



minderoo



INTERNATIONAL STAR AND WAAPA OPEN FIRST SUNSET PERFORMANCE

The first event at the new Sunset Heritage Precinct will celebrate local WAAPA Gospel Choir and international master of gospel voice, Melonie Daniels-Walker, this Thursday 8 December 2016 from 5.00pm.

Made possible by the Minderoo Foundation and Hugh Jackman and Deborra-Lee Furness's support for WAAPA, the performance will deliver a showcase of the gospel songs written by Melonie. WAAPA lecturer Matt Allen and Melonie will be teaching the WAAPA Contemporary Music students all week leading up to Thursday's event.

Melonie is most commonly known for her (12) twelve-year tenure as Chief Background Vocalist, Vocal Arranger and Vocal Director for Mariah Carey, however she is more than a background vocal. She is a Vocal Coach, Vocal Director, Vocal Arranger, a Songwriter and an Actor. With TV, film and stage credits her resume reads like "The Who's Who" of music and entertainment royalty working with a broad spectrum of vocalists and musicians. The list including Michael Jackson, Whitney Houston, Aretha Franklin, Wynton Marsalis, Kim Burrell, Israel Houghton and Tyler Perry. For over ten years she has served as Assistant Choir Director and Worship Leader at one of the largest churches in New York, Greater Allen AME Cathedral.

Melonie arrived from New York yesterday for a week and expressed, 'I am having a wonderful time here at WAAPA. I am loving being with the students. It's a great experience to be with young minds that are hungry & excited for the art of live contemporary music. And I believe the future of the music is in good hands.'

The collaboration of the Minderoo Foundation, created by Nicola and Andrew Forrest, and Hugh Jackman and Deborra-Lee Furness's combined support has led to extensive funding for WAAPA over the last two years. Over thirty-five elite international performing arts practitioners have exclusively visited WAAPA to teach students and support staff, with Melonie being the final recruit to WAAPA for 2016.

Nicola Forrest says the Minderoo Foundation is thrilled to be part of this program which is making such a difference for WAAPA, and would encourage other Western Australians to support WAAPA, either individually or through family foundations and businesses

"We would like to encourage our peers to back the thriving arts and music scene within WA, and we hope this performance is an opportunity for people to see how their contribution could benefit the learning and experiences of students at WAAPA."

It has been Nicola's patronage that has resulted in the first Sunset event showcasing WAAPA. The State Government has supported the grandeur of an event like this in the new space.

WAAPA lecturer Matt Allen, who heads the Gospel Choir, states, "having Melonie here to work with the Contemporary Music vocal students and the WAAPA Gospel Choir is a dream come true. She is a singer of the highest calibre. When it comes to gospel singing, she is at the top of the game and we are so lucky to have her here to take all the students' education to heights they would not achieve without her. The impact she has already made on the students has been invaluable."



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The visiting artists program is helping to continue WAAPA's international reputation for producing incredible talent, with musical alumni including Tim Minchin, Triple-J Unearthed artist of the year Meg Mac and 2013 Telstra Road to Discovery winner Helen Shanahan.

The event will take place on Thursday 8 December 2016 from 5.00pm at the Sunset Heritage Precinct, and is by invitation only.

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