

# WAKAKIRRI

Australia's Largest Performing Arts Event for Schools

MEDIA RELEASE

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## WAKAKIRRI ANNOUNCES SYDNEY SECONDARY STORY DANCE CHALLENGE WINNERS



Photo: 'The Rabbits' by Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College Tumby Umbi Campus. (Credit: Winkipop Media)

Wakakirri is proud to announce the Sydney Region's Secondary Challenge winners winners for the 2018 Wakakirri Story Dance Challenge.

Six schools from around the region, spreading from the inner city up to the Central Coast and out to the Blue Mountains, were invited back to NIDA on September 10th to perform their award-winning Wakakirri Story Dances for the chance to be nominated for the coveted national Story of the Year Award.

Katoomba High School and Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College, Tumby Umbi Campus were both named as the region's winners for their impressive original productions.

Wakakirri's National Panel representatives – Andrew McFarlane, Joshua Horner and Katie Kermond – all commended the schools for their strong storytelling, dance ability and dramatic action.

Tumby Umbi staged a masterful and hopeful interpretation of *The Rabbits*, John Marsden's picture book depicting an abstract interpretation of the colonisation of Australia and its social impact. The performance also won the school the Best Australian History Award and Excellent Group Dance (read more [here](#)).

Katoomba High's dramatic approach to *Lord of the Flies* also saw them win the Best Adapted Story Award and recognition for Excellent Lead Cast. The classic "survival of the fittest" story sees a brutal fight for power unfold when a group of young people are stranded on an island (read more [here](#)).

It's been big year for regional schools and for modern takes on classic stories for Wakakirri. This year 240 schools entered Story Dances that express students' thoughts, ideas and aspirations.

*Wakakirri's Story of the Year Award for the Primary and Secondary categories will be announced on Waka TV on October 17, schools will be watching the announcement live via YouTube.*

*The Wakakirri Story Dance Challenge will return to Sydney in 2019 (dates TBC). Registration open on October 17, see website and subscribe to stay up to date: [www.wakakirri.com](http://www.wakakirri.com)*

*See Editor's Notes for the full list of Sydney Secondary Challenge Finalists and item descriptions.*

–ENDS–

**For further information, interviews and hi-res images please contact:**

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

**Wakakirri** is Australia's largest performing arts event for primary and secondary schools. A Wakakirri Story Dance is a 3-7 minute performance by a group of students that theatrically tells a story using a combination of dancing, acting and creative movement to pre-recorded music.

Read more: [www.wakakirri.com/what-is-wakakirri/](http://www.wakakirri.com/what-is-wakakirri/)

### Sydney Secondary Awards Night Judges:



#### Andrew McFarlane

A graduate from NIDA, Andrew has had an extensive career in film & television. He has starred in some of Australia's most successful TV dramas including *The Sullivans*, *Patrol Boat*, *The Flying Doctors*, *Water Rats*, *Blue Heelers*, *Home & Away*, *Neighbours*, *The Alice*, and *Underbelly: A Tale of Two Cities* and numerous telemovies and miniseries for the Australian and the US market. Andrew is also a regular presenter on *PlaySchool* for the ABC. In theatre, Andrew has worked for every state theatre company in Australia and for numerous independent and commercial theatre companies. He has run both "Acting for the Camera" and "Introduction to Stage Acting" courses for the NIDA Open Program and is a course director at the Darlinghurst Theatre School.



#### Joshua Horner

Australian born Joshua Horner is a star of stage and TV. Starting out as a professional dancer he spent 5 years with the Australian Ballet then crossed over to a career in Musical Theatre which lead him to star in *A Chorus Line*, *Billy Elliot The Musical* on Broadway and played 'Tony' in *Movin' Out* on London's West End. Other shows include *Dirty Dancing*, *Guys and Dolls* and *Tivoli*. After moving to Los Angeles in 2009 he became a choreographic consultant for the Walt Disney Resort, choreographing their hit parade *Soundsational*. He then inspired and choreographed water for the award winning night time spectacular *World of Color*. He's been a Judge on *Dancing with the Stars* in Australia, created the hit website *Dance Upon a Dream* which is a worldwide database for competitive dancers

([www.danceuponadream.com](http://www.danceuponadream.com)) and is the star of FREEFORM'S fabulous new comedic digital series *Oh My JOSH!*

#### Katie Kermond

Husband and wife duo Katie and Wayne's partnership has an innate aesthetic synchronicity. They have directed and choreographed traditional musicals including *Mary Poppins*, *Evita*, *Sweet Charity*, *A Chorus Line*, *We Will Rock You* and *Wicked*, as well as having conceived, written, directed, choreographed and produced national tours of the original contemporary Australian musicals *Jive Junkys*, *Candy Man*, and the Cabaret Show *Speigelesque*. Winners of multiple Australian entertainment awards, the Kermonds also received the coveted Pick Of The Fringe Award at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

### WAKAKIRRI SYDNEY SECONDARY CHALLENGE FINALISTS

SCHOOL	ITEM TITLE	ITEM DESCRIPTION	AWARDS
Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College - Tumby Umbi Campus	The Rabbits	Based on John Marsden's picture book, <i>The Rabbits</i> is an abstract interpretation of Australian colonisation and its social impact. This land was invaded by foreigners with unfamiliar ways and this changed the lives of Australians forever. What will it take to heal those unresolved wounds?	Story of the Year Nominee / Sydney Region Winner / Best Australian History Story Award
Katoomba High School	Lord of the Flies	A plane crashes onto an island. No adults have survived. Young people are in charge and the fight for power has never been more brutal. Survival of the fittest.	Story of the Year Nominee / Sydney Region Winner / Best Adapted Story Award
MLC School	The Private Life of a Masterpiece	Edgar Degas' <i>Little Dancer</i> , was first unveiled at an exhibition in the spring of 1881. The piece created public outrage with many critics claiming that Degas had created a new standard of artistic horror. Today it's one of his most famous works, but who was the young dancer immortalised in the wax?	Best Biographical History Story Award

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Northmead Creative & Performing Arts High School	The Farmer Wants A Life	Buying a piece of the Aussie Dream becomes reality for the Jones's. Everything is fine until the weather changes and working on the farm becomes a struggle. Rain and drought damage crops and the bills are overdue. While the Jones's lose everything, the Banks make another record profit.	Best Drama Story Award
Cranebrook High School	Hear Us Roar	Cranebrook High School presents Hear Us Roar, A Chinese lion legend. The lion, a symbol of power, wisdom and good fortune, chases away evil spirits and brings happiness, longevity and good luck. Come with us now as we journey back to ancient China where the legend began.	Best Cultural Celebration Story Award
Kingswood High School	Eighty One Hundred	"Between 80 and 100 Australian women die at the hands of their male partners every year – and a woman in Australia is more likely to be killed in her own home by her male partner than anywhere else or by anyone else."(*The ABS PSS 2006) We can diffuse the violence and break the silence.	Best Raising Awareness Story Award