

Soiree en Blanc - Artist Bios

Karin Schaupp is one of the most outstanding guitarists on the international scene, her playing hailed by the German press as “so perfect, so complete, that it seems like a miracle”.

Karin has released six highly acclaimed solo CDs for Warner Music International and ABC Classics, as well as various award-winning ensemble and orchestral albums. Recent releases include *Mosaic* (2015) featuring guitar concertos by Australian composers; and *Cradle Songs* (2010), a collection of exquisite lullabies from around the world, all arranged for solo guitar. Her collaborations have also led to a number of recordings including three albums with the ARIA award winning ensemble Saffire, The Australian Guitar Quartet, a duo album with Genevieve Lacey (recorders), the ARIA nominated *Fandango* with Flinders Quartet (2011) and most recently the double ARIA nominated *Songs of the Southern Skies* (2012) with Australian songstress Katie Noonan.

Alicia Cush is a Brisbane-based performer, musical director and independent producer. She commenced musical training at an early age studying violin, flute, piano and voice, following by tertiary study at The University of Queensland, The Victorian College of Arts and The Queensland Conservatorium of Music.

Currently, Alicia is the Artistic Director of Little Match Productions, directing and performing with Babushka and Belladiva. These ensembles have performed at many prestigious events, including Brisbane Festival, Melbourne Cabaret Festival, Queensland Cabaret Festival, Wonderland Festival, Adelaide Fringe Festival and Anywhere Theatre Festival.

As a chorus member of Opera Q, Alicia has performed in *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Turandot*, *La Traviata*, and *Aida*. In 2009, she completed a Master of Music Studies (Opera) at The Queensland Conservatorium, winning several prestigious competitions, Nickson Prize for Voice, Dr Francesco Castellano Italian Operatic Award and Linda Allen Postgraduate Prize.

Recently, Alicia toured internationally with Circa Contemporary Circus' Helpmann Award-winning *Il Ritorno* and completed an Artist-in-Residence program at the Judith Wright Centre of Contemporary Arts. Last year also saw Alicia touring Queensland with Babushka's *Doll* and featuring in *Women in Voice 2017*. This year includes a state tour with Belladiva, producing various productions for major venues, and in creative development for a new opera project, *The Owl & the Pussycat*.

Kim Fanning is our much loved music teacher & mum at Windsor State School. Kim is a passionate educator. Graduating from University of Queensland in 1994 with a Bachelors of Music Kim has forged a career as a leader in instrumental teaching. Recently awarded the P & C bursary on World Teachers Day to spend on professional

development Kim is eager to learn more about teaching and technology. Kim LOVES teaching primary school children the love of music and inspiring the next generation of string performers.

Jillian Didemus is a dedicated member of our teaching community at WSS and also a talented vocalist with a strong professional background in the performing arts. Graduating with an honours degree in Music & History Jillian has sung throughout Canada and the United States participating Master classes and performing. After a short time performing opera around beautiful Italy Jillian received her teaching degree. Jillian brings a bright energy and love for music to her classrooms of all ages.

Paul Kucharski was born in Ohio, U.S.A. and relocated to Australia in 1994. He holds a Master of Music degree and a Performer's Certificate from Indiana University, and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Kentucky. Formerly a lecturer at universities in Louisiana, West Virginia and Townsville and a multi-instrumental instructor with Education Queensland, Paul is currently Teacher of Band Instruments at Windsor State School. He enjoys performing in, and composing for a variety of genres, including concert band, jazz ensemble and chamber ensembles.

Gaic Giacomantonio completed a Bachelor of Music Degree, majoring in guitar and composition at UQ. He worked as performing musician for many years, playing both guitar and piano, and was a teacher of music and music theory for 15 years. He has collaborated with his wife, Karin Schaupp, by arranging or composing works for her solo and ensemble recordings and live performances.