

# Rob Guest ENDOWMENT

## FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE 2010 ROB GUEST ENDOWMENT

The six finalists have been announced for the 2010 **Rob Guest Endowment**. Created in recognition of the late Guest's achievements in the musical theatre industry following his sudden death in 2008, ANZ and ANZ Trustees have established a memorial fund in Guest's honour to encourage emerging young performers in musical theatre. **The ANZ Trustees Foundation: ANZ Rob Guest Endowment** will be awarded each year to an emerging musical theatre performer selected by a panel of industry experts. The Award will provide the emerging performer with further knowledge and training in the industry to develop their potential.

The six finalists selected are **Sarah Bakker, Simon Brook McLachlan, Francine Cain, Nathan Derrick, Bree Langridge,** and **Drew Weston**. They were selected from submissions across Australia and represent some of the most promising emerging musical theatre talents.

The six finalists will share the spotlight with a 'who's who' of Australian showbusiness at the **2010 Rob Guest Endowment Concert** on **Monday October 4** at **Her Majesty's Theatre** in Melbourne, competing to become the second winner of **The ANZ Trustees Foundation: ANZ Rob Guest Endowment Award**.

Hosted by Bert Newton, the concert will also feature performances from Australia's biggest music theatre stars, including:

- Lucy Durack and members of the cast of *WICKED*
- Rhonda Burchmore
- Cast members from *Mary Poppins*
- Amanda Harrison
- Matt Lee
- Chris Horsey
- Tom Burlinson
- Rachael Beck, Mandy Carnie and Danielle Barnes
- Danielle Matthews, Inaugural winner of the Rob Guest Endowment award

**Tickets are on sale now** at [www.ticketek.com.au](http://www.ticketek.com.au) and are priced at \$80 (Premium), \$60 (A Reserve) and \$30 (students).

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## BIOGRAPHIES

### SARAH BAKKER

Sarah trained in Brisbane from the age of 3 and at age 9 performed the role of Young Cosette in the Cameron Mackintosh 10th Anniversary production of *Les Miserables*. Sarah performed in the Asian and Australian tours of *The Phantom Of The Opera* from early 2007 to the end of 2008; originally as a dancer in the corps de ballet, then as an ensemble member covering the role of Christine Daae, which she performed numerous times. In 2009 Sarah joined the ensemble of *Chicago* for the Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne seasons, also covering the roles of Roxie, which she performed several times and Matron Mama Morton. Sarah also had the honour of being one of six finalists in the Inaugural Rob Guest Endowment. Sarah is currently performing as the Kite Girl in *Mary Poppins*, as well as understudying the title role, which she is thrilled to have already had the opportunity to perform.

### SIMON BROOK MCLACHLAN

Simon is a graduate of the NIDA Singer/Dancer/Actor Course, and also holds a B.Commerce from the University of Sydney. Currently appearing in *Jersey Boys*, Simon understudies the roles of Frankie Valli and Bob Gaudio. Previous theatre credits include Disney's *High School Musical*, *Hi-5*, *The Wiggles Dorothy's Dance Party USA Tour*, *VIN*, and *Godspell* for Lambert House Productions. Simon has also appeared in numerous television commercials, and most recently in Channel Seven's *The Pacific – Episode II*. Highly impressed by the quality and calibre of performances in the 2009 competition, Simon felt that 2010 would be his year to enter. It is wonderful that such a foundation has been established to foster and promote upcoming talent. Thrilled to be one of this year's finalists, Simon hopes that the Rob Guest Endowment will offer the experience, exposure, and training to assist in his next steps forward in his career.

### FRANCINE CAIN

Francine Cain graduated from WAAPA in 2009. At WAAPA Francine's roles included Maureen in *Rent*, Mary Phagan in *Parade*, Lorraine Flemming in *42nd St*, Alice B. Toklas in *Loving Repeating* and The Narrator and Rebecca Hilliker in *The Laramie Project*. Before attending WAAPA, Francine completed an Advanced Diploma in Music Theatre and Commercial Dance at the Australian Dance Performance Institute in Brisbane while receiving her Speech and Drama CDPA from AMEB. Francine also represented Australia at the international Folk Song and Dance Festival in China with The Fame Talent Agency. Francine feels so thankful & privileged to be a part of this year's Rob Guest Endowment.

### NATHAN DERRICK

Nathan started his professional career at the age of ten as Young Peter Allen in *The Boy from Oz* and then played Kurt in *The Sound of Music* for SEL & GFO. After High School Nathan had the privilege of working for Nickelodeon in the Pan-Pacific Tour of *Dora the Explorer: Dora's Pirate Adventure* and then played Jack Scott for

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## ENDOWMENT

Disney's production of *High School Musical: Live on Stage*. Nathan was also a featured soloist in two state school spectaculars, and sang with the Australian Male Welsh Choir as a soloist for their *Songs for Christmas and Beyond* CD, Nathan achieved a Lyrebird award for his performance as Gavroche in *Les Miserables*. Other performance credits include *The Nutcracker*, *Don Quixote* and *Swan Lake* for The Australian Ballet and Opera Australia's *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Little Sweep* and *Brundibar*. As an actor Nathan has appeared in the television shows *Rush*, *Neighbours* and *Bed of Roses* as well as numerous voiceovers. Nathan is thrilled and honoured to be a finalist for 2010's Rob Guest Endowment.

### **BREE LANGRIDGE**

Raised and Trained as a Dancer in Hobart, Bree relocated to Melbourne where she graduated from Musical Theatre at the Victorian College of the Arts. Since graduating, Bree has gone on to work across the board in Music Theatre, Dance, Cabaret and Children's Theatre. Recent credits include *Wicked*, *Down the Rabbit Hole*, the Australian Tours of *Lazy Town Live*, and *Yo Gabba Gabba Live Onstage*. She also produced her own Music Theatre piece in 2006 called *Inside Out*, playing in Melbourne and Hobart. Bree set up a Cabaret workshop called *New Sounds Project* in 2009 and has collaborated with national and international up-and-coming composers to explore and perform new work. In 2008 Bree resided in Japan for a year where she played Wendy in Universal Studio's version of *Peter Pan*.

### **DREW WESTON**

Drew Weston graduated from WAAPA in 2009 and made his professional debut playing the role of Curly in the IAJ International production of *Oklahoma!* While studying at WAAPA Drew performed the roles of Britt Craig in *Parade*, Bert in *42nd street*, Steve in *Rent* and Guy in the Australian premiere of *Loving Repeating*. Other productions include *Jane Eyre*, *The Laramie Project*, *Oklahoma!* and *Tales from Ovid*. Drew was born and raised in Melbourne and trained with the Young Australian Broadway Chorus (YABC). He also features on the original cast recording of *The Silver Donkey* by Matthew Frank and Dean Bryant. Currently Drew is performing in the ensemble of the Australian production of *Mary Poppins* and understudying the role of Bert.



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