

PRESS RELEASE: Australia's Biggest Celebration of Music in Schools

Save the Date 2 November 2017



Music: Count Us In (MCUI), Australia's largest school music participation program, is thrilled to announce Taylor Henderson as the music mentor for 2017. **MCUI is Australia's largest school music advocacy and participation initiative, growing steadily since 2007.**

To kick off the year, Taylor Henderson will mentor five talented school students as they work together to write the MCUI program song - 'the song that stops the nation'. On Thursday 2nd November at 12.30pm AEDT, more than half a million children will perform this same song, on the same day, at the same time. Last year, MCUI saw more than 2,500 schools and over 600,000 students take part in this FREE program. It provides students and teachers with the opportunity to develop their music skills and simultaneously perform with schools around the country in a celebration of music and music education.

Taylor Henderson has achieved incredible success since first coming to the attention of the music industry and Australian public in late 2013. Within a year, he launched his career with a #1 single ('Borrow My Heart', certified double-platinum), a Top 5 single ('When You Were Mine', certified platinum), and two #1 ARIA albums (*Taylor Henderson* and *Burnt Letters*). Taylor is a genuine musician whose truth is at the heart of his music. Taylor begins his next chapter with the release of 'Light Up The Dark', the new single for the new Aussie comedy film 'Spin Out'. With his new album almost finished, Taylor has announced an Australian tour for September/October during which he plans to preview his new material for his dedicated fans. Passionate about Music Education and on being MCUI's 2017 mentor, Taylor says:

"Songs are OUR stories and Australian songs define our unique culture. I am thrilled to be helping mentor a new generation create great music."

MCUI 2017 kicks off with the Songwriting Workshop on Thursday 6th April taking place in Melbourne. Student finalists have been selected from across the country and MCUI is delighted to have Elliena Escott and siblings Marcus and Tiffany Yeo from Queensland, Makayla Forbes from New South Wales and Sadie Mustoe from Victoria collaborate with our music professionals to create this year's MCUI song. It will be a song for students, written by students. During the Songwriting Workshop, students will receive expert guidance from award-winning producer John Foreman OAM, the program's ambassador and the program's music mentor, Taylor Henderson.

MCUI gives children of all ages and abilities free access to music education. The program also delivers music professional development to classroom teachers. Research shows that many primary teachers often lack the skills and confidence to tackle music with their students. This year, much of the teacher training offered by MCUI will be delivered via live streaming reaching many more teachers in rural, regional and remote areas.

MCUI is managed by Music Australia, the peak service body for the Australian music industry. MCUI is supported by funding from the Australian Government. It meets a priority recommendation of the National Review of School Music Education (2005) to raise the status of music in Australian schools.

To arrange an interview please contact:

Cara Anderson, Communications and Engagement Manager - Music Australia

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THE STUDENT SONGWRITERS

Elliena Escott - Trinity Lutheran College, Ashmore, QLD

Elliena developed her passion for music during primary school. Since then she has surrounded herself with music as much as possible, playing with various instrumental groups around the Gold Coast for the last few years. Elliena has won awards for her songwriting in the past and is a regular busker around Surfer's Paradise.

"I'm super excited to be in the Music: Count Us In Songwriting Team. As a musician and young composer, one of my goals has always been to write a song that makes the nation sing and this is my chance. 'Dream it, then do it'."



Makayla Forbes - Callaghan College Jesmond, Jesmond, NSW

Music has always been a part of Makayla's life and has had the opportunity to perform in Australia and overseas, most notably at the Vienna Music Festival. Makayla is quite new to songwriting but she is inspired by Australia's diversity and the importance of individuality.

"I write to inspire others to make a difference and to achieve their dreams. It is such an amazing privilege to be involved in MCUI 2017."



Sadie Mustoe - Yarra Valley Grammar, Ringwood, VIC

Sadie has been writing her own songs since she was 6 years old and she has received great critical recognition for her efforts. She has released an album of her own compositions titled 'Girl on the Hill'. Sadie's music celebrates the people in her life.

"I feel privileged to promote music to a wider community, to express my love for music and to work with other artists in something bigger than I could have ever imagined."



Marcus and Tiffany Yeo - Brisbane Grammar Schools, Spring Hill, QLD

Born into a family of musicians, siblings Tiffany and Marcus started collaborating and writing music about two years. Both enjoy playing violin and piano and are involved in music at school.

"We want to merge our music with our passion to inspire people and change this world, one song at a time. We hope our songs can touch the hearts of everybody who hears them. With music, the possibilities are endless!"



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