



Digital innovator awarded Opera House arts scholarship

– 2016 Lloyd Martin Travelling Scholarship winner to explore the impact of digital disruption on arts & culture –

Sydney – Thursday 20 October, 2016. The Sydney Opera House today announced this year’s recipient of a scholarship to inspire the next generation of Australian arts leaders – putting a spotlight on the growing influence of digital innovation on arts and culture.

Claire Joachim, Social Media Specialist at the Opera House, is the third winner of the \$20,000 scholarship, which was established in 2013 to honour the memory of Lloyd Martin, the Opera House’s longest-serving general manager (1978-97), and is made possible by the generous support of the Martin family.

The scholarship will enable Claire to undertake a study tour to the US and UK focusing on how social media is influencing the way arts and cultural institutions communicate, program and operate.

Sydney Opera House CEO Louise Herron AM said: “Digital engagement is an increasingly critical area for all arts institutions. The recent *Songlines* Facebook livestream, which Claire initiated, underlines the scale of the opportunity presented by social media. The livestream received a million views in the first 12 hours, reached 6.8 million people overall and was our most successful piece of digital content.

“We aim to make the digital experience of the Opera House as bold and inspiring as the building itself. Since joining the team, Claire has made a significant contribution to this objective. So I’m thrilled that as a result of this scholarship she will see international best-practice in social media first-hand and then apply those insights to her role at the Opera House.”

Scholarship winner Claire Joachim said: “I am honoured to have been awarded this year’s scholarship and am so grateful to the Alexandra and Lloyd Martin Family Foundation and to the Opera House for their support. This opportunity for immersive research into social media innovation in a global context is hugely exciting.

“While social media is facilitating opportunities for co-creation, engagement and discussion, it’s also causing disruptive shifts in culture. It is challenging traditional platforms of influence and, in many ways, leading to a democratisation and reinterpretation of ‘art’ itself.

“Through digital platforms, everyone has the power to be an artist, influencer, critic or advocate. My research will examine the effects of this and how cultural institutions are responding through changes in policy, strategy and structure.”

The *Lloyd Martin Travelling Scholarship for Emerging Arts Leaders* is open to staff of the Opera House and its Resident Companies. The scholarship aims to foster the next generation arts leaders by giving them a chance to research international best practice at the point in their career when it is most beneficial.

Earlier this year, 2014 winner Carl Nilsson-Polias, Content Manager at Sydney Theatre Company, presented his findings on digital content at the 2016 Australia Council’s national marketing summit. The 2015 winner, Anke Timm, Opera Australia’s Community Partnerships Manager at the time, will also present the results of her study tour on innovation in the areas of accessibility and community-based partnerships in coming months.

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Sydney Opera House

The Opera House is a masterpiece that belongs to all Australians. It is the country's number one tourist destination and its busiest performing arts centre, welcoming more than 8.2 million visitors a year on site and hosting more than 2000 performances attended by more than 1.5 million people. Deloitte has estimated the total cultural and iconic value of the Sydney Opera House to Australia at \$4.6 billion. On its 40th Anniversary in 2013, the Opera House embarked upon a Decade of Renewal to prepare it for future generations of artists, audiences and visitors.

About the Lloyd Martin Travelling Scholarship

The Lloyd Martin Travelling Scholarship for Emerging Arts Leaders is an Opera House initiative to help the next generation of arts managers tackle the increasingly complex landscape facing cultural institutions in the 21st century. The AUD\$20,000 annual scholarship funds an overseas residency or study trip for a person in the early stages of their career. Fostering the next generation of talent is part of Lloyd Martin's legacy, and is integral to the Opera House's Decade of Renewal.