

## Mr Paul Kelly

### Citation for conferral of Doctor of Arts (honoris causa) Ceremony 14, Tuesday 16 September 2014, 11:00am

Chancellor, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Mr Paul Maurice Kelly.

The Degree of Doctor of the University, DUniv (honoris causa) is being awarded to Paul Kelly to acknowledge his exceptionally distinguished service to society and to recognise his service to not just Australian music but also to creative writing, his significant collaborations with Indigenous Australian musicians and film makers, and his significant community service through nationally-profiled benefits and fund-raising concerts.

Paul Kelly was born on 13 January 1955, the sixth of nine children, and raised in Adelaide, where he attended Rostrevor College and was dux of his graduating year. His father, John Kelly, a lawyer practising in Adelaide with the family firm, Kelly & Co Lawyers, died of Parkinson's disease when Paul was 13 years old. His mother, Josephine, was the daughter of the internationally-renowned Argentinian baritone Count Ercole Filippini, a leading soloist with La Scala opera company, and his Australian opera-singer wife Anne McFarland, who is also known as Australia's first female symphony opera conductor. The Filippinis were founders of the Italo-Australian Opera Company, well known in Australia in the 1920s. From this colourful classical music pedigree, Paul Kelly himself has emerged as one of Australia's most gifted and celebrated contemporary singer/songwriters. Internationally renowned for his song compositions, creative writing and recorded music performances over a thirty-year period, he is regarded by his fellow international music industry professionals as without peer in Australia.

Mr Kelly has won eight Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) Awards, and in 1997 was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame. He holds three Australasian Performing Right Association (APRA) Awards. He holds six awards from the Country Music Association of Australia and four 'Mo' (Australian entertainment industry) awards. His songs 'To Her Door' and 'Treaty' (with Yothu Yindi) have been named in the 'Top 30' best Australian songs of all time. In addition, he was a Victorian State Finalist for the 2012 Australian of the Year Award. Aside from "Treaty", Kelly has written/co-written several songs on Indigenous Australian social issues and historical events.

His curriculum of 19 commercially-released studio albums, released nationally and internationally, is impressive.

During the 2000s Mr Kelly was commissioned to compose for film and television scores and soundtracks, including the films *Lantana*, *Silent Partner*, *One Night the Moon*, *Fireflies*, and *Jindabyne*. These works have resulted in five award wins: ARIA 'Best Original Soundtrack' for *Lantana*, Australian Film Institute (AFI) 'Open Craft Award', 'Best Music Score' from the Film Critics Circle of Australia and Screen Music Award 'Best Soundtrack Album' for *One Night the Moon* and the Valladolid International Film Festival's 'Best Music' award for *Jindabyne*.

Mr Paul Kelly contributed to the national magazine, *The Monthly*, from 2009 to 2010. His memoir, *How to Make Gravy*, published by Penguin Books (Australia) in 2010, was short-listed for the Prime Minister's Literary Award in the non-fiction category in 2011 and was the 2011 co-winner of 'Biography of the Year' at the Australian Book Industry Awards. Kelly's fiction publications include his first and second anthologies of lyrics: Kelly, *Lyrics*; Kelly, *Don't Start Me Talking*. The 2004 edition of *Don't Start Me Talking* was added to the Victorian Certificate of Education (Year 12) reading list in 2006.

In February 2009, together with American singer-songwriter Leonard Cohen, Kelly donated \$200,000 to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal in support of those affected by the Black Saturday bushfires. Additionally Mr Kelly performed at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on 14 March 2009 for *Sound Relief*, a concert in support of victims of the bushfires. All proceeds from the Melbourne concert went to the Red Cross Victorian Bushfire relief. In June 2005 Kelly put together *Timor Leste – Freedom Rising*, a collaboration of Australian artists donating new recordings and unreleased tracks to raise money for environmental, health, and education projects in East Timor. Funds raised from the album went to Life, Love and Health and The Alola Foundation. On 8 October 2006 Paul Kelly, with other prominent Australian musicians, performed at the Athenaeum Theatre in Melbourne to raise further funds for

Life, Love and Health, and to help support ongoing programs in East Timor in response to the needs of the people during the humanitarian crisis.

Kelly's collaboration with leading Indigenous artists, most significantly with Yothu Yindi on 'Treaty' and Kev Carmody on 'From Little Things Big Things Grow', have resulted in internationally-famous songs that, while themselves anthems for Indigenous rights, have been used in many other contexts. Other collaborations have resulted in international recognition for his film scores and it should be noted that, in addition to writing the music for indigenous film-maker Rachel Perkins' award-winning feature film *One Night the Moon* (2001), which was shot in the Flinders Ranges, Kelly also featured in the role of the farmer in the film. In 2010 "From Little Things Big Things Grow" was added to the National Film and Sound Archive's *Sounds of Australia* Registry.

Aside from the awards listed above and documented public and critical success of his recorded outputs, Paul Kelly was the subject of a 2010 tribute concert marking his 30th anniversary as a solo artist, and celebrating his contribution to Australian music. A documentary film *Paul Kelly – Stories of Me*, directed by Ian Darling, was released in 2012 and won the Film Critics Circle Award in 2012 for Best Documentary and the Australian Screen Editors Guild Award in 2013 for Best Documentary Editing. The film was part of the Official Selection at both the Canberra and Melbourne International Film Festivals in 2012.

Paul Kelly has made a significant contribution to contemporary Australian music and more generally to contemporary Australian culture. His large and diverse catalogue of songs clearly shows an engagement with contemporary issues over a number of decades. He has been described as a rare poetic voice in contemporary Australian music.

An artist of Mr Kelly's achievements and standing is clearly worthy of the award of an honorary degree from The University of Adelaide.

I am very pleased and proud to present to you Chancellor, for admission to the honorary degree of Doctor of Arts (honoris causa) — Mr Paul Kelly.