

Golden Fiddle Awards Chairman Mark Mitchell addresses the audience at the 2017 Golden Fiddle Showcase

On behalf of the directors of the Golden Fiddle Awards, Pixie Jenkins, Andrew Clermont and myself, please accept my warmest thanks to all of you for attending our concert this morning.

As I say every year, there are lots of reasons for this concert to be staged, but the reality is that your attendance is real driving force. I also note from looking through the audience in the foyer, that many of you have been coming every year for some time now, and this is even more fantastic for us.

We know every year that we can expect to fill this theatre with people who, like all of us here backstage, want to hear fantastic Australian fiddle music played in all its forms.

And as some of you know who have been here before, we can expect something special, some surprises, some larrikinism, some history, some cultural heritage and most of all, violin music played to its highest standard in Australasia.

The other big expectation in our life is the actual mission of the Golden Fiddle awards, which has been simplified and put together magnificently by Pixie on our new website this year. And it simply says:

We nurture beginners
We honour improvement
We reward the exceptional

I would urge you to take a look at the site which is now a very good summary of who we are and a great archive of our past achievements, particularly of this concert.

All of our concerts and activities are achieved on a not-for-profit basis, and through the hard work of the directors, who themselves have lots to do throughout the year.

For example:

Andrew Clermont, professional musician, spent six or seven months out of the country this year playing virtually all over the world.

As a violin maker and operator of other businesses, I visited 13 countries this year, and just before Christmas, I did 32 take-offs and landings in 11 weeks.

Pixie Jenkins, entertainer, musician and radio show host played so many gigs and shows we've lost count. But most importantly Pixie finished a university degree this year. He's now an academic. We think he's angling for us to address him as Professor Pixie, which I think would be rather special.

I am pretty sure there isn't a professor in the world called Pixie. Actually, Pixie, what you could be is the Professor of Fiddlin'.

So ladies and gentlemen, this is the Golden Fiddle Awards, and we promise to keep the torch alight.

We will shine it wherever there is the sound of lovely notes and harmonies coming from that mysterious little wooden box with strings.

We will nurture all ages and all levels, and we will do our best to bring them to you at this theatre, at this concert, or the next one, or the one after that.

Thank you so much.