

The Secret History of Queensland

Live music, Live drawing, History coming to Life.



The Secret History of Queensland is a performance that uses storytelling, songs and live sand-painting to show you a Queensland you haven't seen before.

www.secrethistory.com.au

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Company Profile - *Wish List Productions*

The Secret History of Queensland is brought to you by *Wish List Productions*, a Brisbane-based collaboration between musicians Emma Nixon and Nicole Murray. They are joined by cellist, Rebecca Wright.

The Secret History of Queensland is presented by three extraordinarily experienced teachers and performers. The amazing art of fiddlesinging is the focus of this collaboration between Scottish fiddler and Golden Fiddle Award winner, Emma Nixon, internationally renowned singer from Cloudstreet, Nicole Murray, and acclaimed singer and songwriter, Rebecca Wright. Their gorgeous harmony singing, accompanied by fiddle, viola and cello, brings Scottish and Australian repertoire vividly to life.



Emma Nixon

Winner of three Golden Fiddle Awards in both teaching and playing categories, Emma Nixon is a star of the Australian fiddle scene, her powerful and passionate performances of traditional and contemporary Scottish music

enchancing audiences across Australia and around the world.

A registered teacher, Emma is passionate about music education. She has taught classroom music and string instrumental music for over 20 years. Emma is also interested in community music making. She established and directs the Brisbane Celtic Fiddle Club, teaches Scottish fiddle classes at workshops and summer schools in Australia and the UK.

Emma was the joint recipient of the 2013 National Folk Fellowship, awarded by the National Library of Australia and the National Folk Festival. She researched Scottish music in Australia in the Library's manuscript and oral history collections. Based on this research, Emma has recorded a CD, compiled a tune book and presented papers at national and international conferences.

Emma has completed a Master of Music in Folk and Traditional Music at Newcastle University (UK). She is currently undertaking a PhD in Australia, researching methods of dissemination of traditional Scottish fiddling.

Emma is in demand as a Scottish dance fiddler in Australia & New Zealand, playing for Scottish Country Dance classes, socials and balls, as well as for Scottish ceilidh dances.



Nicole Murray

Nicole Murray is a Queensland-based singer, multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, international performer, choir director and visual artist.

She has toured in ten countries since 2003, and made seven albums with John Thompson as the award-winning folk duo, *Cloudstreet*, specialising in

harmony vocals, with Irish flute, fiddle and percussion, matching John on concertina and guitar.

Nicole has taught Traditional Singing annually for five years, at the week-long Celtic summer school, *Music Under the Southern Cross*, in Victoria. Her passion for community music-making led her to found the *Maleny Tunes Class* in 2007, where she taught weekly Irish tunes for three years. Members of the tunes class have graduated to play in the *Maleny Ceili Band* for community dances. In 2013 she founded *The Folk Choir* in Brisbane, which she continues to direct, and since 2010 she has directed *Morningsong Choir*. Nicole is a qualified teacher and teaches preschool music classes with *Rhapsodaisy*.

She co-founded in 2008, co-ordinates and teaches at the *Maleny Celtic Winter School* every June, an intense weekend of Celtic music workshops, concert, sessions and dance.

She was the Musical Director for the *Woodford Folk Festival* Closing Ceremony Fire Event in 2010, coordinating the music to accompany the live fire show before an audience of 16 000 people.

Her songs have been used by choirs and she was nominated for a QMusic award for "*The Wooden Spoon*".

She is currently recording and performing nationally with Emma Nixon in the fiddle and vocal duo, *The Wish List*.

In 2013, she toured with Musica Viva in Schools, with the Irish ensemble, *Fada*. and exhibited internationally as a painter, showing portraits and presenting a paper at the North Atlantic Fiddle Convention in Northern Ireland.



Rebecca Wright

Winner of the Declan Affley Award for Emerging Talent at the National Folk Festival in Canberra at the age of 18, Rebecca has spent the past 15 years performing on stages both in Australia and internationally. She is well known on the Australian folk festival circuit not only for her inspiring solo performances as

a singer/songwriter/guitarist, but increasingly as guest cellosinger with a range of notable Australian artists including *Cloudstreet*, *The Wish List*, Fred Smith, Mark Cryle and Judy Small.

In 2008, she was invited to tour the UK with Australian duo, *Cloudstreet*. Whilst on this tour she met her now husband, Scots singer Donald McKay, and spent the following 3 years immersed in traditional Scottish music and culture whilst living with him west of Glasgow. During this time Rebecca also attended a number of residential music camps focused on traditional Scottish fiddle and cello music, and studied under various tutors including Natalie Haas, Christine Hanson and Seylan Baxter.

In 2010, Rebecca spent seven months touring Europe with seven-piece folk rock band, *The Wishing Well*, a tour which saw her both busking on the streets by day and performing at internationally acclaimed festivals, including the Montreux Jazz Festival, by night.

Rebecca is also a gentle and confident facilitator, having trained under community choir director, Brian Martin. She is a regular guest facilitator of *The Folk Choir* and *Morningsong Choir*, both based in Brisbane.

Rebecca has independently released two albums and two EPs, and has appeared on countless other recordings, providing both cello and vocal harmonies.

When not on tour, Rebecca works for the Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) as an Administrative Assistant and Examinations Supervisor.

ABOUT THE SHOW

SHOW SYNOPSIS

The Secret History of Queensland was developed in response to an invitation from the State Library of Queensland to prepare a creative musical performance for Queensland Week 2013, researched from the collections of the library. The show is a presentation of songs and stories about Queensland history. These compelling tales of the past are delivered through music, song and stories, all illustrated by live sand-painting, digitally projected for audiences of all sizes and ages. The show can be performed as a theatre presentation or as an interactive, child-centred school performance.

The history of our place is carried in the personal histories of the people who live here. Using this premise, Emma Nixon and Nicole Murray began with stories gleaned from their own Queensland families, and built on these authentic experiences with research in the State Library of Queensland to construct an entertaining and educational show.

Queensland's history is rich and varied. Every person has their own stories of connection to Queensland that weave together to form a rich cultural and historic tapestry. Exploration of stories from within Emma and Nicole's own families have led to tales of Queensland pirates, convicts, bushrangers, immigrants, pioneers, and true experiences of living in this state of extremes.

Nicole, Emma and Rebecca present these intriguing stories with an equally fascinating instrumentation: they are highly accomplished musicians who accompany their singing with violin, viola and cello, a skill known as "fiddlesinging".

In *The Secret History of Queensland*

performance, Nicole also creates a stunning series of illustrations by drawing on a lightbox with sand to create images of sailing ships, historic houses, convicts, horses and riders, cleverly constructing the next image out of the remains of the last. The lightbox images are projected onto a screen for the audience to see.



PERFORMANCE SPECIFICS

DURATION

The Secret History of Queensland is performed as a single 80-90 minute performance, without interval. In a school setting, the performance is generally 60 minutes.

SUITABLE VENUES

The show is designed as a theatre presentation or interactive school performance. The show can be presented in more informal settings but is not suitable for outdoor performance. Digital projection of the sand-painting images is a central part of the performance and so the venue needs to be able to accommodate this.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES PER WEEK

The maximum number of performances per week is negotiable. The company is able to perform a school performance and theatre performance on the same day, or two school shows on one day.

MINIMUM BREAK BETWEEN PERFORMANCES

90 minutes

TOURING PERSONNEL

The touring party consists of 3 people.

Name	Role
Emma Nixon	Performer
Nicole Murray	Performer
Rebecca Wright	Performer

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Originally performed for Queensland Week celebrations at the State Library of Queensland, *The Secret History of Queensland* has been performed at venues and schools around South-East Queensland since mid-2013.

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

All three performers involved in *The Secret History of Queensland* are experienced workshop presenters. A range of workshop possibilities are available.

They include instrument-playing workshops for violin players such as *Scottish Fiddle Playing* (Emma Nixon), *Sing With Your Fiddle: An Introduction to Fiddle-Singing* (Nicole Murray and Emma Nixon) and *Draw Your Story* on the use of illustration with sand-painting as an example.

DESCRIPTION / DETAILS

Generally, workshops will involve limited equipment. Ideally, projection facilities would be required for the *Draw Your Story* workshop.

COST

A one-off fee of \$500 would be charged for each workshop.

TARGET AUDIENCE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Workshops based around fiddle-playing are of course aimed at violin players. They can be of any experience level.

Emma's workshop on Scottish Fiddle will involve information about stylistic approach, decoration and learning tunes by ear.

An introduction to Fiddle-Singing is aimed at violin or other strings players who wish to incorporate singing into their musical performance.

Draw Your Story is aimed at high-school students or a general audience. Sand-box projections will be used to demonstrate basic illustration techniques. As many participants as possible will have an opportunity to try the sandbox, while general techniques will be taught using broad-tipped markers on paper.

MARKETING

MARKETING COPY

One line:

The Secret History of Queensland: Live music, Live drawing, History coming to life.

Short:

The Secret History of Queensland. Compelling tales of the past are delivered through music, song and stories, all illustrated by live sand-painting. With Nicole Murray (vocals, fiddle, viola), Emma Nixon (vocals, fiddle, viola), and Rebecca Wright (vocals, cello). Live music - live drawing – history coming to life.

Extended

Queensland's history is rich and varied. Every person has their own stories of connection to Queensland that weave together to form a rich cultural and historic tapestry. Exploration of stories from within Emma and Nicole's own families have led to tales of Queensland pirates, convicts, bushrangers, immigrants, pioneers, and true experiences of living in this state of extremes.

Developed in response to an invitation from the State Library of Queensland for Queensland Week 2013, *The Secret History of Queensland* is a presentation of songs and stories about Queensland history. These compelling tales of the past are delivered through music, song and stories, all illustrated by live sand-painting, digitally projected for audiences of all sizes and ages. The show can be performed as a theatre presentation or as an interactive, child-centred school performance.

The history of our place is carried in the personal histories of the people who live here. Using this premise, Emma Nixon and Nicole Murray began with stories gleaned from their own Queensland families, and built on these authentic experiences, presenting these intriguing stories with an equally fascinating instrumentation: they are highly accomplished musicians who accompany their singing with violin, viola and cello, a skill known as "fiddlesinging".

The songs & stories of *The Secret History of Queensland* performance, are illustrated by the live creation of a stunning series of illustrations by sand-drawing on a lightbox, with images of sailing ships, historic houses, convicts, horses and riders, cleverly constructing the next image out of the remains of the last.

MARKETING MATERIALS

Flyers and posters can be provided, either in template or completed JPG or pdf format.

TEACHER'S RESOURCES

The following teaching resources are available:

The Secret History EP

Four fantastic songs from the show. This is lovely listening and also a great teaching resource.

The Secret History Teacher Resource Pack

The Pack includes:

- Rationale and Objectives
- Class activities for P-7 classes in History, Music and Visual Arts
- The Secret History EP

A copy of this pack will be sent to schools on booking of the Secret History of Queensland performance to assist in preparing students for the show.

***Drummond Castle* Ensemble Arrangement**

A String Ensemble arrangement of *Drummond Castle* (included in the show) appropriate for mixed level Primary school string orchestra. Score, parts, information and CD included.

***Stool of Repentance* Ensemble Arrangement**

A String Ensemble arrangement of *Stool of Repentance* (included in the show) appropriate for mixed level Primary school string orchestra. Score, parts, information and CD included.

PRODUCTION DETAILS

For Schools

The *Secret History of Queensland* is an interactive show with child-centred learning activities. It is a cross-curriculum presentation with links to the Australian History Curriculum and the draft Australian Curriculum for The Arts, particularly Music and Visual Arts.

Requirements

- The performance is one hour.
- We require an indoor space, preferably one that can be darkened enough for the audience to see the projected images of the sand drawings.
- Unfortunately, an outdoor space does not allow for the projection of the sand drawings. For schools that only have an outdoor space, the show will be modified so that there is no live artwork. All storytelling, musical performance and interactive activities remain the same.
- We require access to power.
- We would like to use the school's projector and screen if available.
- We provide PA, light box (and projector if required).
- We require 45 minutes setup time and 30 minutes pack up

Once your school's booking has been confirmed, we will post you a Secret History of Queensland pack which includes:

- a paragraph for the school newsletter
- information/ consent form for parents
- 1 teacher resource kit (including CD and variety of class lessons for History, Music and Visual Arts)

For Theatres & Festivals

The Secret History of Queensland theatre show is a one and a half hour show presented without an interval. Stories, songs and live sand drawings illustrate some of the people and events of Queensland.

Technical Requirements:

- 3 x XLR (with phantom power)
- 3 x vocal mics
(vocals need to sit above instruments in the balance)
- projector
- screen

Where necessary, we can supply sound and AV equipment.

We are happy to tailor a show to suit your requirements. If you would like to discuss booking *The Secret History of Queensland*, please contact us.

CONTACTS

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