



An Interview with Dr John Lynch

In preparation for the ABODA Queensland Conducting Camp in April we thought we would ask Dr John Lynch a few questions about his experiences here in Australia so far as well as some questions that plague music teacher and ensemble directors at the start of every year.

1. You've just started a new role at Sydney Con – how will you measure your success?

I'm having a wonderful time in my new position at the Sydney Con and love the challenges this unique new role entails! I will measure my success by the success of my students, the growth of the wind band and wind conducting programs at the Con, and in the ways I am able to assist the Australian wind band movement (I'm still figuring this one out!).

2. How important is lifelong learning and/or professional development to you?

I've always been a lifelong learner and never settle for the status quo. My professional mantra is to raise the bar for my students and myself each and every day. I am not the teacher, conductor, musician I was a decade ago (or a year ago), and I plan to continue to learn, grow, and evolve until I draw my last breath!

3. How do you engage in developing yourself as a professional?

I listen to and learn from the best: the best international instrumental soloists, the best professional conductors, the best teachers, the best professional ensembles, top composers, as well as the best leaders in all of the arts, business, and higher education (and sometimes, even politics!). I also learn a great deal from my students and my colleagues and love collaborating with others. I'm an avid reader as well.

4. What has been your greatest professional challenge and how did you overcome it?

My greatest professional challenge has involved managing adults. They are always more challenging than students. Having to let a colleague go is always difficult. When I've needed to do so for the best of an organization and the students, I've tried to be humane and helped guide that colleague towards a more successful path.

5. What has been your greatest professional achievement and why was it so great?

My greatest professional achievement as a teacher is of course the success of my current and former students. I have former students leading happy and successful lives and careers both in music and other highly challenging fields (these include a creative director at Pixar Pictures, a leading surgeon, highly successful teachers, composers, pop stars, many professional musicians, etc.).

6. Thinking about the Conducting Camp in Brisbane - what are you most looking forward to?

I am most looking forward to meeting all of the talented conductor teachers! I really enjoy working with adult professionals and helping them achieve their artistic and pedagogical goals. I want to create a relaxed and creatively stimulating environment in which to grow. I've never been to Brisbane, although my brother's best friend from high school lives there with his Australian wife and raves about it! I also enjoy great food and wine so look forward to a little exploring along the way.

7. Fast Five (one word response):

- Favourite wind band: Sydney Conservatorium Wind Symphony :) I love the U.S. Marine Band too!
- Favourite wind band score: Symphonies of Wind Instruments by Stravinsky for its perfect craftsmanship
- Favourite wind band composer: Percy Grainger
- Favourite city in the world: New York City (for the culture, the diverse people, and the vibe)
- Favourite pastime: World Travel

8. With the school year commencing what approaches do you take to get students motivated and enthusiastic about rehearsals?

I share with them the goals for the year, the semester, and for the day. I do so with great passion and enthusiasm. I tell them we are taking an exciting journey together and nobody knows quite where we will end up! (Of course there are well laid plans and a map). Some exciting goals for this year, the 100th Anniversary of the Sydney Conservatorium, include: our first Band Invitational, a residency of the Wind Symphony at Carriageworks (an alternative contemporary arts space in Sydney), our first professional recording project, many commissions and world premieres (with a focus on new works by Australian composers), and great Australian guest artists.

9. When it comes to building a great program/ensemble what in your opinion are the key elements?

- Establishing a clear vision informed by the input of the members (and considering the goals of the institution and the faculty).
- Being knowledgeable and passionate about every piece selected, as well as creative and artistic programming that ignites the feelings, imagination, and intellect of the performers and the audience.
- Setting very high standards for yourself, your students, your colleagues, your bosses, and the institution. Never settle!
- Having a strong aural imagination and building a sound concept for the ensemble. This includes working on fundamentals each day.

Interested in what Dr John Lynch had to say, join ABODA Queensland for Conducting Camp from 15th April to 18th April.

Conducting Camp: Dr John Lynch

April 15 @ 12:00 pm - April 18 @ 5:30 pm

Peter Doherty Theatre, Indooroopilly State High School, 107 Ward Street, Indooroopilly

ABODA Queensland is hosting a **Conducting Camp**. The four day camp, featuring Dr John Lynch, will provide a personal approach to developing your conducting technique. Podium (limited) , Observer and Workshop Band places still available.

For further information: <http://abodaq.org.au/event/conducting-camp-dr-john-lynch/>



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