

Hopelessly DEVOTED

A CELEBRATION OF
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

WITH
QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

6 APRIL 2024
CONCERT HALL, QPAC

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Queensland Symphony Orchestra provides a spoken Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of each concert to encourage awareness and to demonstrate our respect for First Nations cultures and traditions, as well as signalling our commitment to a more inclusive and equitable society. We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of Meanjin where we work, rehearse and perform; specifically the Turrbal and Yuggera peoples, whose deep connection to this land reminds us to always protect and care for it.

Queensland Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia. We acknowledge the cultural diversity of Elders, both past and present, and the significant contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to Queensland and Australia.

Welcome



In recent years we have lost many contemporary music icons including George Michael, Tina Turner, Tony Bennett and Burt Bacharach. Perhaps the one most personal to me was Olivia Newton-John.

When her posters adorned my bedroom wall as a teenager, little did I know our paths would cross professionally. During my career I had the privilege of working with her three times. For a fundraising concert in support of the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre at Sydney's State Theatre in 2008; her sitting for her *Madame Tussauds* figure immortalising her as 'Sandy' from *Grease*; and her national orchestra tour in 2012 as her Tour Manager.

They say don't meet your heroes, but Olivia was as delightful and generous as you could ever imagine her to be and I will treasure the time I got to spend in her presence.

When Olivia passed on 8 August 2022, I was inspired to honour her legacy in a concert which celebrates her life and music. *Hopelessly Devoted*

brings together the Queensland Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Nicholas Buc, our wonderful cast which includes David Campbell, Jess Hitchcock, Georgina Hopson, Christie Whelan Browne and our host Courtney Act.

Today we invite you to add your generous support to help continue Olivia's legacy. You can donate to the Centre by scanning the QR code in this program or on the banner located in the Concert Hall foyer.

Whether you are excited to revisit her iconic hits from films such as *Grease* or *Xanadu*, her early country hits, or her chart-topping and award-winning songs that solidified her as one of the best-selling music artists of all time, one thing is for sure...her music has been the soundtrack to our lives and with this concert will live on.

Sit back, or stand and dance, as we offer you a musical tribute to the talent of this extraordinary artist, advocate and activist.

Thank you for joining us.

Mark Sutcliffe
Creative Director &
Executive Producer

Hopelessly DEVOTED

A CELEBRATION OF
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

NICHOLAS BUC Conductor

COURTNEY ACT Host

MARK SUTCLIFFE Creative Director

DAVID CAMPBELL

JESS HITCHCOCK

GEORGINA HOPSON

CHRISTIE WHELAN BROWNE

GRANT WINDSOR Keys

TOBY LOVELAND Guitar

JUSTIN BLISS Bass

DAVID MONTGOMERY Drums

Hopelessly Devoted premiered with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
Thursday 7 March 2024, Arts Centre Melbourne.

Hopelessly Devoted is a Make My Mark Production.

Production Credits

MAKE MY MARK

Executive Producer
Mark Sutcliffe

QSO PRESENTS

Producer
Gabrielle Waters

Production Manager
Jessica Wardrop

Production Coordinator
Benjamin Shaw

Production Assistant
Rhiannon Tate

HOPELESSLY DEVOTED

Creative Director
Mark Sutcliffe

Lighting Designer
Peter Rubie

Lighting Operator
Lyndon Buckley,
Krank'd AV Productions

Audio Engineer
Geoff McGahan,
Norwest Productions

Monitor Engineer
Raul Asin

Hair & Make Up Artists
Gemma Elaine,
Sarah Smith

Select Wardrobe
Hannah Beech

With thanks to:

Penny Sanderson and the team at the Olivia Newton-John Cancer & Wellness Centre.

Nicholas Buc, Melanie Hiluta, Michael Caprio, Donna Grecco, Michelle Day, Steve Anderson, Jeremy Sharp, Siân Darling, Daisy Hicks, Stephanie Adams, Monica Keightley, Scott Petriche and Mindy Coppin.

Duration: 2 hours and 20 minutes including 20 min interval

Act 1

Oliviature

Dare to Dream

Cast

Written by Paul Begaud, Vanessa Corish & Wayne Tester

Banks of the Ohio

Jess Hitchcock

Traditional. Original song arranged by Bruce Welch & John Farrar

Please Mr. Please

Georgina Hopson

Written by Bruce Welch & John Rostill

Let Me Be There/If You Love Me

Let Me Know

Courtney Act and
David Campbell

Written by John Rostill

I Will Be Right Here

Jess Hitchcock and
David Campbell

Written by Diane Warren

I Honestly Love You

David Campbell

Written by Peter Allen & Jeff Barry

Magic

Christie Whelan Browne

Written by John Farrar

Suddenly

Christie Whelan Browne and
David Campbell

Written by John Farrar

Suspended in Time

Jess Hitchcock

Written by John Farrar

Make a Move on Me

Georgina Hopson

Written by John Farrar & Tom Snow

Physical

Christie Whelan Browne

Written by Steve Kipner & Terry
Shaddick

INTERVAL

Act 2

Boats Against the Current

David Campbell

Written by Eric Carmen

Love is a Gift

Georgina Hopson and

David Campbell

Written by Olivia Newton-John,
Victoria Shaw & Earl Rose

Sam

Jess Hitchcock

Written by John Farrar, Hank Marvin &
Don Black

A Little More Love

Christie Whelan Browne

Written by John Farrar

Totally Hot

Georgina Hopson

Written by John Farrar

Take Me Home, Country Roads

Cast

Written by Bill Danoff, Taffy Nivert &
John Denver

Soul Kiss

Jess Hitchcock

Written by Mark Goldenberg

Heart Attack

Christie Whelan Browne

Written by Paul Bliss & Steve Kipner

The Rumour

David Campbell

Written by Elton John & Bernie Taupin

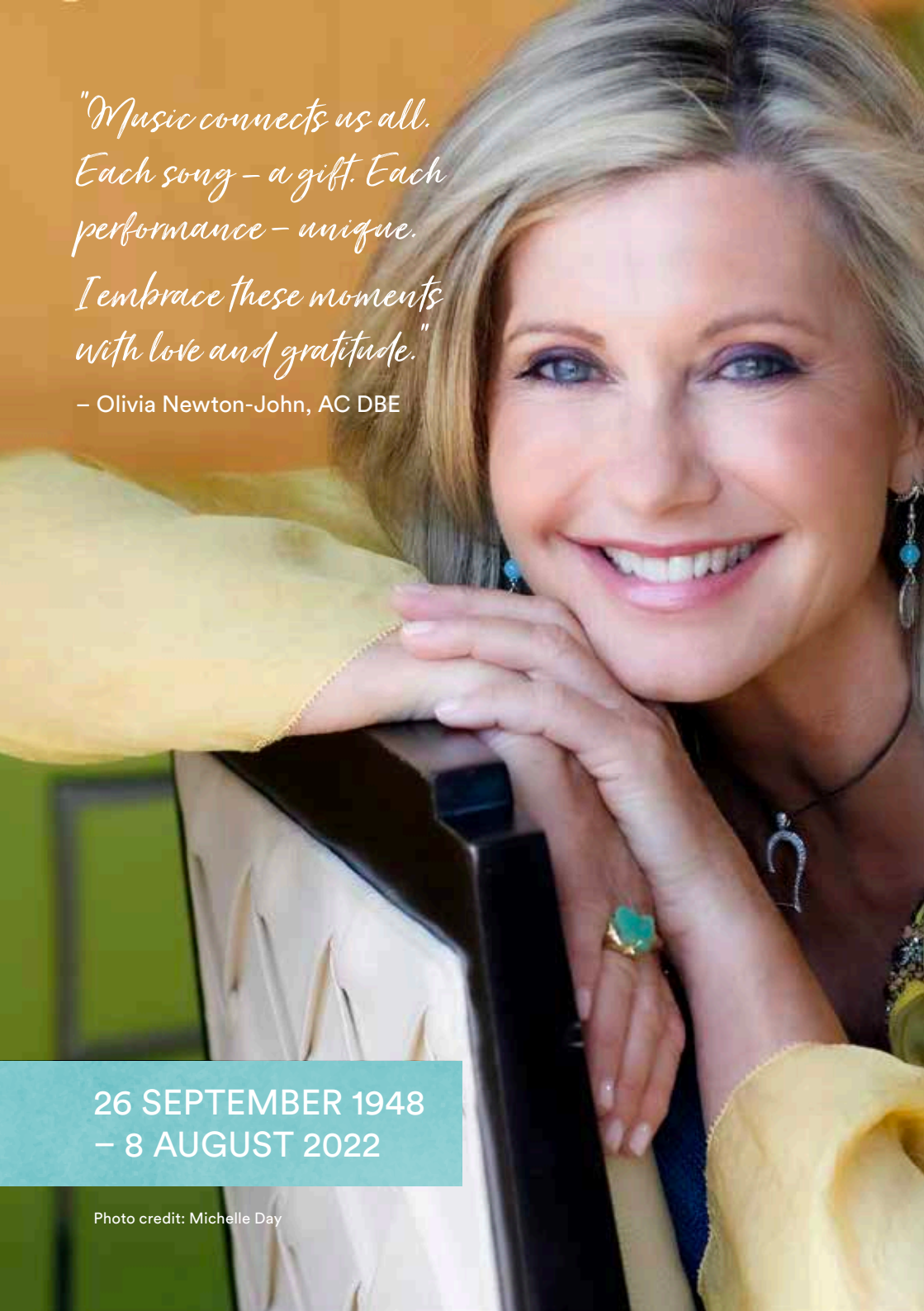
Hopelessly Devoted

Georgina Hopson

Written by John Farrar

All arrangements by Nicholas Buc.

Hopelessly Devoted to You – original
arrangement by Steve Anderson.



*"Music connects us all.
Each song – a gift. Each
performance – unique.
I embrace these moments
with love and gratitude."*

– Olivia Newton-John, AC DBE

26 SEPTEMBER 1948
– 8 AUGUST 2022

Photo credit: Michelle Day

Hopelessly Devoted to Olivia

It's fitting that Olivia Newton-John's remarkable catalogue is being celebrated by this all-Australian show. She might have been born in the UK, but Australia was Olivia's home. Indeed, she often sang the song written by her dear friend Peter Allen, *I Still Call Australia Home*.

And Olivia helped put Australian music on the map.

Asked in 2007 who was the best artist to have come out of Melbourne, music mogul Michael Gudinski said: "As far as the most impact internationally, you'd have to say Olivia Newton-John."

The ONJ story really starts in 1954 when Olivia was five and her family moved to Melbourne. At Christ Church Grammar primary school, Daryl Braithwaite was her first crush. "I used to pass notes to him, he was so cute," Olivia later revealed.

While at University High, Olivia's singing career took off. In 1964, she won the Sitmar Talent Quest on Johnny O'Keefe's TV show *Sing Sing Sing*. She sang *Everything's Coming Up Roses* and the prize was a trip to England.

A debate raged in Melbourne's papers: School or Stardom? Should Olivia finish her schooling or pursue a career in entertainment? Olivia chose showbiz. "The decision was made easier by my teacher, who said, 'You're not working at school, so you may as well go.'"

Olivia was a regular on TV's *The Go!! Show*, where she met two people who would be key characters in the rest of her life: John Farrar – guitarist in the house band, The Strangers – and Pat Carroll. John ended up becoming Olivia's producer and main songwriter, while Pat – who married John in 1970 – became her singing partner and best friend.

John wrote a string of hits for Olivia, including *Have You Never Been Mellow*, *You're the One That I Want*, *Hopelessly Devoted To You*, *Magic*, *Suddenly* and *A Little More Love*.

"I think John's a genius," Olivia said. "He stays in the background a lot, but he's a great part of the reason for my success."

In 1966, as the *Sing Sing Sing* prize was about to expire, Olivia's mother convinced her to go to the UK. "I really wanted to stay in Australia,

but my mum said I should broaden my horizons.”

In the UK, Olivia forged an enduring friendship with Cliff Richard, becoming a regular on his TV show. She was also part of a manufactured group called Toomorrow, put together by The Monkees’ music supervisor Don Kirshner. Olivia starred in the *Toomorrow* movie, a sci-fi musical about dying aliens who kidnap *Toomorrow* because the group’s “vibrations” are needed for their race to survive. “It was a disaster,” Olivia recalled.

In 1974, Olivia represented the UK in the Eurovision Song Contest, singing *Long Live Love*. She came fourth (a group from Sweden named ABBA won, singing *Waterloo*).



Photo credit: TPLP / Contributor (Getty Images)

“Doing the Eurovision Song Contest pushed me to go to America,” Olivia later explained. “I remember Helen Reddy was working in Florida and I went to see her. She said, ‘Look, if you have a success in America and you really want to make it here, you have to be available, you have to be here.’”

Olivia moved to Los Angeles, where she scored her first US number one with *I Honestly Love You*, a song co-written by Peter Allen.

Paul Hogan dubbed Olivia’s house “the headquarters of the Gumleaf Mafia” – the gang of Aussies who were making their way in LA in the ’70s and ’80s. “Livvy is the best ambassador for Australia,” Huges said.

Olivia ended up having 15 Top 10 singles in the US – an Australian record she shares with the Bee Gees. Coincidentally, Barry Gibb was one of Olivia’s biggest fans, calling her “the greatest female singer in the world” when he introduced her at the Sydney leg of Sound Relief in 2009.

A couple of years after moving to America, Olivia met movie producer Allan Carr at a dinner at Helen Reddy’s house. He offered Olivia the role of Sandy in the movie version of the stage musical *Grease*. But Olivia was reluctant. “Because *Toomorrow* had been such a disaster, I wasn’t sure I wanted to do another movie, thinking it might jeopardise my music career.”

Olivia requested a screen test with John Travolta. “I wanted to see if I



Photo credit: Archive Photos / Stringer (Getty Images)

could do it. John and I hit it off, so I said yes.”

Olivia would later reflect: “What I found with *Grease* and *Physical* is the things I was most afraid of were often the things that were the most worthwhile.”

Olivia’s biggest-selling single, 1981’s *Physical*, was co-written by another Aussie, Steve Kipner. “I knew it was a commercial song, kind of naughty,” Olivia said. “Well, for its time it was kind of naughty, but now it’s very tame.”

After recording the song, Olivia “freaked out”. She called her manager – another Aussie, Roger Davies – and said, “Let’s pull it, it’s too over-the-top, I don’t think I can deal with it.”

“It’s too late,” Roger replied. *Physical* had already gone to radio.

Trying to play down the song’s suggestive lyric, Olivia did an exercise video for the film clip. “It was all about getting physical. It was funny and people loved it.”

But the song was still banned in Utah. “I was glad about that,” Olivia smiled. “At least I can say I was banned once.”

Physical ended up spending 10 weeks at number one in America – no Aussie act has had a longer-running chart-topping single in the US – and the video sent sales of headbands and Lycra soaring.

Olivia's success inspired the next generation of stars. In 1990, I spoke to Kylie Minogue about her musical influences. "I was obsessed with *Grease*," Kylie revealed. "Olivia Newton-John was who I wanted to be. And I admitted that to her when I met her." Kylie covered *Physical* in 2000. Originally intended for the *Moulin Rouge* movie, it ended up as a bonus track on the Australian tour edition of Kylie's chart-topping *Light Years* album.

And Olivia didn't just inspire Aussie artists. When I interviewed Mariah Carey in the late '90s, the American star wasn't overly expansive, but her eyes lit up when I mentioned *Grease*. "Oh my god," she gushed. "I loved that movie and I loved Olivia Newton-John. I wanted to be her."

Olivia had five American chart-toppers: *I Honestly Love You* (1974), *Have You Never Been Mellow* (1975), *You're The One That I Want* (with John Travolta, 1978), *Magic* (1980) and *Physical* (1981). No Australian woman has had more number one singles in the US.

Olivia was also the first Australian woman to have a #1 album in the US (1974's *If You Love Me, Let Me Know*). And she's the only Australian woman to have had more than one chart-topping album in America.

And Olivia was the first Australian to win a Grammy for Record of the Year (*I Honestly Love You* in 1975), one



of four Grammys she received – no Aussie act has won more.

The remarkable facts and chart stats are one thing; Olivia Newton-John's true legacy is her humanity. Her music changed lives; her work is continuing to save lives.

The Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness & Research Centre opened in Melbourne in 2012. Tottie Goldsmith – who Olivia called "Plonker" – helped her aunt build the ONJ Centre at Heidelberg's Austin Hospital.

"Olivia always encouraged people to be positive and trust their cancer journey," says Tottie, whose mum Rona was Olivia's sister. "She'd always turn things into a positive. She wanted people to thrive.

"She radiated this incredible light."

I had my own encounter with Olivia in 2002. I was working at a radio company and it was my job to write a radio special – to be hosted by Olivia – to celebrate the release of her duets album (2). It was a quick turnaround: I had a brief meeting with Olivia, then quickly wrote the script and emailed it to her that night. The following morning, Olivia turned up to our studios, walking out of the lift on her own, unaccompanied by any showbiz entourage.

Olivia spotted me and smiled sheepishly. “You’re going to hate me,” she said.

My heart sank. I immediately feared that Olivia didn’t like the script, and the radio special was going to be a disaster.

“You hate the script, don’t you?” I remarked.

“No,” she replied. “It’s great. But would you mind if we changed these two words – I wouldn’t use them in everyday conversation.”

That was it. Olivia Newton-John – the biggest star of my childhood – was apologising for wanting to change two words in a hurriedly written script that she was voicing. Her professionalism and respect for an anonymous scriptwriter told me everything I needed to know.

For that special, we also spoke to many of the stars who appeared alongside Olivia on the album. Tina Arena said: “Olivia is such a genuine and honest performer. I love that sincerity about her. She’s just a great human being.”

And the late-great Billy Thorpe put it succinctly: “I don’t think Australians quite understand the enormity of Olivia’s fame. There are stars, there are superstars, there are megastars and there are the Barbra Streisands, the Frank Sinatras and the Olivia Newton-Johns.”

Olivia loved singing with other people. “The exchange of energy



produces something different in you,” she explained in that radio special.

And she loved encouraging young Australian talent. Aside from her friends Richard Marx and Michael McDonald, the (2) album featured an all-Australian cast, including David Campbell. Olivia became a big fan when she saw David playing Johnny O’Keefe in the musical *Shout!* “I was knocked out by David’s performance,” she said. “He’s going to be a big star. Well, he’s already a star, but he’s going to be *bigger*.”

I later spoke to the great Australian record producer Charles Fisher, who produced the (2) album. “Olivia is a beautiful soul and a beautiful human being,” Charles said. “She restored my faith in icons.”

Charles remembers flying from Melbourne to Sydney with Olivia. The record company had stuffed up the booking and placed them both in economy. As they sat in the back row of the plane, a flight attendant came rushing up. “Oh Olivia, I’m really sorry, there must be some mistake. Would you like to come up to business class? There are some seats up there, I’ll escort you.”

“Nah, it’s all right,” Olivia replied. “We’re fine.”

Charles has worked with some of the world’s biggest stars; only one has given him a gift to thank him for his work. After finishing the (2) album,

Olivia sent him a travel kit containing a neck pillow and eye mask.

The gift arrived at Charles’ house with a handwritten note:

“Thank you so much. You’re a very talented man. I loved the experience – Olivia.”

“I think she just had this purity of soul, purity of spirit,” says Tottie, who is a Goodwill Ambassador of the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness & Research Centre. “Everything she did was about trying to leave the Earth a better place.

“Outside of her talent and that gorgeous, angelic voice, she just exuded this incredible warmth and joy and positivity and love.”

Though she travelled the world, sold more than 100 million records, and starred in one of the biggest movies of all time, Olivia somehow managed to remain The Girl Next Door. Grateful and graceful. Genuine and unaffected. One of us.

Yep, she will always be “Our Livvy”. We remain Hopelessly Devoted.

- *Jeff Jenkins*

Australian music journalist Jeff Jenkins is the author of several books, including *50 Years of Rock in Australia* and *Ego Is Not A Dirty Word*, *The Skyhooks Story*, and is the co-author of Ian “Molly” Meldrum’s memoirs, *The Never, Um, Ever Ending Story* and *Ah Well, Nobody’s Perfect*.



SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH CANCER TO THRIVE



With your help, we can keep providing life-changing support through evidence-based wellness therapies at the Olivia Newton-John Cancer Wellness Centre.

www.onjcancercentre.org



ACKNOWLEDGING COUNTRY

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Who We Are

Queensland Symphony Orchestra occupies a unique place in the cultural landscape of Queensland, and more broadly as one of the five state symphony orchestras in Australia. Because of this leadership role in the arts, and because culture is at the core of who we are, QSO finds a natural alignment and significance in First Nations cultures.

Launched in March 2022, our Reconciliation Action Plan is one component of our contribution to reconciliation. Discover more about Queensland Symphony Orchestra commitment to reconciliation, led by our Board, CEO Yarmila Alfonzetti, and our Reconciliation Working Group, by reading our Reconciliation Action Plan below.

In November 2022, QSO was thrilled to welcome artist and musician, Jeremy Donovan for a week-long residency at our home in South Bank to paint the essence of the Orchestra, its people and our place in beautiful Meanjin/ Brisbane. The work was inspired by Jeremy's interactions with our team and our collective ideas and stories. Listen to him as he unveils the process and the experience of bringing this work to life.

Watch the making of "Who We Are" by Jeremy Donovan





Nicholas Buc

conductor & arranger

Nicholas Buc is an Award-winning composer, conductor and arranger with over 20 years experience in the music industry. He has composed music for film, television and the concert hall, with some of his work being screened at festivals and theatres around Australia, Asia and the US. As the recipient of the prestigious Brian May Scholarship, he completed a Master's degree in Scoring for Film and Multimedia at New York University, receiving the Elmer Bernstein Award for Film Scoring.

He recently completed work on the new Australian feature film *Slant*, starring Sigrid Thornton and Pia Miranda, which won Best Australian Feature at Monster Fest 2022. He also scored the Ukrainian documentary *Slava*, which won Best Short Film at Byron All Shorts Flickerfest 2023.

He has worked with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, Nick Cave and Warren Ellis, Chris Botti, Amanda Palmer, Ben Folds and Australian pop sensation Tina Arena. He has written arrangements for Birds of Tokyo, Missy Higgins and Vera Blue as well as working on *Junior MasterChef*, *The Voice Australia* and the *2021 AFL Grand Final*.

Nicholas is highly sought after as a conductor for live film concerts, having conducted the world premieres of *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *The Lion King (2019)*, *Beauty and the Beast (2017)*, *Shrek 2* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 2*.

He is also the only person in the world to have conducted all three original *Star Wars* films in concert...in one day!



Courtney Act

host

Boy, Girl. Artist, Advocate. Courtney Act is more than just the sum of her parts. She is a multifaceted artist and queer community advocate who embodies the zeitgeist of an era.

From her beginnings in the premiere season of Australian Idol to winner of Celebrity Big Brother UK, Courtney has become one of Australia's most loved media personalities as series host of ABC's One Plus One, Eurovision Australia Decides Spokesperson, and co-host of the Opening Ceremony for Sydney World Pride.

Adding to her list of achievements, Courtney made her stage debut with the Sydney Theatre Company in Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* and has gone on to become best-selling author with the release of *Caught in The Act* by Shane Jenek.

Last year saw Courtney as a proud Rainbow Partner with Sydney World Pride and released her SWP anthem 'Celebrate' to coincide. Madame Tussauds Sydney revealed the Courtney Act wax figure as the centerpiece of their 'Pride Zone', immortalising her as one of Australia's most influential cultural icons.

2024 has already seen her headlining in Smashed during Sydney Festival and returning as the host for the ABC Sydney Mardi Gras broadcast.



Mark Sutcliffe

creative director

Mark Sutcliffe has spent over 25 years working in the entertainment and performing arts industry and in that time has worked on some of the biggest cultural events in Australia.

Organisations include Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, Sydney Opera House, Sydney Cricket & Sports Ground Trust, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Michael Cassel Group, Opera Australia, Live Nation, Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Festival, National Gallery of Australia, Powerhouse Museum, Global Creatures and the Almeida Theatre in London.

Events have ranged from the Edinburgh Military Tattoo to the Paris Opera Ballet, Sydney Festival to Picasso, Vienna Philharmonic to *Strictly Ballroom – The Musical*.

Through his company Make My Mark he has produced and created *To Barbra, With Love, Hopelessly Devoted, What the World Needs Now* and co-created *George Michael: Freedom!* and *David Bowie: Nothing Has Changed* (with Amanda Pelman) – all celebrating icons in music.

As well as honouring Olivia Newton-John, Mark dedicates these performances to his mother Bernice Sutcliffe, who passed away in 2023.



David Campbell

David Campbell OAM is one of Australia's most popular and versatile entertainers. A proven television and radio host, he also headlines theatre, cabaret and concert performances, as well as being an ARIA winning, Helpmann Award winning, multi-platinum recording artist and author.

David is the popular co-host of the national *Today Extra* show for the Nine Network, as well as the beloved annual Christmas Eve broadcast of *Carols by Candlelight*. For radio, David presents his own top rating, national weekend afternoon radio show on Smooth FM and in print, David is a regular featured columnist in *Stellar*, News Corp's popular *Sunday* magazine.

David is one of our leading musical theatre stars and has achieved similar success on the international stage, most notably captivating New York with his award-winning cabaret show. His production credits include *North By Northwest*, *Dream Lover — The Bobby Darin Musical*, *Les Misérables*, *Company*, *Shout!*, *Assassins* and more.

David has previously performed with the Sydney Symphony and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras in concerts celebrating George Michael and is happy to be honouring Olivia Newton-John in this production.



Jess Hitchcock

Jess Hitchcock is an Indigenous singer-songwriter who has stirred the Australian music and performing arts scene as a genre-defying force. Her powerful voice and knack for storytelling has seen her shine across pop, country, folk, opera and music theatre, sharing the stage and studio with some of Australia's favourites.

One of Jess's most notable collaborations is with legendary Australian singer-songwriter, Paul Kelly. Together they performed and recorded Paul's song *Everyday My Mother's Voice* earning standing ovations across the nation. Jess has also collaborated with Archie Roach, Tina Arena and Kate Miller-Heidke.

Jess's original material is equal parts dramatic as it is playful, always showcasing her vocal prowess. Her

much anticipated album *Unbreakable* was released mid 2023 and reached #4 in the AIR charts. The first single *I Don't Have the Heart* was described by *The Music* as "an arena sized pop ballad".

When Jess is not on stage with her own band or joining forces with Australian music legends, she lends her mezzo-soprano vocals to select performing arts companies. Most recently, Jess starred in West Australian Opera's *Wundig wer Wilura*, in Noongar language.

Born with heritage from the Torres Strait Islands and Papua New Guinea, Jess's artistic diversity and adroitness are seldom seen in someone as young as her. The way she navigates her creative path is a rare find and nothing short of inspirational.



Georgina Hopson

Originally hailing from Toowoomba, Georgina is a graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music.

Selected Theatre Credits include: Karen in *Bananaland* (Brisbane & Sydney Festival), Christine Daaé in Opera Australia's *Phantom of the Opera* on Sydney Harbour, *The Golden Age of Broadway* for the Sydney Opera House's 50th birthday celebrations, *To Barbara with Love* at the State Theatre, Lorelei Lee in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (Hayes Theatre Co.), Lina Lamont in *Singin' in the Rain* (QPAC), MJ Alternate in *Jagged Little Pill* (GWB), Emma Carew in *Jekyll & Hyde* (Hayes Theatre Co.), Gussie Carnegie in *Merrily We Roll Along* (Hayes Theatre Co.), Lily in *The Secret Garden* (Opera Australia, cancelled due to COVID-19), Claudia Nardi in *Nine* (Squabbalogic), Mother in *Ragtime* (Production Company), *Evita* (Opera Australia/Gordon Frost Organisation),

My Fair Lady (Opera Australia/Gordon Frost Organisation), *West Side Story* (Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour), *Oklahoma!* (The Production Company).

Awards & Nominations: Sydney Theatre Award nomination for Best Performance in a Supporting Role – *Merrily We Roll Along*, 2022; Green Room Award for Best Performer in a Lead Role – *Ragtime*, 2020; Rob Guest Endowment Award, 2017; the Matilda Award for Best Emerging Artist, 2015.

Georgina played Wendy Hogan in the TV miniseries *Hoges: The Paul Hogan Story* (Fremantle Media), and has appeared in *Doctor Doctor* Season 5 (Easy Tiger) and in *Bump* Season 2 (Roadshow Rough Diamond).

Georgina has been a proud MEAA Equity member since 2017.

Instagram @georginahopson



Christie Whelan Browne

Christie Whelan Browne is one of Australia's most versatile stage and screen performers.

An award-winning actress she has delighted musical theatre audiences in shows such as *Company* (Sydney Theatre Award for Best Newcomer), *Vigil* (Green Room Award Winner), *The Boyfriend*, *Once We Lived Here* (Green Room Award Nomination), *Sugar* (Green Room Award Nomination), *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* (Green Room Award Nomination), *Shane Warne The Musical*, *Singin' In The Rain* (Green Room Award Nomination), *The*

Drowsy Chaperone (Helpmann Award Nomination), *Jerry's Girls*, *Anything Goes*, *Xanadu* and *The Producers*.

On the silver screen, Christie has been seen in *Wonderland*, *Offspring*, *Peter Allen – Not The Boy Next Door*, *House Husbands*, *True Story with Hamish and Andy*, *Have You Been Paying Attention?*, *Get Krack!n* and *The Wrong Girl*.

Recently, Christie was a finalist on Network Seven's *Dancing With The Stars*, was a regular cast member on Shaun Micallef's *Mad as Hell*, and featured on Binge's hit series *Colin From Accounts*.

Band



GRANT WINDSOR
Keys

Grant Windsor is a musician of international reputation. Based in London for 11 years, he has worked alongside international artists such as Michael Bublé, Bilal, Kamaal Williams, Gregory Porter, Carol King, Sir Tim Rice, Pee Wee Ellis, Jose James and Basement Jaxx, and with Australian artists such as Pete Murray, Guy Sebastian, Christine Anu and Kate Ceberano

Grant Windsor recorded on Blue Note records with Jose James in 2014 on *No Beginning, No End* which received two downbeat awards. In 2001 Grant received the inaugural APRA Professional Development award for Jazz Composition. Currently working at both the VCA and Monash universities and is an APRA – AMCOS Ambassador.



TOBY LOVELAND
Guitar

Toby Loveland, a Brisbane-based guitarist with over two decades of professional experience, is highly sought after in the Australian musical theatre scene, notably featuring in QPAC productions like *Moulin Rouge*, *Chicago*, *Lion King* and *Wicked*. He's supported top performers including Anthony Callea and Jessica Mauboy and worked with John Foreman at the TV Week Logie Awards. Toby has toured globally and locally, playing in Europe, Taiwan and Fiji. Alongside performing with duo act Phoenix and his own band Savvy, he's taught guitar and bass for 20 years. Currently, Toby lectures in contemporary music studies at TAFE Queensland Southbank.

Band



JUSTIN BLISS

Bass

Born in Brisbane, Australia in 1982, Justin came from a musical family with his mother working as a professional singer, which helped inspire his love for music. He started playing Double Bass at the age of ten, was accepted into Kelvin Grove State High School's excellence in music program in 1997 and went on to study at the Conservatorium of Music in 2000.

During this time, he has developed a wide range of musical tastes and interests which has allowed him to perform with many national and international artists and groups such as Sir George Martin, Keith Urban, John Barrowman, The Whitlams, Hugh Sheridan, Tommy Emmanuel, John Foreman, the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Ballet, and the English National Ballet.

Justin is also in demand as a Musical Theatre musician, and has recently played in productions of Frozen, 9 to 5, Mamma Mia, Singin' In The Rain, Tick Tick Boom!, Moulin Rouge!, Chicago, and Jersey Boys.



DAVID MONTGOMERY

Drums

David has been Section Principal Percussion of Queensland Symphony Orchestra since 1994 and Principal Percussion of the Australian World Orchestra since 2011.

He spends his time between performing, composing and teaching. David has performed with the Kanazawa Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, West Australian Symphony, Opera Australia Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Australian World Orchestra. As a soloist David performed the Australian premiere of Joseph Schwantner's percussion concerto, the first performance of Gerard Brophy's Trance Dakar written for him after a study trip to Senegal with master drummer Aly N'Diaye Rose, and Ney Rosauero's Marimba Concerto No.1.

ENCORE WRITING CREDITS

You're the One That I Want

Christie Whelan Browne and David Campbell

Written by John Farrar

Xanadu

Cast

Written by Jeff Lynne

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