

## VCA Creative Wellbeing and Pathways Showcase

*Thu, 9 Apr, 1pm - 5pm AEST*

*Founders Gallery, Elisabeth Murdoch Building*

Staff and students are invited to an afternoon that explores creativity and wellbeing and industry pathways for emerging practitioners. This informal showcase will highlight collaborative arts-based practice, mentoring and professional development opportunities, and transformative approaches to creativity and learning.

### Sessions by:

**Leah Avene**, Indigenous Pedagogies Lead at the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development

**Dr Sarah Austin**, Senior Lecturer in Theatre and ARC DECRA Fellow, **Emily Tomlins**, Associate Director of Polyglot Theatre Company, and VCA Alumni, **Sophia Derkenne**

**Dr Trisnasari Fraser**, Convenor Creativity and Wellbeing Initiative, and industry panel with representatives from Melbourne Recital Centre, Arts Centre Melbourne, Australian Centre for Contemporary Arts

**Dr Sarah Woodland**, Senior Lecturer in Applied Theatre, in conversation with **Professor Michael Anderson**, Co-Director of the CREATE Centre at the University of Sydney



<https://finearts-music.unimelb.edu.au/research/creativity-and-wellbeing-research-initiative-cawri>

<https://www.cawri.com.au/>

### **1pm - The Wilin model – knowledge and wellbeing: Leah Avene**

This workshop introduces participants to the concept of multilogue – the acknowledgement that we are in dialogue with many different elements. Centring Place as a source of strength, we explore purpose, practice, professions through creative engagement with stories and land.

### **2pm - VCA/Polyglot collaboration: A panel discussion with Sarah Austin, Emily Tomlins, Sophia Derkenne**

A panel discussion exploring the long- and short-term impact of 3rd year students studying a BFA Theatre at Victorian College of the Arts undertaking an immersive learning experience with Polyglot Theatre during their degree. This unit of curriculum has been designed and developed by key Polyglot staff and Dr Sarah Austin and is now in its fifth year of delivery.

The panel discussion will feature alumni and current students in conversation about what it means to learn creative practices of co-design and co-creation with children and young people, and the experience of the play-based, immersive theatre-making process Polyglot champions. The discussion will also focus on how this unit of study has opened up an understanding of potential pathways to industry for students and resulted in employment, funding and new opportunities.

### **3pm - Addressing decline in creative enrolments: Panel discussion with Trisnasari Fraser and Arts Centre Melbourne, Melbourne Recital Centre and Australian Centre for Contemporary Art**

Trisnasari Fraser chairs a timely panel with representatives from Melbourne Recital Centre (MRC), Arts Centre Melbourne (ACM) and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) that situates a collaborative project with FFAM within the broader national context of declining participation in creative education. The session foregrounds how ACM, ACCA and MRC are expanding school-based arts education while also exploring how the organisations strengthen pathways into tertiary study and early professional life for emerging artists and musicians.

Panellists will discuss how ReachArt (ACCA), Accelerando and Making Waves (MRC) expand arts education through curriculum-aligned workshops, in-venue learning, outreach and partnerships with schools — and how such engagement contributes to arts literacy, creative confidence and long-term participation.

The session will address how ACM, MRC and ACCA support tertiary students and early-career artists and musicians via professional development mechanisms and programs such as PLAY (ACM); and how institutional strategy, advocacy and sector partnerships can address declining participation in creative education.

### **4pm - Sarah Woodland in conversation with Michael Anderson, Leadership Lantern framework**

In this conversation, Michael and Sarah will discuss arts leadership and transformation in the polycrisis. Michael will introduce his 'Leadership Lantern' framework and explore how arts students and educators can remain critically hopeful and empowered in the face of multiple challenges facing the industry ... and the world.