

2018 IGNITING IMAGINATION AMBASSADORS



Brandon Lee

Brandon Lee is a Japanese koto (zither) performer based in Melbourne, Australia. Originally from Malaysia, he started the koto while attending university in Melbourne. He eventually moved to Japan and was a live-in apprentice for koto virtuoso Kazue Sawai in Tokyo. In 2011, he officially obtained his teaching and performance license from the Sawai Koto School. In 2014, he graduated with a Masters of Music from Monash University.

Since moving back to Melbourne, Brandon has actively performed all around Australia, including Melbourne, Sydney, and Broome. He has performed at events and festivals such as, *NGV's Cool Japan*, *Broome's Shinju Matsuri*, and more. He has also performed internationally in Japan and America.

Brandon performs both classical and contemporary for the koto but he is also interested in cross cultural collaboration in music and has worked with musicians like Peter Knight, Andrea Keeble, and Sandy Evans. He is currently part of the project Koto Transformation that is set to premier in Singapore and the Philippines later this year.



Carolina Cordeiro

Carolina Cordeiro is a Melbourne based singer performing haunting songs of love, longing and tragedy in the Fado tradition of Lisbon, Portugal. Delivering in an intimate, emotional style and accompanied by Leni Phillippe Janon on Portuguese guitar, their mournful songs will cloak you in an intoxicating melancholy. They say in Lisbon, if no one cries when you sing Fado then you should have stayed home.

Carolina Cordeiro was born on the deck of a Portuguese caravel and descends from a long line of singing gardeners. Tragically abandoned in Melbourne by a travelling albatross, she now performs haunting songs of love, longing and tragedy in the Fado tradition of Lisbon, Portugal.



Janette Hoe

Janette Hoe is a Melbourne-based dance artist, performance maker and collaborator. Her practice is informed by somatic, movement-based improvisation practices with a focus evolving from the tradition of Butoh. Her work engages in a vigorous cultural discourse, often exploring themes of 'home' and 'loss' drawn from her Malaysian-Chinese/Indonesian ancestry. This has led to numerous visually evocative, site-responsive performances in indoor and outdoor non-theatre settings across

Australia and South East Asia. Her performances invite audiences into landscapes where fragments of memory, lived experiences and imagination meet.

Janette was awarded a Master of Fine Arts (Dance) by Research from the Victorian College of the Arts. Her research examined cultural and geographical aspects of human being, and how particularities of place(s) and communities are implicated in creative practice. She was also the recipient of an Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship.

Selected highlights as a choreographer and performer include The Echoes Project (Mapping Melbourne, 2017), Under a Willow (Castlemaine State Festival, 2017), Seven-ness (MPavilion, 2016), Colour of Silence ('Melbourne Now' NGV 2014), White Moth (Malaysia and Indonesia, 2014) and tonglen* (MCA, Sydney 2013).

Janette was nominated 'Dancer to Watch' for her works No Candles Please (2006) and her MFA live performance moths are calling (2014) by the Dance Australia Critics Survey.



Leona Kakima

Leona Kakima is originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo in the heart of Africa, in the country of Soukous (DRC). In his homeland Lubumbashi they call him, 'Golden Star (Nyota)'. He plays Congolese and Pan African contemporary dance music. His music is influenced by and is originated out of the oppression experienced through the history of sace trade. He is a dancer, singer and an all round performer.

He comes from a family of singers and performed early on in the famous regional group 'Bana Shaba', founded by Kot Wan Mutomb sponsored by the President of the Republic, Mobutu Sese Seko. After migrating to Australia, he played in the well-known Mebourne band, Musiki Manjaro .



Puya Mehman Pazir

Born in Shiraz (Iran) in the year 1977, Puya showed an interest in music from early childhood and soon embarked on playing the Setar. Progressively improving his techniques and knowledge in traditional Iranian musical modal systems, at the age of fifteen he commenced professional training under the supervision of music masters such as Master Behnam Vadani on Setar, simultaneously brushing up on techniques on the Tar under supervision of Master Mohammad Reza

Ebrahimi.

At the age of twenty-two Puya gained entrance to the prestigious Art University of Tehran. During the process of his tertiary education Puya obtained valuable knowledge about instrument techniques from masters such as Behnam Vadani, Mohamad Reza Ebrahimi, Darioush Talai, Keivan Saket and Mehrbanu Tofiq, and the theory of music, solfeggio, and composition from Hoseyn Dehlavi, Sharif Lotfi, Amir Eslami and Siavash Beyzai.

In the year 2000 Puya began performing with the Sepidar and Art University Ensembles as well as the Austrian cultural consulate choir, performing in a number of noteworthy concerts in renowned venues throughout Iran.

Having established the Mehr ensemble in Tehran and after migrating to Australia in 2006, Puya continued his musical activities with relevant members in Melbourne. Today his primary focus remains creating compositions of a unique nature.