



Citation for the Award of Doctor of Letters (DLitt) *honoris causa*

Mr Andrew Bovell

In his keynote address to Australia's National Play Festival in 2014, Andrew Bovell stated that it was the playwright's job to tell the truth.

Fortunately for this generation of theatre and film goers, he also believes it is his job to tell a great story.

Some are confronting, others poignant, many segue seamlessly between heartbreak and black humour, but all are thought provoking.

Always there is a richness of language, a layering of ideas, and an understanding of pattern and shape in storytelling that begs attention and a response.

Andrew is one of Australia's finest writers, and a passionate advocate for Australian writing and Australian stories.

Born in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, in November 1962, he completed his secondary education at Perth's Scotch College before graduating with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Western Australia and a Diploma in Dramatic Arts from the Victorian College of the Arts.

Today, however, he calls South Australia home, living and working from the Willunga property he shares with his partner, the actor Eugenia Fragos.

Andrew began writing professionally in the late 1980s and for a number of years was writer-in-residence with the Melbourne Workers Theatre.

His early works for the stage included *Holy Day*, *Who's Afraid of the Working Class?*, *Scenes from a Separation* and *Speaking in Tongues*, which he later adapted for the screen as the award-winning *Lantana*.

His other film credits include the original screenplay for one of Australia's best loved movies, *Strictly Ballroom*, and most recently the internationally acclaimed *A Most Wanted Man*.

In 2015 he was the first Australian screenwriter to be invited to deliver the British Academy of Film and Television Arts and the British Film Industry International Screenwriting Lecture.

Andrew's recent award-winning works for the stage include:

- *Things I Know to be True*, a co-production between State Theatre Company of South Australia and Frantic Assembly in the UK
- *When the Rains Stops Falling*, which premiered in Adelaide before being produced throughout the UK, America and Europe, and being named "best new play of the year" by *Time* magazine, and
- the landmark adaptation of Kate Grenville's novel *The Secret River*, which wowed audiences and critics alike at the 2017 Adelaide Festival of the Arts.

Andrew's output is prolific and he continues to win awards, for specific works and for his body of work. Last year he received the Sydney Theatre Company's *Patrick White Playwrights Fellowship* for established dramatists.

Andrew is a writer and playwright who has excelled in an exemplary, but also socially conscious fashion, in two highly competitive forms – live stage and film. He is outstanding in his field and an extremely worthy recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Flinders University.