The Con Artists

[Katie Noonan singing.]

Con Artists Director and Head of Jazz Queensland Conservatorium Stephen Newcomb: With this particular concert we've been able to invite back a number of the star graduates, Katie Noonan, Kristen Berardi, Ellie Hoyt, and Luara Karlson-Carp.

Multiple ARIA Award winner and platinum selling artist Katie Noonan: We're here to honour the wisdom and leadership and musical genius of Mr John Hoffman who was our mentor.

[Luara Karlson-Carp singing.]

Gillian Helfgott Scholarship winner Luara Karlson-Carp: It gave me a lot of skills first and foremost. A lot of musical skills. A lot of vocal skills. Irene Bartlett is a technical master in terms of contemporary vocal pedagogy and I was so lucky to really have so much of her time while I was here.

[Ellie Hoyt singing.]

Best Australian Jazz Vocal Album, Australian Jazz Bell Awards Ellie Hoyt: I started jazz at a young age and went I really want to do this and there's only really a few places in Australia can study jazz but I really wanted the technique so I actually moved, I had no family up here and I moved to Brisbane and studied music.

[Isaac Hurren playing.]

Saxophonist, composer and improviser Isaac Hurren: I came through this School here and it really shaped me in a powerful way.

[Con Artists performing.]

Stephen Newcomb: The Con Artists I guess it started just as the Con Big Band when John Hoffman joined the Queensland Conservatorium. When I first started in the band I was playing trombone, I was a trombonist at the School here and I was a classical trombonist playing in the Big Band.

Montreux Jazz Festival International Vocal Competition winner Kristin Berardi: It was the thing that you wanted to get into at the Con if you were a nerdy nerd. You know oh I really want to get into that because it's rad.

[Kristen Berardi singing.]
Luara Karlson-Carp: I remember in my first week at the Con during orientation I was sitting in one of these seats and I remember thinking to myself, I wonder if I'll ever get to perform in the Ian Hanger Recital Hall.

[Kuara Karlson-Carp singing.]

Katie Noonan: I was lucky enough to be in the Con Artists and you know it formed us as musicians, it was some of our first gigs, some of our first recordings, and some of our first tours.

[Con Artists performing.]

Stephen Newcomb: Over the years I've been fortunate to write arrangements for the group. John has been really encouraging and nurturing in a lot of people in their writing careers and I was one of them. In the last two years John started to hand it over to me to take and that is what I am doing in this concert tonight.

[Bachelor of Music (Jazz Voice) and Con Artist Kayleigh Pincott singing]

Isaac Hurren: When you are a musician it's your life so it's a life long journey and you keep on working on it the whole time. It's nice to just be able to work with young musicians here and try to show them how to improve as quickly as possible and share the love of music.

[Con Artists performing.]

Ellie Hoyt: It's been the most incredible thing to be honest. I think it's the best thing I ever did.

[Con Artists performing.]