



MEDIA RELEASE

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Local artist scores coveted spot in the 2020 Australian Conducting Academy

Patrick Brennan, Artistic Director/CEO of the Central Coast Conservatorium of Music is **one of eight conductors chosen from a rigorous selection process** to take part in the Australian Conducting Academy (ACA) 2020 Summer School in Hobart, Tasmania.

Mr Brennan will train under the leadership of world-class conductor, Johannes Fritzsch, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra (TSO) Principal Guest Conductor and Course Director.

"I am absolutely elated that I have been selected for the ACA Summer School as it is such an incredible opportunity that will take my conducting to a new level", said Mr Brennan.

"High calibre professional development conducting programs are a rare commodity in this country so the ability to work with Maestro Fritzsch and his incredible team of experts and the TSO is extraordinary".

The course will deliver intensive sessions including speaking from the podium, score reading, workshops and rehearsals with pianists and orchestra and panel discussions.

A previously chosen participant and **Conductor of Sydney University Wind Orchestra, Cathy Chan said**, *"I'm excited for Patrick. If it is similar to my experience with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra then he will stretch, refine, extend and develop his skills".*

The knowledge and expertise that Mr Brennan gains at the ACA Summer School will bolster his capacity as a music educator, conductor and Artistic Director on the Central Coast.

Importantly this knowledge transfer will positively impact the students from regional and metropolitan NSW that he works with on a regular basis.

It will also enable the Central Coast Conservatorium greater capability in delivering professional development programs to Central Coast music teachers and conductors who work in our community.

As part of Mr Brennan's professional and music education portfolio, Central Coast Conservatorium of Music students can access music extension programs such as the Central Coast Chamber Orchestra, Central Coast Opera, the Regional Youth Orchestra of NSW and Northern Sydney Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

These are cornerstone organisations that Mr Brennan has created or developed for students seeking high calibre inspirational performance opportunities and experiences.

“Students at the Central Coast Conservatorium want to be challenged at a professional level. They crave academic insight and cohesion within the group but mostly they respond to the emotional connection between themselves and the conductor,” Mr Brennan said.

Mr Brennan directs a number of important Central Coast ensembles including the Central Coast Philharmonia Choir, the Central Coast Concert Band, Central Coast Chamber Orchestra, Central Coast Youth Orchestra and the Central Coast Symphonic Wind Orchestra.

“What’s spectacular is that our students are not happy with mediocrity, they want to jump straight to excellence and that’s driven from the top with good leadership and modelling”, **Conservatorium teacher and support staff for the Central Coast Youth Orchestra, Diane Gardiner** said.

“For the first time in decades I’m seeing a generation of teenagers with conducting skills to take into further study if they choose.”

Central Coast Youth Orchestra member and former student of the CCCM, Kimberly Gilbert said *“Patrick has passion for making music, but also the ability to inspire this passion in others. This is not an easy task when faced with up to 30 restless teenagers!”*

Now a student at Sydney Conservatorium, Kimberley went on to say, *“watching Patrick work with members of the orchestra, be they the concertmaster, a section leader or an instrumental section as a whole, it is always clear that in the process of encouraging us to be better musicians, he also encourages us to be more resilient, determined and understanding human beings, with a love for music”*.

A member of the CCYO since 2013, Bradley Tham became Concertmaster in 2017. Bradley said, *“Patrick has had a positive impact on me, teaching me a lot about myself and my musical style while strengthening my musicianship skills. Mentoring me for conducting has taught me a lot about orchestral awareness and how to manage people and the orchestra”*.

Dr Christopher Sainsbury, unofficial resident composer of the Central Coast since the 1980’s, and Senior Lecturer in Music Composition, School of Music, Australian National University says, *“more than being a fine conductor, Patrick facilitates the creation of culture in communities. He is a great supporter of Australian composers and musicians, and he draws more from an orchestra in two rehearsals of a new piece than most would achieve in four. I very much like my music coming together under his lead, it’s magic!”*

The Australian Conducting Academy summer course is supported by the University of Tasmania, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University and Melba Opera Trust.

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Photos

- 1 Patrick Brennan, Conductor, Chamber Orchestra Opera Arboretum
- 2 Patrick Brennan CCYO and Vanishing Shapes, experimental avant-garde ensemble
- 3 Patrick Brennan Central Coast Philharmonia