



Pinnacle 2025 – Michelle Beins

Monday, 6th January, a beautiful sunny summer's morning in Perth and the much-anticipated ANCOS National Conference for 2025 was about to start. Delegates from near and far gathered in the stunning foyer of the Parmelia Hilton in Perth full of excitement for the what would lie ahead. The room was buzzing as both old connections were reignited and new ones were formed.

At last, the moment everyone was waiting for. It was time for the conference to begin and to enter the Argyle Ballroom for the opening ceremony. After a moving Acknowledgement of Country by WA's very own Jane Nicholas, a welcome from the incredible conference convenors Kailee Marshall and Ebony Yapp, and the WAOSA committee's inspiring performance of Jet Chong's composition *To The Top*, delegates were keen to join in with the very first all-in session lead by Robyn Staveley. The session had us all on our feet, moving to music in new and imaginative ways. And thus, begun one of the most inspiring, engaging and motivational four days in my journey as a music teacher up until this point.

The conference was blessed with so many fabulous presenters who shared their knowledge and expertise in such creative and inspiring ways over the course of the four days. Three remarkably different but very complimenting apex presenters: Robyn Staveley, Estevao Marques and Wolfgang Hartmann, had me eating out of their hands in every session. Robyn's sessions that seamlessly bind the neuroscience and the joy of music-making not only challenged my brain but also gave me food for thought in the fight to advocate for quality music education for all children. Each session with Estevao left me with the biggest smile on my face. From his impressive and skilful performances on the spoons to the way he had us moving and enjoying all kinds of music in the most free and creative ways. Wolfgang was a wealth of knowledge in terms of understanding the authentic Orff-Schulwerk process and how truly important it is to connect and build relationships with each and every student we come across in our classrooms. Each and every presenter brought something special to the conference and it was so special to learn from and interact with them all.

As the conference came to a close in a very emotional and heartfelt closing ceremony, I walked away feeling sad that the experience was over but so incredibly alive with a new passion for music education and a strong desire to be the best music teacher I could be for the students I teach each day. I would like to recognise the amazing organising committee who worked tirelessly and seamlessly both in the years leading up to and throughout the conference to ensure that both presenters and delegates were supported and well looked after. It truly was an unforgettable conference and has left me very eager for the next one!