



MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED UNTIL 6 SEPTEMBER 2022

8 Winners announced for national performing arts awards

Winners for PAC Australia's **Impact Awards** were announced on Monday 5 September 2022 at the awards ceremony at the Yallamundi Room, Sydney Opera House as part of the opening event for the Australian Performing Arts Exchange (APAX).

The annual awards, previously known as the Drover Awards, celebrate performing arts leadership, new thinking, and best practice, with a focus on lasting impact in communities, and in 2022 were rebranded the Impact Awards. Eight awards were bestowed across four categories at the national event.

The highest achievement in the awards, the **Wendy Blacklock Industry Legend Award**, recognises the outstanding contributions and exceptional, long-time service to the performing arts industry from an individual or organisation. This Award honours the illustrious career and the services of Wendy Blacklock AM, who was a pioneer of national touring and founder of Performing Lines.

The 2022 Wendy Blacklock Industry Legend Award winner was **Stephen Page AO**, Artistic Director of Bangarra.

The PAC Australia board has long observed and admired the major role the inaugural Industry Legend recipient has played as an artist and a cultural leader, establishing and nurturing contemporary indigenous dance into a place of prominence in communities across Australia. PAC Australia's members and the communities they represent are indebted to Stephen Page for his artistic ambition, storytelling and leadership over many years.

The **Innovator Award** is awarded to an individual or organisation specifically delivering innovation for the sector. The 2022 Innovator Award was awarded to two organisations. The winners of the 2022 Innovator Award were **HOTA, Home of the Arts** and **Arts on Tour**.

HOTA, Home of the Arts was recognised for leadership and innovation in the development and delivery of models that support artist and sector development, particularly through their ArtKeeper program.

In an effort to improve secure and fair work conditions for artists across the sector, ArtKeeper roles were advertised as jobs for artists, not as opportunities or grants. This reaffirms that the work artists do is essential to venues, the sector, and to the audiences who have relied on artists work more than ever over the past two years - to lift our spirits, keep our cultural connections, imagine new futures and more.

Arts on Tour was recognised for their leadership in promoting green touring and providing resources to the sector to support the transition to environmentally sustainable touring practices.

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Arts on Tour started the Green Touring Initiative in late 2020 with the aim of providing tools and strategies to minimise emissions and work towards carbon neutral touring. The outcomes of this Initiative, The Green Touring Toolkit and accompanying resources, and Arup's emissions calculator Circulate, were launched in 2022. These initiatives support artists and organisations to develop environmental sustainability goals both in the touring practices and across their operations.

The **2022 Performing Arts Centre of the Year Award** was **Art House Wyong**.

The Art House has contributed significantly to the cultural urban transformation of Wyong and the surrounding Central Coast region and is leading the way a new, regional performing arts centre can operate under an independent business model and achieving high audience engagement. The Art House has positioned itself as a venue of national significance in only six short years, in an area that didn't have an existing theatre or audience. It has made significant contributions to the community, artists, and region as a destination, through its dedication to presenting renowned live performance locally.

Four further **Impact Awards** were bestowed to two organisations, a production and an individual. Impact Awards recognise individuals or organisations who have had a positive impact on the sector, either through a short-term project or initiative, or longer-term contributions. The 2022 Impact Awards winners were **ActNow Theatre**, **CDP Theatre Producers**, the production **Dungarri Nya Nya Ngarri Bi Nya** and the late **David Lloyd**.

ActNow Theatre was recognised for their award-winning program of interactive performance projects that are steered by social justice.

ActNow's ongoing mission to democratise and decolonise storytelling, celebrates and amplifies the voices of our First Nations, POC and Queer communities. Most significantly, this crucial work is led by ActNow's staff, board members and artists from these targeted communities.

CDP Theatre Producers was recognised their sector-wide support and contributions to safely reactivating touring throughout the pandemic.

As one of the most active touring organisations during the early days of Covid-19, it was important to the whole CDP team to share experiences and learnings with the industry at large. The company's commitment to make sure touring was still possible, where permitted and safe to do so, broke through challenges of multiple border closures and state-based lock downs. Most importantly, as one of the active touring organisations through the early days of COVID, this award recognises CDP's commitment to sharing their experiences and learning with the industry at large, including their contributions to PAC Australia's own sector reactivation planning, and as a member of the LPA Working Group which developed the National Guidelines for COVID-safe touring.

Dungarri Nya Nya Ngarri Bi Nya producing partners, Wulgurukaba Walkabouts, Big Eye Theatre (Mula Jina Warran and Mula Jina Jalbu), Sambo Productions, Komet Torres Strait Islander Arts and Culture, and Dancenorth Australia were recognised for their significant achievement in elevating First Nations stories and culture and fostering social cohesion through their cross-cultural collaborative performance project.

Dungarri Nya Nya Ngarri Bi Nya (now we have arrived) was a ground-breaking celebration of First Nations culture from across the North Queensland region. The impact of this work was felt deeply by community and the participants themselves. Not only did the non-Indigenous collaborator on the project celebrate and respect cultural protocol, but that overall, Dungarri Nya Nya Ngarri Bi Nya was a vitally important and impactful event for the First Nations community.

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The late **David Lloyd** was recognised for his dedication to the support of contemporary performing arts practice particularly through the Roadwork and Blaklines consortia, his leadership of PAC Australia and VAPAC at board level and his role in the development of the Ulumbarra Theatre. Lloyd's award was accepted by his daughter, Celeste Lloyd and sister, Kate Russell.

PAC Australia's Executive Director, Katherine Connor said "It was an honour to host our awards in person again, there was such a buzz of camaraderie in the room. To have over 200 industry professionals come together to celebrate trailblazing companies, individuals and projects – who are creating real impact in our sector and communities – was a real thrill and inspiring for all our guests".

The Australian Performing Arts Exchange (APAX) continues until Friday 9 September with keynotes, panels and networking opportunities for performing arts professionals at NIDA, Sydney.

APAX will take place on Bidjigal and Gadigal country and PAC Australia pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians and Elders past and present.

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Discover more <https://paca.org.au/impact-awards/about/>

Images: Event images will be available on 6 September [here](#)

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