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**For immediate release**

## **Bianca Kostic-London wins the \$10,000 Neil Curnow Award**

Flinders Drama Centre graduate Bianca Kostic-London has been presented with the 2009 Neil Curnow Award, to undertake study at the world-famous Stella Adler Studio of Acting in New York.

The Neil Curnow Award – valued at \$10,000 - is made possible through the generous bequest of the late Neil Curnow and is open to theatre graduates from the Flinders Drama Centre and TafeSA's Adelaide College of the Arts. The award allows the recipient to undertake further study interstate or overseas.

Graduating with a Bachelor of Creative Arts (Honours) in 2009, Bianca has relished the opportunity of playing women of various ages and ethnicities during her time at Flinders Drama Centre, including the Russian Ludmilla in Valentina Levkowicz's *Svetlana in Sling Backs*, the Irish protagonist in *Molly Sweeney* and the Spanish woman Serena in *The Body Project*. Bianca's producing credits include *Black Books* (2007) and video clips for *Lady, Legs and Lemonade* (2008). She also worked with Chantal Contouri and Luke Clayson on the development of Rosalba Clemente's new script, *Swimming to New York*, for the Vitalstatistix theatre company.

The Neil Curnow Award will enable Bianca to undertake eleven weeks of training at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting later this year. From June through to the end of August, Bianca will participate in both the Chekhov Intensive and the Shakespeare Intensive, offered as part of the studio's Summer Program. Founded in 1949, the Stella Adler Studio of Acting has trained thousands of actors, many of whom have gone on to establish successful careers in the theatre and film.

"Training in the classics of Shakespeare and Chekhov at a studio I admire and a technique that influences my work - in a city full of personality, culture and life - is going to be a sensational adventure," says Bianca. "But being supported in my venture by the Helpmann Academy, Flinders Drama Centre, family and friends means I am not the only one on this adventure and that makes it all the more exciting."

Born in country Victoria in 1925, Neil Curnow was a professional actor, speech and drama teacher, theatre director, playwright and dedicated exponent of the theatre arts. Trained in the UK and the United States, Neil was a passionate supporter of the performing arts and dedicated to excellence in all aspects of theatre production and performance.

The Neil Curnow Award is administrated by the Independent Arts Foundation, in collaboration with the Helpmann Academy and Arts SA.

**For further information contact Chris Bull, Helpmann Academy Marketing Manager, on (08) 8463 5015 or 0425 615 233**