is an important asset in the industry."

It was through these WAAPA connections that Lambetsos was able to secure her secondment, which led to her current job.

Based on her experience, Lambetsos has a simple piece of advice for anyone wanting a career in the arts: put your hand up for everything.

"Take any opportunity that is presented to you, at this point there is no such thing as a bad experience. Doing as much as you can allows you to decide what you do and don't want to do later down the line. It also gets your face and name out there which is always a good thing."

She also recommends learning as much about the industry as possible and experiencing art forms outside your own area of interest or expertise. For WAAPA students, that means getting to know students in other courses, who Lambetsos sees as "future colleagues, employers, connections and mentors".

As for Lambetsos, she is living her dream: working in an environment of artistic endeavour and knowing she is contributing to an industry she loves.



2014 PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS



Synchronicity



Children of Eden



Conversations with the Dead



Fallen



Synchronicity



Blood Wedding



Radio Active



Conversations with the Dead



Guess Who's Coming to Dinner



Fallen



Guess Who's Coming to Dinner



Hansel and Gretel



Radio Active



Children of Eden



Blood Wedding



Hansel and Gretel

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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



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