

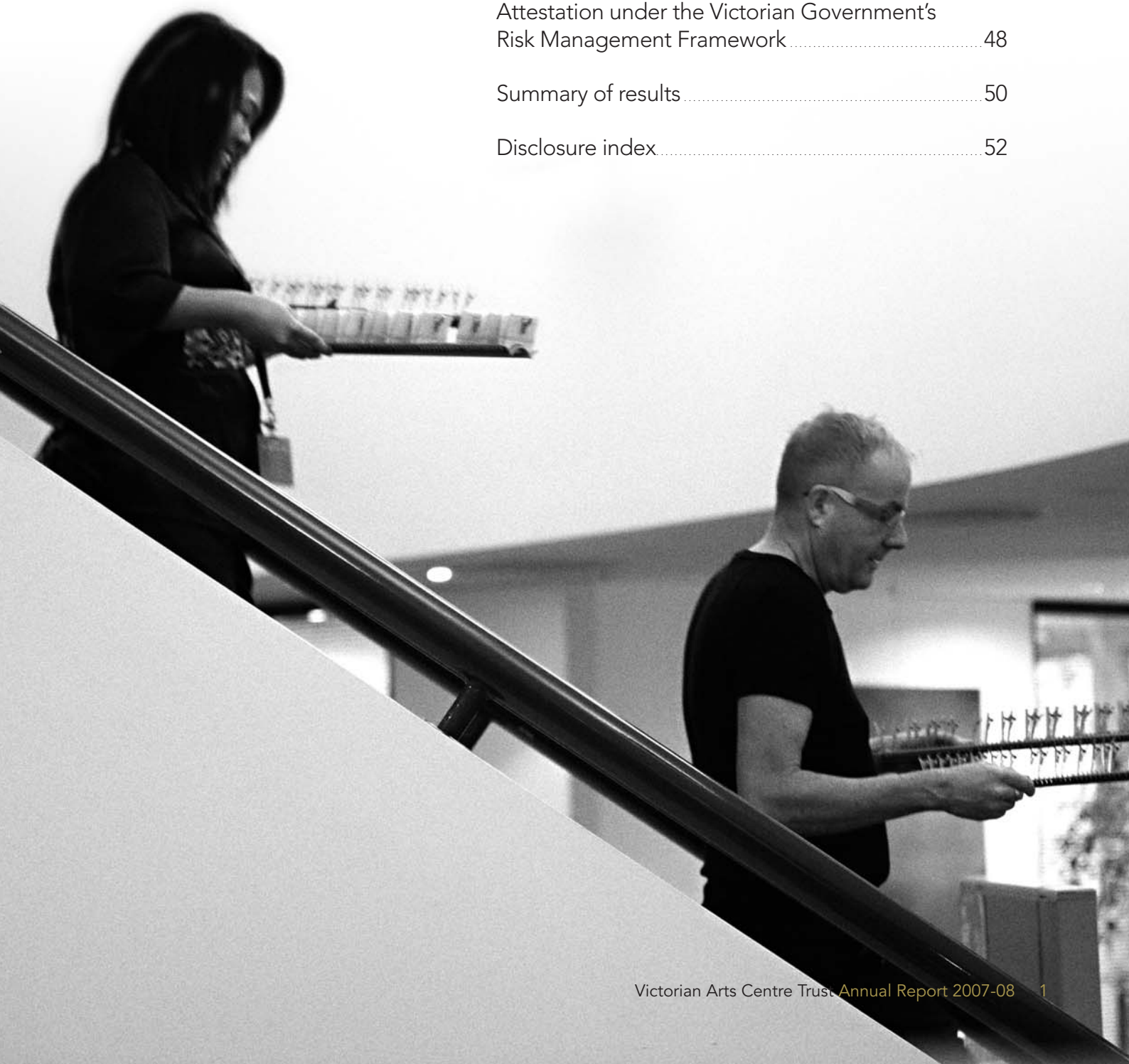
OUR PERFORMANCE IS MEASURED IN MEMORIES

Victorian Arts Centre Trust **Annual Report 2007-08**



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President's Foreword

We aspire to be one of the world's great arts centres. We create and present the best of the performing arts in the heart of a vibrant, sophisticated and culturally diverse city. We support wonderful artists and managements to achieve their creative goals. We delight and challenge audiences of all ages and backgrounds with distinctive and diverse programming in Melbourne, through regional Victoria, around Australia and occasionally overseas.

Our staff and management are special people who choose to work here because they love the arts and want to share their passion with millions of people every year. Our performance venues and support facilities are the finest in Australia and, with State Government support, we are about to begin a process to make them even better.

We are situated at the apex of an arts precinct like no other in this country, a potent web of creativity and innovation. We exist to enrich the lives of our ultimate owners, the people of Victoria, and to offer outstanding experiences to residents of, and visitors to this state.

**We are the Arts Centre,
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.**



Carrillo Gantner AO, President

The wide spectrum of live performance

If you haven't discovered the power of live performance, I invite you to share the experience with us. Last year more than 2.4 million people did so. Why? Because there is always something wonderful and unexpected going on here: day time performances to stimulate the curiosity and smiles of children and young people; creative development programs of new works offering opportunities for young artists full of energy and hope as they embark on their careers; the classical and contemporary works of our great partner companies like the Australian Ballet, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Theatre Company, Opera Australia, Bell Shakespeare, Bangarra, Musica Viva, Australian Chamber Orchestra, The Production Company, Sydney Dance Company, the Melbourne International Arts Festival and many others; the visiting national and international artists, productions and companies from Australia and around the globe – traditional Indian music and stand up comedy, African dance and the Royal Shakespeare Company; and beautifully curated exhibitions of the best of our cultural heritage, from theatre design and other visual arts to the powerful 'Icons' show featuring rock legend Nick Cave.

The Arts Centre works to achieve its goals by the constant application of its collective skills and experience to the process of strengthening our relationships with local, national and international artists, managements and networks; by intelligent marketing of our productions to as wide an audience as possible; by displaying the wonders of our acclaimed performing arts collection; by striving for the



best in our people and facilities so that we truly serve the public good; and by developing systems for self-evaluation and benchmarking of our work against other great art centres around the world.

We manage some amazing facilities: Hamer Hall, the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, the State Theatre, the Playhouse, the Fairfax Studio, the ANZ Pavilion, and the Black Box; plus the extensive technical and production facilities, rehearsal and dressing rooms, administration, food and beverage outlets, art collections, gardens and a host of support services that make this Centre a round-the-clock operation. Our Act of Parliament requires us to manage these facilities in optimum condition for the benefit of the community and that is our emphatic goal.

Our valued supporters

The ability to fulfil our objectives and to plan ahead for the future reflects the strong partnership we enjoy with the Victorian State Government and a growing number of supporters among individuals, philanthropic trusts and the corporate sector. The Government's on-going commitment to provide increasing programming funding has enabled us to broaden the mix of our programming and to reach many more people. Programming is where we intersect most directly with the wider community and where the public good is most clearly evident.

It is therefore very heartening to report that we have begun to build our endowment this year with gifts of more than \$2m received to expand our international programming. It is very pleasing that not only has there been a

significant increase in total donations, but also a 26% increase on the number of individual donors. Donors can specify where they want their support to go and this year many of them have chosen to contribute directly to the delivery of performances for families and children through our 'Chookahs!' children's festival or through subsidised performances for disadvantaged schools.

Central to the long term success of the Arts Centre is the continued emphasis on planning for the future, for refreshment of our facilities to ensure that they remain state of the art and able to serve the needs of the contemporary community. We do this in the context of making the Arts Centre precinct more attractive to the public and connected to the great wealth of cultural and related service facilities in our midst. It is truly exciting to be writing this following the Government's announcement of the upgrade for Hamer Hall, as stage one of the Arts Centre redevelopment. This is great news for audiences and visitors who will enjoy the improved facilities, for artists and companies who will perform here, and for Victoria to further showcase its cultural strengths and attraction.

My heartfelt thanks

I thank the Victorian Government – the Premier, Minister for the Arts and Arts Victoria – for their strong and continuing advocacy and backing. I thank all our supporters, sponsors and partners on and off the stage. I thank my fellow Trustees and join with them in thanking our Chief Executive Tim Jacobs and his entire management and staff. Their dedication and willingness to think confidently about how to realise the full potential of the Arts Centre remains focused and true.

We have wonderful art, people, facilities and support and we are working to make them even better. We have a Master Plan that brings them all together to map out our future in this extraordinary creative precinct. Watch this space because in coming years you will see the Arts Centre acclaimed among the great art centres of the world.

Carrillo Gantner AO
President



Chief Executive's Report



Tim Jacobs, Chief Executive

The Arts Centre continues to pursue its vision and plans as a leading international performing arts centre.

The Report of Operations presents the year's activities across programming, the visitor experience, the place in the precinct, and the way we go about doing what we do. It outlines our approach to achieving excellence, growth and continuous improvement across all areas of the enterprise.

Programming for the future of the Arts Centre

The development of distinctive programming streams was intended to provide our programmers with a longer, wider view, and a stronger strategic focus. This year has delivered pronounced benefits from clearer programming agendas and increased budgets allocated for programming. We will continue to more deliberately design and manage the total program mix and actively strengthen the Arts Centre's artistic signature.

The priority for the year was to address those areas where we saw good prospects for immediate growth. There has been expanded programming for children, families and young people; a broader creative development

agenda and consolidation of the momentum generated last year by the Mix It Up initiative. We expanded the range of music programming in both the Hamer Hall and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

Forward priorities will focus on complementing the repertoire of Australian companies and performers with a wider range of international programs scheduled into all our venues. Over time we will see a significantly repositioning in the role of the Fairfax Studio, the Playhouse Theatre and the summer and winter seasons of the State Theatre. This will require ongoing selection of a broader spectrum of international productions. It will call for continuing commitment to increasing programming resources. It will see us expanding our role in commissioning and joint ventures with major venues, festivals and performing arts presenters around Australia and internationally.

Connecting with audiences and visitors

Our aim is to attract larger, broader, more diverse and more involved audiences.

This year we achieved a record of over 2.4 million attendances at Arts Centre programs – over 1.6 million people attended performances and more than 800,000 participated in exhibitions, events and related activities. Significantly, most of this growth came in response to non-traditional programming – a welcome confirmation of the market research that has guided our planning over recent years.



The high point of this year must become next year's foundation. During the year we decided to take a much closer role in ticketing and customer relations. Improved market research and marketing services will enable us to connect better with audiences in future. We are in advanced preparation stages to bring ticketing services in-house early in 2009. This will enable us to build a stronger connection with our audiences. It will also assist the Arts Centre presenters to continue to achieve growth in their segments of the market. Significantly, this major shift reflects the emerging predominant practice across the major performing arts sector internationally. It offers a unique opportunity for the Arts Centre to strengthen its market facing strategies and services.

The place and the precinct

The modernisation of the Arts Centre and the redevelopment of its surrounding precinct has been another centrepiece of the Trust's recent operations and planning. As a twenty five year old facility – designed thirty five years ago – the built environment of the Arts Centre must now respond to the dramatic changes in the surrounding urban environment, to the nature and contemporary needs of the public and performance spaces, and to the expectations of contemporary audiences for a multi faceted destination attraction.

Our approach has been to address the future redevelopment planning with a clear perspective on the Arts Centre's unique civic role as a focal point for the performing arts. It calls for confidence and vision, since what becomes of the redevelopment project will define the Arts Centre and its role in the community for the next thirty years.

Organising for excellence

This year we have commenced an initiative that underpins the approach we are taking to developing organisational capability, practice, process improvement and systems. It particularly emphasises a increasingly internationally connected outlook and approach.

Project Marker is part international benchmarking, part organisational learning exchange with a group of colleague arts centres around the world, part continuous improvement research and part professional development of our current and future management personnel. The project seeks to develop a management culture with a robust commitment to learning, excellence, open sharing of skills and ideas, and continuous improvement. It expects curiosity about what we do, how we lead and manage, and how new ideas and innovation can be fed into the way we go about ensuring the current and future success of the arts centres. Project Marker completed the first stage evaluation phase, and conducted its first formal learning exchange with management at The Edge, Auckland.

The detailed Report on Operations follows. It develops these themes with a narrative account of activities across the Arts Centre's year, for 2007-08.

Tim Jacobs
Chief Executive

**THERE IS
ALWAYS
SOMETHING
WONDERFUL
AND
UNEXPECTED
GOING ON
HERE**

Our year in review



Sir Ian McKellen, Royal Shakespeare Company's *King Lear*

Photo: Manuel Harlen

Our year in review

July

The Arts Centre came alive with a diverse range of music performances and one of the world's greatest theatre companies. We also saw Australia's leading choreographer close a chapter in his life.

MIX IT UP kicked off the month with full houses for two events. *So Frenchy So Chic* featured leading French contemporary groups Emilie Simone and Nouvelle Vague and *Visible* showcased emerging artists from migrant and refugee communities. Hamer Hall also featured music of a different kind with the finals of the **International Chamber Music Competition**.

We welcomed the **Royal Shakespeare Company** as they commenced their 10 performance season of Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Chekhov's *The Seagull* in the State Theatre.

The month saw the launch of the 2007 **Melbourne International Arts Festival** program, one of the city's favourite arts events.

July was also a time for reflection when one most enduring relationships in the arts came to an end. During the season of **Sydney Dance Company's** *Ever After Ever*, Graeme Murphy announced his and partner Janet Vernon's resignation from the company after 30 years of service. Melbourne audiences said thank you for a lifetime of memories from one of Australia's living treasures.



August

As winter set in, we offered audiences a range of hot performances best enjoyed indoors.

We hosted a range of international companies and showcased some of the world's best performers. Argentina's hottest dance company **Estampas Potenas** performed *Tango Fire* in the State Theatre and **MIX IT UP** featured the sounds of one of our closest neighbours with *Indonesia Rocks*. This concert featured a vibrant performance by Indonesian contemporary band **Kua Etnika** in the Fairfax Studio.

Aside from these international events, **The Production Company** continued to feature the best of the Broadway Musical tradition, when they presented *Little Me* in the State Theatre.

The Arts Centre also continued its diverse exhibition program with *Drawn to the Stage* – an exhibition that commenced as a project to catalogue the stage design archives of the **Performing Arts Collection**.



Royal Shakespeare Company Tour

One of the world's greatest actors, Sir Ian McKellen, led the renowned Royal Shakespeare Company in two new productions of Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Chekhov's *The Seagull*. The 10 performance season was exclusive to Melbourne and seen by more than 15,500 people.

The productions reunited McKellen with the acclaimed director Trevor Nunn, two of the towering figures of British theatre and marked their first collaboration in 17 years.

The RSC season reinforced the Arts Centre's reputation as an international leader in the performing arts. The tour was made possible through an international partnership between the RSC, Singapore Repertory Company, The Edge, Auckland and St James Theatre, Wellington.

This strategy created a blueprint for touring similar world-class productions.

Our year in review

MIX IT UP

MIX IT UP continued to explore Victoria's cultural diversity. This initiative showcases contemporary performing arts from a range of cultures and traditions.

The focus for the year continued to be the consolidation and expansion of the music program. Seven major events were held in Hamer Hall, Playhouse and Fairfax Studio achieving ticket sales and attendances significantly above budget. Total attendances were 14,800, exceeding the target for the year by nearly 25%.

Free programs staged in the foyers prior to each mainstage presentation enhanced the audience experience at all events. These included local artists and community groups offering performances, workshops, demonstrations and food stalls.

The close collaboration with Multicultural Arts Victoria continued to bear fruit, building deeper community engagement for MIX IT UP events. This collaboration was also key to securing funding for the first time from the Australia Council Community Partnerships Fund of \$145,000 for the 2008 MIX IT UP program.

MIX IT UP was further recognised by the City of Melbourne with the announcement of the Melbourne Award for 2007 for Contribution to Community.



September

Drama productions were a highlight this month with international performers and our leading national companies.

British actor **Miriam Margoyles** performed a highly successful season of the solo piece *Dicken's Women*. During the season we trialled a captioned performance to assist the hearing-impaired. We look forward to offering this service for future events.

Australian performers were also centrestage when **Bell Shakespeare** performed Nikolai Gogol's *The Government Inspector* and we announced the winner of one of Australia's premier drama awards. The **Wal Cherry Award** was won by Ross Mueller for his play, *The Glory*. The piece was presented in a rehearsed workshop performance and went on to a fully produced season by Hothouse Theatre in early 2008.

The Arts Centre was also the venue for an innovative multi-media exhibition. **The Experimenta Playground** featured international art that begged to be touched and explored and over 40,000 people attended this unique event.

Music performances continued to feature a variety of music styles. British pianist Stephen Hough performed a recital including music by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Chopin and Debussy, part of **Musica Viva's** season at Hamer Hall. *Our Backyard*, another MIX IT UP event featured emerging and established Australian hip hop artists including **Bliss N Eno**.

In addition to the wide range of performances, our Education Department welcomed staff from the Lincoln Center Institute to co-present the *International Educators Workshop*, a professional development program for generalist and specialist teachers.





Photo: Josh Robenstone

Horace Andy, *Roots Nation*

Our year in review

Education at the Arts Centre

Education at the Arts Centre underwent a significant period of transformation and change in 2007-08.

After the appointment of a dedicated Programming Manager with responsibilities for Education, Families and Young People in late November, program staff participated in a full review of strategy, programming and operations.

This included wide consultation with internal and external stakeholders. A new program structure and stream priorities were drafted and supported by the Executive and Trust to ensure the Arts Centre Education programs embrace a contemporary approach to our public purpose mandate.

There is a renewed focus on

- Leadership
- Advocacy
- Access & Participation
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Commissioning of new works by and for young people
- Digital Content and Online Learning

Highlights of 2007-08 for Education, Families & Young People included a partnership with the State Library of Victoria to co-present Spare Parts Puppet Theatre's production of Shaun Tan's award-winning book *The Arrival*; a new pilot project for the Special Access Kit at Alfred Brash SoundHouse, which developed case studies with students with autism spectrum disorder and visual impairment with promising outcomes; the presentation of the first Lincoln Center Institute International Educator's Workshop for 25 local educators; the return of the much-loved *Chookahs!* Festival in October; and a successful outreach partnership with Rutherglen Primary School.



October

October is festival time at the Arts Centre and the 2007 program showcased some of the world's finest companies and performers. A highlight of this year's **Melbourne International Arts Festival** was the appearance of famed US choreographer **Merce Cunningham** with two programs in the State Theatre.

We also welcomed the **Spiegeltent** back to the Arts Centre Forecourt. This was the 7th consecutive year that it has thrilled Melbourne audiences and the season ran until mid-December.

Other October highlights included concerts by the American singing sensation **Josh Groban**, and **The Production Company's** season continued with *42nd Street* in the State Theatre.

The annual **Chookahs!** Festival brought thousands of children and families to the Arts Centre for a five-day program involving interactive programs and theatre performances.



November

This month featured everything from grand opera to Australian Rock royalty.

Opera Australia filled the State Theatre with fantastic singers, elaborate sets and spectacular costumes. The spring season saw the company present *Don Giovanni*, *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Alcina*.

Transcendent performances of a different kind continued in the **Speigeltent** with *La Clique* continuing to wow audiences. Their season featured 49 sold-out performances.

The Playhouse saw a series of performances by Australian musicians, including **Stephen Cummings**, **The Black Sorrows**, **Mark Seymour** and **James Reyne**.

One of Australia's favourite performers **Magda Szubanski** graced the Playhouse stage in the **Melbourne Theatre Company's** *The Madwoman of Chaillot*.

The **Full Tilt** program featured two performances, showcasing Victoria's most exciting independent artists. *With a Bullet* by Nat Cursio Co. featured short dance pieces by nine Melbourne choreographers. This was followed by *The Call* from prize-winning playwright Patricia Cornelius. *The Call* was performed by Melbourne Workers Theatre in their first season at the Arts Centre.

School speech nights were a popular choice for those people visiting Hamer Hall. Families had the opportunity to see their children in one of Melbourne's finest performing arts venues.

December

As the holiday season approached, we hosted two of Melbourne's favourite festive events.

Carols by Candlelight brought thousands of people to the Sidney Myer Music Bowl and popular tenor **David Hobson** starred in the **Morning Melodies** Christmas performance.

December also saw **Short & Sweet** return to the Arts Centre with 60 10-minute plays performed over three weeks. This innovative project featured over 370 artists performing works from all over the world. The winning play *49 Stories About Brian MacKenzie* told a story with no dialogue and still had the audience captivated from start to finish.

Nick Cave: The Exhibition

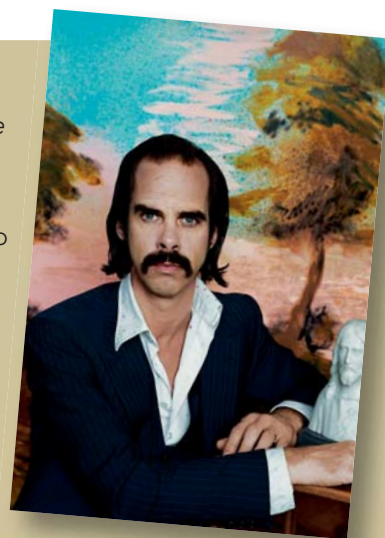
This landmark exhibition was the third Icon Series exhibition, following *Dame Edna Everage* and *Kylie*. This exhibition series was established to honour the achievements of Australian performers on the international stage.

The exhibition material was drawn from a generous donation by Nick Cave to the Performing Arts Collection. It offered a rare insight into the creative imagination of this extraordinary musician, songwriter and author.

The exhibition was complemented with a range of free public programs. These included curator's talks, three intimate *In Conversation* sessions with Nick Cave and *Abusing the Muse*, an online documentary filmed in and around the Arts Centre. Nick Cave: The Exhibition also launched the *The Nick Cave Stories* collection.

The exhibition was an outstanding success with over 270,000 people discovering more about one of Australia's most inspiring performers.

Nick Cave: The Exhibition will also tour to Brisbane, Perth and Canberra from March 2009.



Nick Cave, 2007
Photograph by Polly Borland
Original painting by Tony Clark



Jon Bon Jovi

Photo: Josh Robenstone



January

January marks the start of the annual Sidney Myer Music Bowl music season and this season was hotter than ever.

New Year's Day saw the return of **Summadayze**. This year's event was held on an incredibly hot day but music fans still danced well into the night. The Sidney Myer Music Bowl was also the venue for *Kiss My Grass*, an annual dance party event that showcases local talent.

Music was also popular with other segments of our audience as **Hi-5** delighted young children and the veteran singer **Joe Cocker** rocked Hamer Hall.

Hamer Hall was also the venue for **Aeros**, an awe-inspiring display of physical prowess, fusing dance, gymnastics and the talents of 20 Romanian gymnasts. Young gymnasts and dance enthusiasts enjoyed this Melbourne exclusive.

The Arts Centre was part of the **Midsumma Festival**, when *Vaudeville X* by Michael Dalley served up catchy tunes whilst taking satirical swipes at the middle class and the arts elite.

Australia Day was celebrated with an outdoor installation *The African Village* across the three days of the Australia Day weekend. *The African Village* provided an environment where visitors could experience African food, music, dance and crafts.

February

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra launched its 2008 Concert Season with performances across a range of music styles. Song writing legend **Burt Bacharach** performed with the orchestra for three sold out performances and **Nigel Kennedy** repeated a similar feat later in the month.

February also saw the orchestra performing in their popular free concert series at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

The Australian Ballet farewelled Executive Director Richard Evans who departed to take up the position of General Manager of the Sydney Opera House.

Our year in review



March

March was a time for ballet and a diverse range of music events.

The **Australian Ballet** held a highly successful season when **Graeme Murphy's** *Swan Lake* returned to the State Theatre. The free *Telstra Ballet at the Bowl* performance also enabled a wider audience experience the thrill of classical dance.

MIX IT UP started its 2008 season with a performance by the Sufi musician **Omar Faruk Tekbilek and his Ensemble**. The event engaged the local Turkish community and featured a free foyer program with Turkish performance groups, visual arts and crafts.

The **Australian Chamber Orchestra** had great success with two concerts featuring **Katie Noonan** singing the music of Radiohead, Handel, David Bowie, Paul McCartney and Sting.

At the Sidney Myer Music Bowl we continued to move Melbourne with the Future Music Festival featuring the dance music pioneers **The Chemical Brothers** and the cool sounds of **Jack Johnson**.

April

This month featured stand-out events from the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Theatre and Opera Australia.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra gathered an international line-up of soloists, the **Bach Choir** and the Melbourne Symphony Chorus to present the powerful Verdi *Requiem* in Hamer Hall.

Melbourne Theatre Company continued its successful year presenting *Love Song* and the thriller *The 39 Steps*. Based on Alfred Hitchcock's 1935 cinematic masterpiece, *The 39 Steps* featured over 100 characters being played by only four actors.

April also saw **Opera Australia** return to the State Theatre for their Autumn Season. **Bizet's** famous opera *Carmen* was a major success boasting record ticket sales and excellent reviews. Performances of *A Masked Ball* and *Arabella* completed the season.

Education at the Arts Centre partnered with the State Library of Victoria to present **Spare Parts Puppet Theatre's** production of Shaun Tan's award-winning book, *The Arrival*. The sell out season included author talks and workshops.

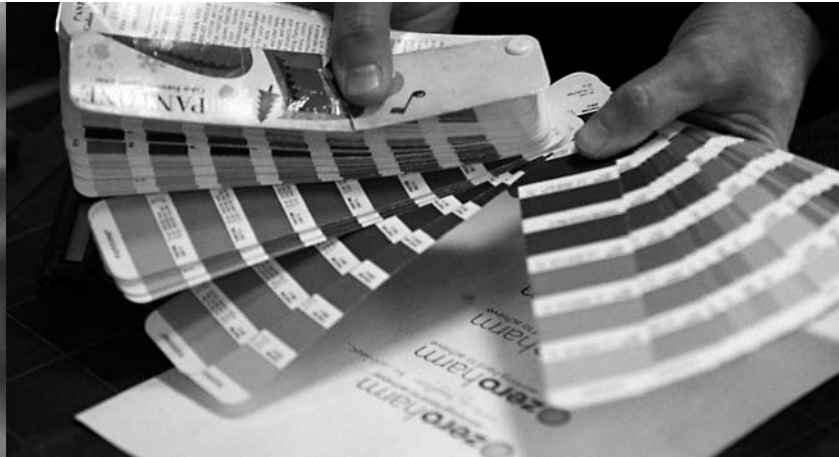
Canadian singer-songwriter **kd lang** returned to Hamer Hall. The songstress went barefoot on the Hamer Hall stage as she performed songs from her latest album and her much-loved hits.



Photo: Jeff Busby

Helen Christinsan and Marcus Graham, Melbourne Theatre Company's *The 39 Steps*

Our year in review



May

As winter approached the Arts Centre was filled with reggae, Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* and the spiritual world of Bangarra Dance Theatre.

MIX IT UP continued with *Roots Nation*, an international reggae event that teamed international superstars **Luciano**, **Horace Andy**, and **Mikey General** with local performers. The event brought an incredibly diverse audience into Hamer Hall.

This venue also featured the veteran singer/songwriter **Neil Sedaka**. A sing-a-long screening of *The Sound of Music* encouraged many audience members to attend dressed as their favourite character from the film.

Two **FULL TILT** productions also had seasons in May – *The Talk Show* and *Big Business*. *The Talk Show* was a series of forums with a twist and were produced with the Next Wave Festival and hosted by **Suitcase Royale**. This was followed by *Big Business* from The Business. This world premiere production created a magical world within the Fairfax and the season sold out.

Contemporary dance also featured in May when the **Bangarra Dance Theatre** came to Melbourne with the moving premiere of a new work, *Mathinna*. We also welcomed **Sydney Dance Company** back to the State Theatre when they performed **Meryl Tankard's INUK2**.

FULL TILT supports the development of new performance works by independent artists and small to medium companies through workshops, forums, creative development projects and fully staged presentation seasons in the Fairfax Studio and Blackbox.

FULL TILT productions are for the most part either premiere seasons of new work or a return season, which transfers the production from a small independent venue into the Fairfax Studio. Creative development projects include a range of artforms and experience levels; ranging from emerging artists through to mid-career and senior artists who are still working on the cutting edge.

Since 2006 **FULL TILT** has given over 30 new projects their first stage of development and presented 15 productions at the Arts Centre.

FULL TILT looks for new performance work that:

- Challenges assumptions about **what can and should happen** inside the Arts Centre
- Preferences **original ideas** and **adventurous creative processes**
- Embraces risk-taking **collaborations** between artforms and artists that genuinely venture into **unknown territory**

FULL TILT creates new performance for audiences hungry for adventure.

FULL TILT



June

MIX IT UP continued to spice up Hamer Hall this month with **The Anoushka Shankar Project**. The concert featured a stunning fusion of traditional Indian classical and contemporary western music. The local Indian community was actively involved in filling the foyers of the scents and sounds of India.

Dance was also popular at the Arts Centre with The Australian Dance Awards and a season from The Australian Ballet.

The Awards were held at the Arts Centre for the first time and this weekend long event included public access dance events and a glamorous awards ceremony.

The Australian Ballet presented works by Jerome Robbins and welcomed new Executive Director, Valerie Wilder. Valerie brings a wealth of knowledge about the art form and an international perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing the company into the future.

June also featured an important education project and an award for one of Melbourne's leading arts administrators.

Alfred Brash SoundHouse and the **Education Workshops** team partnered with Rutherglen Primary School for a landmark regional partnership project to commemorate the centenary of the school. Over 500 local community members attended the launch of the Year 5/6 students' documentaries at Rutherglen Memorial Town.

The 2008 **Kenneth Myer Medallion** for performing arts was awarded to Stephen Armstrong, Executive Producer at the Malthouse. This Arts Centre sponsored award recognises outstanding achievement in the areas of creativity and mentoring.

Collections

The Arts Centre's collections, exhibitions and research unit has responsibility for the care, development and presentation of the performing arts collection and the public art collection.

The ambitious and engaging *Icons and Insights* exhibition program has driven substantial audience growth both in Melbourne and internationally. *KYLIE: A Free Exhibition* completed its tour of three major venues in the United Kingdom, attracting over 247,000 people. The third Icon exhibition *Nick Cave: The Exhibition* was launched this year.

The scholarly and popular *Insights* exhibition *Drawn to the Stage* displayed over 300 works by 50 designers drawn entirely from the Performing Arts Collection. The collections have also been accessed by a large number of visitors through the research service, over 60 loans to other cultural institutions, 20 collection tours and the increasingly popular *Spotlight* lecture series.

The collections have been developed through substantial donations, commissions and purchases throughout the year, with material worth over \$1.5 million entering the collections. Outstanding acquisitions have included the Nick Cave collection of over 3,000 objects, 15 eye-catching stage outfits personally donated by Dame Edna Everage and the complete archive of the Playbox Theatre.

The Maxwell and Merle Carroll Fund assisted in the commissioning and acquisition of seven major works of art by leading contemporary artists. Numerous patrons have enriched the collection through the donation of material related to our key collecting areas of opera, music, theatre, dance, art and circus.

The care of the collections has focussed on a large and complex project to completely catalogue the entire collection in an electronic form.



Dame Nellie Melba 2008
By Anna Eggert
Acquired through the Maxwell
and Merle Carroll Bequest 2008



Madeleine Eastoe, The Australian Ballet's *The Nutcracker*

Photo: Jim McFarlane

OUR AIM IS TO ATTRACT LARGER, BROADER, MORE DIVERSE AND MORE INVOLVED **AUDIENCES**

Engaging our audience and partners

Connecting with audiences



Heather Walker, Executive

Competition for the leisure dollar is at an all time high as customers consider how to react to more choice and value for money propositions. For this reason, the Arts Centre is embarking on the development of a more strategic approach to connecting with its audiences – past, present and future – and ensuring that through research and analysis, we find ways in which to intelligently link the performance on stage with its potential audience. The introduction of a Customer Relationship Management strategy, linked to the purchase of tickets directly from the Arts Centre whether by phone, internet or in person is the beginning of realising that strategy to provide a seamless and responsive service.

Over the past year we have welcomed a growing number of younger audiences, particularly to events at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. We have also seen growth in the number of people accessing our website now attracting over 1.2million unique visitors annually. This has inevitably led to an increase in the web as a marketing and promotional tool. For some events more than 50% of tickets are sold via this channel and continued growth in this area will be matched by significant functional improvements in the coming months.

It has also been a year of more collaborative marketing especially for the Royal Shakespeare Company's performances for which we worked with Melbourne Theatre Company and Bell Shakespeare to ensure their subscribers could access tickets for this very special season. The nationally collaborative nature of *Edward Scissorhands* (scheduled for a season at the Arts Centre in July 2008) resulted in working alongside fellow marketers from inter-state performing arts venues to streamline the campaign and share collateral and insights.

Turning to the visitor experience on-site, we achieved great success with the retail arm of the business with results 40% ahead of budget. Strong merchandise and program sales from season at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl and Hamer Hall alongside retail sales associated with the Nick Cave exhibition all helped to contribute to the overall result. Also ahead of budget were Sunday Market sales driven by a concentration on occupancy and yield management.

The Arts Centre car park too had a very good year with results 20% over those achieved in the previous year. The project to automate the car park payment systems lead to increased customer choice, better controls and greater efficiencies and no doubt contributed to the positive impact. Food and beverage sales also showed significant growth – 36% up on the previous year. Curve Bar and catering facilities at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl were perhaps the strongest drivers but the entire operation achieved growth. On the back of these results, Smorgon Family Plaza offerings were upgraded and refined in the tail end of the financial year.

Philanthropy



Philanthropic support for the vision and purpose of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust increased significantly this year. In addition to a significant increase in total donations, it was also rewarding to welcome so many new donors to the Arts Centre. This year the number of donors supporting the Arts Centre's performances and programs increased by 26%.

It was also encouraging to receive the first of our endowment gifts with more than \$2 million in support expanding international programming at the Arts Centre. A further \$2 million has been pledged to this exciting new initiative, which will be launched in 2009.

Donors have also auspiced a pilot music program for disabled children, which has been developed by the Arts Centre's Alfred Brash Soundhouse. As a result of these generous gifts 240 Victorian children with profound needs were able to experience the joy of creating music.

With continued donor support we will be able to develop training modules that will be made available to music therapists around the world via the Arts Centre's website.

This is just a snapshot of the vital contribution donors are making to the Art Centre's extensive education programs, free exhibitions, the preservation and extension of the performing arts collection and the new works we are developing through the **FULL TILT** program.

We would particularly like to acknowledge our most loyal and generous donors; our Major Benefactors who have made gifts of over \$1 million and our Arts Angels, who have been involved with the Arts Centre for 10 or more consecutive years and have each donated over \$250,000.

These individuals have made a substantial and enduring contribution to Victoria's vibrant arts culture.

First Call Fund

Over 200 individuals made founding gifts to the First Call Fund. The First Call Fund has been established to enable schools that may be challenged by cost or distance, access to the Arts Centre's performing arts programs and workshops for schools.

Our vision is to enable more Victorian students to access performing arts experiences at the Arts Centre and in their own classrooms.

Research shows the early introduction to the performing arts enhances students' academic results and develops a stronger likelihood of an arts appreciation that carries through into adulthood.

Thanks to the support of our donors we will be able to invite up to 13,000 students from disadvantaged schools to attend an education performance at the Arts Centre over the next 12 months.

Donor list

ARTS ANGELS – MAJOR BENEFACTORS

Single gifts of \$1M or more

The Smorgon Family
Mr Richard Pratt AC & Mrs Jeanne Pratt AC
Rio Tinto
Clemenger Foundation
Mrs Neilma Gantner
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ARTS ANGELS – INDIVIDUALS

Gifts of over \$250,000 and 10 years of involvement

Mr Richard Pratt & Mrs Jeanne Pratt AC
Mr Baillieu Myer AC & Mrs Sarah Myer
Mr Marc Besen AO & Mrs Eva Besen AO
Mr Leon Velik & Mrs Sandra Velik
Mr Sam Smorgon AO & Mrs Minnie Smorgon
The Gandel Family
Mr Solomon Lew and Mrs Rosie Lew
Miss Betty Amsden OAM
Mr Robert Kirby & Mrs Mem Kirby OAM
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Mrs Barbara Haynes

ARTS ANGELS – CORPORATIONS

Gifts of over \$250,000 and 10 years of involvement

Spotless
Commonwealth Bank of Australia
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Tattersall's
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VISIONARY

Annual gifts of \$50,000 or more

Anonymous
Miss Betty Amsden OAM
Mrs Barbara Haynes
Mr Carrillo Gantner AO & Mrs ZiYin Gantner
Mr Baillieu Myer AC and Mrs Sarah Myer

BENEFACTORS

Annual gifts of \$30,000-\$49,999

Mr Marc Besen AO & Mrs Eva Besen AO
The Gandel Family
Mirlex Australia Pty Ltd
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Annual gifts of \$20,000-\$29,999

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Annual gifts of \$10,000-\$19,999

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Mr David Southwick
Mrs Shirley Strauss
Mr Derek Young & Mrs Caroline Young

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Annual gifts of \$5,000-\$9,999

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Mr Bill Burdett & Mrs Sandra Burdett
Ms Rosemary Forbes & Mr Ian Hocking
Matsarol Foundation Pty Ltd
Mr Saul Same & Mrs Lucy Same
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Annual gifts of \$2,000-\$4,999

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Mr Stephen Newton
Mr Peter Redlich AO & Mrs Sally Redlich
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Annual gifts of \$800-\$1999

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Ms Helen Vorrath & Dr Peter Thorne



Photo: Andrew Wuttke



Teddy Tahu Rhodes and Jud Arthur, Opera Australia's *Don Giovanni*

Photo: Jeff Busby

FOUNDATION ASSOCIATES

Annual gifts of \$350-\$799

Mr Michael Allnutt & Mrs Sue Allnutt
Mrs Wilma Attwood
Mr Arthur Charlwood
Miss Rae Corran
Mr Peter Cotter & Mrs Marilyn Cotter
Ms Anita Cyngler
Mr George Deutsch & Mrs Kathy Deutsch
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Ms Margot Vaughan & Ms Bernadette Nicholls
Mrs Beverly Langsford-Willing
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Worldwide Ticketing
Ms Shirley Yeates

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The Jack Brockhoff Foundation
The Ian Potter Foundation
Newboys Foundation
Sidney Myer Fund
The Myer Foundation

BEQUESTS RECEIVED IN 2007

Maxwell & Merle Carroll

SEAT ENDOWMENT GIFTS RECEIVED IN 2007-2008

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Ms Audrey Cope
Mrs Janet Dawson
Mr Charles Hardy
Ms Katherine Kirby
Ms Sandra Makris
Mrs Rosemary Mangiamele
Dr Jan Schapper
Mr Ivan Scown
Mrs Tatsu Stokes

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Mr Chris Begg and Mrs Patricia Begg OAM
Mr Tony Berry
Mr Denis Biggs
Mr Kenneth N Bullen
Mr Douglas Butler
Mr Laurie Carew OAM
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Ms Margot Vaughan and Ms Bernadette Nicholls
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Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Photo: James Penlidis

Corporate Partnerships



Sponsors of the Arts Centre in 2007-08

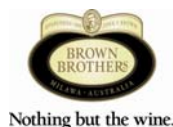
We thank the following sponsors for their varied and significant support

Gallery Sponsor



(Concluded December 07)

Program Partners



(Concluded June 08)



Supply Partners



Production Partner



GROUP TECHNOLOGIES

The Corporate Partnerships unit has made significant progress in establishing and implementing a range of new strategies to increase corporate sector support of the Arts Centre's long-term vision and goals.

A new corporate membership offer has engaged five new supporters as advocates of the Arts Centre, who can entertain and engage with their key clients and stakeholders with a uniquely different and prestigious corporate entertainment experience. In turn, we are thrilled to present our offer to a broadening corporate audience.

New partnerships with Foster's and Brown Brothers has also brought about an increasing and deepening level of support for the Famous Spiegeltent whilst Coca-Cola, Amcor, Nestlé Peters, Magic 1278 and Genovese Coffee remain loyal and committed sponsors of the Arts Centre through various program and supply partner arrangements.

Corporate members

Gold

Pitcher Partners
Malleons Stephen Jaques
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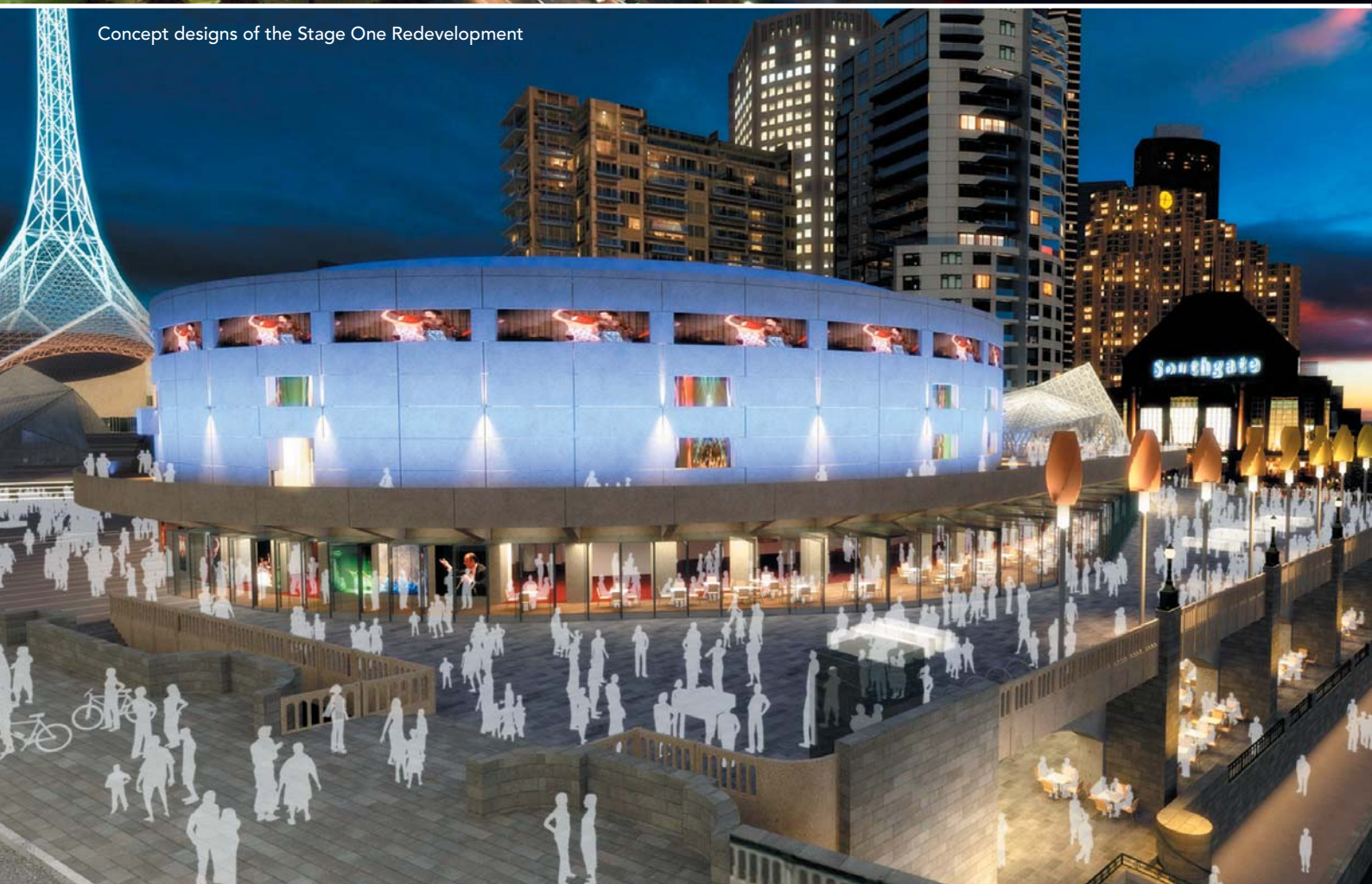
Photo: David Simmonds

STRIVING FOR THE BEST IN OUR FACILITIES AND PEOPLE

Our building and organisation



Concept designs of the Stage One Redevelopment



The place and the precinct



Colin Excell, Executive



The Victorian Government appointed architects fjm to work with the Trust and key stakeholders to develop a master plan to integrate the Arts Centre's redevelopment proposals, with the broader precinct initiatives of the Southbank Plan and development of the vacant YMCA site for cultural purposes.

The Trust's vision for the Southbank Cultural Precinct Redevelopment project is to give Melbourne a world class arts and cultural precinct with a modernised Arts Centre as the centre piece.

The focal point of the precinct will be a new public plaza featuring a promenade sweeping over and down to Sturt Street, connecting adjacent arts venues and integrating the diverse and unique range of arts, cultural and education facilities successfully developed in the precinct over the past 20 years.

Designed in the 1960s and built in the 1970s the Arts Centre's designers did not envisage the development of the surrounding Southbank precinct as we know it today. The Southbank Cultural Precinct Redevelopment will connect the Centre with the Southbank arts and residential precincts, enlivening the precinct and significantly improving accessibility and connectivity to the arts.

At the time of writing this report, the Victorian Government announced Stage One of the project, a \$128.5 million commitment to transform and open up the St Kilda Road Arts precinct to the Yarra River with a redevelopment of Hamer Hall.

The \$128.5 million package involves a major renovation of Hamer Hall including:

- A major new crystalline form on the river terrace of Hamer Hall, providing new connections, amenities and a spectacular new outlook to the city;
- New and expanded foyer spaces;
- New connections with the city, St Kilda Road and river, with new stairs, improved disability access, escalators and lifts;
- Improved acoustics, new auditorium seating, cutting edge staging systems and technology;
- A new flexible multi-purpose performance venue;
- Workshop and rehearsal spaces; and
- Innovative approaches to sustainability including power generation and waste and water management.

Maintaining the facilities



Michael Burns, Executive

The presentation and functionality of the facilities are fundamental to the effective delivery of all Arts Centre activities and the high standards required to ensure a safe and reliable environment have continued to be successfully delivered. As a result of the ongoing drought and a major performance season committed for the Sidney Myer Music Bowl, significant temporary infrastructure to enable irrigation with recycled water was installed to ensure the public lawn areas were able to be sustained to deliver a safe and enjoyable environment for audiences.

Housing the Arts Centre's collections

The Arts Centre's collections are the pre-eminent performing arts collection in Australia and form an important part of the Victorian State Collections.

The existing collections storage facilities are at capacity and additional storage will be required.

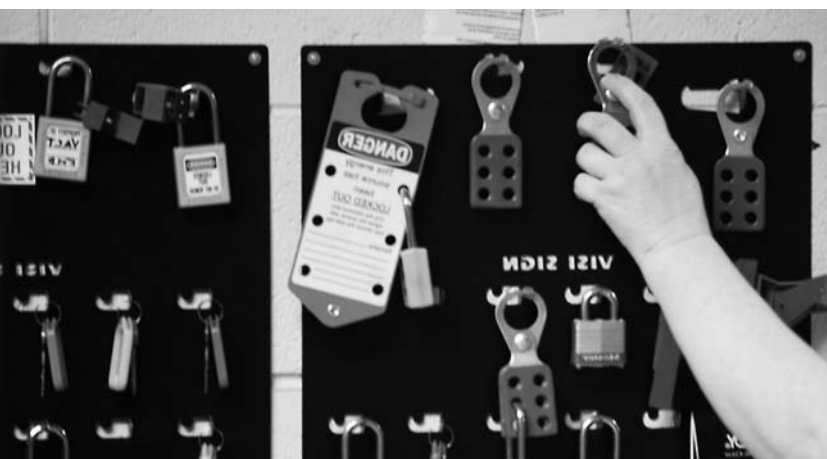
The Trust has been working with other government collecting agencies on a plan for the development of long term integrated storage facilities to house the State Collections.

Renewing and enabling capability

Continuing the focus on upgrading and diversifying the visitor offer, the renewal team have refreshed the ANZ Pavilion, enhancing the catering capability, improving lighting and delivering a new colour scheme throughout this space. Additionally, Mezz Bar has been completely refurbished, with patrons now able to enjoy a new "tapas" style pre-show refreshment offer within a revitalised and comfortable space.

Further works to improve our capacity to deliver a first class facility for our presenters also continued, including the comprehensive upgrade of the State Theatre proscenium lift. This was the first major upgrade of the lift since the opening of the Theatres Building and improved technology and safety features to current-day standards. Other projects delivered within the venues included the upgrading of lighting fixtures, safety improvements to the flying system and replacement of pianos.

Two major projects were completed in the car park during 2007-08; these were the installation of new technology to automate the car parking process enabling a considerable saving in labour costs, and a major upgrade of the Emergency Warning Information System (EWIS). The upgraded EWIS system will greatly improve patron safety for those using the car park should a major incident occur in either the Theatres Building or the NGV.



Environmental leadership

The Arts Centre seeks to take a leadership position to be recognised as a leading performing arts organisation in the sustainable and environmentally responsibility of its operations and activities. This year the Arts Centre's environmental management strategy – Performing Green with

the Arts Centre – has continued to drive change and improvements through the enterprise.

Initiatives implemented include:

- Lamp recycling for all buildings and venues
- Upgrading of urinals to “waterless” urinals, reducing water consumption in these areas by up to 70%
- Installation of a range of new electricity, gas and water meters to allow for “real-time” gathering and analysis of data and consumptions.
- Recycling of waste from all events at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl
- Installation of variable speed drives on the cooling towers to reduce both energy and water consumption
- Replacement of lamps in a number of areas with more energy efficient options
- A staff education program

Environmental performance

Environmental Aspect	Description	Units of Measure	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06
Energy (1)	Electricity	Kilowatt hour (kWhr)	31,044,422	31,207,378	31,384,841
		kWh / event	21,603	22,532	23,043
	Natural Gas	Gigajoules	69,678	70,485	69,230
		GJ / event	50.8	50.9	48.5
	Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO ₂ -e)	44,660	44,920	45,081
		CO ₂ -e / event	31.1	32.4	33.1
Water	Total consumption	Kilolitres (KL)	101,280	98,925	104,492
		KL / event	70.5	71.4	76.7

Notes:

“Event” refers to a main stage event, being within the State Theatres, Playhouse Theatre, Fairfax Studio, Hamer Hall or the Sidney Myer Music Bowl – 2005-06: 1,362; 2006-07: 1,385; 2007-2008: 1,437

1. Energy and water consumption includes both VACT and NGV usage.

People and Culture

The Arts Centre continued to build organisation capability and enhance a positive organisational culture. Projects included:

- Continued progress in building a performance culture with 76% take up of performance and development plans
- 11 staff from a range of business units undertook a Team Leadership development program, designed to improve the effectiveness of staff working as supervisors, team leaders or managers
- 26% of ongoing, fixed term or variable time staff undertook secondments or assignments in higher roles
- 49% of available roles were filled with internal candidates
- Additional resourcing directed towards change management in recognition of the increased level of support required by major change initiatives such as the in-house ticketing project

The Enterprise Development Agreement 2004 expires nominally in July 2008. Planning for a new agreement was undertaken and formal discussions commenced in April.

Public sector values and employment principles

The employment principles outlined in section 8 of the *Public Administration Act 2004* reinforce the public sector values. The employment principles require a public sector employer to establish processes to ensure:



- employment decisions are based on merit
- employees are treated fairly and reasonably
- equal employment opportunity is provided
- human rights as set out in the Charter of *Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* are upheld
- public sector employees have a reasonable avenue of redress against unfair or unreasonable treatment

The Trust has its own set of values, aligned with the Public Sector Values and has a suite of employment policies and guidelines to support the Employment Principles.

The People Matter survey administered by the State Services Authority was again undertaken to monitor the application of the public sector values and employment principles. Results were not complete at the time of publishing.

Measure	KPI	Result
Worker's Compensation	Workcover Performance Rating	75.1% (24.9% better than the industry 3 year average)
	Premium Rate	1.58% of total remuneration (.53% better than the industry rate)
	Average days lost per worker's compensation claim	10 (5.6 in 2006-07)
	Return to work	75% of injured staff returned to work in under 10 days (95% in 2006-07)
Safety Management Systems	Achieve compliance to AS4801	90% (compliance is achieved at 80%)



Workforce Data

	Ongoing				Variable Time				Fixed Term & Casual Employees	
	Employees (Headcount)		FTE		Employees (Headcount)		FTE		FTE	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
Gender										
Male	91	98	89.28	95.68	31	32	19.16	20.63	43.08	27.42
Female	104	86	96.23	80.64	8	16	4.33	8.24	60.42	43.84
Total	195	184	185.51	176.32	39	48	23.49	28.87	103.50	71.26
Age										
Under 25									9.40	
25-34	53	39	51.00	38.23	10	19	5.74	10.93	42.22	24.06
35-44	52	51	47.94	48.22	14	13	8.22	7.50	29.96	20.36
45-54	49	48	48.03	46.33	11	11	7.16	7.49	14.48	14.48
55-64	35	39	34.13	38.13	3	3	1.84	2.03	4.82	5.60
Over 64	6	7	4.41	5.41	1	2	0.53	0.92	2.62	2.66
Total	195*	184**	185.51	176.32	39	48	23.49	28.87	103.50	71.26

Notes:

- (a) Ongoing employees includes people engaged on an open ended contract of employment and executives engaged on a standard executive contract.
- (b) FTE means full time equivalent
- (c) The discrepancy between the number of Fixed Term and Casual staff for 2007 in the table above compared to the 116 reported in the Annual Report for 2006-07 reflects a flawed methodology used in 2007 to convert headcount of casual employees to full time equivalent. The methodology used in 2008 is consistent with that used prior to 2007.

* This figure reflects 174 full time headcount and 21 part-time headcount.

** This figure reflect 167 full time headcount and 17 part-time headcount.

People and Culture



Betty Amsden Fellow

Betty Amsden OAM, is a long-standing, generous supporter of the Arts Centre and has a particular interest in the development of staff. The Betty Amsden Development Fund was established to enhance the capacity of staff to make a significant contribution to the vision and purpose of the Trust, through learning and development activities.

Chris King, Acting Manager, Theatre Technical Development, became the inaugural Betty Amsden Fellow. Chris travelled to the United States and China to review external broadcast capabilities in a range of venues. Possible applications of this technology at the Arts Centre include the streaming of performances on the internet.

Occupational health and safety

The organisation has continued its commitment to OH&S throughout the financial year with a number of key initiatives:

- The Safety, Health & Environment Committee was expanded to ensure contractor representation
- 26 'toolbox' meetings were conducted across the organisation to respond to immediate safety matters
- Continued development and delivery of the wellbeing program
- A commitment to increasing safety and training resources in Production, where the majority of injuries and safety issues have arisen
- Increased use of positive performance indicators

Key performance indicators

A number of KPI's have been identified to enable the measurement of OH&S effectiveness and provide a valuable tool in the strategic management of these issues.

An increase in lost work days has provided challenges for the organisation this financial year and will lead to a renewed emphasis on high risk work areas to improve performance in 2008-09.

Enterprise performance

Strengthening the planning, performance and risk management frameworks continued to be the key focus for the Finance & Business team during 2007-08. Progress in providing better management systems, and developing initiatives to support an increasing emphasis on accountable performance management, can be briefly summarised as follows:

- The implementation of a new financial management system to enable streamlining of the financial management processes and to provide enhanced operational performance analysis and reporting functionality
- The development and implementation of a new budgeting system which will enable an increased focus on program and project performance management
- Enterprise performance reporting was significantly improved during the year and will undergo further development in 2008-09 with the introduction of a new management reporting system.



- The new enterprise risk management framework has been successfully established. During this first year of a three-year implementation plan the necessary policy, process and information systems frameworks have all been established and applied to improve the management of strategic and major operational risk.

International collaboration

The development and implementation of the Arts Centre's international benchmarking project (MARKER), which was launched in 2007, was a significant focus during 2007-08. This project, which expects to establish a learning and development collaborative comprising up to 12 international performing arts centres from the Asia-Pacific, UK-Europe and North American and Canadian regions, has the following key objectives:

- Promoting excellence in performing art centre management
- Providing a collaborative platform for organisational learning and the development of partnering opportunities
- Increasing the engagement of all key stakeholders, and creating learning and development opportunities for staff

Progress in establishing project MARKER can be summarised as follows:

- Development of an appropriate organisational (governance, legal and communication) frameworks and a collaborative learning model based on international best practice

- Executive led visits to 10 international performing arts centres has established the Pacific base for the project (The Sydney Opera House, The Edge in Auckland, and the Arts Centre) and has confirmed the interest of targeted participants in Asia, UK, Europe, North America and Canada.

The focus forward during 2008-09 will be on completing the establishment of the collaborative between the Pacific participants and continuing the engagement of other international participants.

Information systems

Improving the functionality, integration, resilience and cost effectiveness of the core information systems continues to be a significant focus for the Information Systems team. Significant achievements during 2007-08 can be summarised as follows:

- Implementation of a new remote access and wireless networking capability to support increasing staff and presenter mobility
- Installation of a new (20TB) data storage facility to support planned growth in multimedia programs and enable increased digitisation of the performing arts collection
- Upgrading the communications network infrastructure to support the 2008-09 implementation of the new CRM-ticketing system with new 'state of the art' telephony technologies
- Introduction of new server technology which, together with the communications and data storage enhancements, has increased the resilience, scalability and cost effectiveness of the core technology infrastructure.



Sydney Dance Company, *INUK2*

Photo: Josh Robenstone

THE TRUST'S VISION IS OF A SOCIETY THAT VALUES THE PERFORMING ARTS

The Trust and its role

The Trust's role and context



The Trust's core purpose is to enrich the lives of Victorians – culturally, educationally, socially and economically (*Victorian Arts Centre Act 1979 S,5*).

The Trust's role is to:

- provide leadership in the creation, production, presentation, promotion and advocacy of the performing arts
- stimulate curiosity in and understanding of the performing arts
- increase accessibility to and enjoyment of the performing arts
- create partnerships that increase the value and potential of the performing arts
- manage, develop and promote cultural collections
- manage, maintain, develop and present the Centre in first class condition.

Vision and values

The Trust's vision is of a society that values the performing arts. The Trust promotes these values especially as integral to its approach:

- Leadership – show clear direction and purpose, advocate, set an example, excel, creating confidence and motivation
- Creativity – be curious and inventive, flexible and adaptive, always willing to find better ways to do things
- Inspiration – be passionate, energetic and committed
- Inclusivity – welcome and engage, listen and learn, collaborate for mutual benefit
- Integrity – be open, honest and trustworthy, reliable and true to our word: act fairly, ethically and respectfully

Statutory functions

The Trust is a statutory entity subject to the general direction and control of the Minister for the Arts of the Victorian Government.

The functions of the Trust are described in detail in the *Victorian Arts Centre Act, 1979* (as amended).

They are:

- "to control, manage, operate, promote, develop and maintain the Centre;
- to present and produce theatrical performances, operas, plays, dramas, ballets and musical and other performances and entertainment of any kind at any place;
- to promote the use of the theatres, concert hall and other places of assembly by suitable persons and bodies;
- to provide leadership in the promotion and development of the performing arts;
- to ensure the maintenance, conservation, development and promotion of the State collection of performing arts material;
- to oversee the exhibition of performing arts material from the State collection and make any performing arts material from the State collection available on loan to persons or institutions;
- to carry on, whether within or outside Victoria, whether alone or in association with any other person or persons and whether or not in relation to the Centre, a business of providing ticketing, inventory management of admissions, marketing and related services;
- to perform any other functions appropriate to the Centre as the Minister may approve;
- to carry out any function conferred on the Trust under this Act."



Ailsa Piper

"Having zero artistic ability myself, I love being associated, albeit in a small way, with the magic of performance at the Arts Centre. I feel enormously proud that hundreds of thousands of Victorians of all ages leave here feeling inspired, provoked, excited and just plain entertained." Paul Brasher



Paul Brasher

"The most fulfilling and challenging thing is forging connections and spaces where the limitless possibilities of the performing arts are opened to all – regardless of location, age or means. It's dreaming a future while grappling with the present." Ailsa Piper



Mem Kirby OAM



Michael Daddo



Carrillo Gantner AO



Deborah Beale

"I love the performing arts and I love experiencing them at the Arts Centre: the different venues host a wondrous diversity of artists and art forms, and audiences enjoy some of the very best from Australia and around the world." Carrillo Gantner AO



Janet Whiting



David Vigo



Leon van Schaik AO

"I love working with the Arts Centre team and the Trustees to ensure that the redevelopment is a world beater."

Leon van Schaik AO

The organisation

Organisational context

The Arts Centre is a statutory authority of the Arts portfolio. The Arts portfolio is administered by Arts Victoria, a division of the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The Trustees are appointed by the Governor in Council on recommendation of the Minister for the Arts.

Trust

Carrillo Gantner AO (President)
Deborah Beale
Paul Brasher
Michael Daddo
Mem Kirby OAM
Ailsa Piper
Leon van Schaik AO
David Vigo (from 7 August 2007)
Janet Whiting
The Trust met 6 times in 2007-08.

Trust Committees

Risk Management and Audit Committee

The Committee provides advice to the Trust on matters relating to financial management, physical assets, investments, risk management and all aspects of internal and external audit and compliance matters.

Janet Whiting (Chair, Risk)
Paul Brasher (Chair, Audit)
Carrillo Gantner AO
The Committee met eight times in 2007-08

All members of the committee were independent of management of the Arts Centre throughout the period.

Performance and Remuneration Committee

The Committee provides advice to the Trust on executive remuneration, executive performance and general remuneration policy matters.

Carrillo Gantner AO (Chairman)
Paul Brasher
Michael Daddo
Janet Whiting
The Committee met twice in 2007-08.

Artists Advocacy Group

The Group provides advice to the Trust on matters relating to artistic policies and programming, and promoting the Arts Centre as a place for artists.

Ailsa Piper (Chair)
Rachel Burke
Deborah Conway (from August 2006)
Carrillo Gantner AO
(Trust representative)
Caroline Gillmer
Helen Herbertson
Mem Kirby OAM (Trust representative)
Neil Pigot
David Pledger
Sian Prior
Peter Wilson
David Young
The Group met 4 times in 2007-08.

Philanthropists' Council

The Council provides advice to the Trust on matters relating to philanthropic support, and assists the Trust through program development and advocacy in relation to fundraising and sponsorship.

Betty Amsden OAM (Chair)
Terry Campbell AO
Duncan Fischer
Carrillo Gantner AO
Mem Kirby OAM
John Magowan
The Council met 6 times in 2007-08.

The Philanthropists' Council was wound-up as at 30 June 2008.

Organisational chart



The Victorian Government's Arts Policy – “Creative Capacity + Arts for All Victorians”



The Trust complies with all relevant legislation and regulations, and responds to such Government policies and guidelines as may apply to public entities from time to time.

Further to its own Act, the statutes having particular relevance to the Trust's role and operations are:

- *the Financial Management Act 1994,*
- *the Public Administration Act 2004,*

The principal policy framework is *Creative Capacity + Arts for all Victorians*. *Creative Capacity + Arts for all Victorians* is the Victorian Government's policy framework for the arts and cultural heritage sectors.

The Policy outlines three broad goals:

- Arts for all Victorians: a culture of participation
- On the threshold: an economy based on innovation
- Creative place: a dynamic cultural sector

The policy outlines four strategies:

Developing artists, ideas and knowledge

Artistic development, innovation and collaboration, new ideas, new forms of creative expression, a challenging, stimulating and creative environment.

Engaging creative communities

Engaging communities in creative life, broadening access, enabling more people from all backgrounds to enjoy the arts and cultural heritage, valuing creativity, diversity and participation.

Building creative industries

Thriving, viable creative industries and increased cultural productivity, a vibrant successful and sustainable cultural sector.

Creative place and space

Creatively planned spaces, local distinctiveness and a sense of place, civic pride and confidence in cultural facilities and cultural collections, integral to vibrant communities.

Administrative reporting requirements

Freedom of Information

The Trust is an 'agency' for the purposes of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the Act) and is therefore subject to the Act.

Freedom of Information (FOI) arrangements followed by the Trust are in accordance with procedures established under the Act.

The Trust received one request for information from a Member of Parliament during the year, which was still being processed as at the 30 June 2008.

All requests for FOI access must be made in writing to the Arts Centre's Freedom of Information Officer; Annabel Allen, PO Box 7585, St Kilda Road, VIC 8004.

The subject and date range of the information sought should be indicated as precisely as possible, and the request should be accompanied by the application fee of \$22 (waived in certain circumstances).

Apart from the application fee, certain other charges such as search fees and photocopying charges might apply in relation to the provision of documents as stipulated in the Freedom of Information (Access Charges) Regulations 2004.

Further information on the Act may be obtained from www.foi.vic.gov.au

Financial and other information retained by the accountable officer

The following additional information is retained by the Trust for the period covered by the Annual Report and can be accessed subject to a request in accordance with the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, to the Arts Centre's Freedom of Information Officer as detailed above.

- Declarations of pecuniary interests from all relevant officers of the Trust.
- Details of shares held by a senior officer as nominee or held beneficially in a statutory authority.
- Details of publications produced by the Arts Centre about the Arts Centre.
- Details of any external reviews carried out on the Arts Centre.
- Details of changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies charged by the Arts Centre.

- Details of overseas visits undertaken, including objectives and outcomes of each visit.
- Details of major promotional, public relations and marketing activities undertaken by the Arts Centre to develop community awareness of the Arts Centre and its services.
- Details of Trust committees, the purposes of each committee and the extent to which the purposes have been achieved.
- Details of any major external reviews carried out on the Arts Centre.

There were no research and development activities undertaken by the Arts Centre during the reporting period, and there were no significant changes in prices or services during the period.

Competitive Neutrality Policy compliance

Competitive Neutrality requires Government businesses to ensure where services compete or potentially compete with the private sector, that any advantages arising from their Government ownership are removed if they are not in the public interest.

The Trust is committed to the ongoing compliance with the requirements of the competitive neutrality principles and is satisfied that its activities comply with the Victorian Government's Competitive Neutrality Policy.

Statement of compliance with the *Building Act 1993*

The Trust continues to comply with the relevant guidelines, pursuant to Section 220 of the *Building Act 1993*. To ensure compliance, third party surveyors are engaged prior to commencement of any works where planning permits are required and also following construction on all works, to certify compliance with building regulations.

During 2007-08 there were four works certified for approval, two works the subject of mandatory inspections (with the exception of a final inspection for each work) and two occupancy certificates issued.

All buildings of the Trust were compliant with the *Building Act 1993* throughout the period.



Andrew Moon, Executive



Implementation of the Victorian Industry Participation Policy

In October 2003, the Victorian Parliament passed the *Victorian Industry Participation Policy Act 2003* which required public bodies and departments to report on the implementation of the Victorian Industry Participation Policy (VIPP). The Trust is required to apply the VIPP in all tenders over \$3 million in metropolitan Melbourne and \$1 million in regional Victoria. The Trust did not commence or complete any contracts during 2007-08 to which the VIPP applies.

Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001

This section of the report contains information that is required to be published annually under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* (the 'Act') Section 104.

The Trust has established written procedures for handling disclosures made under the Act in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Ombudsman Victoria. A full copy of the procedures is available on the Arts Centre's web site <http://www.theartscentre.com.au>.

The procedures include detailed information about:

- roles and responsibilities of the Disclosure Officer and the Disclosure Coordinator;
- confidentiality provisions;
- procedures for the conduct of investigations;
- action to be taken after an investigation;
- managing the welfare of the whistleblower;
- management of the person against whom a disclosure had been made.

In respect of the Act:

- The Trust has not received any disclosures during the year, consequently, the Trust has not referred any disclosures to the Ombudsman for determination as to whether they are public interest disclosures, or for the Ombudsman to investigate, and there have been no investigations of disclosed matters taken over by the Ombudsman from the Trust during the year.
- The Ombudsman referred one disclosed matter to the Trust during the year, which related to officers of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust. Pursuant to Part 4 of the Act, the allegations were determined by the Ombudsman to be public interest disclosures within the meaning of the Act.
- The Ombudsman investigation found that the disclosed matter was not substantiated.
- The Ombudsman recommended further monitoring and review by the Trust of some administrative procedures to ensure ongoing monitoring practices were sufficient, and requested a requested a report on same to be supplied within three months. On receipt of that report, the Ombudsman advised that he considered the matter finalised.
- The Trust has made no request under section 74 of the Act to the Ombudsman to investigate disclosed matters during the year.
- The Trust has not declined to investigate a disclosed matter during the year.

Subsequent Events

There have been no events which have occurred since 30 June 2008 that materially affect any of the statements made as information providers of this report, or that will impact on the operations of the Trust in future periods.

Attestation under the Victorian Government's Risk Management Framework

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info@theartscentre.net.au
www.theartscentre.net.au

the Arts Centre
ABN 83 295 983 059



I, Carrillo Gantner, certify that the Arts Centre has risk management processes in place consistent with the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard, and in respect of the internal control systems that enable the executive to understand, manage and satisfactorily control risk exposures, certify the following:

The Arts Centre's revised enterprise-wide risk management framework is in the process of an implementation and continuous improvement cycle. As part of this process during the year there has been assessment and management of all strategic risks, assessment and management of all significant operational risks, an internal audit of entity level risks and controls, assessment and management of risks on all significant organisation projects, and the development of a compliance management framework has commenced. In addition, the risk appetite and tolerance of the Organisation has been determined by the Trust, a revised risk management policy introduced, the foundations of the organisation's risk universe have been established and improved risk reporting processes have been implemented.

The next financial year will see assessment and management of the remaining operational risks, implementation of a control self-assessment and audit process, implementation of the compliance management framework, full assessment and management of interagency and state-wide risks, and design and implementation of a fraud management framework.

The Risk Management and Audit Committee verifies this assurance and that the risk profile of the Arts Centre has been critically reviewed within the last 12 months.

Carrillo Gantner, President of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust

18 September 2008



Photo: Josh Robenstone

kd lang

Summary of results 2007-08 (F2008)



Tony Chamberlain, Executive



Financial performance

Strong revenue growth and contained expenditure resulted in a substantial lift in the F2008 net operating result. This result reflects substantial increases in earned revenue, resulting from programming, visitor services and philanthropic and sponsorship activities. Increases in operating expenditure (excluding depreciation) have been limited to building organisational capability, increased investment in programming and supporting revenue generating activities.

Based on the audited financial statements, total revenues increased by 33% for F2008 to \$62.5 million (F2007: \$47.0 million) and total expenditure has remained static at \$64.0m (F2007: 64.1 million) reducing the annual deficit to only \$1.5 million (F2007 \$17.1 million).

Excluding the unfunded annual depreciation expense of \$12.9 million (F2007: \$19.3 million) the net result for F2008 was an operating cash surplus of \$11.4 million (F2007: \$2.2 million). The substantial reduction in depreciation expense is a result of the devaluation of fixed assets following a change in valuation policy which occurred in F2007.

In accordance with the relevant accounting standards this operating surplus includes donations to the collections, capital receipts credited to endowment funds or applied to capital projects, and revenues received in advance which are to be applied against F2009 expenditure. Excluding these revenues would reduce the F2008 cash operating surplus to \$4.8 million (F2007: \$1.2 million) and adjust the comparable increase in total operating revenues for F2008 to 21% (F2007: 8%)

Due to limited capital funding, \$3.0 million of this surplus was required to support capital projects (F2007: \$0.4 million). Adjusting for this investment reduces the residual cash operating surplus to \$1.8 million (F2007:\$0.8 million).

Total equity has increased marginally to \$405.6 million (F2007: \$404.4 million) due mainly to an increase in value of the collections (\$2.9 million) and capital contribution of (\$1.1 million) offset by the overall deficit (- \$1.5 million) and a diminution in investment funds (\$1.4 million). The overall liquidity position has improved which reflects the improved cash operating performance (\$1.0 million) plus advance funding (\$3.8 million) held for application during F2009.

Performance trends

Financial performance is monitored on a monthly basis against targets set in the cultural enterprise plan. The overall residual cash operating surplus of \$1.8 million (F2007: 0.8 million) represents a satisfactory performance from all business units and a particularly strong performance from programming and visitor services operations.

Most of the key non-financial performance indicators, which present a range of measures relevant to each business unit, show a positive improvement in performance for F2008.

Attendance at performances, public programs and exhibitions has increased by 11% since F2007 to record similar overall levels to F2006 which included the impact of Commonwealth Games visitation and attendance at performances. On-line activity continues to grow and patronage of our visitor facilities (food and beverage and car park usage) has also increased. The pattern of improvement in overall venue utilisation continues with increased events in Hamer Hall and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

Financial Performance	F2008 \$m	F2007 \$m	F2006 \$m	F2005 \$m
Total Revenue	62.5	47.0	42.4	39.5
Less Total Expenses	51.0	44.8	43.1	39.6
Net Operating Result	11.5	2.2	-0.7	-0.1
Less Depreciation	13.0	19.3	18.9	19.8
Net Reported result	-1.5	-17.1	-19.6	-19.9
Total Assets	421.8	419.9	504.7	507.6
Less total Liabilities	16.2	15.5	14.7	13.1
Total Equity	405.6	404.4	490.0	494.5

Patronage Profile ¹	F2008 (000s)	F2007 (000s)	F2006 (000s)	F2005 (000s)
Attendances at Performances	1,278	1,250	1,249	1,14
Attendances at Public Programs	316	242	399	211
Attendances at Exhibitions	834	699	808	836
Total Attendances³	2,428	2,191	2,456	2,193
Online Visitors	1,222	1,116	982	375
Other Visitors & Facility Users ²	1,336	1,209	na	na
Total Visitors	2,558	2,325	982	375

Events Profile	F2008	F2007	F2006	F2005
Performance Events	1,360	1,378	1,425	1,089
Public Program Events	3,624	4,294	4,212	3,887
Exhibitions & Displays ⁴	29	38	43	25
Total Events	5,013	5,710	5,680	5,001

Venue Utilisation	F2008 %	F2007 %	F2006 %	F2005 %
Hamer Hall	76	81	73	78
State Theatre	93	99	99	98
Playhouse	97	98	90	96
Fairfax Studio	97	98	98	92
Average mainstage utilisation⁵	91	94	90	91
Sidney Myer Music Bowl	26	24	30	18

Facilities Management	F2008 %	F2007 %	F2006 %	F2005 %
Facilities Presentation	92	92	92	na
Facilities Functionality	97	99	na	na

Notes

1. This measure was changed in F2008 to distinguish attendees from visitors
2. For F2007 and F2008 this measure includes car park users and food & beverage customers
3. This measure previously included on-line visitors to the collection
- 4 This measure was changed in F2008 to exclude exhibition and display days
5. This measure was changed in F2008 to exclude maintenance days

Disclosure index

The Annual Report of the Victorian Arts Centre Trust is prepared in accordance with all relevant Victorian legislation. This index has been prepared to facilitate identification of the organisation's compliance with statutory disclosure requirements.

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The Victorian Arts Centre Trust Annual Report 2007-08 is published as two separate documents – the Report of Operations and the Financial Statements. The page references in this Disclosure Index refer both sections. Those pertaining to the Financial Statements document are referenced with the accompanying 'F'.

* FRD is a Financial Reporting Direction issued by the Minister for Finance pursuant to s8 of the *Financial Management Act 1994*. Compliance with FRDs is mandatory.

** SD is a Standing Direction under the *Financial Management Act 1994*. Compliance with SDs is mandatory.

via St Kilda Road ↗ ↘



