



Media Release – For immediate release

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**18th Annual Helpmann Awards
Performers, Hosts, Presenters and Broadcast details announced**

A sensational line up of stars and industry heavyweights come together to honour and celebrate Australia’s most prestigious live performance Awards

This year, the winners of the 2018 Helpmann Awards will be announced at two events over two big nights. Both events will be directed by one of Australia’s most internationally renowned producers, Olivier and MTV Award winner, choreographer and director **David Atkins OAM**. This year, for the first time, the Helpmann Awards will be broadcast live across the country, exclusively on the ABC.

Helpmann Awards Act I Sunday 15 July 6pm Sydney Town Hall

Act I is an up close, industry-insider event at cocktail hour celebrating the very best creative, designer and supporting roles and will include Awards for Best Presentation for Children, Best Regional Touring Production and Best Special Event.

Act I will be hosted by celebrated broadcaster, director, producer, actor, advisor and artistic director **Rhoda Roberts AM** and **Michael Lynch CBE AO**, one of Australia’s most experienced and internationally renowned Arts Administrators. The titans of musical direction, **Vanessa Scammell** and **Max Lambert**, will play on dual grand pianos. Performers will include **Chloe Dallimore** and **Amanda Laing**, musical theatre rising star **Georgina Hopson**, Sydney Youth Orchestra quintet, and dynamic operatic duo **Jenny Lui** and **Andrew Jones**.

Helpmann Award Act II Monday 16 July 2018 Capitol Theatre Sydney

Staged on the set of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert The Musical*, this Black Tie event will present Awards in all live performance genres along with celebrating the 2017 Centenary JC Williamson and Sue Nattrass Award recipients, and honouring colleagues In Memoriam.

Hosts for the night include Olivier & Tony Nominee, performer and writer, **Tony Sheldon**; acclaimed choreographer **Raphael Bonachela**; the multiple Helpmann Award winning mezzo soprano **Jacqueline Dark** and celebrated musical theatre star and TV host **David Campbell**.

Stellar performances will include a vivacious ‘stampede of sass’ with the **cast of Priscilla Queen of the Desert The Musical** performing “*It’s Raining Men*” and an evocative duet from *ab [intra]* with electrifying Sydney Dance Company dancers **Davide Di Giovanni** and **Charmene Yap**. The stars from the celebrated new Australian musical *Muriel’s Wedding*, **Maggie McKenna** and **Madeleine Jones**, will perform *Amazing* as their characters, Muriel and Rhonda, affirm their new friendship.

Triple ARIA award winners, the quiet achievers of Australian pop *My Friend the Chocolate Cake*, with **David Bridie**, **Helen Mountfort** and **Hope Csutoros** will perform the entrancing “*Weep*” as part of the *In Memoriam*.

The biggest line up of Australia leading female vocalists will bring the show home with songs from the hit musical and film *Funny Girl*. Divas and funny girls themselves, **Michala Banas** (*Upper Middle Bogan*), **Natalie Bassingthwaite** (*The X Factor*), **Casey Donovan** (Australian Idol) **Virginia Gay** (*First Tuesday Book Club*), **Verity Hunt-Ballard** (*Mary Poppins*), **Dami Im** (*Eurovision*), **Maggie McKenna** (*Muriel’s Wedding the Musical*), **Queenie van der Zandt** (2017 Helpmann Awards Host) and **Zahra Newman** (*Book of Mormon*) will have the audience standing in their seats and cheering for more.

The Red Carpet will roll outside the Capitol Theatre from 6pm hosted by the diva of dresses and darling of Australian musical theatre, **Rhonda Burchmore OAM**.

The Helpmann Awards Act II will broadcast live from the Capitol Theatre on **ABC on Monday 16 July at 9.30pm**. Highlight from the previous night, Act I, will also be part of the broadcast.

ABC Managing Director Michelle Guthrie said ‘The Helpmann Awards are an incredible celebration of the contribution the live performance industry makes to our country’s culture. The ABC is proud to champion this industry by broadcasting the event for Australians to enjoy the amazing performances and appreciate the hard work and talent of all the nominees.’

2018 Helpmann Awards Artistic Director David Atkins OAM said ‘I am proud and honoured to be part of the 18th annual Helpmann Awards in what will be a landmark year for the event.

This year the Helpmann’s will not only celebrate every genre of our thriving performing arts industry, they will also acknowledge and exalt the shared passion, joy and creative endeavours of those practitioners, both on stage and behind the scenes, that give life to the art of live performance’.

The Helpmann Awards are the premier celebration of Australia’s vibrant live performance industry. The Awards recognise distinguished achievement and excellence in Australia’s live performance sectors including musicals, contemporary music, comedy, opera and classical music, theatre, ballet, dance and physical theatre, presentations for children, regional touring and cabaret.

The Helpmann Awards are supported by the NSW Government, via its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.

Tickets for the 18th annual Helpmann Awards Act I and Act II are now on sale via Ticketmaster.

Don't miss the showbiz night of nights presented live in Sydney and on ABC TV Monday 16 July 9.30pm. Catch up anytime on ABC iview.

Helpmann Awards ACT I

Sunday 15 July 2018

Sydney Town Hall 6pm

Show only Tickets \$29*

Helpmann Awards ACT II

Monday 16 July 2018

Capitol Theatre 8pm,

Red Carpet 6 – 7.30pm

Gold Pass \$175*

(Show + Souvenir Programme + After Party)

Show only tickets \$69*

*Subject to availability. An additional handling fee of \$8.55 is applicable to all online bookings per transaction.

A full list of Helpmann Award nominations is available from:

www.helpmannawards.com.au/2018/nominees/

ENDS

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