

MEDIA RELEASE

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE AND CAMERON MACKINTOSH CELEBRATE SUZIE HOWIE



Suzie Howie honoured on Melbourne's version of Hollywood's Walk of Fame

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 1 JULY 2014 – Renowned theatrical producer **Cameron Mackintosh** today unveiled a Melbourne Arts Walk plaque he generously purchased to honour publicist **Suzie Howie** for her contribution to the Melbourne theatre scene.

Currently in Melbourne for the launch of his production *Les Misérables* which opens on 3 July, Cameron Mackintosh worked for many years with Suzie on productions including *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Cats* and *Les Misérables* and was thrilled her career could be recognised in such an exceptional and enduring fashion.

“For more than three decades - beginning with his first Australian production, *Oklahoma!*, through to *Mary Poppins* - Suzie worked on Cameron Mackintosh's shows here and in New Zealand, in Asia and the Pacific, and in South Africa,” Suzie's husband and partner Paul Taylor said.

“She admired Cameron tremendously but she also had deep affection for him. This plaque, I'm sure, reflects his respect and feelings for her,” he added.

“We are delighted to honour Suzie's contribution to the arts industry through the Melbourne Arts Walk. In the spirit of Suzie's great work promoting the world's best artists, every cent of all the Arts Walk plaques donated goes into an endowment fund which enable more artists to perform here in Melbourne, which will enrich an already thriving arts scene,” said Louise Georgeson, Executive – Development and Strategy, Arts Centre Melbourne.

Suzie Howie, who lost her battle with cancer in October 2012, was an Australian publicity legend who managed the publicity for the majority of Australia's best-selling musicals and theatre productions, including *Cats*, *Les Misérables*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Jersey Boys*, *Wicked* and many more. Described as “the best publicist in the southern hemisphere” by **Barry Humphries**, she also publicised international film blockbusters such as *Crocodile Dundee*, *The Man from Snowy River* and *The Man from Snowy River II*.

The **Melbourne Arts Walk**, a series of crafted plaques honouring the arts which are embedded into the footpath surrounding Arts Centre Melbourne's famous buildings are an Australian first and feature quotations from famous artists celebrating the creativity and passion of the performing arts in Melbourne. They can be purchased for \$25,000 each.

Taking the idea of **Hollywood's Walk of Fame** a step further, each plaque features an inspiring, uplifting quotation from a leading artist or renowned creative, recalling their experience of performing in Melbourne. Notable performers who have provided quotes for the Melbourne Arts Walk include **Guy Pearce, Olivia Newton-John, Paul Kelly, Tina Arena, Silvie Paladino, Robert Lepage, Cliff Richard, Marina Prior, Reg Livermore** and many more.

Designed by Victorian artists **Simone LeAmon** and **Edmund Carter**, the design of the plaques take their inspiration from an imagined spotlight shining down from Arts Centre Melbourne's famous spire, casting pools of light onto the walk ways below.

The plaques, measuring one metre in length, feature a performer's quotations which can be chosen from a selected list, with each plaque created from bluestone, brass and granite. They are an important fundraising initiative for Arts Centre Melbourne, who receives around 20% of its operations funding from the Victorian Government, with the remainder from self-generated income and private, philanthropic and corporate partnerships.

In recognition of a fully tax deductible Melbourne Arts Walk donation to the Arts Centre Melbourne Endowment Fund, supporters will be recognised on a plaque alongside their choice of artist quotation. For further information about purchasing a plaque, please contact Alice Molan on 03 9281 8087.

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About Arts Centre Melbourne

Arts Centre Melbourne is a not-for-profit organisation which receives operational funding from the Victorian Government relying on the support of its own commercial activities and the support of generous individuals to sustain and grow its role in and for the community. Last financial year Arts Centre Melbourne staged more than 3,600 performances and public events, engaging with more than 3.2 million people. It delivers Australia's largest performing arts participation program, with over 150,000 children, young people and their families taking part each year, with a further 55,000 students and teachers participating in its annual education program.

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For further media information, interviews or images please contact:

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