

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: SA Performance Makers Forum 2012

Friday 7 September 2012, Adelaide College of the Arts

Full report prepared by Jennifer Greer Holmes and Jane Howard and is available on request.

BACKGROUND the Who and the How

The Forum was presented by the Arts Industry Council of South Australia (AICSA), and supported by a \$5,000 grant from Arts SA, \$300 from Theatre Network Victoria, and in-kind support. The forum was organised by a committee comprising: Craig Harrison, Deputy Chair AICSA and Manager Artform Development, Country Arts SA, Andy Packer, Artistic Director, Slingsby, Steve Mayhew, Artistic Director Kumuwuki/Big Wave Regional Arts Conference, Geordie Brookman, Artistic Director, State Theatre Company of SA and Jennifer Greer Holmes, independent arts manager. The committee prepared a list of topics based on similar events in 2009 and 2010 that were then shortlisted using Survey Monkey and voted on by the sector. Jennifer Greer Holmes coordinated the program including the venue, guest speakers, catering and documentation on the day and prepared a report with assistance from Jane Howard. Guest speakers included The Honourable Lord Mayor Stephen Yarwood, Nicole Beyer, Director, Theatre Network of Victoria and Danielle Madsen, The Australian Centre of Social Innovation.

PROGRAM and Method

Nine topics were selected by survey for discussion sessions: Vacant & Empty Spaces; Personal Sustainability; Resilient Artists; Arts SA: The Changing SA Landscape; Cultural Leadership in SA; How can we make people want art as much as beer?; Curated performance space in SA; How can we influence the political landscape in SA?; Producers: The Changing SA Landscape; Use of local artists by SA festivals and venues. Approximately fifty performance makers attended during the day representing a broad range of artistic practice. Performance makers chose roundtable sessions about the topics of most relevance to their practice. Each roundtable was facilitated and documented by a representative from the organising committee.

KEY MESSAGES Themes and recommendations

Each of the nine roundtable discussions are documented in the full version of the report, which is available on request. It is acknowledged that dialogue at the roundtables is based on the opinions of participants and may contain inaccuracies. Where this potentially occurs, words such as 'perceived' or 'in the opinion of' have been inserted. Key action points are listed for each topic.

Recurring themes and recommendations that emerged from a number of the sessions were:

- investment of \$2 million required in the medium sector of the arts in South Australia
- the need for a central, well equipped (portable floor and rig), curated, 120-200 seat performance space
- the need for a central, administered, rehearsal and resource space
- upgrade government owned Queens Theatre and alternative spaces within the Adelaide Festival Centre
- adequate funding for content as well as infrastructure to boost the reputation of South Australian arts
- advocacy to progress arts policy across the three levels of government and the major political parties
- a consistent longer term framework for arts in South Australia
- arts practitioners communicating to share resources, knowledge, artistic processes and support

This report builds on the work of the Independent Performance Makers 2011 weekend.