

# **INTRODUCING THE ALISON JONES TECHNICAL PRODUCTION COLLECTION**

## **SPEECH BY: ELLA GORDON – QUT BFA (TECHNICAL PRODUCTION) 3<sup>RD</sup> YEAR STUDENT**

Good evening all. My name is Ella Gordon and I am a member of the 2017 graduating cohort. Tonight, I am here to present the Alison Jones Technical Production Collection.

In it's long history, QUT Technical Production has not only produced an amazing group of artists, managers and technicians, but it has also fostered an incredible community; a community that reaches far beyond the confines of a university degree; a community that has developed from a shared passion to create worlds and tell stories.

This community provides a home to many of us, who often enter into this course as misfits; not quite drama or music or IT or management or art students, but rather a complex and magical combination of all of the above, and more. And it is here that we find 'our people'; 'our tribe'. Those who share and understand our weird and wonderful obsessions with a beautifully focused light or a perfectly called cue.

And so this course has become much more than just a place to learn how to rig speakers and calculate beam angles; it's a place to help each other turn passions into performances and ideas into innovations.

And when graduates venture out into the big wide world, they are supported by a family of fellow graduates both here in Brisbane, throughout Australia and around the globe. Many of us had the chance to experience that this year as we undertook secondments, finding QUT Technical Production comrades throughout the industry who took us under their wing, without question, and helped us grow and flourish.

For me personally, this community has held me up during my battles with serious illness and provided me with a shining ray of hope upon which to draw strength and inspiration from. For some, this community has laid the foundations for lifelong friendships, artistic collaborations, business partnerships, romantic relationships, and even the odd technical production baby.

One much loved, valued and dearly missed member of this community is Alison Jones.

As the youngest of four children, Alison grew up in Byron Bay and from an early age showed her creativity, filling the house with paint, metal, wood, fabric, hot glue, clay, paper and glitter, filling her head and her home with amazing creations.

In 1997, as a high-school student, Ali attended the QUT Academy of the Arts production of West Side Story at what was then known as the Basil Jones Theatre, Gardens Point (now QUT Gardens Theatre). A sentence in the program at that performance read, "sets, costumes, props, lighting and sound by QUT Theatre Production students" and from that moment Alison decided she must go to QUT to learn and to create.

She thrived, fought, stressed, created and loved her way through over thirty productions in her three years studying Technical Production at QUT.

Alison passed away in January 2007 and was posthumously awarded her Bachelor of Fine Arts (Technical Production) in March the same year. Her mother, who we are honoured to have here tonight, says: "She did what she was born to do. She crammed a lifetime into those years. She did what she loved."

The Alison Jones Technical Production Collection honours her incredible legacy by presenting materials and resources that relate to the often-unseen practices of design, management and technology within live performance and theatre production. It stands as an ongoing archive and educational resource for students, educators and practitioners in our field.

Whilst the traditional approach to archiving has often centered around the final production, the Alison Jones Technical Production Collection captures the processes, fine details and complex moving parts that go into creating a performance. This preservation of our creative heritage pays tribute to the countless unseen and unrecognised hours of hard work and planning that our students and staff, both past and present, have dedicated to creating live performance. In turn, the digital collection also becomes an incredible resource for our past, present and future community to learn and grown from, by assembling the memories of our shared experiences and creations.

The task of creating and compiling this collection has been no mean feat, and would not have been possible without the dedication and hard work of QUT librarian Jill Rogers and web developer Matthew Kirwin, as well as our very own Dale Norris who developed the new archival protocol and process. And most importantly, Carly O'Neill, who has worked tirelessly over five years to lay the foundations and develop this incredible platform.

I encourage you all to take a closer at the collection once the exhibition opens this evening, and invite your friends and colleagues to access it through the [QUT Library Digital Collections Page](#).

So on behalf of QUT Technical Production students and staff, both past and present, it is my great honour and privilege to present to you [The Alison Jones Technical Production Collection](#).