



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

**GOVERNOR'S PERFORMANCE SERIES
VICTORIAN COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
VARIETY SHOW
Tuesday 16 May 2023**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Professor Duncan Maskell, Vice-Chancellor, University of Melbourne

Professor Nicola Phillips, Provost

Professor Marie Sierra, Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts and Music

Professor Emma Redding MBE, Director, Victorian College of the Arts

Distinguished guests

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we gather – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders of other communities who may be with us.

Tony and I are delighted to welcome you all to Government House for this evening's Variety Show: the last in a series of performances that we have had the pleasure of hosting over the previous eight years.

First conceptualised by my predecessor, Governor David de Kretser AC, before being adapted by Governor Alex Chernov AC KC, the Series has enabled us to welcome thousands of Victorians to Government House.

We have been mindful of Victoria's breadth and depth of creative talent. Accordingly, we have attempted to expand the Series to include a wide array of artforms.

And it HAS been a wide array.

Amongst other things, this Ballroom has felt the steady beat of drums at a rock concert, heard collective gasps at the daring tricks of Circus Oz performers and been awed at the colourful and skilful ballroom dancers gliding across this floor.

The Garden has also played its role, hosting, for example, a Sunset Cinema for a screening of the Australian film *Paper Planes*. And on another occasion, a collection of pipe bands, topped off – literally – by a lone piper atop the Government House tower.

The importance of Victoria's creative industries is no surprise to us. We know its contribution to our economy. We appreciate the depth of talent. And we see the community's curiosity, engagement and enthusiasm for it.

We are confident that your curiosity, engagement and enthusiasm will be fed this evening, not only by the quality of the performers that you will be seeing, but also by the fact that the entire show is being staged and performed by the Victorian College of the Arts.

The VCA, our near neighbour on St Kilda Rd, celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, marking half a century as a leading institution in artistic invention.

The variety in its courses is significant, including instruction in dance, acting and theatre, design and production, film and television, creative arts therapy, Indigenous arts and culture, visual art and writing. Many of those skills will be on show – or behind the scenes – this evening.

The Governor's Performance Series is particularly dear to us, not only in showcasing our performers, but also as just one of various ways we are able to welcome a diverse range of Victorians to Government House.

We hope that amongst the audience tonight, there may be many of you who have not otherwise had the pleasure to visit here. Please make sure you look around after the performance. The House, used for more than 150 years as the State's seat of constitutional, ceremonial, community and international engagement, is beautiful.

Finally, I can say that this performance is especially close to our hearts. It is the last in the series that we have hosted, as my term in office will shortly end.

Nothing could make us happier than facilitating – and enjoying – the up and coming talent in this sector. And so, a warm thank you to everyone at the Victorian College of the Arts who has worked to make this evening possible.

It is now my pleasure to introduce the VCA's Director, Professor Redding MBE.