

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.

Terence Crawford

Terence Crawford works as an actor, playwright and a director and is currently Head of Acting at Adelaide College of the Arts. Crawford was Head of Acting, Theatre Nepean, University of Western Sydney., 1997-2002 and has held a similar role at both Intercultural Theatre Institute, Singapore (then TTRP) and La Salle College of the Arts, Singapore. Crawford has published two books, both about acting: *Dimensions of acting: An Australian approach* (Currency Press 2011) and *Trade Secrets: Australian actors and their craft* (Currency Press 2005).

Crawford began performing at the Young People’s Theatre in Newcastle before ‘graduating’ to a year of professional work at the Hunter Valley Theatre Company (HVTC) under the direction of Arne Neeme. He then trained as an actor at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA), graduating in 1984. As an actor he has performed with most of the leading companies in Australia including at the State Theatre Company of South Australia (STCSA).

At NIDA, Crawford was strongly influenced by Nick Enright who taught him core, enduring values about theatre and acting, and human connectivity. Crawford's work as an actor and teacher aims toward an in-the-moment exploration of the connection between actors, audience, and the ideas of the text. He expands this to the politics and culture surrounding the play. As a trainer, Crawford believes it is important for him to assist the actor to be able to self-diagnose his or her work in order to understand what is and is not working. Crawford sees actors as artists and believes that they need to understand the dramaturgy of the whole play and not simply a ‘character’s journey’. He stresses that the early aspects of actor training need to teach actors about theatrical dramaturgy. This allows understanding of what the text or project requires of an actor and how it might be meaningful. He continues to develop aspects of the text-analysis that he was first taught at NIDA, and incorporates work on the floor that allows the actor to discover the interactions in the scene and the intentions of the characters through a physical process that identifies what is at stake in the scene. The graduates that Crawford taught include significant actors working in both Australia and Asia.

Acting Teachers at NIDA

Keith Bain, Nick Enright,
Gale Edwards, Peter King,
Rhys McConnochie

Directors

Aarne Neeme (HVTC)
Aubrey Mellor (NIDA)
Neil Armfield (STCSA)

Colleagues

Lindy Davies, David Kendall
Simon Stollery, T. Sasitharan,
John Gaden

Terence Crawford

Books

Stanislavsky *An Actor Prepares*
Building a Character
Sanford Meisner *On Acting*
Lecoq *The Moving Body*,
Richard Hornby *The End of Acting*
Anne Bogart *A Director Prepares*

Teaching and Leadership

Theatre Nepean
TTRP (now IIT) Singapore
LaSalle (Singapore)
ACArts (Adelaide)