



Media release

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Australian stage and television singer-actress Rachael Beck to share secrets with rising stars

This month entertainment industry professionals including **Rachael Beck** will come together with secondary students from around Victoria to reflect upon what it takes to make it as a professional performer in today's world.

The talk forms part of the **2017 Wakakirri Careers Day and Season Launch** event being held at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art for schools participating in the 2017 Wakakirri Secondary School Challenge.

Other speakers include entertainment industry professionals James Elmer, Petra Glieson and Michael Cormick, as well as special guest, the **Hon. Ms Jenny Mikakos, Minister for Youth Affairs.**

The panel will be discussing the trials and tribulations each experienced on the road to career success and how students can use participating in Wakakirri to enhance their own career prospects.

The event aims to inspire, encourage and inform budding choreographers and producers aiming for a career in the Performing Arts.

Rachael Beck said "Wakakirri is a unique opportunity for students to design, direct, choreograph their own work and perform it on a professional stage. They may never get such an opportunity ever again in their careers. It's an invaluable experience for anyone seeking a career in the arts."



Established in 1992, Wakakirri is the name for Australia's largest Performing Arts festival for schools, involving over 20,000 students across every state and territory each year. Each school participating in Wakakirri creates a unique performance with a story and message that resonates with their community.

Participation in the arts is essential if students are to develop confidence in expressing themselves. Through such participation students experience the freedom, intense satisfaction and sense of achievement which comes from knowing that one can create something significant.

Laura Roso, Drama Teacher from Xavier College-Kostka Hall said about last year's event:

"We got to hear the background stories of some of the most elite entertainers in the country as well as being given tips and suggestions when creating a performance. This was very valuable. I would highly recommend this day to anyone thinking about attending. It is very rare to get an opportunity to attend an event like this. We are very grateful to the Wakakirri crew for organizing such an inspirational day for not only students but teachers!"

THE 2017 WAKAKIRRI CAREER DAY EXPERIENCE WILL INCLUDE;

- Key Note Speakers from Entertainment Industry Professionals and current Wakakirri Panel Reps including **Rachael Beck, James Elmer, Petra Glieson** and **Michael Cormick**.
- Official Opening of the Season: **Adam Loxley, Wakakirri Festival Director**
- Minister's Address: **Hon. Ms Jenny Mikakos, Minister for Youth Affairs, Victorian Government**
- Photo Opportunities / Question & Answer Session
- Exclusive Gallery Viewing – *Claire Lambe: Mother Holding Something Horrific*



EVENT DETAILS;

MELBOURNE

- Monday 29th May 2017
- 10.00am – 12.00pm
- ACCA (Australian Centre for Contemporary Art) – 111 Sturt Street Southbank VIC 3006

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Notes to editors:

About Wakakirri

Great stories can change the way people think about the world around them. Wakakirri is the search for the most inspirational Story Dance created by an Australian school. A fable to reimagine? A statement to make? A history to recall? A cause to champion? A classic to reinterpret? Something new and modern? Great stories can be about anything and every year the Wakakirri search is on!

Established 25 years ago, Wakakirri is the name for Australia's largest Performing Arts festival for schools, involving over 20,000 students across every state and territory each year.

A Wakakirri Story Dance is a 3-7 minute performance that theatrically tells a story using any combination of dancing, creative movement and acting to pre-recorded music (Secondary Schools can use film projections and live singing). Schools can tell any story, in any way they wish. All sets, props and costumes should be well utilised and not gratuitous. All schools are encouraged to minimise their environmental footprint when creating their props and costumes and there are special awards for schools that excel in this area. Each year schools are invited to incorporate the annual Signature Item into their story for an extra challenge. The Signature Item for 2017 is "Gift".

Participating in Wakakirri is an experience students never forget. From the start of rehearsals schools can get tips and follow other schools on Wakakirri TV. After rehearsals, schools come together to perform in professional theatres, under full lights and sound to an audience of family, friends and the official Wakakirri National Search Panel. Students get the chance to meet the Panel members (including Rachael Beck, James Elmer, Andrew McFarlane and Mark Wilson) and walk the Red Carpet. Every school's performance is filmed for Wakakirri TV, the People's Choice Awards and the Story of the Year Awards.

The process of creating a performance for Wakakirri covers many areas of the National Curriculum. Principals and teachers report Wakakirri builds teamwork, community pride, life skills and resilience. Of course, if you ask the students, they say it's just loads of fun!

Wakakirri is a creative challenge that is accessible and affordable for every school in Australia whether public or private, Primary or Secondary, regional or remote. Wakakirri has categories and Story Awards for new schools, experienced schools, schools that want to create blockbuster performances to schools that want to keep it simple. Schools can create their own Story Dances or use the Wakakirri Artist In Residence program if they need help.

Via live performances, Wakakirri TV, People's Choice Awards and Social Media, Wakakirri stories reach over 3 million people each year. Great stories can change the way people think about the world around them. So, do you have a story to tell? The search is on!