

HELPMANN AWARDS 2019

Media Release

23 April 2019

Artistic Director of La Mama Theatre, Liz Jones AO, announced as the recipient of the 2019 Sue Natrass Award® for exceptional service to the live performance industry.

The 19th annual Helpmann Awards 14 & 15 July Arts Centre Melbourne

Live Performance Australia is pleased to announce **Liz Jones AO** as the recipient of this year's **Sue Natrass Award**. This prestigious award honours exceptional service to the Australian live performance industry shining a spotlight on people in service roles that support our industry. The Award will be presented at the 19th annual Helpmann Awards in Melbourne in July.

As Artistic Director of La Mama Theatre, **Liz Jones AO** has been a cornerstone of Melbourne's independent theatre scene since 1976. Her steadfast commitment to the 'low financial risk, high artistic risk' ethos has ensured La Mama remains a place where experimental and emerging theatre-makers can try out new ideas and hone their craft.

Liz Jones AO said "I am delighted to receive this award, particularly as it is the **Sue Natrass Award**. Sue's personal integrity and quiet determination in achieving her ideals has long been an inspiration to my own life in theatre."

Liz is deeply committed to creating opportunities to artists who are under-represented in the mainstream. In the 1980s she addressed the gender imbalance in writing and directing roles, and in the 1990s she created new opportunities for indigenous theatre makers, including actively supporting the reinvention of Ilbjerri Theatre.

Liz's commitment to Australian theatre extends beyond her work with La Mama. She has served on numerous government committees and the boards of several theatre companies; represented Australia at the Women's International Playwrights' Conference four times; mentored emerging artists and maintained a performing career while still managing a lively family life.

Liz has received numerous honours including the 2000 Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award Facilitator's Prize, 2001 Green Room Lifetime Achievement Award and the 2018 Australia Council Award for Theatre. She holds an honorary Doctorate of Laws from ANU and her name is on the Victorian Women's Honour Roll. She was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2012.

After La Mama was gutted by fire in 2018, messages of support poured in from far and wide, which is testament to the place that Liz and La Mama have in the Melbourne theatre community's heart. After forty years at the helm of La Mama, Liz is currently involved in the fundraising campaign to rebuild the theatre.

LPA Chief Executive, Evelyn Richardson said, "LPA is delighted that Liz Jones AO is the recipient of the 2019 Sue Natrass Award. Her unwavering commitment and support of performers and creatives over the past forty years has made La Mama an innovative theatrical force that is woven into the rich cultural fabric of Melbourne".

In a new destination partnership with Visit Victoria, 42 prestigious Helpmann Awards will be presented across two-star studded nights for the very first time in Melbourne on **14 and 15 July 2019** at the Victorian home of the performing arts, **Arts Centre Melbourne**.



HELPMANN AWARDS 2019

The Helpmann Awards are the premier celebration of Australia's vibrant live performance industry. These national 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, presentation for children and young people, regional touring and cabaret. The Helpmann Awards also incorporate two of the highest industry honors, the lifetime achievement awards for outstanding contribution to the Australian live performance industry, the JC Williamson Award and the Sue Natrass Award.

The **2019 Sue Natrass Award** and the **2019 JC Williamson Award** will be presented at the 19th annual Helpmann Awards.

Tickets on sale in early May via Arts Centre Melbourne and Ticketmaster.

The full program, including award category nominees, will be announced in June.

The Helpmann Awards are proudly supported by the Victorian Government, via its tourism, sports and major events agency, Visit Victoria.

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For further information or to arrange an interview with Sue Natrass Award recipient, Liz Jones AO or LPA Chief Executive, Evelyn Richardson please contact:

National & Melbourne - Vicky Iliopoulos, Lucky Star Media M:0410 551 388 E vicky@luckystarmedia.com.au

Adelaide – Neil Ward, Neil Ward Publicity M:0438 095 580 E: neil@neilwardpublicity.com.au

Brisbane – Cinnamon Watson, Cinnamon Watson Publicity M: 0432 219 643 E: cinn@cinnamonwatsonpublicity.com.au

Perth – Lynne Burford, Lynne Burford Publicity M: 0417 921 038 E: lburford@inet.net.au

Sydney – Ian Phipps, Ian Phipps Publicity M: 0419 977 649 E: ian@ippublicity.com.au

About LPA

LPA is the peak body for Australia's live performance industry. Established 100 years ago in 1917 and registered as an employers' organisation under the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009, LPA has over 400 Members nationally. We represent commercial producers, music promoters, major performing arts companies, small to medium companies, independent producers, major performing arts centres, metropolitan and regional venues, commercial theatres, stadiums and arenas, arts festivals, music festivals, and service providers such as ticketing companies and technical suppliers. Our membership spans from small-medium and not-for-profit organisations to large commercial entities.

LPA has a clear mandate to advocate for and support policy decisions that benefit the sustainability and growth of the live performance industry in Australia.

