

Arts Centre Melbourne announce Alter State a new major arts disability festival



EMBARGOED, 10:00AM AEST, 26 JULY 2021 – [Arts Centre Melbourne](#) and [Arts Access Victoria](#) are excited to announce [Alter State](#), a major arts and disability festival.

Alter State will open with a launch event week this November and build to the main festival in 2022. There will be live performances, talks and workshops celebrating contemporary disability arts in Australia and Aotearoa (New Zealand).

“Alter State is more than a presentation of amazing art; it is a two-year journey of artists exploring creativity shaped by our geographic location and histories, telling stories from our region and delving into new approaches to Access in a program that we hope will seed and imagine diverse futures,” says **Wendy O’Neill, Arts Centre Melbourne’s Creative Producer, Access & Inclusion and Alter State co-lead.**

“It has been many years since we have had a major cross art form event platforming the work of Deaf and Disabled artists in Victoria. We have seen incredible examples in other states and other parts of the world but to have that in our backyard again feels significant,” says **Caroline Bowditch, CEO of Arts Access Victoria and Alter State co-lead.**

“The sector and the community have been missing the opportunity to come together, share different stories and wisdom, and showcase the incredible talent and experience that Deaf and Disabled artists can bring.”

Joshua Pether, alongside fellow Foundation artists **Rodney Bell** and **Carly Findlay OAM** have helped develop Alter State.

“I don’t see the festival as only being a platform to showcase performances by artists with a disability but rather, and importantly, a place where we can have conversations and spark dialogue about what we want to see for the future in our community,” says Pether.

“We want to build on these conversations, deepen the rigour to our practice and apply that to our performances and the work we create. If we create slowly and methodically, then we can potentially change the face of disability arts in Australia, become a major artistic voice in the Melbourne arts community and within the Pacific region.”

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In **November 2021**, *Alter State* will launch.

The opening event will include two commissions – one in collaboration with the [Metro Tunnel Creative Program](#) and the other a part of the UK/Australia Season, a collaboration between the [British Council](#) and the **Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**.

Further details regarding this event will be announced in **early September 2021**.

Images can be found [here](#).

Alter State is possible due to our strategic partnership with the [Victorian Health Promotion Foundation \(VicHealth\)](#) and project support from a range of funding bodies and Philanthropic supporters.

In accordance with COVIDSafe guidelines, Arts Centre Melbourne's venues will be closed until Wednesday 28 July. We continue to offer engaging online experiences via our digital hub – [Together With You](#).

For more information including: our current health and safety policies; bookings for free and ticketed events; and other digital content and experiences, please visit artscentremelbourne.com.au.

For more information about Arts Centre Melbourne, please visit www.artscentremelbourne.com.au or phone 1300 182 183. Become a fan of Arts Centre Melbourne on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

For further media information and interviews, please contact Advisor, Media and Communications, Michael Barr on 0434 410 939 or michael.barr@artscentremelbourne.com.au.

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