

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

Creating Belonging Through Storytelling



PRESENTED BY MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA AND QPAC

THURSDAY 16 NOVEMBER | CONCERT HALL, QPAC



25 years creating welcome
and belonging



WELCOME FROM QPAC



Storytelling is at the heart of all that we do at QPAC. Whether it be through song, dance, theatre, spoken word or comedy, we love sharing stories and believe that's where the power of live performance lies.

It's the stories shared on our stages that provide the real point of connection, of belonging and meaning and this last in our 2023 *Changing the Conversation* series allows us to linger on this notion for a moment.

What is it about another person's story that helps us understand them more, that allows us to connect in a meaningful way? We're very grateful to our esteemed panel for their willingness to share their own stories, for helping others to articulate their lived experiences and for helping us understand the power of storytelling.

A celebrated soprano, a philosopher and community advocate, and a storytelling consultant (what a delightful title) – who better to spend the evening chatting with about belonging, community and how to change the conversation for the better through stories.

Thank you once again to our partners Multicultural Australia for collaborating with us to present this engaging and meaningful conversation series.

John Kotzas, AM
Chief Executive, QPAC

WELCOME FROM MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA



Welcome to *Creating Belonging Through Storytelling*, the final *Changing the Conversation* event of 2023, delivered in partnership with the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

The *Changing the Conversation* series has been a tremendous success in its inaugural year. We started 2023 with a thought-provoking conversation about the fundamental importance of Indigenous culture in Australia and the need for A First Nations Voice to Parliament. We then moved on to stimulating conversations about Cultural and Human Rights in the Digital Age

and explored how we can engage in Brave Conversations About Multiculturalism.

Multicultural Australia has been proud to partner with QPAC on the *Changing the Conversation* series – providing a space for diverse voices from across our community to share their wisdom and perspectives on some of the important questions that are being asked by all Australians.

I am truly thankful for QPAC's unwavering support and partnership on what has been an impactful journey of learning, creativity and connection to community.

Tonight's conversation will be an exciting and stimulating exploration of the importance of storytelling in shaping who we are as a community and as individuals living in an increasingly diverse, interconnected and complex world.

The stories that we tell about ourselves and the stories that others tell about us play an important role in shaping our understanding of ourselves and each other. The power of storytelling comes from its ability to preserve culture and create a sense of identity and belonging. It also serves to build bridges, educate and ultimately to build community by bringing people together.

The power of storytelling means that we must tell stories ethically, wisely and with cultural sensitivity, ensuring that we do not cause harm to others, and share stories in ways that respect the rights and dignity of all individuals, cultures and communities.

Thank you for joining us tonight. We hope that the stories and thoughts that you hear will prompt within you a curiosity and passion to explore your own stories and those of others around you, and to have a continuing conversation about how we can all create belonging through storytelling.

We look forward to seeing you at our 2024 *Changing the Conversation* series.

Warm regards,
Christine Castley
CEO, Multicultural Australia

DIGITAL STAGE

Did you miss previous
***Changing the
Conversation***
events?

Watch on Digital Stage



made possible by QPAC

ABOUT THE PANELLISTS



Michelle Law (Facilitator)

Michelle Law is a writer and actor – working in print, screen, and stage – currently based on Gadigal Land. Her works include the plays, *Single Asian Female* (La Boite Theatre Company), *Top Coat* (Sydney Theatre Company), and *Miss Peony* (Belvoir St Theatre); the television shows *Homecoming Queens* (SBS) and *Safe Home* (SBS); and the book *Asian Girls are Going Places* (Hardie Grant). Her awards include two Australian Writers Guild Awards, the Queensland Premier's Young Publishers and Writers Award, and the Arts & Culture 40 Under 40 Awards, which celebrates the country's most influential Asian Australians. Michelle is also a widely published freelance author and a prolific speaker who regularly appears on panels and at festivals.



Heru Pinkasova

Papua New Guinean-Australian soprano Heru Pinkasova weaves her stories through reimagined Papuan folk songs, en route the classical canon to create soulful operatic cabaret.

Following celebrated performances in *Three Marys*, an opera by Andree Greenwell, *The Beginning of Nature* (ADT), *Hot Brown Honey*, *Showboat* and *Songs My Aunties Taught Me*, Heru has lovingly curated a collection of melodies that are part opera, tradition and comedy, and one hundred percent remarkable.

In addition to providing insights on the *Changing the Conversation* panel, Heru will deliver a special performance to conclude this year's series.



Omid Tofighian

Omid Tofighian is an award-winning lecturer, researcher and community advocate, combining philosophy with interests in citizen media, popular culture, displacement and discrimination.

His publications include *Myth and Philosophy in Platonic Dialogues* (Palgrave 2016); the translation of Behrouz Boochani's multi-award-winning autobiographical novel, *No Friend but the Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison* (Picador 2018); co-editor of special issues for journals *Literature and Aesthetics* (2011), *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media* (2019) and *Southerly* (2021); and co-translator/co-editor of *Freedom, Only Freedom: The Prison Writings of Behrouz Boochani* (Bloomsbury 2023).



Dung Tran

Dung Tran is a lived experience anti-racism Story Telling mentor, educator and advocate, and Co-Founder of Our Race – a social enterprise made of story holders, practitioners and researchers who educate and advocate for ethical storytelling.

Growing up in Ipswich during the 80s and 90s, where she witnessed and experienced racism regularly, instilled in Dung a strong sense of social and racial justice.

Dung has used her lived experience as one of her greatest strengths, as both a driver to fight for justice and to encourage others to value lived experience as the highest form of expertise.

QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

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Ms Clare O'Connor

We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors of this land, their spirits and their legacy. The foundations laid by these ancestors – our First Nations Peoples – gives strength, inspiration and courage to current and future generations, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, towards creating a better Queensland.

QPAC warmly thanks our key donors who help us engage broadly across the state and continue enriching lives through performing arts.

Tim Fairfax AC and Gina Fairfax AC, Dr Lee and Professor Peter Coaldrake AO, Leigh Tabrett PSM, Susan Rix AM, Dr Sally Pitkin AO, Dare Power, Dr Cathryn Mittelheuser AM, Queensland Community Foundation, de Groots Charitable Fund, Sandi Hoskins, Klaus Beckmann, Barbara Snelling, Jill Hutchins, Leigh Wheeler, Joachim and Paula Erpf, Frank and Karen Alpert, Alison Iverach, Jenny Morton, John Ryan, Margaret Heggie, Natalie Nelson, Ben Castleton, Meg Bock, Anthony Wade-Cooper and several donors who wish to remain anonymous.

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ABOUT THE CHANGING THE CONVERSATION SERIES

Multicultural Australia in partnership with QPAC is excited to be hosting *Changing the Conversation*, a series of thought-provoking discussions exploring key issues in our increasingly multicultural society. Bringing together thought leaders from academia, government, business, and the community to engage in robust discussions about multiculturalism in the Australian context, the series explores issues of who and where we are as a nation and what we need to do to create a society that better reflects and cares for all its people. The *Changing the Conversation* series forms part of QPAC and Multicultural Australia's Connecting Through the Arts initiative which aims to connect and engage with multicultural communities, offering opportunities for greater participation in the performing arts.

Sign up at **QPAC.COM.AU** for upcoming
Changing the Conversation announcements!

ABOUT MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA



For more information about
Multicultural Australia visit
multiculturalaustralia.org.au

Since 1998, Multicultural Australia has worked to create welcome and belonging in Queensland. Our clients and community are at the heart of everything we do, and we are passionate about providing client-centred and culturally informed care and support to meet the unique needs of individuals and communities.

We have welcomed tens of thousands of individuals from refugee, asylum seeker, international student, and migrant backgrounds in Queensland – with the goal of creating a more equitable and prosperous society.