

Wolverine Sighted In Surry Hills

Written by Christopher Surplice

Hugh Jackman has to be one of Australia's greatest entertainment success stories. Who will ever forget that incredible debut in *Corelli*, where he and Deborah-Lee Furness lit up the screen with their sexual tension. An attraction that was felt off screen as well, and transposed into an enduring romance and marriage. His progress is a testament to hard work, talent and superb technical skill that is evident in everything he does, whether he's a Wolverine or a Boy from Oz. If the fact that he can act, sing and dance isn't enough to make you insanely jealous, to find out that he's also self effacing and willing to give something back to the industry that has rewarded him, will make you doubly so.

Jackman returned to one of his early stamping grounds last week to pay a visit to the Acting School where he honed his craft, Actors Centre of Australia. The ACA's proud Founder and Artistic Director, Dean Carey, announced that Jackman has agreed to become the inner Sydney theatre school's Patron. Graduating from *The Journey* program at the Centre he continued to work with his mentor Carey at WAAPA in Perth.

Jackman addressed the auditorium packed with current students of the school and told them how delighted he was at becoming Patron. "ACA lit my passion for the craft and the fundamentals I learnt here are a huge part of the foundations I take to work with me every day. Returning to ACA, I was thrilled to see that the spirit, vitality, warmth and joy of the place is very much alive."

Artistic Director Carey said the Actors Centre was proud to welcome Hugh Jackman as Patron. "The Centre prides itself on a culture and community of artistic nourishment and freedom of expression. Our staff are as passionate about education as they are about the acting craft itself. It is this passion and culture that differentiates ACA from other acting schools." ACA has a celebrated alumnus, including Naomi Watts, Nicole Kidman, Colin Farrell and Russell Crowe. Recent guest tutors at ACA include Emmy Award winning director actor/director Gale Edwards, Jeremy Sims, George Ogilvie and Russell Dykstra. Established in 1987, ACA is currently celebrating 20 years as a self-funded arts facility. Hugh plans to return to the Centre later this year for official birthday celebrations and as often as his busy schedule permits to continue to support the ongoing work and expansion of the school. "I look forward to sharing my experiences with the students and also watching them grow as artists."

"I am often asked why Australian actors are doing so well on the international stage, and my first response is always that the training we receive is world class. Certainly for me, ACA was a huge part of my development. I really have to thank all the staff at ACA for instilling in me that sense of play, risk taking, and adventure that has made acting for me so fulfilling."

Image courtesy of the Actors Centre