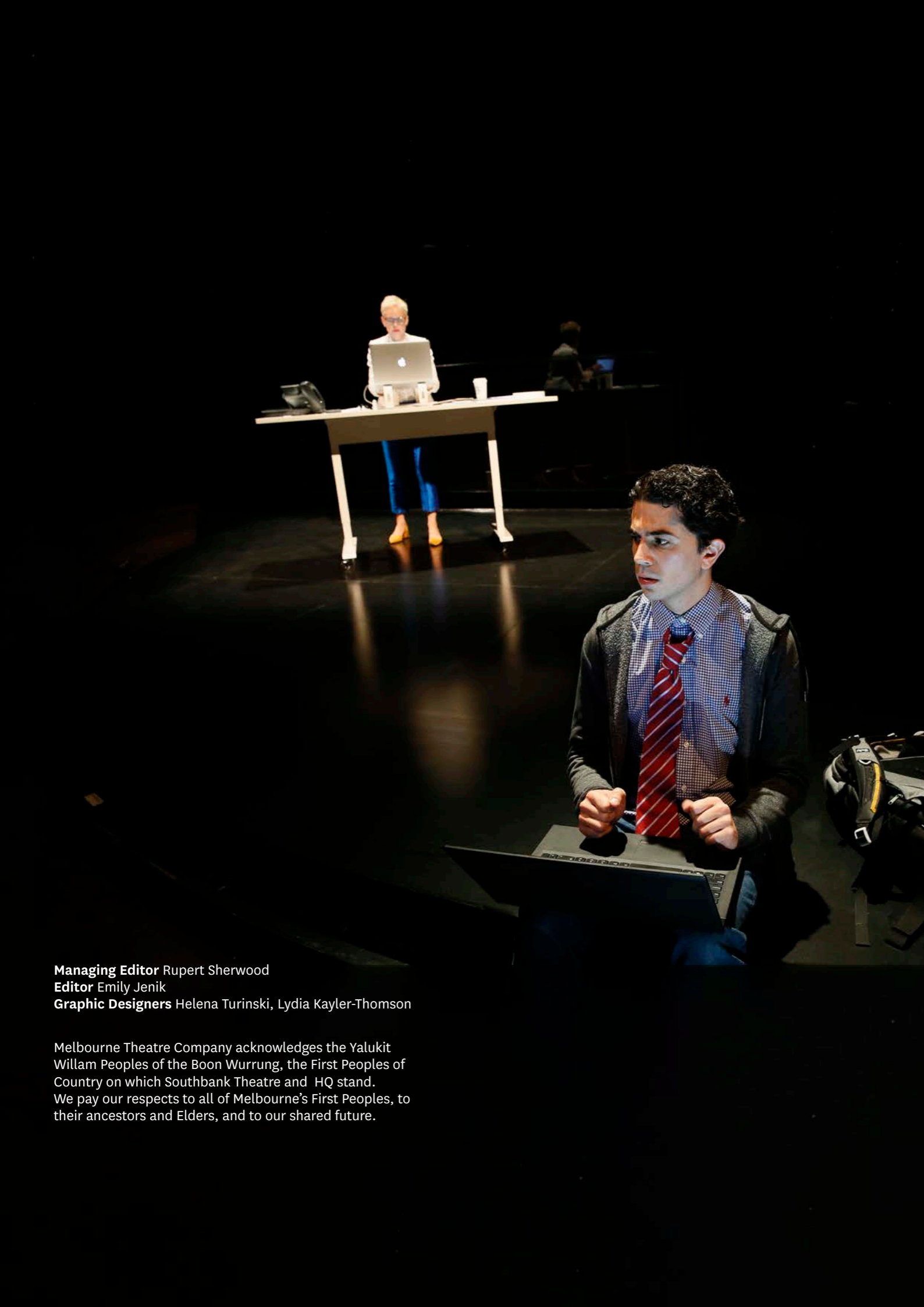


2021

DONOR IMPACT REPORT



MTC
FOUNDATION



Managing Editor Rupert Sherwood
Editor Emily Jenik
Graphic Designers Helena Turinski, Lydia Kayler-Thomson

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Country on which Southbank Theatre and HQ stand. We pay our respects to all of Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.

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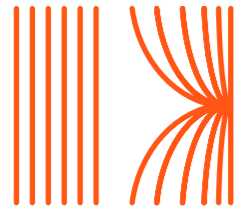
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2021 IN NUMBERS



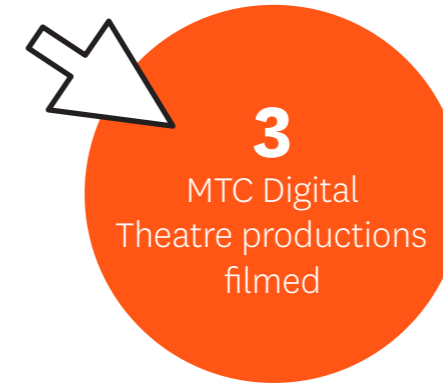
53,359

paid attendance at
MTC mainstage productions



524

MTC artists and industry professionals
maintained employment



3

MTC Digital
Theatre productions
filmed

9,300+
views of MTC Digital
Theatre Productions

22%
of MTC Digital Theatre
viewers were
new to MTC

13%
of MTC Digital Theatre
viewers were from
regional Victoria
or interstate



54 new Donors of **\$1000** or more



32,313
Victorian students
reached through MTC
Education activities

134
discounted tickets for
students to attend MTC
mainstage productions
during the reduced
2021 Season

454
VCE students and
teachers provided exclusive
access to *Cyrano* dress
rehearsal recording
and revision seminar

2001
new Donors of
\$2 or more

19%
of total revenue
from private
donations

1,397
Victorian Education
Pack downloads



253
students participated in
live online seminars

CHAIR'S REPORT

JANE HANSEN AO



2021 began and ended with cautious optimism and great promise as Melbourne Theatre Company returned to our stages, bringing our community together and helping our city return back to life. In between, the Company faced another period of exceptional challenges as the second year of the pandemic took hold.

As we emerged from 2020 we studiously planned a reduced season with an embedded degree of flexibility to allow us to be as nimble as possible. However, sudden lockdowns and changeable capacity restrictions resulted in uniquely trying situations for companies of MTC's complexity, and sadly three of our programed plays for the year had to be cancelled.

The impacts quickly compounded the losses of 2020 and put added pressures on the Company in what was hoped to be a recovery year. Determined as ever to safeguard Victoria's state theatre company, the Board and Executive team worked in concert to navigate the financial stresses and maintain steady governance. Throughout it all, our aims were to remain on stage for our loyal Victorian audiences, maintain employment opportunities for our staff and contracted artists, support the wider arts community and survive as a viable entity.

We are proud to say that these aims were met alongside a great deal of additional activity detailed in this report. Among the significant achievements was the launch of MTC Digital Theatre. This new venture was greeted with great enthusiasm from audiences and is already helping MTC reach new corners of the country.

While there is a long road ahead to fully rebuild the Company's financial health, collective efforts across the Company to contain costs and minimise losses coupled with targeted government investment and audience support ensured MTC successfully weathered the storm of 2021. In the face of very tough operating conditions, the company recorded a better than expected result, recording an operating loss of \$920,000 (excluding restricted endowed gifts).

This would not have been possible without the commitment of our passionate MTC Donor community who once again showed extraordinary support in the form of ticket sales, subscriptions and donations. These contributions remained vitally important to our survival. Thank you for your ongoing generosity, the positive impact of which is felt across all aspects of the organisation.

We also must acknowledge the loyalty of our corporate partners who stayed the course and were prepared to re-imagine how we may work together.

Strategic financial relief from federal, state and local governments recognised and appreciated not only our difficulties but also the valuable role that we play in the broader arts ecosystem. In particular, a substantial grant of \$5 million from the federal government through its Arts Sustainability Fund helped to mitigate continued losses across 2020 and 2021, and position the Company to re-emerge as strongly as possible over the medium term.

The University of Melbourne continued to provide MTC with consistent support and guidance through these troubled times. As a department of the University, we are pleased to play an integral part in the refocused performing arts strategy across campuses and disciplines for the benefit of the social and cultural development of Melbourne.

I must also recognise and thank my Board and Foundation Board colleagues, Virginia Lovett, Brett Sheehy, the Executive team and the entire MTC staff who worked so hard and with a great sense of commitment and collaboration during this challenging year. Together, we have responded and adjusted to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic while remaining committed to presenting outstanding theatre.

Of course, 2021 was also a year of change with the departure of our long-time Artistic Director, Brett Sheehy, and appointment of his successor, Anne-Louise Sarks.

Brett oversaw a period of great evolution at MTC and has much to celebrate in his achievements across ten seasons and more than 100 productions. Under joint direction with Executive Director, Virginia Lovett, MTC had grown to be a financially robust arts company pre-COVID, with the largest subscriber base of any theatre company in the country. On behalf of the Company, I thank Brett for his outstanding contribution in cementing MTC's place as one invested in its city and its artists – through the introduction of innovative artist development programs, cross-artform collaborations, and expanding the breadth and diversity of programming. Brett's final season was launched in October 2021 and will be presented throughout 2022.

MTC is a company poised for an exciting new era under the artistic direction of Anne-Louise. As we look towards the future, with full houses and a greater sense of post-pandemic optimism, we are proud to be playing an important role in re-energising our city and our state theatre company.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Hansen', written in a cursive style.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO'S REPORT

BRETT SHEEHY AO



This is my final report as Artistic Director & CEO of Melbourne Theatre Company. That my last two years with MTC were 'the COVID years' has meant a bittersweet finale. That MTC survived and is in a position for recovery is testament to the dexterity and ingenuity of the Company, to the loyalty and resilience of its supporters and audiences, and to its local, regional and national eminence evidenced by the investment from all three levels of government throughout the crisis.

2021 began with a new COVID-inspired paradigm for MTC – a year divided into two acts. Act 1 was carefully calibrated in scale, scheduling and programming to enable a steady reopening of Southbank Theatre with a Summer Series of weekend-long events followed by two complete productions – *Berlin* by Joanna Murray-Smith and *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes* by Hannah Moscovitch. The Summer Series celebrated the theatre-making process, showcasing works in development, vibrant new writing and a specially devised work by a group of exceptional artists. The two mainstage productions marked MTC's full return to stage and also our first foray into filming our shows for distribution with MTC Digital Theatre. Both were great successes in their live and digital form.

Act 2 was to be a suite of six productions including the world premiere of a contemporary Aboriginal work, two other new Australian plays, two international hits and a classic. Much to our disappointment, the pandemic again played havoc with the season and forced the cancellation of three incredible works – *Jacky* by Declan Furber Gillick, *Cyrano* by Virginia Gay after Edmond Rostand

and *Sunday* by Anthony Weigh – and a great deal of disruption to the shows that did make it to the stage.

The Lifespan of a Fact by Jeremy Kareken & David Murrell and Gordon Farrell and *The Truth* by Florian Zeller played in May and June, each navigating zoom rehearsals, sudden capacity changes and indeed a number of show cancellations. I commend everyone involved – both MTC staff and the show companies – for their resilience and determination. Shakespeare's *As You Like It* closed the year, marking a triumphant return once again and delighting audiences and critics alike. This show, which had been three years in the making, was a spectacular display of artistry, music and joy. It too had many challenges in its way including its 2020 cancellation – so for it to end the year fully realised, and bring with it a sense of hope for 2022, was a much welcomed celebration.

Despite the upheaval across the year, we are proud that we were able to maintain employment opportunities for 524 artists and industry professionals. It was another difficult year for the sector and MTC certainly experienced its fair share of challenges. However, once again the Company showed its strength and leadership, often being the first to return to stage and strive ahead against the odds.

Last year also saw the continuation of our industry-leading new writing program, NEXT STAGE. Conducting workshops, dramaturgical development and readings over Zoom was not ideal but dexterity ruled and enabled NEXT STAGE to continue to thrive. In-person workshops took place when possible and the necessary hybrid nature of the program was embraced by our extraordinary cohort of writers.

Other highlights of our 2021 off-stage programming were Cybec Electric, our First Peoples Young Artists Program, Women in Theatre Program, MTC Education and our collaborations with other organisations including First Stage. Designed to invest in artists, offer career development opportunities and open up the creative futures of students and young people, each of these programs are an important part of MTC's artistic operations.

It was also a great pleasure in 2021 to program the 2022 season, my final program for MTC.

Ten seasons – 2013 to 2022 – is a gift for an artistic director. That the team and I achieved so much, especially in terms of the national landscape, gives great satisfaction. Beyond the catalogue of more than 100 productions which I had the opportunity to program, I'm especially proud of eight specific accomplishments by the Company during my tenure:

- Establishing the largest subscriber base of any theatre company in the country.
- Investing in Australian playwrights with the landmark NEXT STAGE Writers' Program, resulting in 50% of MTC's programming being new writing by the time I departed.
- Championing the careers of women in the arts industry with the establishment of MTC's Women Directors' Program, which grew to become MTC's Women in Theatre Program.
- The dynamic shift and growth in diversity on MTC's stages and amongst its writers.
- Opening the Company to fresh, independent artistic voices with the national-first NEON Festival of Independent Theatre and its subsequent evolutions.
- Seeing MTC's work on multiple international stages including *Rupert* at the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, and *Complexity of Belonging* and *North by Northwest* in the UK, Europe and Canada.
- Presenting stellar international productions on MTC's stages – *One Man, Two Guvnors*, *Once* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*.
- Cross-pollinating art forms through collaborations with artists from other genres including visual artist Callum Morton and musicians Missy Higgins and Tim Rogers.

These have meant more to me than simply programming plays, as they realised a vision to make real and significant improvements to Australia's cultural landscape.

Finally, my thanks go to our Board of Management led by Jane Hansen AO, our Foundation Board, the terrific team at MTC, our artists, Donors, corporate partners and audiences. I enjoyed my tenure enormously and wish Anne-Louise Sarks, Virginia Lovett and everyone at MTC the very best for 2022 and future years. MTC is a very special and rare company. My greatest wish for the Company in its recovery and the years ahead is that it is well looked after by all those who hold its reins. I leave knowing it is in very good hands.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CO-CEO'S REPORT

VIRGINIA LOVETT



2021 was again a challenging year for Melbourne Theatre Company as we navigated the ongoing pandemic and the rise of new COVID-19 variants. The sector, its artists and arts workers – particularly in Victoria – endured lockdowns and closed theatres more than any other city in the world.

MTC's financial result for 2021 was mitigated by the generosity of our Donors, substantial investment from the federal government and prudent cost savings across the year. The final operating deficit of \$920,000 (excluding restricted endowed gifts) was an outstanding result considering the financial pressure the Company endured through another year of cancellations and lost box office.

2021 started strongly with a Summer Series of events at Southbank Theatre followed by the first two productions of the year. This represented Act 1 of our program and a highly successful return to the stage after MTC's prolonged closure in 2020.

The beginning of Act 2 in May coincided with the start of the pandemic's second wave, the onset of which was to prove most challenging as it propelled the Company towards months of further disruption that affected all areas of the organisation.

MTC operated as flexibly and nimbly as possible during this time, but the hurdles were many and varied. Again we needed to reschedule or cancel performances as lockdowns were announced; play to reduced capacities

as required by regulation; negotiate date changes with artists, rights-holders and venues; navigate border closures and quarantine requirements to get interstate artists to Melbourne; and seek to predict ever-changing capacity limits while maintaining a high level of customer service for our committed audience – all of whom were equally impacted by cancellations and changed capacities.

Extended lockdowns ultimately forced the cancellation of three productions, including *Cyrano* on its opening night after just three preview performances and the full cancellations of *Jacky* and *Sunday*. In total, the Company cancelled 174 performances across the year. Of the 187 performances staged, only 47 of them played to 100% capacity due to imposed venue capacity restrictions which saw house sizes vary from as little as 13% to 100%.

The emotional toll on our community over the past year has been as significant as the financial. Staff wellbeing remained the highest priority in every aspect of our operations as the creative industries endured periods of uncertainty and disruption. As restrictions came and went, the implementation of new protocols and procedures along with a large portion of our workforce working remotely enabled on-site operations to continue safely when permitted. Throughout it all, the MTC team and our artists once again demonstrated their resilience under sustained pressure.

The Company took the lead in sector advocacy across all levels of government, calling for our employees to be classified as essential workers in order for rehearsals to be permitted. This was of critical importance so that we could be stage ready when vaccination rates enabled venues to reopen.

The federal government recognised the financial stress the Company had been under and in October we were successful in arguing for a grant through the Arts Sustainability Fund of \$5 million. This grant enabled the Company to weather 2021, but more importantly to repair some of the damage to the balance sheet and better position the Company for its future under a new Artistic Director.

Over the course of 2021 we remained firm in our intention to return to stage as soon as possible in order to provide employment for the creative sector and a sense of connection for our audiences. Pleasingly, our perseverance and determination was vindicated in late November and December with the very successful staging of *As You Like It* to audiences exceeding 15,000 (with 12% from interstate or regional Victoria) and the resulting employment of technical teams, front of house staff, creative teams, actors and musicians.

This was a significant achievement considering the majority of the rehearsal and planning period was carried out remotely under lockdown restrictions.

Another notable success in 2021 was the launch of MTC Digital Theatre. Partnering with our precinct colleagues in the Broadcast Unit at Arts Centre Melbourne, a long-term goal was realised with the filming of three productions for digital distribution. *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes*, *Berlin* and *As You Like It* were recorded live during their in-theatre season for release as on-demand viewing. This significant undertaking was a new frontier for the Company and required a great deal of technical innovation to ensure seamless integration with MTC's website and a premium experience for our audiences.

I commend the in-house MTC team who led this project so successfully. In its first few months, MTC Digital Theatre has enabled us to reach audiences unable to travel to Melbourne; to support schools and universities with their online curriculum and reach socio-economically and geographically disadvantaged students in Victoria. The opportunity to engage with MTC productions in a digital format has unlocked many possibilities and we have been greatly encouraged by the enthusiastic response from audiences.

Across the two years of the pandemic, MTC has arguably been the most impacted theatre company in the country with a total of 585 performances cancelled and a combined box office loss of nearly \$18 million. Our ability to preserve the Company and continue producing exceptional theatre both live and digital has been greatly aided by the support from our community and government. Our subscribers, Donors and broader audience again showed incredible generosity, while

strategic investment from governments at all levels came as very welcome relief. This much needed support coupled with prudent financial management to minimise costs and find savings has enabled MTC to navigate the considerable challenges of 2021. We extend our appreciation and thanks to all those who played such an important role in sustaining MTC's future.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge our Chair Jane Hansen AO, Board of Management and Foundation Board for their support throughout the year. Likewise, I thank my outstanding colleagues at MTC for their tenacity and support during another difficult chapter in MTC's history. I am proud of the staff, creatives and casts as they again rose to the challenges we faced and continued to create and put on shows, traverse the complexities of the year and always strive for the best.

As the year came to a close, we farewelled Brett Sheehy after ten years as Artistic Director. It has been a pleasure working alongside Brett and I thank him for his artistic leadership that saw MTC grow creatively and in audience reach. As Anne-Louise Sarks steps into the role and MTC bounces back, the Company is in a strong position for recovery and investment in a new era of artistic vision.



THE WELL

by Louris van de Geer
adapted from the book *The Well*,
by Elizabeth Jolley

29—30 JANUARY
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL



BEATING THE BLUES WITH FINN, BURNS AND PHILLIPS

5—6 FEBRUARY
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL



CYBEC ELECTRIC

19—20 FEBRUARY
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner



A DEVELOPMENT READING OF THE BLACK WOMAN OF GIPPSLAND

by Andrea James

26—27 FEBRUARY
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL



WELL, THAT HAPPENED

Created by Dean Bryant for Esther Hannaford,
Bert LaBonté, Zahra Newman, Christina O'Neill
and Eddie Perfect

10 APRIL
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner



SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES

by Hannah Moscovitch

8 MARCH—1 APRIL
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner



BERLIN

by Joanna Murray-Smith

17 APRIL—22 MAY
VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL

Cybec
Foundation

Cybec Electric is made possible by the support of the
late Dr Roger Riordan AM and The Cybec Foundation.

NEXTSTAGE

Commissioned through MTC's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program, supported by the
donors, foundations and organisations of MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle

ONSTAGE PRODUCTIONS



THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT

by Jeremy Kareken & David Murrell and Gordon Farrell

15 MAY—15 JULY

VENUE Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio



THE TRUTH

by Florian Zeller
translated by Christopher Hampton

18 JUNE—15 JULY

VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner



SHAKESPEARE'S

AS YOU LIKE IT

13 NOVEMBER—18 DECEMBER

VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

CANCELLED PRODUCTIONS



CYRANO

by Virginia Gay
after Edmond Rostand

2—4 AUGUST

VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner



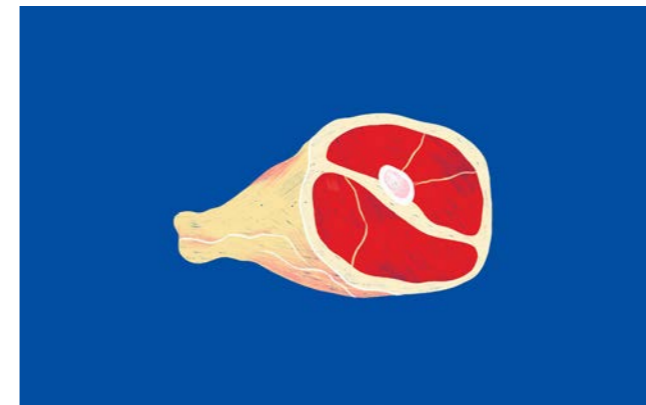
SUNDAY

by Anthony Weigh

18 SEPTEMBER—23 OCTOBER

VENUE Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

Commissioned by MTC with the support of the Joan and Peter Clemenger Trust. Supported by MTC's Sunday Giving Circle Donors.



JACKY

by Declan Furber Gillick

9 OCTOBER—13 NOVEMBER

VENUE Arts Centre Melbourne, Fairfax Studio

AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL

Commissioned through MTC's NEXT STAGE Writers' Program, supported by the donors, foundations and organisations of MTC's Playwrights Giving Circle. Supported by Craig Semple.

DONOR EVENTS

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES Tuesday 30 March 2021

Donors and their guests joined MTC Associate Director Petra Kalive and leading actors Dan Spielman and Izabella Yena in a live conversation online after their performance.

AS YOU LIKE IT Monday 29 November 2021

Donors gathered with the cast and creative team of *As You Like It* for a post-show cocktail party to celebrate our first in-person engagement in almost two years.



(Top left) Rowena Rudge, Nick Rudge, Louise Nelson and Chris Walters; (top right) Jack Green, Natalie Abbott, Rosemary Walls and Shivantha Wijesinha; (bottom left) Roger Goldsmith, Jan Goldsmith, Richard Piper and Pat Burke; (bottom right) Richard Sergeant; Peter Jacobsen and Halina Jacobsen.

THE LIFESPAN OF A FACT Monday 7 June 2021

Donors and their guests remained in the theatre for a post-show conversation with the cast of the show hosted by MTC Associate Director Petra Kalive.

BERLIN DIGITAL Tuesday 18 May 2021

Artistic Director & CEO Brett Sheehy AO hosted Donors and their guests to join playwright Joanna Murray-Smith, Director Iain Sinclair, and cast members Grace Cummings and Michael Wahr in a live conversation online after the performance.

THE TRUTH Tuesday 13 July 2021

Donors and their guests joined members of the cast and creative team of the show in a live conversation online after the performance that evening.



(Top left) Julie Burke, Xani Kolac, Jan Nolan, Georgina Flood, Susie Denholm and Christine Williams; (top right) Tim Walter, Adrian Nelson and Rupert Sherwood; (bottom left) Angelina Beninati, Anna Maria Pecora and Shivantha Wijesinha; (bottom right) Pinky Watson and Rosemary Forbes.

MTC DIGITAL THEATRE

In 2021 Melbourne Theatre Company launched MTC Digital Theatre, giving audiences around Australia the opportunity to see MTC productions direct from stage to screen.

In the inaugural year of this new digital venture, two productions were filmed and released for on-demand viewing, with a third production filmed for release in 2022. The productions were filmed live during their in-theatre seasons with a multi-camera set up to capture the performance from an audience's perspective. MTC Digital Theatre quickly established an engaged audience, reaching people regionally and interstate as well as reducing access barriers for audiences across the country.

'We are a long way from Melbourne here in north-east Victoria and I think this initiative is a great way to get quality productions seen by country audiences.'

—Audience Member

'I love attending live performances but this is another way to broaden the audience and bring people closer to the arts. Also great for those of us who couldn't make it to the live season.'

—Audience Member

'We totally loved it. Thank you for bringing the theatre into our homes. It's a true wonder.'

—Audience Member

'I felt I was there in the theatre!'

—Audience Member



SEXUAL MISCONDUCT OF THE MIDDLE CLASSES

by Hannah Moscovitch

Filmed live in theatre on
23 and 24 March
Digital tickets sold 1,201
Estimated views 3,122*



AN MTC NEXTSTAGE ORIGINAL BERLIN

by Joanna Murray-Smith

Filmed live in theatre on
3 and 4 May
Digital tickets sold 2,377
Estimated views 6,180*



Shakespeare's AS YOU LIKE IT

Filmed live in theatre on
11 December for release in 2022

21.5%
of viewers were new to MTC

13%
of viewers were from regional Victoria or interstate

*Based on tickets sold multiplied by 2.6 people per household as per most recent ABS data.
aifs.gov.au/facts-and-figures/population-and-households

MTC EDUCATION

Despite the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the arts and education in Victoria, MTC Education continued to find imaginative and innovative ways to best support Victorian students throughout 2021, thanks in no small part to your generosity. Throughout 2021, MTC Education continued to produce more online resources and new opportunities for remote engagement than ever before, in response to demand from schools and requests from the Department of Education.

The result of our concentrated focus on digital programs has meant that we have been able to expand our reach even further into diverse and isolated communities – providing young people from all over Victoria with access to opportunities to learn new skills, help build confidence and thrive in creative careers. When permitted, and in line with the latest public health advice, learning and engagement activities were also conducted in person.

‘I gained not only a better understanding about the work that is done in the theatre and how it all runs, but also a lot more confidence in chasing my passion as an actor ... My biggest takeaway was that the life I dream myself living is possible and a whole new world that is there for me if I put in the work to go there.’

—2021 Careers Week participant

MTC sincerely thanks the Victorian Department of Education and our 2021 Education Giving Circle Donors for generously supporting the core activities of MTC's education department: Paul & Wendy Bonnici and Family, Judy Bourke, Krystyna Campbell- Pretty AM, Deborah Conyngham, Tom and Elana Cordiner, Jane Hansen AO and Paul Little AO, Linda Herd, Larry Kornhauser and Natalya Gill, Anne and Mark Robertson OAM, Roslyn and Richard Rogers Family, Hilary and Stuart Scott, Richard and Debra Tegoni, Walter and Gertie Wagner, Ann and Alan Wilkinson, Anonymous.



‘Thank you for providing this initiative for rural students. (MTC Education) allows our geographically and culturally isolated students to be exposed to professional theatre, which is essential for their development as performers and storytellers.’

—Teacher: St Joseph's College Echuca



MTC EDUCATION SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

VIRTUAL SCHOOL VICTORIA PARTNERSHIP

A semester-long course exploring the lifecycle of an MTC production. Written for the Year 11 Theatre Arts program at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School as part of the school's residency in the Lawler at Southbank Theatre in 2021.

Supported by Virtual School Victoria



VICTORIAN CHALLENGE & ENRICHMENT SERIES

Interactive online workshops for high-ability students at Victorian Government schools. Workshops covered directing, devising, rehearsal and backstage and had a total of 314 participants.

Supported by the Victorian Government



CAREERS WEEK

A new approach to high school work experience: a week of virtual workshops and panels where students worked together on creative projects and discovered a range of careers in theatre.

Supported by our Education Giving Circle Donors

THE GERALDINE LAZARUS REGIONAL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

A suite of on-demand workshops available exclusively to schools in regional Victoria. Topics covered included; acting, directing, production and VCE monologue.

Supported by The Gailey Lazarus Foundation

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

Digital PD day

A professional development day for teachers exploring stage management, playwriting, costume design and acting.

Teacher as artist PD week

A series of online professional development events for educators covering performing, design, movement and producing.

6-9 December | virtual

Participants 24

Teaching Artists and MTC Staff Xanthe Beesley, Tariro Mavondo, Martina Murray, Eugyeene Teh

Supported by The Gailey Lazarus Foundation

MTC DIGITAL EDUCATION

LIVESTREAM

A live workshop to recreate a *Berlin* rehearsal with actors, director and stage manager. Students were able to interact with the artists and make suggestions to help shape the rehearsal via an online chat.

Supported by the Besen Family Foundation.



Supported by the Ian Potter Foundation



VCE PLAYLIST PRODUCTION: CYRANO

MTC's production of *Cyrano* was selected to be studied for the VCE curriculum. This production was cancelled due to a lockdown in Victoria but a recording of the dress rehearsal was made available exclusively to schools to ensure students could fulfil their study requirements.

Supported by the Ian Potter Foundation.



DIGITAL RESOURCES

An ever-expanding library of free digital education resources to support teachers and students, with insights from directors, actors, designers and other theatre artists. The number of people engaging with resources through the MTC website grew throughout 2021, with an 11.7% increase in unique users, and over 30,000 total page views. Downloadable education packs continued to be popular, both for 2021 productions of *Berlin* and *Cyrano*, and previous productions such as *Jasper Jones*. During extended periods of remote learning, students could explore our stages and behind-the-scenes via virtual tours.

Supported by the Ian Potter Foundation.



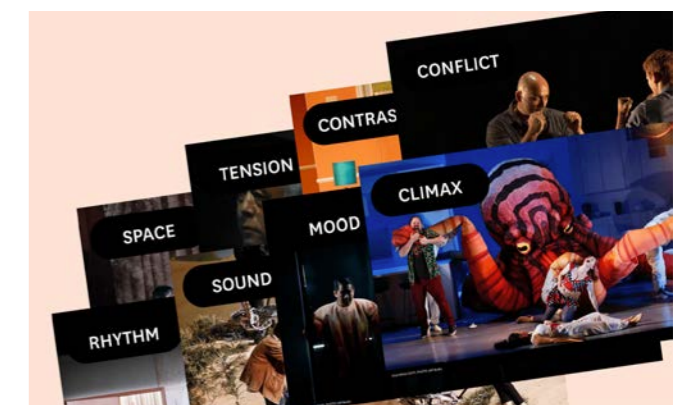
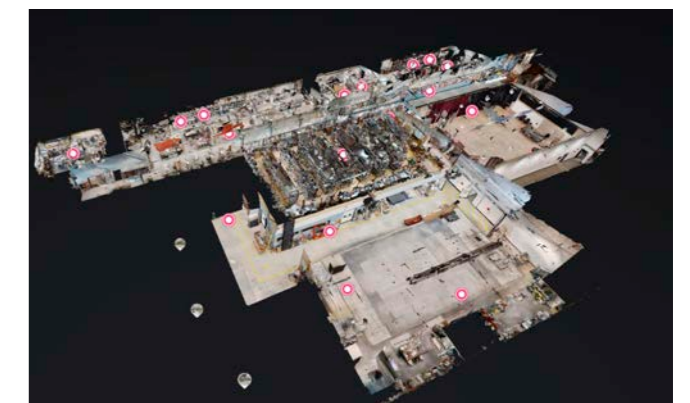
VCASS YEAR 11 THEATRE ARTS

A semester-long course exploring the lifecycle of an MTC production. Written for the Year 11 Theatre Arts program at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School as part of the school's residency in the Lawler at Southbank Theatre in 2021.



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH MTC

A Breadth subject for University of Melbourne students, offering an inside look at the art, craft and business of MTC, delivered by the Victorian College of the Arts in collaboration with MTC Education. Due to lockdowns, this course included the study of the 2021 MTC Digital Theatre productions of *Sexual Misconduct of the Middle Classes* and *Berlin* in lieu of attending live productions.



MTC AMBASSADORS

Behind-the-scenes access for Year 11 theatre-lovers that helps young Victorians follow their passion, explore future career pathways and feel empowered by the arts.

This year-long extension program continued throughout 2021, providing students with insight into the world of professional theatre, opportunities to meet MTC staff and artists, see MTC productions and share their experiences of theatre with like-minded peers.

April–December | virtual and face-to-face

Participants 16

MTC thanks our Youth Ambassadors Giving Circle for their generous support of this program: Melody and Jonathan Feder, Bruce Freeman, Jock and Jenny Jeffries, Larry Kornhauser and Natalya Gill, The Leg Up Foundation, Tom and Ruth O’Dea, Heather and Simon McKeon, Ging Muir and John McCawley, Suzy and Dr Mark Suss, Kevin and Elizabeth Walsh.

‘Meeting all of the industry professionals has allowed me to gain a greater sense of depth to the industry, especially the roles that are backstage. It makes me feel a whole lot more appreciative of the work these people do for our entertainment, but also opens up the possibility of more potential careers that I had never even known about.’

—2021 MTC Ambassador

‘My experience as an MTC Ambassador has brought me endless amounts of joy. Every time I closed my computer after a meeting, the joy rippled through me and I was genuinely fulfilled ... I am truly grateful for every opportunity to see the inner workings of this industry and I cannot thank you enough.’

—2021 MTC Ambassador



BETTY AMSDEN YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP COURSE

A life-changing week of intensive drama workshops. This program is aimed at students who would not otherwise have access to an extra-curricular drama program due to economic, geographic or personal barriers.

20—24 September | virtual due to lockdown

Participants 18

Teaching Artists Katrina Cornwell, Morgan Rose

Support Artist Sarah Hosford

Audiovisual Designer Justin Gardam

Guest Artists Xanthe Beesley, Petra Kalive, Karl Richmond, Sophie Woodward

Supported by the Betty Amsden Foundation

BETTY
AMSDEN
FOUNDATION

‘Considering the context of the last year, it’s probably the most productive week (my daughter’s) had over the last little while. It was lovely seeing her so enthusiastic and involved. It really is proof of how important it is for each of us to find creative ways to navigate the complex terrain of our world.’

—Parent: Betty Amsden Youth Scholarship Participant





FIRST PEOPLES YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAM

A one-of-a-kind creative learning and engagement initiative for young First Nations people aged 16 to 21, this program is made possible thanks to the support of the John and Myriam Wylie Foundation and partnered by the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development at VCA and YIRRAMBOI First Nations Festival.

In 2021, participants explored potential career pathways in the creative industries while developing their own ideas, skills and confidence through practical workshops and performance work.

Delivered across three blocks, the program covered all aspects of making theatre – from finding a story through to how to best share it with an audience. Participants were guided and supported by teaching artists and alumni from previous years of the program.

Block 1 – Developing story

28 June–2 July

Block 2 – Exploring design

27 Sept–1 Oct

Block 3 – Directing & performance

29 Nov–3 Dec

Participants

Jaydon Brown
Jazleen David De Busch
Matisse Knight
Emma Salmon
Joshua Vickery-Stewart

Lead Teaching Artists

Kamarra Bell-Wykes, Andrea James

Guest Teaching Artists

Joel Bray, Nazaree Dickerson, Anna Liebzeit, Lisa Mibus, Stephen Nicolazzo, Glenn Shea

Support Artists (all program alumni)

Jyden Brailey, Jacinta Keefe, Brodie Murray, Amelia O’Leary, Brodi Purtill, Corey Saylor-Brunskill

This program is made possible with the support of the John and Myriam Wylie Foundation and partnered by the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural Development at VCA and YIRRAMBOI.



YIRRAMBOI
TOMORROW

WILIN.

WOMEN IN THEATRE PROGRAM

MTC's industry-leading Women in Theatre Program helps create opportunities for women pursuing careers in a range of disciplines from production to artistic and executive management.

Supported by MTC's Women in Theatre Giving Circle, the 2021 program saw the completion of postponed 2020 salons and workshops as well as two paid Assistant Designer opportunities in sound and lighting design. There was also new networking events for alumni from all seven years of the program.

MTC thanks our Women in Theatre Giving Circle who generously enabled the 2021 program: The Late Dr Jane Bird, Tara Bishop, Charles and Cornelia Goode Foundation, Fiona Griffiths and Tony Osmond, Lord Family, Kim and Peter Monk, Leigh O'Neill, Annette Smorgon, Richard and Debra Tegoni, Marion Webster OAM.

February–November

This program took place at MTC HQ and remotely during lockdowns.

Assistant Designer placements

Amelia Baker – *Cyrano*, Assistant Lighting Designer
Danni A. Esposito – *Sunday*, Assistant Sound Designer

The length of these placements was impacted due to production cancellations.

Workshop and Networking Session Facilitators

Erica Bagshaw
Jacob Battista
Petra Kalive
Krystalla Pearce
Clare Watson
Tahli Corin
Tasnim Hossain
Anna Liebszeit



FIRST STAGE

Despite having to contend with continuing lockdowns and restrictions on in-person gatherings, a public reading was able to go ahead in the Lawler Studio, just two weeks later than had initially been planned on 24 June 2021.

An audience of 122 masked attendees, made up of friends, family, industry professionals and general public showed an outpouring of support for the FIRST STAGE writers and performers during such a challenging time for the arts sector.

FIRST STAGE 2021 allowed for inclusion of five new writers; Roshelle Fong, Veronica Heritage-Gorrie, Jeremy Nguyen, Vivian Nguyen, and Amarachi Okorom. Excerpts of their work were directed by Isabella Vadiveloo with dramaturgy from Morgan Rose, and performed by actors Monica Jasmine Karo, Ruby Duncan, Taylor Fong, Carissa Lee, Michael Logo, Marcus McKenzie and Jenny Zhou.

Writers were identified through an open callout through Emerging Writers' Festival for applications, which was also widely advertised through our newly developed networks including Footscray Arts Centre, Ilbijerri and Western Edge Youth Arts.

The breadth and quality of the work presented at FIRST STAGE 2021 was extremely impressive, ranging from zeitgeist drama, sitcom style explorations of race and representation, and a moving biographical account of the stolen generation.



First Stage is made possible with the support of The Vizard Foundation



Presented in partnership with the Emerging Writers' Festival



NEXT STAGE WRITERS' PROGRAM

MTC's ground-breaking NEXT STAGE Writers' Program continued with gusto in 2021, despite the significant impacts of COVID-19 on in-person activity. This included:

- 2** NEXT STAGE ORIGINALS programmed in 2021 Season (one staged, one cancelled)
- 12** WORKSHOPS HELD IN 2021 to further the development of commissioned plays
- 32** WRITERS COMMISSIONED across 27 plays since 2017
- 2** NEW WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE
- 88** EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES for actors and creatives across the workshops
- 4** NEXT STAGE ORIGINALS PROGRAMMED for 2022 season
- 1** NEW COMMISSION AWARDED

COMMISSIONED WRITERS

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Van Badham | Tom Holloway | Chris Ryan, Megan Washington (composer) and Mark Leonard Winter |
| Carolyn Burns, Tim Finn (composer) and Simon Phillips (2021 commission) | Emme Hoy | Declan Furber Gillick |
| Angus Cerini | Andrea James | Melissa Reeves |
| Patricia Cornelius | Anchuli Felicia King | Chris Summers |
| Aidan Fennessy | Benjamin Law | Natesha Somasundaram |
| Louris van de Geer | Nathan Maynard | Merlynn Tong |
| Dan Giovannoni | Joanna Murray-Smith | Kylie Trounson |
| Michael Gow | Ellen van Neerven | |
| Elise Esther Hearst and Phillip Kavanagh | Diana Nguyen | |
| | Joe Penhall | |
| | Leah Purcell | |

WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE

Emme Hoy and Merlynn Tong completed their residency in 2021.

Across the program to date there have been 11 resident playwrights, with all residents also receiving play commissions.

MTC'S PLAYWRIGHTS GIVING CIRCLE

Louise Myer and Martyn Myer AO, Maureen Wheeler AO and Tony Wheeler AO, Christine Brown Bequest, Allan Myers AC QC and Maria Myers AC, Tony Burgess and Janine Burgess Dr Andrew McAlicee and Dr Richard Simmie, Larry Kamener and Petra Kamener



CYBEC ELECTRIC

This year, MTC showcased the brand new work of eight emerging playwrights and theatre-makers, ranging widely in lived experience, cultural identity and style of writing. The creative team were led by directors Katy Maudlin (MTC Women in Theatre Program 2020) and Stephen Nicolazzo (*Abigail's Party*), guiding our 2021 performers: Zach Blampied, Joel Bray, Max Brown, Carissa Lee, Amanda Ma, Louise Siverson, Leonie Whyman and Jenny Zhou. We were also joined by Emma Gibson (MTC Women in Theatre Program 2020) as Associate Dramaturg, and Brodie Murray (MTC First Peoples Young Artists Program 2020) and Susanne Porter as Cybec Interns.

After almost an entire year off stage, and with such a long history of our shared championing of new writing through the program, being able to include Cybec Electric in our physical and creative return was monumental for MTC, and very much representative of our aims to develop, showcase and provide paid opportunities for young writers, directors and performers.

‘Development programs like this are crucial to the professional development of new playwrights because it acclimatises us to the rigors of developing work for the mainstage which, in turn, makes us even stronger contributors to Australia’s theatre landscape. I also really treasure the sense of community formed around Cybec and similar programs. Now more than ever, it is equally important to feel actively connected to my peers so that we can cheer each other on and forge ahead with exciting ideas that move us.’

—Margot Tanjutco, Cybec 2021 Writer

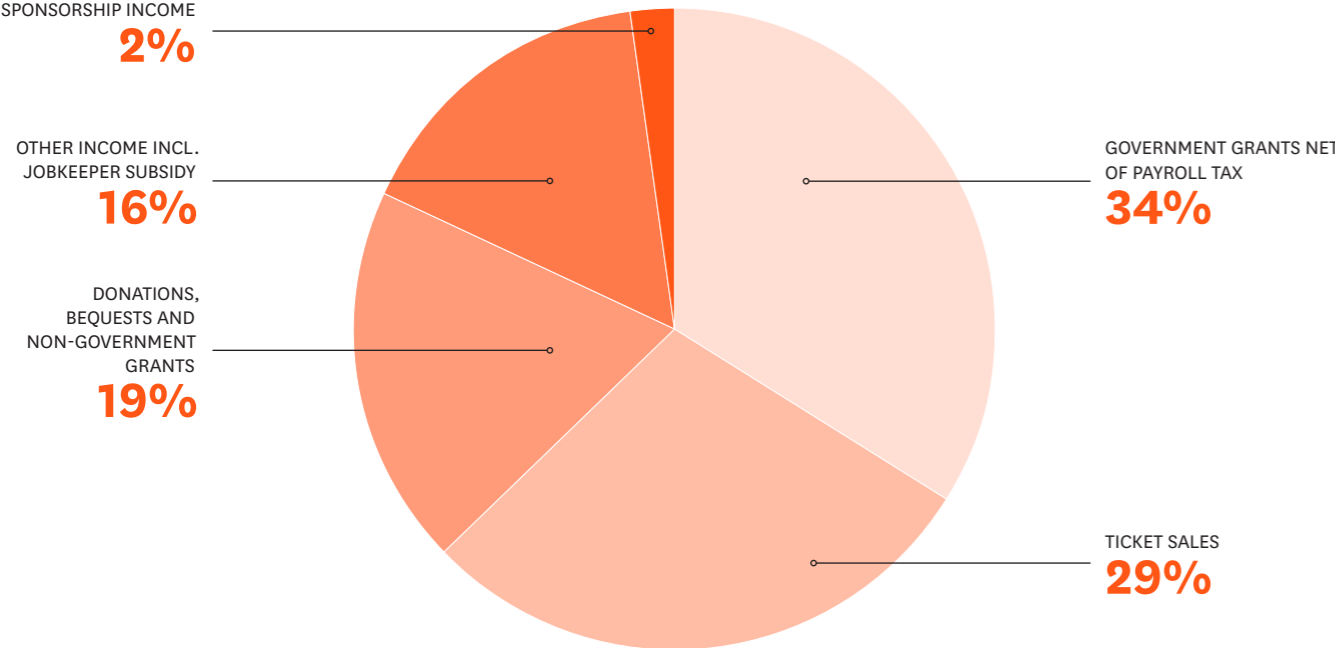
Cybec
Foundation

Cybec Electric is made possible by the support of the late Dr Roger Riordan AM and The Cybec Foundation.

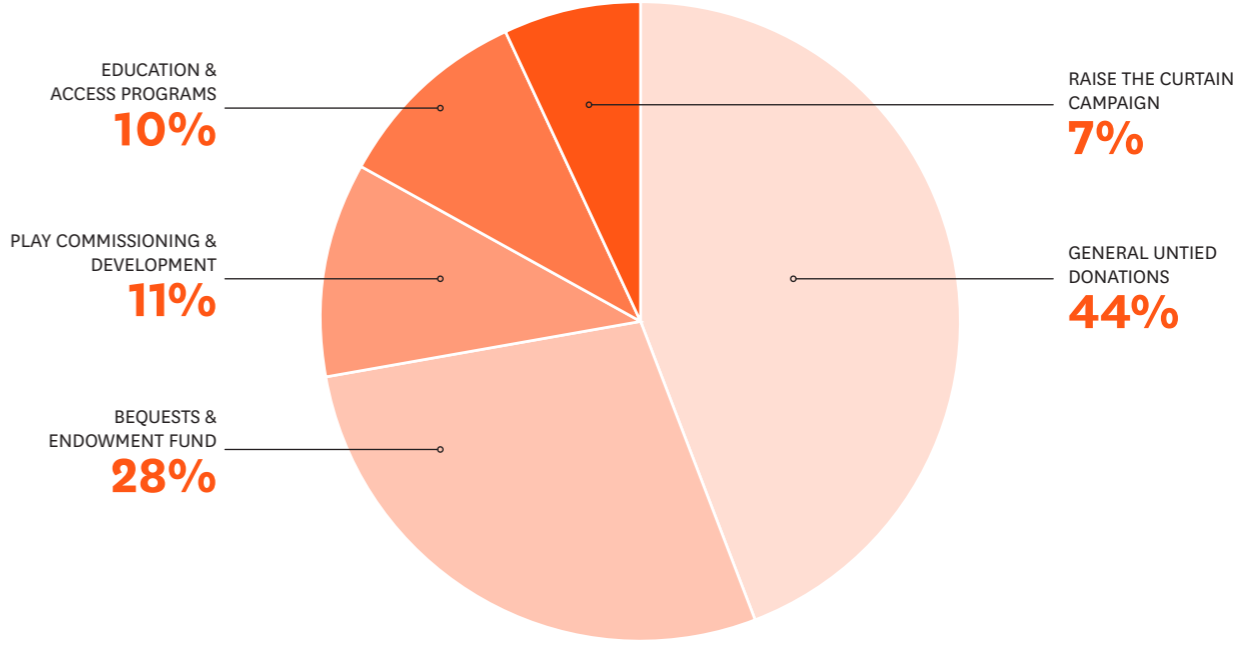


FINANCIAL REPORT 2021

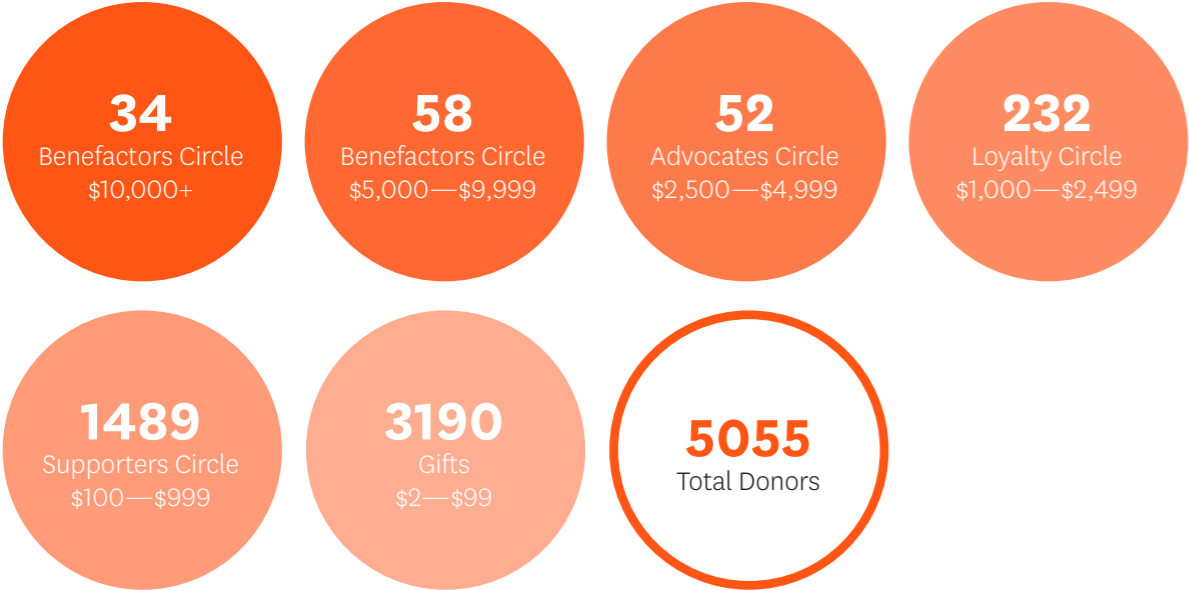
2021 Income—\$17.5M



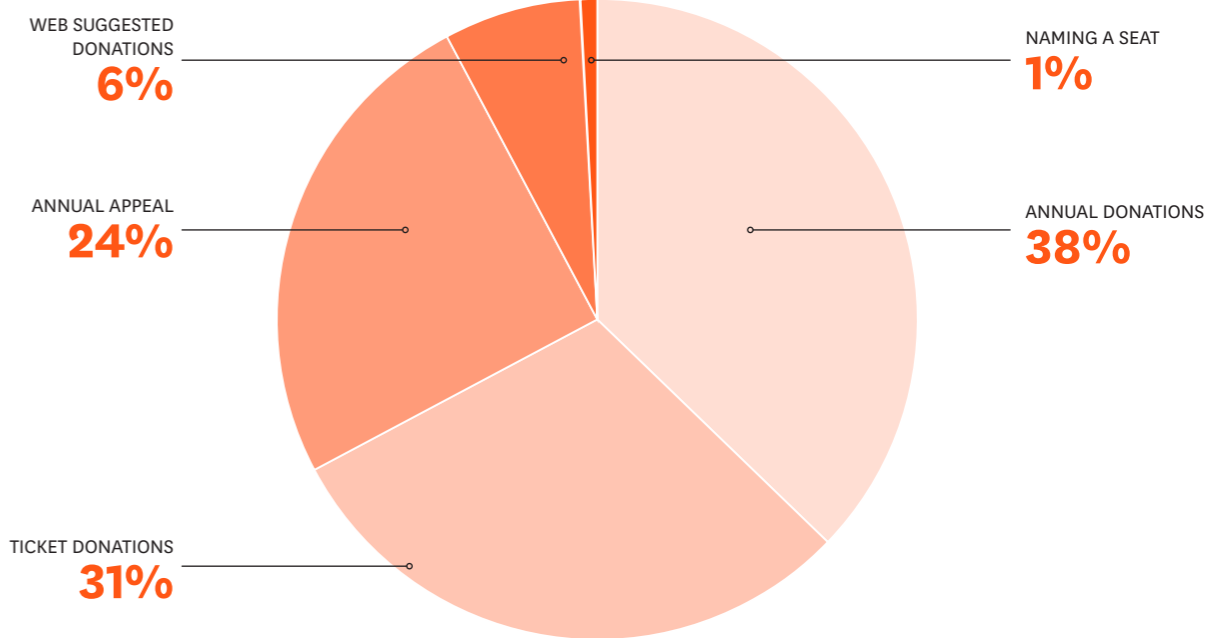
2021 Donations



2021 Annual Giving Donors by Circle



Breakdown of Untied Donations



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MTC Director of Finance and IT. MTC Foundation Board Member since March 2021.

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MTC Director of Development. MTC Foundation Board Member since January 2019.



CIRCLES OF GIVING

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE ONGOING SUPPORT OF OUR LEADING DONORS.

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Acknowledging a lifetime of extraordinary support for MTC.

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Supporting the long term sustainability and creative future of MTC.

Leading Gifts Jane Hansen AO and Paul Little AO The University of Melbourne	\$50,000+ Geoffrey Cohen AM Orcadia Foundation The Late Bidy Ponsford Andrew Sisson AO and Tracey Sisson	\$20,000+ Robert A. Dunster Prof Margaret Gardner AO and Prof Glyn Davis AC Anne and Mark Robertson OAM	\$10,000+ Jane Kunstler Anonymous
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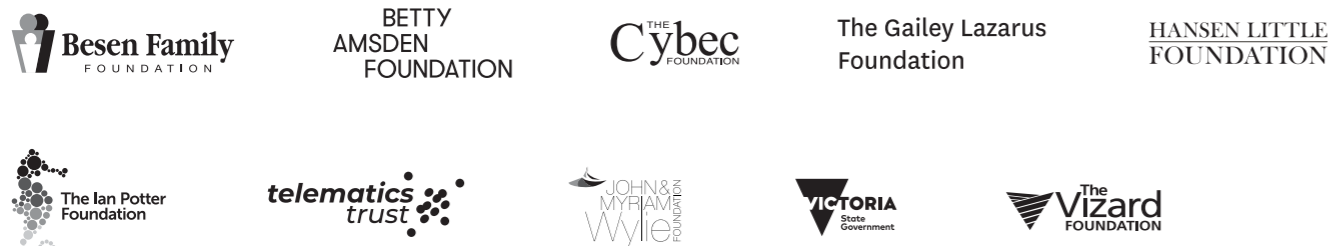
MTC'S PLAYWRIGHTS GIVING CIRCLE

Supporting the NEXT STAGE Writers' Program.

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Allan Myers AC QC and Maria Myers AC, Tony Burgess and Janine Burgess
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Donors whose recent gifts help MTC enrich and transform lives through the finest theatre imaginable.

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MTC is a department of the University of Melbourne

