





## Travelling the world as GM of Hyatt Hotels

Paul Wright

**Master of Business Administration, General Management  
General Manager, Park Hyatt Beijing**

Since beginning his career in a corporate training program at the age of 22, General Manager of Park Hyatt Beijing Paul Wright has travelled the globe with Hyatt Hotels. With over 20 years' experience in the field, Paul has taken his management expertise and applied to hotels in Bali, China, Australia, Dubai, and South Korea - transforming the way they do business.

Paul explains where the last few years have taken him since completing a Master of Business Management Administration at the University of South Australia, what it is like to move all around the world with a wife and children, and how the economic boom in China has influenced the hotel industry.

**Please briefly describe your journey from studying an MBA to where you are now.**

Since completing my MBA in June 2009, key highlights have included being appointed Hotel Manager of the Grand Hyatt Beijing in January 2011, and then two years later, my first General Manager assignment to Incheon Korea in December 2012. This hotel underwent a major expansion, adding an additional 500 rooms, making it over 1,000 rooms in total, and also re-branding it to Grand Hyatt Incheon.

In the same year the expansion opened in 2014, I was also nominated as a Global Top 10 finalist for the Jay A. Pritzker Award for Leadership – this Hyatt award recognises general managers from around the world in over 650 hotels who have consistently demonstrated their ability as leaders, coaches, and mentors. They are high achievers leading top performing hotels and are viewed as role models of company values. In addition to my nomination that year, the hotel team was a Global Top 5 Finalist for the Hyatt Thrive Leadership Awards – this award recognises a Hyatt Hotel that embodies the company's commitment to thriving communities by demonstrating exemplary leadership in environmental sustainability and/or community engagement.

In August of 2015, I was offered the opportunity to return to Beijing to become the General Manager of the Park Hyatt Beijing, a leading luxury hotel in Beijing and all of Asia Pacific. The hotel most recently received a Top 10 Gold List ranking by Conde Nast Traveller, rating it as among the Top 10 best hotels in all of China.

**What is the biggest misconception about working in the hotel industry?**

That an amazing building, fancy design, beautiful interiors, unique art work, and lots of cutting edge technology makes a good hotel. Location is indeed always important, and these physical aspects I mentioned can for sure make a hotel experience truly memorable and special. However, the most successful hotels are always the ones where the service is genuine and unrehearsed with warm, passionate, caring employees who treat the guests and their fellow colleagues like family, always using empathy. That is the real 'secret sauce' for any hotel which wants to create a solid reputation and enjoy a profitable future, with loyal guests who highly recommend it to their own circles of friends, families, and business associates alike. It is what true authentic hospitality is about, just read Trip Advisor and you will understand quickly the point I am making. To achieve this culture and have it alive in a hotel is really hard work and it all starts with the general manager and their leadership team 'walking the talk'.

**How has the economic boom in China had an impact on your work?**



The economic boom has seen not just the hospitality industry dramatically change, but all industries. The number of hotels under development by all hotel companies is just staggering and this is not only continuing to change the balance of supply and demand, creating ever more competition, but it has particularly made finding talent very challenging. Hotels are great training grounds to take very inexperienced recruits and build a solid base of skills, especially in customer service and sales. Therefore as other customer service and sales based industries like retail, financial services, automotive, luxury goods, call centres, real estate, etc. all grow and expand, they often come 'fishing' for employees in hotels, offering them higher wages and more benefits. Often younger employees, especially millennials, are attracted to try different industries and something new. Hospitality does demand employees to do shift work, weekend work and quite often long hours, so a nine-to-five weekday job paying more is attractive to some who are not that passionate or really 100 percent sure they wish to be in hospitality long term. So due to this boom

employee turnover in China, particularly in hospitality, it is high regardless of all the efforts you make to provide top class working conditions, paying well, and providing attractive benefits. With high turnover, maintaining service and product quality standards, and high customer satisfaction in a hotel is indeed a real challenge.

**You have worked for Hyatt Hotels in Australia, Bali, Dubai, South Korea, and Beijing. Do you have a favourite country or city to work in?**

I can honestly say that there is not one favourite, each have had their own unique qualities and things I have loved and also been frustrated with. In saying that, we had our daughter in Melbourne and our son in Bali, so these two places do have special importance to both myself and my wife.

**What's your biggest achievement?**

From the age of 12, I decided to become a hotelier and that dream has come true, allowing me to live and work in so many fascinating places, and to live a 'global life', continually experiencing and learning from the many different cultures I have been exposed to. It has made me such a different person, and it has also allowed my wife and two children to experience the same. So I am not most proud of any one thing or event, but more of the journey and where it has brought me today, the person I have become, and how I see my children benefitting from such a lifestyle and upbringing.

**In hindsight, is there anything you would have done differently?**

Not when it comes to building and developing my career, being a long serving loyal Hyatt employee, and taking the opportunities as they arose. However, I am a passionate snow skier so if I look back on things maybe taking a gap year between completing my undergraduate degree, really committing myself 100 percent to my career and commencing my corporate training program immediately with Hyatt at the age of 22. It would have been great to go on a working holiday and work in the ski fields of Canada, USA, or Europe, even if just making coffees or pouring beers in a bar, while enjoying some skiing on my days off. Something like that would have been really fun, I think, and also a great life experience.

*By Keir Hale*



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## Operations Manager at the ‘Happiest Place on Earth’

Lydia Zang (Yan Yan Zang)

**Masters of Business Administration**

**Operations Manager of Merchandise, Shanghai Disney Resort**

Working for Disney could be considered a magical fairy-tale. Spending your day with Mickey Mouse, Cinderella, Goofy, and Donald Duck. Watching children’s faces light up as their dreams come true ‘meeting’ their lifelong heroes. Opening the imagination of both the young and young at heart.

Behind the delightful fantasy is a well organised, billion dollar company, employing over 62,000 people worldwide with themed franchises in resorts, theme parks, cruise ships, merchandise and film. This empire shows no signs of slowing down too - continually evolving and remaining incredibly popular for generations.



One person who is a contributing member of this empire is Lydia Zang, who is currently the Operations Manager of Merchandise at Shanghai Disney Resort.

After joining Walt Disney English Education Co. in 2009, she was continually promoted from Centre Manager to District Manager, National Sales Manager, and eventually Area Manager, responsible for 380 cast members across multiple cities in China’s east region. In her current role she manages merchandise operations across 10 locations in the resort.

Lydia confirms that Disney really is the happiest place on earth and her favourite character is Ariel from The Little Mermaid. Underneath its playful exterior are the hardworking and dedicated staff.



“People think Disney is fun place, therefore they think the job is only about fun. Our job is fun but not only for fun. Our goal is to exceed the guest expectations, our cast members need to put more effort to achieve this,” says Lydia.

Developing staff and growing the business are what Lydia is most proud of.

“I have developed more than 20 managers at Disney English. I helped them grow from sales or trainer to a manager.”

When Shanghai Disney Resort originally opened, Lydia started with just one cast member growing to 400 cast members.

“We opened beautiful Disney Park successfully together.”

Responsible for so many employees, Lydia focuses on building a strong and happy team by motivating and engaging the cast members through inspirational leadership and storytelling.

“To make sure the guests are happy, I start by making my cast members happy. They are the people who make Disney magical. In the meantime, I also set a SMART goal for my team to achieve. When we achieve the target we always celebrate the achievements together and recognise and appreciate improvement and good performance.”

“Before I studied an MBA course at the University of South Australia, I was a team leader at an International school. I had limited leadership skills and business sense. The MBA course has opened my eyes and mind. It has given me a good foundation of business strategy and people management skills.”



Lydia has learned through experience how to make work easier – work smart and productive, and empower employees.

1. Make your expectations clear - make your style and preference clear and organised so your team always knows your expectations.
2. Make people feel good about their job - build trust by trusting others to do their jobs and through recognition by giving credit to others.
3. Make people want to work with you - be respectful and compassionate. Understand what it means to be a servant leader.

Her advice for recent graduates starting out in their careers is to find a job that they are passionate about at a big company with room to advance.

“Start with a global and big company rather focus on salary and position. Usually a global company has more opportunity and you will learn more.

“Attitude is most important. Don’t complain and do more, learn more.”

And finally,

“Thanks and have a magical day!”



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## Knocking the Samstag Museum for six

Narelle Autio

**Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts)**

Beginning on June 30, the University of South Australia's Samstag Museum will be exhibiting a creative collaboration between esteemed photographer wife and husband duo Narelle Autio and Trent Parke entitled, *The Summation of Force*. The multi-channel video work explores the mythical power of cricket; more than an innocent backyard game, the sport is pitched as a metaphor for life.

Alumna Narelle has had an expansive career as photographer. Initially beginning as a photojournalist for the Adelaide Advertiser, she eventually went on to win awards such as the Walkley Award, Oskar Barnack Award, and World Press Photo Award.

Narelle discusses the uniqueness of Australia, the evolution of her photographic style, and the intricacies of collaborating with her husband.

**Please describe your work.**

Based in reality, candid, cinematic, and optimistic. Photography is like therapy for me, I like to search out what makes me feel better about the world.

I think my style has evolved over time but I am still drawn to photograph reality. I love waiting for a moment to present itself. Without fail, life will always give me something more amazing than my imagination could come up with.

I am a bit of a bowerbird and take inspiration from lots of different artists working in various mediums, but I am not one to totally study someone. I think the best work is done from the closest point of view. When you are truly connected on a personal level and not trying to emulate anyone. I have always allowed my life to lead the way and for the most part take inspiration from what is happening around me.

**Please briefly describe you journey from studying a Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts) to where you are now.**

After graduation my first job was as a photojournalist with the Adelaide Advertiser. I then travelled around the USA and onto the United Kingdom working throughout Europe for various British national newspapers and the then News Limited Australia (News Corp Australia). After returning to Australia I worked on staff at the Sydney Morning Herald for several years while establishing myself as an artist.



Trent Parke and Narelle Autio, on the set of *The Summation of Force*, 2017. Photo credit: Jem Autio Parke.



Trent PARKE and Narelle AUTIO, *The Summation of Force* (still from digital moving image), 2017. Courtesy the artists and Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide and Stills Gallery, Sydney.

**What are some of your career highlights?**

Hard to say. Working as a photojournalist allowed me to visit a lot of incredible places and gave me a lot of unforgettable experiences but the best part was the privileged access I had to ordinary people with stories to tell. Photographing the Sydney Olympics in 2000 and being trackside when Cathy Freeman won gold was pretty special.

**Congratulations on receiving numerous, highly regarded awards! Which award are you most proud of?**

The Leica Oskar Barnack Award. I was the first and I think I am still the only Australian to win this award. It was for a series of photographs taken in and out of the water and around the coastline of Australia. It was extremely satisfying to be rewarded internationally for work done here in my own country about our relationship with the ocean, a great passion of mine.

**You have travelled and worked around the world, where is your favourite place?**

Australia is my favourite place, it is why I came back here and stayed. After working in the media industry in various countries for 10 years I was feeling uninspired... but I fell in love with Australia and photography all over again when I returned from overseas. My favourite trip was searching out family in Finland and visiting the island where my grandfather was born. I took my parents, at that time on their first overseas trip. It was incredibly moving. One of my favourite cities would be Seattle and Washington (State) – amazing coastline, so different from Australia but breathtakingly beautiful.

**Please briefly describe your exhibition coming soon to Samstag, The Summation of Force.**

The moving image work looks at the history of cricket through the backyard game. Opening up a conversation about attitudes to sport. From the innocence and fun of cricket at a grass roots level, through the anxiety of training and striving to be the best, and finally the worshipping of the sports professional.

**Is this exhibition different to your others, or will it have a similar tone and presence?**

It is different because it is a moving image work, something we have never done before but the subject matter revolves around our life and investigates and questions why things are what they are. The photography uses a lot of light and darkness so while based in reality there is a feel of a dream, in that way continuing on the themes of our previous work.

**What is it like working with your partner? Do your unique skills combine well or, at times, contradict?**

Bringing two different points of view together keeps the project energetic and the male and female perspective at times can be both enlightening and contentious. In most cases we welcome the artistic argument that inevitably happens when our ideas contradict. The first project we did together was almost twenty years ago so we know each other very well and trust each other's opinion and honesty. This is a huge benefit as the work has been through a pretty rigorous editing process by the time it reaches an audience and it is incredibly rewarding to achieve something together.

**Do you have any tips or advice for recent Visual Arts graduates starting out their careers?**

Get a real job, one that pays money! Then work hard every spare minute you can to develop your art practice. Don't follow. Find your own story.

*By Keir Hale*



Trent PARKE and Narelle AUTIO, *The Summation of Force* (still from digital moving image), 2017. Courtesy the artists and Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide and Stills Gallery, Sydney.

***The Summation of Force* will be on display at the Samstag Museum from Friday 30 June to Friday 1 September.**

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## 2017 Scholarship and Grants Ceremony

On Monday 5 June, the University of South Australia held the 2017 Scholarships and Grants Ceremony to acknowledge student recipients and celebrate their successes, as well as thank the generous donors for their ongoing support.

This year 130 scholarships, grants, and prizes were awarded, all which contribute towards advancing opportunity in higher education. These are tomorrow's nurses, teachers, and engineers, coming from every corner of the globe and all walks of life to pursue their dreams at UniSA.

>> [View photos from Scholarships and Grants Ceremony](#)

Each student has an individual journey – many have personal hurdles to overcome - and unique goals they are striving towards. We have highlighted just a few of their aspirations below:



**Naomi Richards (Belinda Jeffreys Human Resource Management Scholarship)**

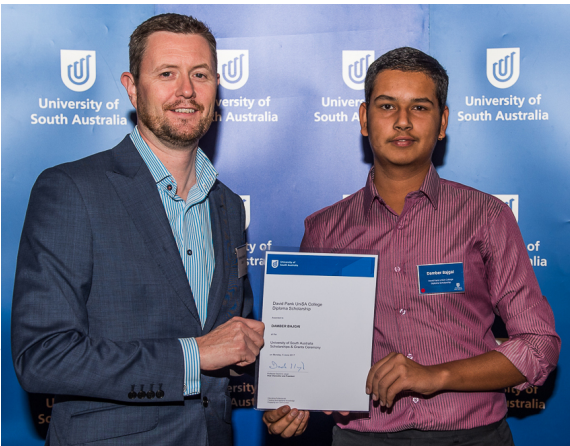
"The reason I chose to study Human Resource Management is because I have a strong passion for people. I believe this career path gives me the opportunity to help others achieve their goals and to help them be the best they can be. There aren't many career paths that allow you to find extraordinary people and put them in their dream job. Not many careers help you to encourage and develop people into the world's future leaders either, and this is what human resource management allows you to do. It's

not just about 'performance management' and disciplining people, it is about helping the world to become a better place by encouraging people to love the job they work in.

I aim to stay on the path of being a HR Generalist where I can eventually become a HR Business Partner, working for a company that has a supportive environment that fosters the growth and development of its employees."

**Damber Bajgai (David Pank Collegeage Diploma Scholarship)**

"I am from Nepal and migrated to Australia in 2009 with my whole family under the humanitarian visa. Since moving to Australia I have been fortunate to have the opportunity to attend school and be able to set my educational goals for a future career. I am highly passionate about the information technology world and wish to study hard throughout my university life to be successful"



**Macaleah Watkins (David Pank Northern Areas High Achiever Scholarship)**

"As I am the first of my family to achieve university entry, I have a strong drive to excel in my studies and also in my practicing field. This scholarship allows me to continue my university studies beyond my education degree and potentially further myself within this field, without financial constraint. I am extremely grateful for this rare opportunity and want to ensure the donors that providing the scholarship is an investment for not only myself but also for my future students I will one day teach."

**James Snowball (Rural Reconnect Relocation Scholarship)**

"My family and I moved to Australia five years ago after living across multiple countries in Africa and Asia. Due to the nature of our living arrangements abroad, I often found myself flying across the world to visit family. It was during these long haul flights that my passion for aviation blossomed. Mum and Dad identify that despite our financial difficulties, a well rooted education is something that will set one up for life.



After receiving this scholarship, I hope to return to Kangaroo Island Community Education to help the students understand that with a bit of hard work and perseverance, they too will be able to achieve whatever goals they set for themselves. I aim to connect and share the importance of a good education for our futures. I hope to educate the future students on the idea that, despite the fear of moving away from home, the skills and qualities one can learn through the schooling system is most certainly invaluable."



**Nikita Charlton (Gavin Wanganeen Aboriginal Scholarship - sponsored by Department of State Development)**

"I am an Aboriginal woman with heritage from Wilcannia area, my family migrated to western Sydney and continue to play a big role in the Tharawal community. I believe that it was my family's commitment to their community that helped encourage my decision to pursue social work and excel in my studies.

I am hoping that by completing this degree I will gain knowledge and lifelong skills to work in rural and remote communities around Australia. I would like to help promote equality and encourage young Australians to access services required to assist them to break down barriers to their education and gain a better quality of life."

**John Boxer (Goodes O'Loughlin UniSA GO Scholarship)**

"I came to university as a mature-aged student with the goal of working within an elite and professional sports environment. Having played sports all my life, I developed a passion for being physically active and helping people. I aspire to help, educate, support and train the younger generation, possibly influencing their journey towards competing at an elite level. Further on, I also would like to engage in research within professional sports to help improve the science of human performance."



By donating to UniSA's Scholarship Fund, you will give a bright student the helping hand they need to follow their dreams and do something remarkable. Every single dollar goes directly to changing the life of a student. Visit: [www.unisa.edu.au/scholarshipfund](http://www.unisa.edu.au/scholarshipfund)

In addition, the University continues to work with donors to establish new opportunities for students. If you would like information about creating a named scholarship, grant or prize please call 08 8302 7030.

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## Queen's Birthday Honours 2017

A number of staff, alumni and supporters of the University of South Australia have been recognised in The Queen's Birthday 2017 Honours list. This prestigious acknowledgement highlights the extraordinary achievements of Australians and their contributions to their communities.

Jack Condous OAM is one of the 2017 recipients of a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his service to the visual arts and to education.

Jack completed a Diploma of Art Teaching from the South Australian College of Advanced Education – an antecedent institution of the University of South Australia – in 1963, and is regarded as an esteemed member of the arts community.



Jack Condous OAM with a portrait of himself by artist, and Jack's former student, Hugh Adamson

He has shared his knowledge with others by serving on numerous arts organisations, including as an Honorary Life Member of the Friends of the South Australian School of Art where he was also the Inaugural President from 2008 – 2012. He is the Council Vice President and Marketing Executive at the Royal South Australian Society of Arts, established the Australian Society of the Arts, was the Secretary for the SA Chapter of Australian Fulbright Alumni Association in 2010, and was the President for the International Society for Education in the Arts from 1978 – 1983 – plus many more including as a professional art teacher for many years.

"This is a reward for all of the enjoyment I have shared with the young creative artists of South Australia," Jack says.

"South Australian artists have continually developed their work, which is shown in so many parts of the world.

"I am proud to be a part of this fantastic community."

A number of alumni were also honoured:

### Member of the Order of Australia (AM)

**Mr Michael O'Connell AM**, Associate Diploma Business (Justice Administration)

For significant service to public administration in South Australia, particularly in the area of criminal justice, and to victims' rights.

**Ms Ann Tonks AM**, MBA

For significant service to the performing arts through senior management and advisory roles, to education, and as an author.

**Associate Professor Denise Wood AM**, Graduate Diploma Instructional Uses of Computers

For significant service to education as an academic, researcher and practitioner in the field of participation, inclusion and access.

### Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM)

**Mr Jack Condous OAM**, Diploma Art Teaching

For service to the visual arts, and to education.

**Ms Lyndell Davidge OAM**, Teaching

For service to the community of Hahndorf

**Mr Aivars Lidums OAM**, Bachelor of Technology in Civil Engineering

For service to chess, and to support for young players

### Australian Police Medal (APM)

**Chief Superintendent Robert Fauser APM**, Graduate Certificate Business Administration

For leadership and excellence in operational policing, organisational development and community engagement.



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