



Media Release – For immediate release

26 September 2017

David Atkins Appointed New Artistic Director: Helpmann Awards 2018-2020

Live Performance Australia (LPA), today announced its new production team for the 2018-2020 Helpmann Awards events. David Atkins OAM has been appointed Artistic Director with Will Sheehan as Executive Producer and Dawn Martin as Production Director.

LPA Chief Executive Evelyn Richardson said “We are delighted to announce David Atkins as our new Artistic Director for the Helpmann Awards for the next three years. David is one of Australia’s most internationally renowned producer, director and choreographers’.

“He has directed and produced some of the largest live events of this decade to a wide array of audiences around the world. He was acclaimed for his outstanding and innovative work as the artistic director and producer of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games Opening and Closing ceremonies and has a pedigree that is unrivalled. His impressive list of credits in live entertainment events and theatrical experiences include creating and directing the first Australian musical presented on London’s West End, the Olivier Award winning ‘Hot Shoe Shuffle’. Currently David is the Artistic Director for White Night Melbourne and White Night Ballarat”.

The Helpmann Awards are the premiere celebration of Australia’s vibrant live performance industry and recognise distinguished achievement and excellence across our diverse live entertainment and performing arts sectors.

“We have some very exciting and ambitious ideas for growing the Helpmann Awards as we head to our 20th anniversary in 2020. We feel very confident that David will bring a fresh, creative energy to the awards supported by Will and Dawn who have worked with us so successfully on previous awards’ ceremonies.

“This is a dynamic, talented and highly skilled team with impeccable credentials and we are delighted to have the opportunity to work with them for the next three years. This heralds a new and very exciting chapter for the Helpmann Awards’ events going forward”, Ms Richardson said.

David Atkins said “Will and Dawn invited me to join them on the tender for this contract and it was too good an offer to pass up. The combination of our collective experience and skills, especially their delivery of the Helpmann’s over the last few years meant we could bring both new blood and Helpmann’s veterans to the team to create and produce the Awards. The Helpmann’s and LPA are pivotal to the Australian performing arts industry and we are honoured to have won this opportunity”.

Will Sheehan said “I am thrilled to be stepping up to the role of Executive Producer. Having been the associate producer of the Awards’ for a number of years I am so honoured to be leading this amazing team entrusted with creating our industry’s night of nights. I am also delighted to be collaborating with David and Dawn, both of whom bring such experience, creativity, energy and passion to the Helpmann’s. There is much we want to achieve together with LPA and I really just can’t wait to get going”.

Dawn Martin said “I am thrilled to be given the opportunity to continue my long-standing association with the Helpmann Awards and to be working with David and Will to celebrate and promote the live performance industry through this prestigious event”.

David Atkins Enterprises is the production company managing this contract commencing in late September 2017.



CELEBRATING
100
YEARS



Key dates for the Helpmann Awards, to be presented live in Sydney in 2018, will be announced shortly. For further information on the Helpmann Awards, visit www.helpmannawards.com.au

ENDS

Media contact

Susan Fitzpatrick-Napier
DMG USA/Australia
Office: +1 61 2 8218 2144
susan@dmgpr.com

Join the conversation on LPA's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) sites.

About LPA

LPA is the peak body for Australia's live performance industry. Established 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. LPA is the producer of the annual Helpmann Awards.

About the Helpmann Awards

The Helpmann Awards recognise distinguished artistic achievement and excellence in the many disciplines of Australia's vibrant live performance sectors including musical theatre, contemporary music, theatre, comedy, cabaret, opera and classical music, dance and physical theatre, children's work and regional touring. The 43 unique Awards also incorporate technical awards and two industry achievement Awards, the JC Williamson Award and Sue Natrass Award for outstanding contributions to the live performance industry.

The Helpmann Awards, named in honour of Sir Robert Helpmann and to commemorate his memory and achievements, were established in 2001 by Live Performance Australia to recognise, celebrate and promote our live performance industry, akin to the Olivier Awards (UK) and the Tony Awards (US).

The Helpmann Awards is the pinnacle event for the live performance industry in Australia. Since its inception in 2001, the Helpmann Awards have grown significantly and are now recognised internationally by the global performing arts industry as well as being a "household" name in Australia. The Awards have been broadcast nationally since 2003.