

HELPMANN AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [12.24 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the nomination of a number of Western Australian arts companies and individuals for the prestigious 2017 Helpmann Awards. This annual event recognises outstanding achievement and excellence in the performing arts in Australia, with the winners to be announced by Live Performance Australia on Monday, 24 July at the Capitol Theatre, Sydney. The nominations for this year's awards are a testament to the talent and commitment of Western Australian performers, playwrights, composers and designers who not only work in the many outstanding Western Australian arts organisations, but also apply their trade in companies and productions across Australia. This year's nominations include productions that connected us to country and celebrated and shared our unique Western Australian stories and culture with audiences nationally.

Perth International Arts Festival's stunning opening event of the 2016 festival, *Boorna Waanginy: The Trees Speak*, witnessed by more than 100 000 people over three nights, has been nominated for two awards, including best lighting design for Mark Howett and Sean McKernan; and best sound design by Kingsley Reeve. Geraldton-born actor and playwright Kate Mulvany has received a nomination for best new Australian work for her adaptation of the much-loved novel *Jasper Jones* by Western Australian author Craig Silvey for the Melbourne Theatre Company. The production has also gained a nomination for best play, best scenic design and best supporting actor. Kate Mulvany also received a nomination for best female actor in Bell Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

Western Australian companies were well represented, with The Last Great Hunt's play *New Owner* by Tim Watts and Arielle Gray nominated in the category of best presentation for children. Black Swan State Theatre Company's co-production with Queensland Theatre of Michael Gow's *Once in Royal David's City* was nominated for best play. The West Australian Opera's principal, Antoinette Halloran, received a best female performer in an opera nomination for *Tosca*. The West Australian Ballet's former soloist Andre Santos was nominated for best male dancer in a ballet in *Beauty and the Beast* and the West Australian Symphony Orchestra's Asher Fisch, who conducted *Resurrection*, was nominated for best symphony orchestra concert. Our individual Western Australian artists were also acknowledged, with Joel Creasey shortlisted for the best comedy performer award for *Poser*. Iain Grandage has been nominated as co-composer for best original score for *Satan Jawa* and Taryn Fiebig was nominated for best female in a supporting role in an opera for *Cosi fan tutte* by Opera Australia.

I congratulate all the Western Australian arts companies and individuals for this recognition of their outstanding excellence in the performing arts, as acknowledged by the industry in their nominations for the Helpmann Awards—sharing our unique Western Australian stories and bringing Western Australian culture to the rest of Australia.