

For immediate release

6.45pm, 13 November 2025

Melbourne's top music prize winners revealed

- Acclaimed singer-songwriter **Shane Howard AM** wins the \$60,000 Melbourne Prize for Music 2025
- Runner-up finalists honoured
- **Deborah Conway AM** wins the Civic Choice Award 2025
- Melbourne Prize celebrates record number of entries received this year
- Total prize pool valued at over \$90,000 – visit www.melbourneprize.org
- Winners in other categories announced

Melbourne's vibrant music scene reached a crescendo today with the announcement of the winners of the **Melbourne Prize for Music 2025 & Awards**, one of Australia's most prestigious and valuable music awards.

SHANE HOWARD AM, acclaimed singer-songwriter, has been awarded the **\$60,000 MELBOURNE PRIZE FOR MUSIC 2025** for his body of work and outstanding contribution to Australian music and cultural life. This award is proudly supported by **Major Patron The Vera Moore Foundation** and **The Tallis Foundation**.

Congratulations to the runner-up finalists **DEBORAH CONWAY AM** singer, songwriter and guitarist, **NICOLETTE FRAILLON AM** conductor and **EMMA DONOVAN** singer and songwriter. All finalists in the Melbourne Prize for Music 2025 will receive \$1,000 each, **supported by Fed Square**.

VANESSA PERICA, composer, arranger and conductor, has been awarded the **\$20,000 BELEURA JOHN TALLIS AWARD FOR EMERGING COMPOSERS 2025** awarded to an emerging Victorian composer to support their career development. **Supported by The Tallis Foundation, in memory of John Tallis (1911-1996)**.

CHARLOTTE MILES, cellist, receives the **\$10,000 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD 2025** awarded to a Victorian musician or group, including performers and composers, to fund project/s, travel or other proposals to assist with their music career. **Supported by Dr Alastair Jackson AM**.

ISOBEL CALDWELL, singer and songwriter and **CAROLYN SCHOFIELD**, synthesist and composer win the **FALLS CREEK MUSICIANS' RESIDENCIES 2025**, offering two 14-day residencies in Victoria's High Country, plus \$1,000 each, **supported by the Melbourne Prize Trust**.

DEBORAH CONWAY AM wins the **\$2,000 CIVIC CHOICE AWARD 2025** awarded to the finalist in the Melbourne Prize for Music 2025 with the highest number of public votes.

This year's judging panel includes three respected figures in the Australian music sector – singer, songwriter, and former Melbourne Prize for Music recipient **Missy Higgins**, conductor **Benjamin Northey** and musician and arts advocate **Genevieve Lacey**.

Judge's statement: *The applications for the Melbourne Prize for Music 2025 form a collection of profound commitment, expression, and contribution to music in Australia. From those who have given a lifetime to their art form, through to those just beginning their journey in music, one thing is obvious, that Victoria is enriched by an absolutely incredible community of musicians and creative artists. It was a deeply moving experience to read all of the applications. Selecting recipients for prizes was no easy task, as there were many deserving submissions. We would like to congratulate all artists who have expressed interest in the annual Melbourne Prize this year, your work is seen, valued and deeply appreciated. These awards are testament to the remarkable ecosystem of music in Victoria, thanks to the many personal and public investments in music education, access and participation, over decades. Let's individually and collectively continue to prioritise, participate in and support music. And to all those musicians who applied, please continue with your music, continue to express your creativity, and continue to change the world through music.*

A Finalist Exhibit for the 2025 prize has been on display at the main stairs at Fed Square since 30 October.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which the Melbourne Prize Trust operates, the People of the Kulin Nation, and pay our respects to the elders, past, present and future.

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Melbourne Prize Trust Founder and Executive Director, Simon Warrender, said: *We have had a record number of entrants this year and I want to thank all entrants and finalists and congratulate the category recipients. This year has been made possible by the generosity of all our partners and patrons – thank you one and all.*

Minister for Creative Industries, Colin Brooks said: *Melbourne is the cultural capital of the nation, and we are proud to support the Melbourne Prize for Music & Awards, honouring Victorian musicians who have made an extraordinary contribution to our music culture.*

Melbourne Lord Mayor, Nicholas Reece said: *The City of Melbourne congratulates the finalists and winners of this year's Melbourne Prize for Music. Tonight, in the music capital of Australia, we celebrate the music community and its contribution to the cultural fabric of our great city. I would also like to acknowledge the judges - what an amazing and difficult job it must have been!*

- ENDS -

For more information or for interview opportunities contact Adi Stevens at Royce on 0407 411 088.

Notes to the editor:

The [Melbourne Prize Trust](#) was established in 2005 to recognise and reward talent, excellence and inspire creative development. The Trust achieves this by running the annual Melbourne Prize, which is funded by private and public sector partnerships and patrons. The Melbourne Prize Trust and annual Melbourne Prize were founded by Executive Director, Simon Warrender OAM. [Committee for Melbourne](#) is a founding partner.

In its 21st year and being one of the most valuable arts prizes of its kind in Australia, the annual Melbourne Prize operates in a three-year cycle, including the Melbourne Prize for Music & Awards (2025), Melbourne Prize for Urban Sculpture & Awards (2026) and the Melbourne Prize for Literature & Awards (2027).

Since inception, the annual Melbourne Prize has made available more than \$2.5 million in prizes, residencies, equipment grants and an annual public exhibition at Fed Square to Victorian writers, sculptors and musicians.

The origins of the Melbourne Prize date back to *The Magic Pudding* sculpture commission and CBD-based children's garden concept at the [Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne](#) – an initiative of Simon Warrender implemented in 1998 through Committee for Melbourne's Future Focus Group.

Thank you to our Partners and Patrons:

The Vera Moore Foundation is acknowledged and thanked for their most generous support as Major Patron and key partner of the Melbourne Prize for Music 2025 & Awards, along with [The Tallis Foundation](#).

The Tallis Foundation are the patrons of the Beleura John Tallis Award for Emerging Composers.

We acknowledge and thank **Dr Alastair Jackson AM** as the patron of the Professional Development Award 2025 and [Falls Creek Alpine Resort](#) for supporting the new Falls Creek Musicians' Residencies.

Fed Square is the Finalist Fee and Foundation Events Partner and 'home' of the annual Melbourne Prize. Their generous support from inception is greatly appreciated.

The Melbourne Prize Trust is proud to have the **Victorian Government**, through [Creative Victoria](#) and the [City of Melbourne](#) **multi-year grant funding**, as Government Partners.

Thank you to our Founding Partners [Playground Studio](#), [Committee for Melbourne](#), [MinterEllison](#) and [EY](#).

The visual identity and design for this year's Prize is the creation of leading Melbourne design studio and Founding & Creative Identity Partner, [Playground](#). Thank you to CEO Sally Dobell, studio manager Kim Hankin, this year's designer Angelina Bassovitch, in conjunction with Macario Manis and Holly Chen, and the studio team one and all for the generous partnership and for providing the head office of the Trust.

Thank you to this year's patrons **Diana Gibson AO**, **The Yulgilbar Foundation**, **Bill Kirk & Janine Kirk AO**, **Lindy M Shelmerdine** and **David K H Moffatt**, the **Sidney Myer Fund** and **The Scanlon Foundation**.

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Thank you to Corporate Partners [Sofitel Melbourne On Collins](#), *the Hotel for the Arts*.

Thank you [Grant Thornton](#) and [Jamison Alliott](#) for professional services. Many thanks to [Kine Graffiti](#) for the videography for the finalist interview and event photography. Thank you to [360Q](#) as our catering partner and [Evan Evans](#) for providing the exhibition banners and signage.

Thank you to [The Mighty Wonton](#) for our IT support and website development and [Royce](#) for media services. Thank you to our Print Partners [Ellikon](#), [Spicers](#) and [Rothfield](#) and [Nyora Studio Gallery](#) for hand-crafting the presentation trophy this year.

The Melbourne Prize Trust is proud to have [Kutcha Edwards](#) as its Cultural Advisor.

All announcements and further information will be available at www.melbourneprize.org

Past recipients - Melbourne Prize for Music & Awards

Melbourne Prize for Music

2022 Missy Higgins
2019 Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO
2016 Kutcha Edwards
2013 Brett Dean
2010 David Jones
2007 Professor Paul Grabowsky AO

Outstanding Musicians Award

2016 Scott Tinkler
2013 Stephen Magnusson
2010 Ben Northey
2007 Genevieve Lacey

Development Award

2022 Jess Hitchcock
2019 Mojo Juju
2016 Matthias Schack-Arnott
2013 Kate Kelsey-Sugg
2010 Natalie Bartsch
2007 Julian Langdon

Belgrave Emerging Composers Award

2022 Annie Hui-Hsin Hsieh
2019 Andrea Keller
2016 Kate Neal

Distinguished Musicians Fellowship

2019 - Erkki Veltheim

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Thank you to our 2025 partners and patrons

Major Patron	Government Partners	Event and Finalist Fee Partner	Melbourne Prize for Music 2025 Partners	The Beleura John Tallis Award for Emerging Composers 2025	Professional Development Award 2025	Falls Creek Musicians Residencies 2025 Partner
	  		 		Dr Alastair Jackson AM	
Patrons	Founding Partners	Professional Services	Hotel Partner	Media Communications	Trophies	Print Partners
Diana Gibson AO 	 	 				
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