

NEW PERFORMING ARTS VENUE STATEMENT POLICY
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND ARTS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the New Performing Arts Venue, located at the corner of Roe and William Streets in Northbridge. The venue will feature a 575 seat main theatre and a 200 seat flexible studio theatre, with associated rehearsal spaces.

2. RATIONALE

The purpose of the venue is to:

- facilitate a greater engagement with new, larger and more diverse audiences for the performing arts in Western Australia;
- develop and explore new and existing theatre forms;
- provide a range of opportunities for the general public to engage with performing artists and artforms in formal, and informal contexts; and
- provide facilities to support the presentation of work by professional performing arts groups and companies.

The programming and operational policies and processes of the venue manager will reflect these intentions.

The venue is envisaged as a contemporary performance space developed primarily for spoken-word drama, but with the ability to present dance, visual theatre and some forms of musical presentation.

There are many forms of performing arts, with new expressions being developed by artists every day. Because of this evolving nature of artistic expression, the lines between artforms have become blurred integrating theatre with dance, puppetry, visual arts, music and technology.

These new forms, in conjunction with new interpretations of classic works, constitute contemporary performing arts, and it is intended that the venue will present a wide range of these theatrical experiences.

For the purposes of this policy, 'contemporary' is defined as reflecting current attitudes and current practice. The use of the term contemporary theatre refers to the presentation of new works along with the re-investigation and re-interpretation of extant and classical works.

3. SCOPE

The policy applies to the New Performing Arts Venue.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Statement of Vision

This is a place to create and experience professional performing arts in new and diverse ways; to engage with distinctive theatrical works; and to embrace the ever-evolving world of theatre.

Theatre is a social act, an interactive experience between audiences and performers. Thus, the venue provides an array of settings for these unique human activities to take place.

4.2 Role of the Venue

4.2.1. Level of artforms to be supported by the venue

While spoken-word drama will be the predominant artform, the theatre management will not present drama exclusively. The venue will also need to present contemporary dance and, particularly in the studio, provide significant opportunities for the presentation of smaller scale contemporary works many of which will be created by independent companies.

While the venue will be the 'home' of the resident and associate companies it will also present the work of local, national and international companies that will either hire the venue or be engaged as part of a curated program.

The program will reflect the diverse range of theatre forms for a broad audience of existing and new theatre-goers through:

- liaising with resident/associate companies in order to promote a cohesive, active venue and ongoing audience development;
- ensuring an active venue and ongoing audience engagement through strategic programming of work toured in, that showcases contemporary artforms and interpretations into the main house and studio;
- ensuring an active venue and ongoing audience engagement through strategic hiring policy that showcases contemporary artforms and interpretations; and
- partnering with local producers to create new works.

4.2.2. Key stakeholders and partners

The venue will be a focal point for the community that will contribute to a more vibrant and engaging capital city. The venue will assist the local performing arts industry through:

- programming contemporary work and show-casing the work of local companies and artists;
- careful management and marketing of the venue and its programme to contribute to overall audience development for the performing arts;

- maintaining accessible and appropriate audience facilities and services; and
- ensuring equitable and affordable use of the venue for both funded performing arts organisations and independent producers/performers.
- The venue will support the government in developing and supporting arts and culture activities through:
- communicating and seeking appropriate partnerships with Cultural Centre co-tenants and the arts sector generally; and
- efficiently operating and maintaining facilities for the presentation of the performing arts.

4.2.3. A living building – engaging the local and broader community

The venue will embody the idea of a dynamic hub, providing a place where people can be stimulated and inspired by a constantly changing array of activities and experiences. It will be a place that people want to take ownership of, use and recommend. It will become a cultural landmark that the sector and wider community recognise as an important asset to living in Western Australia.

Furthermore, the new performing arts venue will be a place that:

- can provide identity for the community
- is not intimidating or difficult to use
- is accessible to all
- has a welcoming ambience
- is vibrant, lively, and safe
- contributes to a memorable experience
- creates an expectation of excellence

To meet these aspirations, and to contribute to the vibrancy of the community, the venue will seek and promote opportunities for the development of complementary relationships between the venue and local residents, businesses, presenting organisations and cultural centre neighbours.

4.2.4. Specific Objectives

The venue will be a vital component in building a competitive advantage for Western Australia by supporting and promoting new, creative, performing arts products.

1. The venue will present contemporary performing arts in diverse ways with a focus on distinctive, professional, and contemporary work;
2. The venue will be technically equipped to ensure that audiences are able to experience this diversity of work, particularly works which are enhanced by or which interface with technology.

The Artistic Programming Policy is listed as PDM-004/2008 and provides a framework for the future programming of the venue.

4.2.5. Possible Outcome Measures

All measures would need to have initial benchmarks agreed by Perth Theatre Trust and the venue manager. These initial benchmarks will be negotiated with the Department of Culture and the Arts based on current levels of activity in Western Australian contemporary performing arts.

5. DEFINITIONS

NPAV New Performing Arts Venue

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

The Artistic Programming Policy is listed as PDM-004/2008 and provides a framework for the future programming of the venue.

7. POLICY OWNERSHIP

The owner of the New Performing Arts Venue Statement Policy is the Director General of Department of Culture and the Arts.

All feedback relating to this document should be referred to the policy owner:

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