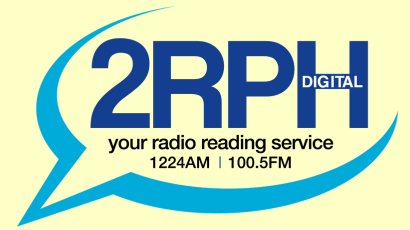


September 2021

SIGNALS



FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO LISTEN!



TELLING STORIES

The Queensland Premier's Drama Award is the richest prize for playwrights in the country, and 2RPH is proud to support it. We spoke to Queensland Theatre's Artistic Director Lee Lewis about the imaginative use of language - and just how important it is.

Lee Lewis is excited. Her sleek hair and tailored suits signal habitual calm in the face of crisis, but the animated eyes and quick-silver tongue indicate a leader who has been energised rather than cowed by the last two years of COVID shutdowns, financial challenges and programming reshuffles.

"We have to move forward as a country," she says speaking in bright, compelling sound-bites. "And I think our playwrights will lead us. There is nothing like the transformative power of a story well told. We need it now more than ever."

Currently the greatest challenge facing Lewis is the next production she is directing, *Return To the Dirt*, by Steve Pirie, the winner of the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2020-21. With entries for the 2022-23 round closing on September 3, Lewis is already calculating the

The winner of the 2022-23 award will receive:

\$30,000 cash prize from Prize Sponsor Griffith University

\$16,000 commission fee to develop their play throughout 2022-23

World Premiere production of their play as part of Queensland Theatre's 2023 Season

Program Spotlight

Science and Environment

presented by Paul Gashler



Like so many of our 2RPH volunteers, Paul Gashler has a very long memory. He can remember listening to the cricket on crystal set radios, the cobble stones on Glebe Point Road, being addicted to radio serial dramas like the ABC's Blue Hills long before the invention of podcasts, and the old Navy shipwrights' workshops down on Blackwattle Bay. And he remembers when editing was done on magnetic tape. "A lot has changed," he agrees amiably. "But I love the way 2RPH has evolved."

In his 18 odd years with the station as a reader (The Australian) and presenter, Paul has seen the diversity of the programming increase, and innovations such as digital editing and recording from home make it easier for presenters to become involved.

"I've met some amazing people," he says. "I had a wonderful mentor in the early days, Peter Collins. He was such a professional and he taught me so much. How to speed up and slow down, how to vary the tone when I was reading. And I'm a huge fan of Peter Worthington, our Technical Manager. He's so clever and well informed there isn't a faulty circuit he can't bring back to life!"

Paul spent 30 years in the Australian Navy and 15 more leading a consultancy company. After deciding to embrace a gentler work pace he began volunteering at 2RPH in the early 2000s, when he and his partner Lydia (who is an enthusiastic **Features**

Forum reader), were not travelling. Especially after the magazine **Cosmos** was launched in 2005.

"It was started to help everyone touched by science, including kids at school. I have loved working with **Science and Environment** ever since."

Paul spends a couple of hours every week researching. "It's fascinating what comes up - everything from the cows that eat plastic in India to the latest malaria vaccine and how to think without a brain."

"We rely on the scientific community's efforts to protect and conserve it, but the world is ours to look after," he adds. "Our First Nation people have it right. Humans are not the top of the tree. Country is everything. "

Paul, a new grandfather, also believes that the challenges we face in the future must be communicated to the next generation "in a way that is not frightening for the young ones."

"2RPH has a serious place in the community," he believes. "Our listeners don't want talk-back. They want content. As long as we are entertaining, then we really are the voice of the world for them."

You can listen to Science And Environment every Friday at 1.30pm and repeats on Mondays at 8.30pm.

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Telling Stories

QLD Drama Award

benefits of the next prize-winning play.

"The fact that the Queensland Government has backed this award from the beginning, and the Griffith University has come on board this year with a significant cash prize, affirms their belief in the future of theatre," she says. "It is one step towards stemming the artistic haemorrhage of the arts. We've lost so many artists because they just couldn't afford to keep going through the lockdowns. This award means a playwright can afford to feed their family."

The winning play is revealed after a rigorous two year process, honed over the past 20

*it's time to celebrate
our wordsmiths*

years, which begins with a group of ten to fifteen readers who look at every anonymous entry twice to create a long list of ten plays from over 200 submissions. A judging panel then meets to read the plays and interview the playwrights. Three plays are chosen to receive development support and funding to write a next draft. Following professional play readings of the finalists' works, the judges decide on a winner and that play is guaranteed a production by Queensland Theatre.

This is a huge boost to a playwrights' career trajectory, but it does place pressure on the company, even in times of plenty. Lewis is confident the knock-on effect is worth it.

"If we can excite one young person to imagine a career in the arts, or to write a play, then we are creating the next generation of storytellers. In 200 years, no one will have any idea who we were or where we've come from without them. Our writers are our national treasures."



The Holidays by David Megarrity (pic by Morgan Roberts), winner of the Queensland Premier's Drama Award 2018–19

Coming out of lockdown last year to direct the company's return to the stage with Mouthpiece by Kieran Hurley, Lee says she was moved to tears by the intensity of the experience and recalls "how quickly I had forgotten the magic of great performance. It was a relief to know how important it is and how much I needed it." "Literacy is a boring word," she continues, "but imaginative use of language helps in any profession. It's a professional skill. Not everyone can do it."

In fact, students who take a combination of arts subjects display a greater capacity for higher-ordered thinking skills such as analysing and problem-solving.

We should be focused on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics), not STEM," she says. "The Australian sports industry has done an incredible job celebrating the exceptionalism of its star performers over the past 20 years."

It's clearly time, Lewis believes, to develop a similar language around how we celebrate our artists.

"That's what the Queensland Premier's Drama Award is all about."



Lynne loves to draw and paint when she is not on radio

Lynne Foley-Jones started her media career working on iconic programs such as "Blinky Bill", "Mr Squiggle" and "Play School" at the former ABC-TV Gore Hill studios in the Children and Education division.

She went on to work in television production with SBS, Foxtel and Film Australia, before joining the community engagement team at a Sydney primary school. And yet for all these career highs, 2RPH Radio holds a special place in her heart.

"I was always a good reader," she explains, "and one day when I was in grade three the teacher asked me to get up and read the story of Louis Braille to the class. It really stuck with me. Ever since I've been very aware that my sight is a gift that some people don't have and I really want to share it with as many people as possible. I think that's why I've always loved voice work too. It really brings characters to life." At 2RPH she began as many do, by co-reading the news and went on to read magazines including Women's Weekly and Mind Food.

Presenter
Spotlight

Junior Journal

presented by Lynne Foley-Jones

Lynne is a classic 2RPH success story. She came to the station with exceptional skills and has enjoyed developing them with us.

"When I took on Junior Journal," she recalls, "it felt like I'd come full circle professionally."

The freedom to create her own content with the program has proved a particular joy which is reflected in the warm earthy manner of Junior Journal. Pitched at primary school aged children, it is never condescending or preachy. "I take my volunteering very seriously," she says with a twinkle in her eye. "But children love funny stories and let's face it they love fart jokes!"

"Each month I bring in a theme, like Bush Tucker or the Dreamtime. I have two short pieces that might be wild or random facts about wild animals or gemstones, a song or some other music, and then a reading from a popular storybook. At the moment it's A Wrinkle In Time." Lynne says that in future she will be moving away from traditional fairytales for a while because she wants to try modern stories with an Australian focus, and more indigenous awareness – "that's very important at the school where I work."

"The next book reading," she promises with a peal of laughter, "will be something a bit more naughty."

What It Means To Give

If you think 2RPH has been a sleepy little place during the Covid lockdowns you've got it wrong. As a community service we work even harder when you need us most. Which makes this the perfect time to give.

Julie Johnson took up the newly created position of Sales, Sponsorship & Fundraising Manager in August this year and she has plans that will certainly wake up anyone out there who doesn't already know what fabulous and vital work this station does.

"What drives me," she says energetically, "is making a difference, which sounds corny. But I see my role as being on the business end of community organisations. I'm the bridge that opens up the relationships, that channels the generosity of the community to where it's needed."

Julie says she "fell into fundraising" at the age of 21 when she learned that almost 400 babies a year were dying of SIDS. Thirty years ago, she was the first National Red Nose Day Campaign Manager and has since worked for organisations as varied as St John Ambulance, St Vincents Health Australia, Ronald McDonald House Newcastle, Bill Crews Charitable Trust, and The Salvation Army.

Clearly she has dedicated her life to the not-for-profit, social-change and philanthropic sector. But Julie relishes a work/life balance. "I also enjoy bushwalking, swimming, and spending time with family, friends – and Millie my dog!"

Julie is currently developing a Giving Program



Julie Johnson and her curly friend Millie give each other some love

for 2RPH that will incorporate high-level donors to underpin long term visionary strategies as well as the supporters who prefer single and regular contributions that fund the day-to-day operations of the station.

It's about "crafting the story about why we exist," she explains. "The people who listen to 2RPH come to us for the inclusivity, the diversity and the accessibility of the digital landscape.

"Our history as a station is a brilliant foundation, but it's what we do next that counts. People give to the future, not to the past, so I'm all about capacity building, priority projects and having purposeful goals. I think these really inspire people to give."

To that end she intends to build a strong culture of giving and create new pathways for philanthropic grants, partnerships, donations and bequests. With the station's 40th Anniversary celebrations looming in 2023, Julie also feels gratitude is a must.

"It's so important to say thank you. We are grateful to everyone who supports our small team and our 200 volunteers and our hundreds of thousands of listeners – and we want them to know it!"

Contact Julie to ask about giving at jjohnson@2rph.org.au

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!



Australian Paralympian Madison de Rozario embodies the spirit of 2RPH

More than ever we need to listen to one another. If you love the spoken word and would like to become more involved in the 2RPH listening community, why not volunteer? We are holding the next round of auditions for readers and presenters this September. Email info@2rph.org.au after reading the volunteer page on our website to let us know you'd like to join us. It's a win-win!

Sponsor Spotlight

Each month we feature one of our loyal 2RPH sponsors



The Christian Science Weekly Perspective.

Looking for an uplift? The Christian Science Weekly Perspective recently shared how a clearer sense of God's love as taught by Jesus was able to bring peace to a troubling situation. To hear more of these spiritual interludes to the daily news reporting in The Christian Science Monitor join us each Saturday at 7:30am.

<https://www.christianscience.org.au/christian-healing-today/>

Disability Confidence Training

The protocols around access and inclusivity have changed radically since 1990 when disability campaigners crawled up the steps of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, to draw support for a key bill pending in the House that would extend civil rights to disabled persons. Today many of us take for granted the wheelchair accessible buildings, public transport ramps, Aslan translators and braille plaques which have been integrated into public life. But the language around disability has also changed. While it's easy to see why terms such as "able-bodied" and "handicapped" are no longer acceptable, it's not always apparent what they should be replaced with.



One in five Australians live with disability, making them powerful market movers for providers of arts and culture. At 2RPH our listeners know we take the spoken word very seriously. So in late July, the 2RPH Board and several volunteers and staff members attended the **Disability Confidence Training Workshop** run by Liz Martin of **Accessible Arts**. The workshop focussed on helping the team improve how we connect with and support people with disability or who are d/Deaf. It covered key disability legislation, creative problem solving, language, etiquette, policy, customer service and how to identify and mitigate accessibility barriers. Liz Martin was impressed by the stimulating conversation which ended the session, and participants unanimously agreed they had thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

