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BURRINJA PERFORMING ARTS UPDATE

Thank you for your continuing support of the new theatre at Burrinja in Upwey. With action aplenty both on-site and in operational and program planning, here is an update on the latest news about this exciting development.

Through the support of our Foundation donors, stakeholders, Jarmbi members and many others, works for the new 400 seat theatre and building redevelopment at Burrinja began in earnest at the beginning of this year.

With building now well underway and on schedule for completion in mid 2011, the Burrinja Performing Arts venue will encourage greater cultural participation by the region's entire community. The facility will deliver excellent stage, performer, technical and audience facilities, full disability access, an Indigenous education cultural garden and much more.

Building progress

After a period of site preparation and the laying of underground services and foundations, it is now exciting to see the auditorium itself start to 'come out of the ground'. The major support pillars are in, the first pre-cast panels installed and form work is in place for the stage level floor.

A key cause of celebration has been the emergence of the lift well, which will finally provide the cultural centre with full disability access to the first floor performance, rehearsal and community spaces.

Internally the renovations to the existing building are well advanced. The old foyer, administration and multi-purpose spaces were quickly gutted. In their place are the wall framing, plant and services for 4 dressing rooms, new public facilities, new administration, a green room, stage door and much more. It is a fabulous experience to walk through the layout of the new facilities as the plans become reality. Externally, the completion of extended parking and upgrades to Matson Drive have been welcome.

The efforts of project builders *Procon* have made the potentially difficult task of remaining operational during the development easier than first anticipated. Progress photos of all the works are on the [Burrinja Facebook](#) page – you can also follow the link from our [home page](#).

A Vision for the new Theatre

Committee and staff have developed a Strategic Vision for the new theatre that proposes a totally integrated arts experience. Burrinja will actively seek and facilitate partnerships and relationships with existing and future performing arts groups, and community and touring productions. The centre will continue to focus on the facilitation of community arts and stakeholder involvement through its performing arts programming.

The '4 E's Framework. *Enable : Event : Engage & Extend : Educate*

The '4 E's' framework integrates and extends Burrinja's existing four key activity areas: Arts, Performance, Education and Community, and furthers Burrinja's mission statement: '*Building Community through Arts*'.

The framework is designed to enable and encourage experiential and extended performance 'events' that integrate elements of arts, performance, education and community through a range of activities. It is based on the premise that the cultural centre should 'think', program and operate as a creative whole.

The strategic vision entails four distinct phases: Pre-Opening; Opening; Post-Opening; and Fully Operational. These phases offer different challenges and opportunities. Currently well immersed in our pre-opening planning phase, it is anticipated that after a creative celebratory opening program the following period will focus on operational systems and stability, before extending into more creative programming and engagement as the theatre becomes 'fully operational'.

Programming

With only twelve months to go until the opening of the new 400 seat theatre at Burrinja the community can look forward to a raft of new programs and activities that further engage the entire region in events that inspire.

A range of touring and community-based programs are currently under consideration for the opening season, with exciting prospects on the horizon. It promises a wide variety of performance, from drama to music, dance and movement to comedy and classical. Watch this space for further updates!

Bookings Open Soon

The theatre will become home to many of the local schools and other organizations that will finally be able to access a quality, purpose-built performance venue 'on the mountain'. With the opening just a year away booking, ticketing and other systems are now being finalized. Venue hire bookings will be open shortly.

Art of Place Indigenous Cultural Garden

A key element of the development is the cultural education garden that will better integrate the redeveloped arts centre with its surrounding environment, creating a space that allows visitors to expand their experience of Indigenous culture from the Burrinja Collection to this landscaped 'Art of Place'.

This project too is now well advanced. AQL Landscape Design and Sinatra-Murphy have been appointed to coordinate the project. They have facilitated a number of inspiring consultative workshops with the Indigenous community that has developed the project vision into schematic design concepts. A local community and stakeholder feedback and information session at Burrinja on June 26 will further this process.

Public Fund update

We have set a target of \$90,000 for our fundraising in order to purchase the audiovisual equipment necessary to fit out the theatre. To date over \$24,000 has been generously donated to the Burrinja Public Fund by Foundation donors: from individual supporters to schools and local businesses. This support is greatly appreciated. All donations to the Burrinja Public Fund are tax deductible, and donations of \$200 or more will be acknowledged with a theatre seat plaque recognizing your support, giving you an on-going stake in the region's new theatre.

Designed by the award winning Gregory Burgess Architects this new facility is set to become an iconic venue, bringing together important economic, social and cultural benefits for the whole region.

We look forward to completing this exciting project's journey with your on-going support. If you would like to discuss any aspects of the project please contact me at Burrinja, or drop in and enjoy our on-going exhibition and cultural programs,

Kind regards



Ross Farnell
Executive Officer