

This summary is part of research on performance training in Australia undertaken by Professor Peta Tait and Dr Melanie Beddie in 2017 funded by La Trobe University. It researched the influences on, and the training of, prominent teachers working within key training institutions circa 1980 to 2010.

### Lindy Davies

Lindy Davies is an actor, director and actor trainer. She was Head of Acting at Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) from 1979 to 1982 working alongside Peter Oysten, the founding Dean. She returned as Head of Drama from 1995 to 2006. She gained an MA from New York University and was taught by Richard Schechner and others. Davies is recognised for her innovative teaching of acting and directing. She is outspoken about her disinterest in American interpretations of Stanislavski and focuses instead on the actor's breath and impulse, and finding an imaginative connection to language.

After studying at Monash University and training as a drama teacher at Melbourne State College in the 1960s, she developed a series of drama workshops for children at the Carlton Council flats using a combination of her own experiences and the teaching processes of Dorothy Heathcote. Davies helped form the La Mama Experimental Theatre Company, which later became the Australian Performing Group (APG) at the Pram Factory Theatre.

In 1976, she travelled overseas to study with Kristin Linklater and Cicely Berry, and it was with these teachers Davies discovered the importance of connecting to impulse, breath and to language. She also attended a workshop with Teo Spycalski, a colleague of Jerzy Grotowski. Whilst overseas Davies participated in a workshop with Peter Brook and Yoshi Oida whose work confirmed for her the need for artistic collaboration during the rehearsal process.

On her return to Australia at the end of 1978 she was able to briefly work with dancer and choreographer Mary Fulkerson who was visiting Melbourne State College. This work consolidated her thinking about the actor in space. While in France she also worked with Peter Brook. Another important collaborator was the director Rex Cramphorn with whom Davies worked on a number of productions including playing Cleopatra in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1983. She now directs productions and gives master classes for actors and for film directors in Australia and internationally.

