

Element 01

# Our Stakeholders

## COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The support of Government, corporate partners and private individuals is crucial to enabling the Opera House, a not-for-profit public trading enterprise, to be all it can be.

Their contribution augments revenue from the Opera House's trading operations, allowing it to present diverse art forms to the widest possible audience, education opportunities to young Australians regardless of their location or circumstance and access to those constrained by physical, financial or social disadvantage.

With other stakeholders who contribute their time, expertise and resources, they are critical to ensuring that the Opera House remains, as our Enterprise Strategy states, "a masterpiece that belongs to all Australians".

In FY15 the Opera House received an endowment from the NSW Government of \$13.17 million, which represented 12% of our operating revenue. Giving by individual donors and foundations contributed \$1.78 million to the Opera House, an increase of 51% on last year's \$1.18 million. Cash sponsorship was \$2.59 million, up from \$2.15 million in FY14.

Samsung entered its third year as Principal Partner and continued to break new ground, including a new Digital Discovery Tour and a whole new world of virtual reality experiences. The interactive educational app *Quest to Stop the Mischief-Making Opera Ghost* uses beacon technology to provide location-based educational content, aligns with the national curriculum, and is specially designed to challenge Years 3 and 4 students to explore the Opera House. Samsung and the Opera House collaborated to capture, in 360-degree virtual reality, key moments from Australian label Future Classic's sold-out 10th-anniversary concert on the Northern Broadwalk as part of 2015's Vivid LIVE program. Another first, a free virtual-reality performance by Squarepusher offered by Samsung in the Main Box Office Foyer

to celebrate the British dubstep pioneer's Opera House debut, proved a huge hit with Vivid LIVE patrons.

In September 2014, Maserati Australia became the Opera House's exclusive auto partner, aligning with the All About Women festival, Summer at the House and the Opera House's Opening Nights.

Long-term partner MasterCard became a Major Partner of the Opera House from 1 May 2015 and AMP Capital increased its support, including backing the Opera House's signature annual festival of First Nations culture, Homeground, and the Danish-Australian student exchange program MADE by the Opera House.

The growing contribution of the Opera House's community of donors was one of the year's success stories. Philanthropic revenue rose to \$1.78m in FY15, a threefold increase in three years. Donors contributed time, funds and vital expertise to enable the Opera House to realise ambitions that would otherwise have been impossible, from bespoke programming for children with multiple and profound disabilities, to subsidised tickets for the financially disadvantaged (The Balnaves Foundation Open House Program, see Spotlight p.15), the forthcoming Indigenous dance competition Dance Rites and the June purchase of the tapestry *Les dés sont jetés* ("The Dice are Cast"), which brought a vital element of the Opera House story back to the House (see Spotlight, p.20).

An exciting new partnership developed during FY15 culminated in the announcement on 1 July 2015 that the Opera House and Flying Fruit Fly Circus, based in Albury-Wodonga, would begin a three-year association to deliver performance and training opportunities for both organisations. The partnership was announced by Greg Aplin, Member for Albury, at the opening night of a return Opera House season of the Flying Fruit Flies' *Circus Under My Bed*, an acclaimed production that has been nominated for Helpmann and Sydney Theatre awards.

## ACCESS STRATEGIC PLAN

The third and final year of the Opera House's third Access Strategic Plan created tangible benefits for patrons, staff and performers with disabilities, as well as enhancing the Opera House's leadership and reputation in arts access.

The Access Program 2015 was launched in February by the NSW Minister for Ageing, Disability and Multicultural Services, the Hon. John Ajaka MLC, at an event in the Utzon Room attended by the Opera House's Accessibility Ambassador, Louise Sauvage OAM. Accessible performances and experiences were launched as part of the Opera House's Creative Learning, International and Children and Families programming. Resident Companies Opera Australia, Sydney Theatre Company, Bell Shakespeare and, for the first time, the Australia Chamber Orchestra are participating in the program, together with Artistic Associate the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, also for the first time.

The Opera House piloted an excursion program in partnership with the Art Gallery of NSW for students with intellectual disabilities, which mirrors its existing partnership with the Museum of Contemporary Art. With Opera Australia and the Giant Steps school we also presented an autism-friendly performance of the musical *The King and I*.

Designated accessible viewing areas on the Forecourt and special customer-transport arrangements were incorporated into major festival events on site, including New Year's Eve celebrations and Vivid LIVE events. For the second year, the Opera House offered free audio-description of *Lighting the Sails*, the centrepiece of the Vivid Sydney festival, for more than 120 people.

The Opera House hosted Mark Morris Dance Group's innovative global program Dance for PD (Parkinson's Disease), including a free community class for people with Parkinson's and their carers, as well as a two-day introductory teacher-training workshop to assist in building a network of qualified teachers who can lead Dance for PD classes across Sydney (see Spotlight, p.35).

In partnership with Lifestart and the Royal Institute of Deaf and Blind Children we offered Accessible Babies Proms accompanied by a free Sing and Play program in the foyer (see Spotlight, p.23). The Opera House partnered with Accessible Arts NSW and the Museum of Contemporary Art to provide an annual accredited Professional Development Day for special education teachers, titled Dance, Theatre and Visual Art: Engaging Students with Disability.

The Opera House continued its support for emerging artists with disabilities. Can You See Me? Company, an initiative of Cerebral Palsy Alliance, performed its latest work *Waiting Room* to sold-out audiences in the Studio.

## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The second year of the Opera House's third Reconciliation Action Plan (2014-2016) concentrated on expanding the Opera House's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistic content and audience participation, increasing Indigenous education and employment opportunities, and enhancing cultural awareness. Key elements were the first Homeground festival (November), Indigenous work experience and trainee programs and the continuation of the popular Indigenous digital education tour *Guwanyi Walama: To Tell and Return*. Work began on Dance Rites, a new annual competition open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia. Funded by Opera House donors, led by the Creative Music Fund, Dance Rites aims to revitalise vanishing Indigenous cultural leadership and practices, including language and traditional instruments. Participating groups will perform at Homeground 2015 in November and the winning group will be featured at Homeground 2016.

In November 2014, the Opera House presented Redfern Talks Back, a project funded by the NSW Government to engage, through the medium of forum theatre, young at-risk people from the Redfern community. A five-week workshop rehearsal period and subsequent performances allowed participants to explore and discuss matters of importance and relevance. The Opera House worked with a range of organisations, including Redfern Police, the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, Tribal Warrior, Redfern Community Centre, Headspace and Youthblock Mental Health services, Alexandria Park High School, WEAVE, The Settlement and the Aboriginal Housing Company. The workshops culminated in two schools shows and one evening performance. Student and teacher feedback was highly positive, indicating that the show had an encouraging impact on students and genuine education outcomes.

Students and teachers from schools in Western Australia's Pilbara region took part in a digital learning project that combined the expertise of the Opera House's Digital Creative Learning team and the West Australian Department of Education's eLearning Pilbara Project (see Spotlight, p.33). Using knowledge and skills developed through the Opera House's Broadband Enabled Education and Skills Services pilot project, *From Bennelong Point to the Nation*, we reached six schools with a strong Indigenous student body. Some experienced the interactive digital tour *Guwany Walama: To Tell and Return*, while others watched a live-streamed performance of the play *Bindjareb Pinjarra* and took part in a post-show discussion. Students from two Western Sydney schools and one from Queensland attended the performance of *Bindjareb Pinjarra* in the Studio.

#### MADE BY THE OPERA HOUSE

MADE by the Opera House entered its second year in FY15. The Multidisciplinary Australian Danish Exchange program was established in 2013 during our 40th Anniversary celebrations and gives five Australian and five Danish students in the fields of architecture, engineering or design the chance to work in each other's country on collaborative projects. By the time it ends, the 10-year exchange will create an alumni group of 100 professionals, 50 Danes and 50 Australians, to continue the international and cross-disciplinary links first forged by the Opera House into new generations. Danes Caroline Richardt Beck, Jakob Franijeur Holmqvist-Larsen, Pernille Krieger, Jonas Snedevind Nielsen and Karina Korsgaard Jensen visited Sydney in July-August 2014 for six weeks. Australians Alex Crowe, Nina Tory-Henderson, Nicholas Werrett, Julianne Lipman and Alasdair Mott completed their six-week program in Denmark in January and February 2015. The Danes' project involved envisaging ways to deepen the Opera House visitor experience for future generations and the Australians imagined future use and development of a site in east Copenhagen.

#### DIGITAL REACH

In FY15 there were more than six million video views of our online content, while more than 44 million minutes of our content was watched on YouTube, equating to almost 84 years in play time.

During Vivid LIVE a worldwide audience had access to a panoramic view that showed Lighting the Sails in context, created by digitally stitching together hi-res photographs for a seamless 360-degree view

of the Sydney Harbour foreshore. This panorama was published on Google Views, as was a later project that provided panoramic views of the interior of most Opera House venues. Together, the two projects attracted more than two million views. More than three million people engaged with Vivid LIVE digital content online.

Our social media channels have an audience of 1.3 million, with a Facebook reach of 135 million. The number of Facebook followers across all Opera House channels increased 10.6% to 674,205, Twitter followers increased 42.9% to 87,394 and Instagram followers increased 81.6% to 22,013.

We generated \$48.4 million through the website, chiefly from ticket and tours sales. This was a 15% increase in revenue on the previous year. Web revenue via mobile devices increased by \$3 million, or 5%, on FY14.

The digital realm is increasingly the Opera House's eighth stage, and in FY15 two All About Women festival sessions were live-streamed to locations in Parramatta, Albury-Wodonga, Mackay and Christchurch, New Zealand, for a combined audience of about 500 (see Spotlight, p.59). Feedback from Christchurch was exceptionally positive: "The live-stream event was a huge success for us. We sold out by Friday and had around 150 people. The audience really engaged with the panel, laughing a lot and breaking into spontaneous applause along with the live audience. We have established that there is an appetite for this kind of event and we would love to do some more in the future."

#### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The second year of the 2014-2016 Environmental Sustainability Plan made significant advances which were rewarded with a Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) 4 Star Green Star – Performance rating. The independent rating assessed our performance as industry best practice, while the Opera House is one of few World Heritage buildings globally to achieve green certification. As GBCA Chief Executive Officer Romilly Madew said when the award was announced in August, most buildings that achieve a Green Star rating are new, and the Opera House "would have to be the most challenging" of all rated buildings. "If you can green the Opera House, you can green anything," she said. NSW Deputy Premier the Hon. Troy Grant MP said: "The endorsement sends a clear message that green buildings don't have to be new. Even the most recognisable and historic landmarks can earn a place among the most celebrated

sustainable buildings in the world." The Opera House also won the NSW Government Green Globe Award for Sustainability in a Heritage Building for the Concert Hall lighting upgrade to LEDs, which saved 75% on energy for these fittings while maintaining heritage values and improving theatre performance.

The Opera House has achieved a 16% reduction in energy use since FY01 (increasing from 9.3% in FY13), saving an estimated \$400,000 a year in energy costs. We are on track to achieve our 20% electricity-consumption reduction target by June 2016. Vivid LIVE used 100% Green Power (120MWh) from renewable energy and tracked and offset other emissions including flights, catering and waste to be carbon neutral. Waste reduction initiatives included a successful OzHarvest food-donation trial during Vivid LIVE, design development for a waste and recycling area in the new loading dock and an independent waste audit.

While overall water use was lower in FY15 than FY14, the Opera House has not yet reached its target of returning to the water use level of FY06 by June 2016. The Vehicle Access and Pedestrian Safety (VAPS) project, high visitor numbers and new toilet facilities in the Lower Concourse were key factors.

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## The Future

- ▶ Intel becomes a Major Partner; broadcast studios renamed Intel Broadcast Studios (September)
- ▶ The Dance Rites dance competition debuts at Homeground 2015 (November)
- ▶ Priority-ticket access feature developed for Samsung mobile users (October)
- ▶ Upgraded search function for Opera House website, making it easier for customers to find content (August)
- ▶ Premiere of *Odyssey*, an interactive sensory theatre work designed for children with profound and complex disabilities (August)
- ▶ Reconciliation Action Plan projects include development of our first Indigenous cultural awareness e-learning module, internship program, audience development strategy and a staff immersion program
- ▶ Utzon-Le Corbusier tapestry conservation under way in preparation for public display in the Opera House
- ▶ Five Danish students of engineering, architecture or design (in the built environment) visit Sydney in July 2015, the third cohort in MADE by the Opera House student exchange program
- ▶ Third group of Australian participants in MADE by the Opera House selected to travel to Denmark in January 2016
- ▶ Second recipient of the Lloyd Martin Travelling Scholarship for Emerging Arts Leaders, Anke Timm, selected following last year's \$100,000 five-year commitment to funding from the Alexandra and Lloyd Martin Family Foundation