

Flinders Drama Students Travel to Japan on an EDS Professional Development Grant

An EDS Professional Development Grant will enable six Flinders Drama Centre students to travel to Japan on 7 June to be part of a new Japanese/Australian bicultural musical *Once Upon a Midnight*.

Invited by Hisashi Shimoyama, the Producer of Okinawa's annual Kijimuna Festival for young people, the bicultural musical *Once Upon a Midnight* will be presented at the festival in July this year.

The six Australian actors in the production were cast from amongst all Flinders Drama Centre acting students. Students selected for the musical and the recipients of the EDS Professional Development Grant are: Melissa Matheson, Chris Asimos, Michelle Pastor, Lauren Henderson, Matthew Crook and David Hirst.

Once Upon a Midnight is a punk rock teen musical written by Alex Vickery-Howe, a postgraduate Creative Arts student at Flinders University. The story follows Kelsey Clarke, the most paranoid child in the world. Lured into the underground world of monsters and dreams Kelsey takes a journey of self-discovery and confronts her deepest fears.

The cultural collaboration is a signification project for Flinders Drama Centre and provides the students with unique opportunity to develop their acting skills in an international theatre setting and extend their networks globally.

In awarding the grant, EDS Executive Director, Karl Grant said, "EDS is pleased to support the work of the Helpmann Academy and the development of the Flinders Drama Centre students through this Professional Development Grant. Being involved in a cross cultural project will extend their skills and knowledge, and resonate in the students' careers and personal development for many years to come."

The Kijimuna Festival is a significant festival for the development of theatre for young audiences and attracts professional theatre companies from around the world. **The musical will be part of the Adelaide Festival Centre's Oz Asia Festival in September this year.**

Flinders University Drama Centre is a Helpmann Academy partner school.

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