The Blue Room Theatre

Annual Report __ 2022



Purpose

The Blue Room Theatre supports the development of WA-based independent artists and arts-workers, and the presentation of new theatre and performance. We provide opportunities, resources and a platform for artists and arts-workers to connect, collaborate and create their work. We share live performance with our community; to inspire, challenge, entertain, and imagine a better future together.

Our Vision

To be a leading artistic development organisation in Australia that empowers independent artists and arts-workers to grow their practice and present their work.

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Overview



The Blue Room Theatre is the trading name of the Performing Arts Centre Society (PACS), incorporated in 1989 by Perthbased theatre artists to support development opportunities for professional practitioners and create communication and networking opportunities across the sector.

The state government-owned heritage building Arts House is the home of The Blue Room Theatre. The Blue Room Theatre spaces include: two intimate black box theatres; two rehearsal rooms; a kitchen; the main office and box office; a bar; and backstage facilities.

Independent artists are at the heart of the organisation. The Blue Room Theatre is a creative hub servicing the needs of performance artists through support (financial and in-kind), resources, opportunities, advocacy, information, and advice.

The Blue Room Theatre Annual Seasons (previously known as the Development Seasons) were established in 1994 and give independent artists the opportunity to present new work, a work that has not been produced in WA or is an innovative interpretation of an existing text. Presented as one season, the Annual Season is the core activity of The Blue Room Theatre and is programmed by an independent peer panel who assess applications from independent artists. The programmed works are supported by The Blue Room Theatre with in-kind equipment, venue and rehearsal space hire, a seed fund and sliding scale of 65-80% of the box office, adjusted according

to any additional funding awarded to the work. Thirteen works were programmed between April and December, with most seasons comprising of two or three weeks. COVID-19 impacted capacities and season lengths for four of the works.

Our regular Summer Nights program was established in 2009 and has been presented as part of FRINGE WORLD since 2012. After a year off in 2021, Summer Nights returned in 2022 and ran independently of FRINGE WORLD.

The Blue Room Theatre is committed to the continuous professional development of artists. Practical skill and career development workshops are integrated within programs or offered in addition or in partnership with other organisations. In 2022, we offered two intensive professional development programs: Design Direction with Joe Lui and Friends and a Creative Producing Circle with Shona Erskine. We also presented two panel discussions: 'Accessibility as Dramaturgy' with Performing Lines and 'The Making of Indie Theatre to the Mainstage' with Black Swan State Theatre Company.

The Blue Room Theatre continued its carbon neutral operations and dedication to environmental sustainability. Efforts to redress systemic racism continued in 2022 through the work of Board, Staff and our Equity and Justice Working Group and the completion of our first ever three-year Equity & Justice Action Plan.

Our Values

Creativity

We support risk-taking, innovation and rigour in artistic practice and our organisational culture.

Community

We are an inclusive and accessible organisation; practicing equity, justice and mutual respect.

Sustainability

We are ethical, transparent and accountable environmentally, socially and in governance.

2020 — 2022 Goals

Goal 1: To develop skilled and resilient professional

artists and risk-taking new work

Goal 2: To deliver broad cultural impact

Goal 3: To sustain a thriving organisation

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Words from the Chair

Monica Kane



Words from the Executive Director Katt Osborne



"Theatre is the most perfect artistic form of coercion" Augusto Boal

Theatre is about stories. Stories are a means of persuasion. The Blue Room Theatre productions act as a mirror to our humanity. The COVID-19 experience throughout 2022 showed us both the simplicity and complexity of what it means to be human. The arts (as always) provided a mechanism in which to express what that experience looked like. For this we are grateful.

And despite COVID-19, the show went on...when it could. Executive Director, Katt Osborne, along with the team tirelessly kept the doors open whenever possible, with the primary focus on keeping people safe. On behalf of the Board, I'd like to thank and congratulate The Blue Room Theatre management, staff and volunteers for wrapping around the artists to bring their shows and stories to life throughout 2022.

Behind the scenes of our public program, the Board worked on the strategy for 2023-2026. Working with the Equity and Justice Working Group we continued to focus and prioritise by underpinning equity and justice across the organisation. This included resourcing an action plan that holds us accountable. It started with the recruitment of a new position for a Community Engagement Producer to develop new relationships between underrepresented groups and The Blue Room Theatre, with the aspiration of encouraging new work and audiences. In line with the equity and justice pledge, the Board has also continued exploring the Ethical Partnerships Framework. In October we workshopped a draft framework during a Board and Staff Development Day, which created a dynamic discourse and in-principle commitment to the framework. The final framework is expected to be endorsed later in 2023.

On the national front, the sector is seeing hopeful policy changes for the first time in over ten years through the federal government's National Cultural Policy - Revive. Australia Council will be turning into Creative Australia, and Creative Partnerships will return to the federal body. Importantly, this policy is a reaffirmation that all stories matter. It centres First Nations voices and reminds us of the plurality of stories that make us the nation we are and aspire to be. This policy has been well received by the sector creating a sense of hope. The budget in May 2023 will be an important signalling as to how serious the government is about the arts, but the commitments made so far are certainly promising.

In addition, the outcomes of the Four-Year Investment grant applications will keep the sector (and our Board) on the edge of our seats. The work we have put into the strategy, positions us strongly. Having steered (and grown) the organisation over the last three years through the loss of this multi-year funding, as well as COVID, has been no easy task. Katt Osborne has done this diligently and respectfully. By the time we go to print, Katt's resignation will be public. Of course, she will continue as Executive Director through the best half of 2023, so full accolades can be held off until next year. Regardless, it is fair to acknowledge the weight of responsibility that she has carried here, and to thank her for doing this with grace, care and persistence.

To our funders and donors - I would like to acknowledge you all - no matter how big or small your contribution is. We appreciate the ongoing support - it remains critical to our success. I offer special thanks to the Department of Local Government and Cultural Industries, City of Perth and the Australia Council for the Arts. As well to our business partners David Mullen Wine Agency and Terms of Service, and our Professional Pathways Partner Minderoo Foundation for supporting our collaboration with Black Swan State Theatre Company.

Finally, thank you to the Board of Directors for their time, commitment, robust dialogue and diligent decision making. A special mention of thanks to outgoing Board Members Zainab Syed, Ian Wilkes and Liesbeth Goedhart, as we welcomed Kaitlin Tinker, Ella Hetherington, Clara Millet and Ali Martin at the AGM in 2022. As colleagues and directors, you are the best.

However, as always, it is the artists, the performers, producers, directors, writers and stage crew that we are all here for, you make up the membership...the collective that are the reason The Blue Room Theatre continues to exist and thrive.

Thank you for your support and your art.

MEKane

MONICA KANE Chair In many ways, 2022 was a more challenging year than 2021. COVID-19 was widespread in the WA community for the first time. Artist and staff illness led to several performance cancellations in the first six months of the year. Despite the general exhaustion of another year of being responsive to the necessary health and safety measures, and constant disruptions to our work and collaborations, our small but mighty organisation achieved a lot of wonderful things in 2022.

We began with the return of Summer Nights. Thanks to the support of 102 individual donors who helped us bring the festival back after taking a year off in 2021. It was also our first time since 2009 that the festival ran alongside, but independent of, the Fringe World festival. The festival featured a program of exclusively made-in-WA work and attendance remained strong across the festival.

And then came the COVID-19 waves. Although to most of us it felt less like riding waves and more like running into walls. We adapted, responded, cancelled, postponed and so on and so on - all year long. We have persevered at times and at other times, we've had to make the decision to walk away. We have witnessed some amazing teamwork and achievements against the odds from artists and production teams who have been in the thick of it.

Despite all these challenges, we presented 12 shows in our Annual Season, which supported 125 independent artists and arts-workers.

In addition to our Annual Season, 2022 also saw the second year of our collaboration with Black Swan State Theatre Company to remount and present an independent work to the mainstage. TOAST by Liz Newell was chosen by Black Swan to be supported and a successful run of the show occurred in April at the State Theatre Centre Studio Underground.

Finally, in 2022 we continued to grow the philanthropic support. 2023's Summer Nights program – which will support 12 productions and the return of our 600 Seconds program – has been again made possible by the generosity of 90 donors raising \$33,000. And our Donor Circle – which was established in 2020 in response to both the pandemic and the loss of our core funding – continues to support the Annual Season – and over three years has raised \$97,000.

I want to thank the entire Board who have tirelessly steered the organisation through another tumultuous year with their expertise, empathy and deep belief and understanding of the immense value and importance of The Blue Room Theatre.

Thank you also to our wonderful front of house bar and box office staff who make attending performances at The Blue Room Theatre so warm and easy, and navigating the complexities of COVID safety protocols this year with patrons.

And a huge shout out and thanks to all our Blue Room Theatre office staff. Thank you for your commitment, adaptability and ability to engage with complex conversations and our collective learning and growth, while stewarding our programs and showing constant care for this building and community all within a pandemic.

As Monica has stated in her Chair's Report, I will be stepping down as Executive Director later this year. I'm so proud of the work that my team has achieved over the last three years, while navigating so much change and upheaval.

I know that The Blue Room Theatre is in a strong position to continue its path to embed anti-racism and continue to reduce barriers for artists, audiences and communities from underrepresented backgrounds to feel fully welcomed and included at The Blue Room Theatre.

I look forward to supporting the next leader to transition into the role, bringing their unique energy to the organisation for its exciting next chapter.

The team and I look forward to 2023 with optimism, ready to continue to listen, support and be responsive to the needs of independent artists and arts workers through any challenge that we face. And we will do so knowing that we have the trust, support and open dialogue with our wonderful Blue Room membership and community.

KATT OSBORNE
Executive Director

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Goal 1: To develop skilled and resilient professional artists and risk-taking new work

Summer Nights

After a year off in 2021, Summer Nights returned in 2022 and ran independently of FRINGE WORLD for the first time since 2012. Our award-winning program of theatre, movement, and storytelling featured twelve shows across two and a half weeks from some of Boorloo's best up-and-coming, established, and experimental artists.

Productions were presented in both black box theatre spaces along with the Kaos Room, which was transformed into a performance space. While Summer Nights has traditionally featured interstate and international works, COVID-19 border closures and travel risks focused the program entirely on local works and artists. In addition, COVID-19 forced one production - Tinashe Jakwa's stillbirth (later renamed, rebirth) - to be postponed. This season was instead presented at The Blue Room Theatre in July 2022.

The stages were warmed with bold, touching, and funny works of theatre, dance, and storytelling, including a punk rock musical, a late-night variety show, and a postmodern play of war and hope. The program supported 99 artists who were a mix of emerging and established; half were under 26 and one third identified as culturally and linguistically diverse. Of the 3,355 seated capacity across the festival, 2,293 were sold plus 435 were allocated complimentary, with Summer Nights bringing in over 2,728 patrons achieving a capacity of 83%. Gross box office income was \$58,053.

Highlights of the festival included Amir Musavi's sold out season of Utopia and Michele Gould's critically acclaimed 107, both from first-time lead artists working. In 2022 we trailed a new 'Summer Nights Pathway' that saw both Amir's and Michele's works programmed in our 2022 Annual Season, where they were given the opportunity to continue developing and elevating the works. Another highlight was the outside broadcast

"It felt like being part of a warm, welcoming and inclusive community and the season itself was a privilege to be a part of." with RTRFM 92.1, which activated our front-yard pop-up bar and promoted Summer Nights across the airwaves.

As part of our Summer Nights community engagement plan, we worked with a selection of shows to further connect and engage their work and the artists involved with specific communities. Takatāpui's Daley Rangi worked with us on free and discounted ticket offers for community and folks with lived experience of sexual assault, and partnered with SARC (Sexual Assault Research Centre) to provide resources to audiences, staff, and volunteers. We worked with the Utopia team on a post-show Q&A and focused on expanding Amir's network in Boorloo's theatre scene to create further opportunities for him, his works, and his collaborators. stillbirth was the third project selected for community engagement, but these plans were cancelled due to the works postponement.

While shorter and smaller than previous festivals, 2022's Summer Nights was an uplifting and joyous celebration of independent performance, and a gentle yet ambitious return in the face of ongoing COVID-19 challenges. Running a smaller scale and independent festival, we had more time and freedom to work closely with artists, improve their financial deal, and focus on audience care and experience within the venue.



"The diverse range of artists and art forms meant that I felt artistically challenged by advanced and brilliant work (that I had access to see because of the Artists Pass)."

CLEA PURKIS (Producer and Performer, She's Terribly Greedy)

MICHELE GOULD (Writer, 107)



stillbirth (Postponed) Tinashe Jakwa

Michele Gould

Conversations with a Fish Helah Kristy Milroy

She's Terribly Greedy Clea Purkis

Wildcard Henry Boles

Salome δ Squid Vicious Mother of Compost Noemie Huttner-Koros

Takatāpui Daley Rangi

The Complete Show of Water Skiing Laura Lui

The Ugly
Renegade Productions

Leo/Taurus/Taurus
Lady Great Theatre Co.

Utopia Tamsilgaran

"Amir and I received wonderful support from the very beginning. For a recently arrived artist without English as a first language such support is essential. You gave him the confidence to remain true to his vision and make a dangerous and unusual work."

PHIL THOMSON
(Producer, Utopia)

Annual Season

The Blue Room Theatre's Annual Season exists to support new works made by artists ranging from emerging to mid-career and established, and to foster further professional development for all involved.

In 2022, our Annual Season comprised of 12 works with 125 artists and arts workers involved. The total capacity reached across the season was 71%. This capacity figure was smaller than in 2021, however 2021 was a particularly strong year after audiences returned in droves after the cancellations of 2020. Gross box office income was \$105,731, which reflects the shorter season and fall in capacity. Culture Counts was once again utilised in 2022, with an average score of 81% across the dimensions of distinctiveness (80%), risk (85%) and local impact (80%).

In 2022 we continued to offer a seed fund on top of in-kind rehearsal and performance space hire, with each production receiving \$2,500. This was thanks to the 18 members of our Donor Circle who collectively donated \$26,500 to support our 2022 Annual Season. The artists and producers also continued high success rates in receiving additional funding – with two thirds of productions receiving grants to support their projects.

Unfortunately, four of the 2022 works were impacted by COVID-19 disruptions with cancelled shows and reduced audience capacity. Thankfully, those impacted were able to still present a season, due to the artists resilience in bringing in alternate cast and crew to keep the shows running. Presenting work in 2022 was challenging, with all our artists needing to persevere at times, and at other times, make the decision to walk away – including our thirteenth production SAND which required cancellation.

The way that all the artists involved in the 2022 Annual Season faced challenges has not only proven the immense talent, skill, and creativity that we have in this town, but also shown the adaptability, empathy, and teamwork that everyone in this community brings to their work.

"A vital, safe, and supportive space for emerging artists to cut their teeth into live performance and theatre making. There is no other space like it."

"Participating in the Annual Season has been crucial in my career as an emerging artist. It provided me with the necessary support to put on my full-length show which was received positively. I am very grateful for the opportunity and the support during the development, production, and post-production, especially during the challenging times brought by the pandemic."

MONTSERRAT HERAS (Choreographer, Spectrums of Choclate Cake) Ann

Annual Season Program



EARTHSIDE Acid Tonge 21 April – 7 May

This postnatal sci-fi was a confessional odyssey that reimagined the infamous story of science fiction heroine Ellen Ripley, alongside the modern woman's birth experience in the public hospital system. On their lonely journey to retrieve an extra-terrestrial parasitic being, both learn they are expendable. The team invited new audiences in with a bubs-in-arms performance with morning tea.



Spectrums of Chocolate Cake HERA-S Productions 3 – 21 May

From first-time lead artist Montserrat
Heras, this contemporary dance
performance explored ambivalence
through a chocolate cake. It explored
pleasure and guilt, gluttony and
moderation, indulgence and abstinence.
This physical exploration of the conflict
between unconscious desires and the
rational mind unfolded onstage and off,
with clever covid- contingencies being
implemented to keep the show running.



SIT! (Or I'll Make You Sit) Morgan Owen 30 May – 4 June

A story about love, relationships, and a stand-up comedian dog. This daring debut from emerging playwright Morgan Owen was a satire about power, attachment styles and the morbid appeal of living under another's control. Despite COVID-19 cancellations, the team brought enough energy to their shortened season to take out The Blue Room Theatre's Member's Choice Award.



MOODY Fonder Physical Theatre 7 – 18 June

MOODY explored the lived experience of emotional complexities and how we can care for each other. This intimate duet was made up of physical theatre, dance, puppetry, and clowning to allow a glimpse into a couple's connection as they navigate love and mental illness. It featured an imaginative bespoke quilt that covered almost the entire performance space and was cleverly used as set and prop alongside the narrative.



Pull The PinJust Friends Theatre Company
17 June – 2 July

A biting comedy that saw a team of middle-aged female tenpin bowlers face their greatest enemy... Age. Fighting hot flushes, midlife crisis, and kids that are too old to be living at home, these women needed more than high waisted undies to beat their biggest opponent. Complete with a bowling alley lane from the Theatre into the Mural Room, and an inventive backstage mattress set up to catch the real-life bowling bowls!



WALK Bobby Russell 14 - 30 July

This contemporary dance solo performance from Bobby Russell saw a shimmering shapeshifter who mirrors those around them as they learn to let go of past ghosts. Supported by a strong design team with lighting by Joe Lui, sound by Peter McAvan, and set and sculpture design by Opie Robinson - this playful intersection of sculpture, design, and choreography landed the team the Overall Design Award.

"The Annual Season is a vital opportunity for indie artists in WA to develop and deepen their practice. It is an integral stepping stone towards other work opportunities and provides the chance for invention and exploration!"

BRIANNAH DAVIS (Producer, You're So Brave)

(Producer, SIT! (Or I'll Make You Sit))

ALEXANDER EGLOFF

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Trust Me, It's the End of Our World After All Beyond the Yard Theatre 16 August – 3 September

A high-stake family drama set against a nuclear apocalypse followed the dynamics of three siblings after an intruder enters their metallic humble abode. They fused the tropes of reality TV with an electric glam rock aesthetic, to explore how the lies we tell ourselves can lead to explosive results. Bringing in 21% new audience members, the team took out this year's Audience Development Award.



Dreams of a Lonely Planet Flying Bicycle Collective 23 September – 1 October

Presented with AWESOME Arts Festival, this newly formed collective delivered an enjoyable children's contemporary theatre show. They engaged with school groups and adults alike as the show followed a young boy's journey to the Lonely Planet, exploring the power of childhood imagination and nostalgia as a means of escape. After the success of Dreams, The Blue Room Theatre will continue its co-presentation partnership with AWESOME Arts.



Homeward Bound Lazy Yarns 4 – 22 October

Sci-Fi theatre took centre stage in this postmodern play exploring isolation, belonging and home. In the liminal backdrop of space, an astronaut lost in time turns to bird migration patterns for inspiration and hope. A thrilling duo performance by writer, Isaac Diamond and performer, Kylie Bywaters.



You're So Brave Georgi Ivers 18 – 29 October

This auto-biographical solo performance from Georgi Ivers found the narrative connection between lived experience of chronic illness, politics in Hong Kong and learning how to pole dance.

The Blue Room Theatre provided additional support to the team to deliver our first ever digital season as a way of engaging with audiences unable to visit the theatre in person.



Socks & Sandals 1 – 12 November

107 was chosen for an encore season as part of our Summer Nights Pathway, and writer and composer Michele Gould produced seven new tracks for the remount and brought on new cast members. Queer musical theatre storytelling celebrated the resilience of youth, with the cast of four flipping stereotypes on their heads whilst also flipping them off.

The Blue Room Theatre supported 107 co-deliver a 'behind the scenes' community engagement pilot project for young people from the migrant and refugee through partnerships with ASeTTS and the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre.



Utopia
Tamsilgaran
8 – 19 November

Afghan director Amir Musavi's first
Australian work returned after a sold-out
season in Summer Nights. This was an
intense, raw, and thrilling expression
from a young man watching horrors
unfold in his homelands and across
the globe. It's abstract and stripped
back storytelling provided an engaging
experience for new audiences and artists
with The Blue Room Theatre.

Artist Advisory & Professional Development

Artist Advisory

This group was set up in 2020 to provide feedback and support to The Blue Room Theatre staff team. In 2022, we hosted seven members, with some returning from 2021. The group, which met three times throughout the year, included people with diverse artistic practices and experiences who advised on topics such as ways for Perth artists to engage critically with work; how The Blue Room Theatre should approach ethical partnerships; and feedback on our season application processes. We thank our 2022 Advisory Group members: Daley Rangi, Grace Chow, Jo Morris, Scott Elstermann, Ayo Busari, Ariane Katscherian, and Cal Silberstein.

Mentorships

10 mentorships were offered over the course of 2022 through the \$300 Mentorship Fund accessible by Annual Season artists to upskill their teams. In 2022 we saw mentorships spanning producing, publicity, stage combat, and directing rehearsal rooms, and Michele Gould (107) was able to link up digitally with Dean Drieberg, the highly acclaimed resident director of Hamilton Australia.



Workshops and Talks

In the winter of 2022, we supported two professional development intensives: one for producers/lead artists and one for designers/directors. The 'Creative Producing Circle' with Shona Erskine included four sessions over two weeks and gave 10 producers / independent artists the opportunity to learn communication and leadership techniques to take into their projects. We partnered with Joe Paradise Lui, Sara Chirichili, Mark Haslam and Emma Fishwick on the 'Design Direction' series of workshops that connected 10 directors/designers with the tools and networks required for more meaningful collaborations within the theatre-making process.

Two panel talks were hosted, one at the start of the year with Black Swan State Theatre Company that discussed taking projects from independent spaces to main stages, and one in August on accessibility as dramaturgy that concluded the Performing Lines Kolyang Artist Lab.

In August we threw our first 'Get Together' event to open up the building and connect independent artists together over food and discussions about performance-making.



Goal 1:

Key Performance Indicators

GOAL	KPI	2022 TARGET	2022 ACTUAL
	New works presented through TBRT programs	39	23
To develop professional independent artists & work	New work developments supported by TBRT	39	25
	Professional development projects delivered	39	13
	% workshop attendees satisfied or highly satisfied*	80%	95%
	% development season producer satisfied or highly satisfied	80%	86%

Notes: Targets for 2020-2022 goals were set prior to the pandemic and loss of multi-year Australia Council Funding. No 2023 targets are set in this annual report due to new Key Goals and KPIs being set against our new strategic plan for 2023-2026. These new targets will appear in our next Annual Report.

Goal 2: To deliver broad cultural impact

Equity and Justice

Process Summary

Recapping First Steps (2020-21)

The Blue Room Theatre Board endorsed an external Inclusivity Audit of our organisation. This was undertaken by the consultant group Tardis. We began working on the first two recommendations of the Audit. Firstly, to make a public commitment to change by creating and sharing our Equity and Justice Pledge and codesigning a strategy. We formed our Equity and Justice Working Group to consult on the final stages of the Pledge and help us frame and embed Equity & Justice principles and goals into our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

This Year: Plan Creation (2022)

We established a new role in the organisation of Community Engagement Producer. This role supported the Executive Director to drive the consultation and creation of our Action Plan, as well as pilot key projects throughout the year linked to our core artistic program, which are described throughout this report.

The Working Group continued to consult on the creation of our Action Plan. Additional Key Staff (Operations and Program Managers, and Community Engagement Producer) also participated in the consultation and development of the plan, with all other staff contributing at five key points in this process. We engaged Diversity Arts Australia to work with us and provide frameworks and feedback on our plan. We undertook a public stakeholder survey and gathered 179 responses from individuals and organisations to benchmark current perceptions and experiences of inclusion at The Blue Room Theatre. A total of 15 consultation meetings were held with the Working Group, Staff, and Diversity Arts Australia to produce our Equity and Justice Action Plan.





Acknowledgements

Many people have been involved in this process and we'd like to acknowledge some of the main contributors and drivers of creating this plan. A special thanks to Zainab Syed (The Blue Room Theatre Board Deputy Chair) who instigated this process. Thank you to everyone involved in the Equity and Justice Working Group.

Equity and Justice Working Group

External Members: Bobbi Henry, Crystal Nguyen, Ellie Murray-Yong, Eva Mullaley, Ian Michael, Jay Emmanuel, Joe Lui, Meelee Soorkia, Melanie Julien-Martial and Phebe Cho.

Board Members: Ian Wilkes and Sam Nerida.

Staff Members: Caro Duca, Katt Osborne, Mitch Thomas and Rose Kingdom-Barron.

Action Plan Goals

To ensure that Equity & Justice is integrated across all levels of our organisation, we have structured our Action Plan to correspond to our three 2023-2026 Strategic Goals.

Through implementing our plan over the coming three years, we aim to achieve the following key goals:

Representation: People from underrepresented groups/ communities are equitably represented in our artistic development activities, program selection, audiences, Staff, Board, Leadership and Volunteers.

Trust: People from underrepresented groups/communities trust The Blue Room Theatre as an accountable organisation.

Inclusion: People from underrepresented groups/communities do not feel marginalised by The Blue Room Theatre – they fell welcome, invited and included.

To view and read our full Equity and Justice Action Plan, including measures of success and reporting framework, please visit: blueroom.org.au/about/equity-and-justice.

Awards & Touring

The Blue Room Theatre Awards

Audience Engagement

Winners: Trust Me, It's the End of Our World After All

(Beyond the Yard Theatre) and

107 (Socks & Sandals)

Nominees: You're So Brave (Georgi Ivers)

EARTHSIDE (Acid Tongue)

Design

Winner: Overall Design - WALK

Nominees: Owen Davis, Set Design - Trust Me, It's the

End of Our World After All

Overall Design - Homeward Bound

William Gammel, Set Design - Pull the Pin

Writing

Winner: Georgi Ivers - You're So Brave

Nominees: Michele Gould - 107

Kaitlin Tinker - EARTHSIDE Isaac Diamond - Homeward Bound

Direction or Choreography

Winner: Elise Wilson - Homeward Bound

Nominees: Bobby Russell - WALK

Yvan Karlsson, Estelle Brown & Izzy Leclezio

- Dreams of a Lonely Planet Amir Musavi - Utopia

Ensemble or Individual Performance

Winner: Bobby Russell and Shuling Wong - WALK

Nominees: The ensemble - 107

Georgi Ivers - You're So Brave

The ensemble - Dreams of a Lonely Planet

The ensemble - Pull the Pin

Members Choice

Winner: SIT! (Or I'll Make You Sit)
Nominees: All shows nominated

Behind The Scenes Awards - Production

Utopia Team

Behind the Scenes Award - Production

Jolene Whibley

Behind The Scenes Awards - Producer

Samantha Hortin

Behind The Scenes Award - All Rounder

Montserrat Heras

Behind the Scenes Award – Publicity and Marketing

Kailyn Crabbe

Behind the Scenes Award – Stage Manager

Ari Rahim

Performing Arts WA Awards 2022

The PAWA Award Ceremony for shows presented in 2022 will take place later in 2023, after this annual report has gone to print.

At the PAWA Awards 2022, celebrating presentations from 2021, productions supported by The Blue Room Theatre received eight awards and 27 nominations across 18 categories.

Best Independent Production (Theatre)

Winner: The Bleeding Tree by Angus Cerini

(lan Michael)

Outstanding Ensemble (Theatre)

Winner: The Bleeding Tree by Angus Cerini

(lan Michael)

Outstanding Direction of an Independent Production (Theatre)

Winner: Ian Michael, The Bleeding Tree by Angus Cerini (Ian Michael)

Outstanding Achievement by an Interstate Artist (Theatre)

Winner: Stace Callaghan, Queer as Flux

(The Nest Ensemble)

Outstanding Ensemble (Musical and Opera)

Winner: The Summer of Our Lives

(Western Sky Projects)

Outstanding Performers in Supporting Roles

(Musical and Opera)

Winner: Nick Maclaine, The Summer of Our Lives

(Western Sky Projects)

Outstanding Musical Direction or Conducting

Winner: Joe Louis Robinson, The Summer of Our Lives

(Western Sky Projects)

Outstanding Sound Design

Winner: Rachael Dease, The Bleeding Tree by

Angus Cerini (Ian Michael)

Additional Presentations

These productions, originally supported by The Blue Room Theatre, went on to present in 2022.

- Bang! Bang! (Shona Erskine, Scott Elstermann and Libby Klysz)
 regional WA tour
- Kangaroo Stew (Desert Wirla) at Koorliny Arts Centre, Kwinana.
- Queer as Flux (The Nest Ensemble) at the Sydney Opera House for Unwrapped
- See You Next Tuesday (Static Drive Co.) at Subiaco Arts Centre
 regional WA tour cancelled due to COVID-19.
- Takatāpui (Daley Rangi) at the Sydney Opera House for Unwrapped
- TOAST (Liz Newell) at State Theatre Centre of WA, Northbridge.

Industry Partnerships

AWESOME Festival for Bright Young Things

Annual Season

Black Swan State Theatre Company

2022 saw the second year of our collaboration with Black Swan State Theatre Company to remount and present an independent work to the mainstage. TOAST by Liz Newell was chosen by Black Swan to be supported and a successful run of the show occurred in April at the State Theatre Centre Studio Underground.

Chamber of Culture and Arts

Get Together

Curtin University

Hayman Theatre: Stage One

Minderoo Foundation

Professional Pathways Partner

Performing Lines WA

Kolyang Disability Lab

Perth Festival

Connect Hub

Propel Youth Arts

Community Engagement

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts TILT



Goal 2:

Key Performance Indicators

GOAL	KPI	2022 TARGET	2022 ACTUAL
To develop broad cultural impact	Supported works have further presentations*	3	5
	WA sector partnerships each year	6	9
	CALD audiences*	4,480	1,533
	CALD participants**	240	56
	Partnerships with diversity organisations	3	2

^{*} As a percentage of audiences, CALD audiences made up 16% of audiences at The Blue Room Theatre.

^{**} As a percentage, CALD participants made up 27%.

^{***} We partnered with ASeTTS and the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre on community engagement for Annual Season show 107.

Goal 3: To sustain a thriving organisation

Alumni Impact Study

In 2022, The Blue Room Theatre commissioned local researcher and artist Shona Erskine to co-design and write an impact study report on our independent artist and arts-worker alumni. The aim was to better understand the reach of our alumni throughout Australia and the world, and gather data on how impactful their formative experiences at The Blue Room Theatre were to their current practices and careers.

The report produced is comprehensive and detailed and has been used to support The Blue Room Theatre's case for ongoing and increased funding.

A brief summary of the key findings are shared here.

Who was surveyed

A total of 372 people responded to the 2022 impact study survey (20% of The Blue Room Theatre's alumni – a strong data set). The 'Identity' question was open ended and there were as many responses as people. The respondents were a diverse group. The age ranges of the respondents saw the greatest number of respondents 69% (258) between 25 and 44 years of age. Of the 372 people who responded, 87% (323) currently work in the arts either paid or unpaid. This is a high retention rate.

Key trends

Location

- 56% of respondents are in Perth metro, 11% outer metro.
- 78% of those in the Perth metro and outer metro plan to work with The Blue Room Theatre again.
- Of those who have moved interstate most end up in NSW (26%) or VIC (46%).

Primary Practice

- 87% of respondents are currently working in the arts.
- Performers, Performance Makers, and Writers make up over half (54%) of respondents.
- The 15% of respondents who ticked 'other' as primary practice
 were asked to define their primary practice. The largest group
 were in Management. Another 'other' large group in the Perth
 metropolitan area was Teacher and Technician.

Project Numbers

- The respondents were involved with The Blue Room Theatre from pre-2003 through to the current year – a good representation from a broad range of years of involvement.
- 76% of respondents have continued to work with The Blue Room Theatre beyond their first year of involvement.
- Irrespective of year first involved, 84% of respondents have done more than one project with The Blue Room Theatre.
- The majority of first projects are done in the younger, emerging formative years – average 60% 18-24 bracket, 25% 25-34 bracket.
- The data consistently points to very high reinvolvement numbers.

Career Impac

- Responses of 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to whether
 The Blue Room Theatre has provided performance making
 and producing and presenting skills, opportunities for risk and
 innovation, artistic autonomy, building professional networks,
 and connections with collaborators averages 90%.
- The belief that The Blue Room Theatre is a unique incubator for professional artists and arts-workers and providing essential and vital entry points / pathways at personal, state, and national level is 100%. This is extraordinary.

"Support from The Blue Room Theatre staff fostered ongoing professional relationships. I got to practice and play with the artists who I am now in a company with (The Last Great Hunt), in an atmosphere of curiosity, boldness and permission to fail with joy."

ADRIANE DAFF
(Performer and Theatre Maker)

"[The Blue Room Theatre]
was my first experience
performing new Australian
work and entry into the
independent sector.... Since
then, I have presented my
work all over the world most recently at the Sydney
Opera House and my latest
play is being adapted into a
drama series on the ABC."

ADRIANO CAPPELLETTA (Performer and Writer)

Services & Resources



As a member-based organisation, The Blue Room Theatre continues to provide invaluable services and resources to independent performing artists, arts-workers and members through the provision of in-kind or significantly subsidised access and hire, as well as administrative, producing, marketing and technical support. In 2022 there were 426 financial members - the full list can be seen on page 22.

Hire

In 2022 The Blue Room Theatre continued to engage with tertiary institutions to deliver public performance programs showcasing the work of graduating students. We were proud to partner with WAAPA for the eighth year of TILT, an original program of self-devised and directed works created and performed by final-year Bachelor of Performing Arts students, and Curtin University's Stage One program in February. A total 1757 hours of in-kind rehearsal space hire was provided to Annual Season and Summer Nights productions and events to support the sector. We also continued to host several functions for both arts and non-arts industry hirers in our bar throughout the year.

Auspice

The Blue Room Theatre has offered auspice services to independent performance artists for many years. As an incorporated body, we ensure all auspiced productions maintain public liability insurance, worker's compensation, superannuation and leave payments for all artists involved, and complete their financial acquittal to the funding body.

Projects Auspiced In 2022

Bang! Bang! (Shona Erskine, Scott Elstermann and Libby Klysz) – DLGSC

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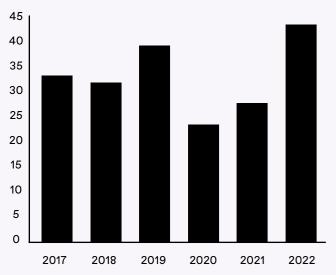
Environmental Sustainability Report

Since 2015, the installation of our solar panels and acquiring LED lights for our theatres, we have continued to reduce emissions and electricity costs overall. Our success in prioritising environmental sustainability has been made possible by the amazing support of our members and community over successive fundraising campaigns. We continue to make savings on our electricity use and purchase carbon offsets to bring our emissions to zero.

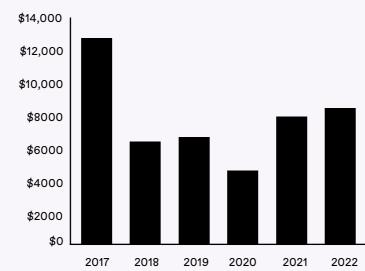
This is The Blue Room Theatre's fourth year of carbon neutrality.

In 2022, thanks to the support of the Australia Council for the Arts, The Blue Room Theatre participated in a more rigorous carbon audit process. As a result of this audit, from 2022 we have now begun to measure the impact of our bar stock (food and drink) and increased the accuracy of measuring our waste (landfill and compost). These new measurements have seen an increase in our recorded overall CO2 emissions, but not a significant increase in costs.

Green House Gas Emissions 2017 - 2022



Electricity Expense 2017 - 2022



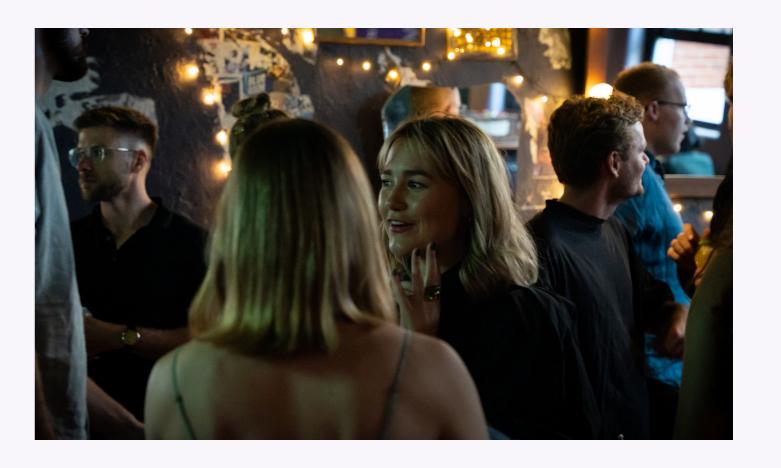
CO2-e	Tonnes	
		ě

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
33.84	32.19	38.84	21.66	26.25	44.55

2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
\$12,810	\$6,508	\$6,727	\$4,497	\$7,901	\$8,416

Notes

- 2019 includes brochure paper and printing for the first time
- 2020 is lower due to being closed for performances the majority of the year
- 2021 includes water and compost waste for the first time
- 2022 includes food and drink and more accurate recording of different waste types
- Includes Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions
- Excludes calculations for staff and audience communtes
- · Excludes business travel all offset



Goal 3:

Key Performance Indicators

GOAL	КРІ	2022 TARGET	2022 ACTUAL
	Maintain reserves at 20% (exc. independent producer box office & auspices)	30%*	33%*
		-\$59K	-\$33K**
	Increase non-box office earned income	-20%	-16%**
To sustain		\$10K	\$10K
a thriving organisation	Increase private income	10%	9%
	Artist Board membership	3	4
	CALD Board membership	3	3
	PD opportunities for Staff & Board	6	6
	Weeks of programming at TBRT	36	35

^{*}Our reserves grew in 2021 based on job keeper income and a successful increase in earned income. The surplus reserves will support strategic projects that will sustain The Blue Room Theatre over the next three years as we adapt our operations without four-year funding from the Australia Council.

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^{**}In 2022 our target is an adjustment from 2021's increase, based on conservative forecasts as a result of projected COVID restrictions in 2021.

Treasurer's Report

Through strong fiscal management we have maintained financial reserves with the goal to not just see The Blue Room Theatre through the pandemic and the loss of multi-year Australia Council ('Ausco') funding, but to spend time engaging with our community and revisioning our future. From this strong position we will invest in our 2023-2026 vision and outcomes.

The Blue Room Theatre continues to receive support from various government grants. With the State Government providing 38%, including core funding via DLGSCI. Ausco's financial support provided project funding which enabled our core artistic program alongside the development of our equity and justice goals.

Sources of Income 2022

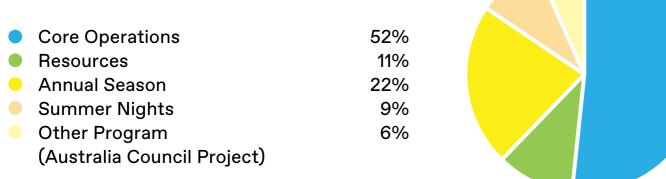
Performance Fees and Box Office	14%	
Fees for Services	10%	
Merchandising & Retail	5%	
Resources Income	8%	
Other	1%	
DLGSCI AOIP	25%	
Australia Council	7%	
DLGSCI Projects	13%	
Local Government Grants	7%	
Sponsorship and Philanthropic	10%	

The impact of COVID continued during 2022, with artists, staff and audience succumbing and being unable to attend shows. The Blue Room Theatre staff worked tirelessly to re-book tickets and reschedule shows to ensure the best outcomes for artists and audiences. Disappointingly, this did lead to a 14% decrease in our operating revenue across ticket sales, performance fees, services, merchandising and retail.

Summer Nights returned in 2022 thanks to the philanthropic giving campaign which was widely supported across our membership and raised over \$30,000 to ensure our stages could once again tell stories and provide opportunities to experience the summer magic. Alongside support from the City of Perth, The Blue Room Theatre saw a successful season with audience attendance at 83%.

Managing expenditure is always tricky, with 82% of our core operations costs being the staff who support artists and make sure our venue runs smoothly. The depth and diversity of their skills has enabled The Blue Room Theatre to upgrade ICT systems, remain carbon neutral and provide professional development opportunities in 2022, all the time whilst supporting the on-stage performances and audience experience.

Expenditure 2022



Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2022

	2022(\$)	2021 (\$)
Revenue from continuing operations		
Operating revenue	412,985	480,755
Revenue from Grants	580,323	616,970
Revenue from donations and fundraising	114,013	104,470
Other revenue	14,128	21,558
Operating Expenditure	(1,177,530)	(1,281,734)
Net (Deficit)/ Surplus for the year	(38,471)	(57,981)
Transfers from / (to) Designated Reserves	17,610	87,001
Net Operating Surplus for the year	(20,861)	29,020

Financially, after adjusting for reserve transfers for money received in 2022 but for spending in 2023, we achieved a deficit of (\$20,861). Certainly not unexpected and aligned with the Board's strategic objectives to show restraint whilst still investing in our three pillars. This strategy is anticipated to see multi-year deficits.

In 2022, The Blue Room Theatre continued with the strategy it had embarked on since 2020 to look towards growing opportunities, investing reserves to maintain and consolidate our core artistic program, whilst beginning implementation of equity and justice actions and community engagement activities.

Our non-committed reserves remain strong at 33% against our target of 20%; ensuring we can continue to provide great opportunities in 2023, whilst reframing our direction and building our capacity.

With funding applications in situ for increased funding from 2024-2026, we will be in a solid and sustainable position to continue this work for the benefit of local independent artists, audiences and the sector. We will then leverage our AOIP funding to increase and diversify our earned and grant income streams, and further increase the diversity of our artists and their stories and impact on audiences and communities in 2023 and beyond.

For a full copy of the financial statements for the Performing Arts Centre Society Inc, Visit the ACNC website at www.acnc.gov.au

Hugh

TANYA PAYNE Treasurer

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Donors

The generosity of our donors allows us to continue to be as accessible as possible and give high levels of support to independent artists. Without the folks below, our 2022 Annual Season and 2023 Summer Nights would not have been possible.

Annual Season Donor Circle

Thank you to our Giving Circle who raised \$26,500 to support the 2022 Annual Season.

Donor Circle Members

Andrew Baker & Rowan Marshall

Anonymous x 4 Bryan Martin

Ian Gay

Jamie & Kath Breen

John Foster

Kate Chaney

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Liesbeth Goedhart

Linda Savage & Stephen Davis

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Mark Hateley & Alison Steer

Monica Kane

Nerida Maclean

Philip Dundas

S and M Glasson

Shane Colquhoun & Leigh Cathcart



Make Summer Nights a Success in 2023

Thank you to our major donors lan and Jill Green, who matched donations and brought our total donations for this campaign to \$31,330, allowing us to program our beloved Summer Nights festival again in 2023.

Matched Funding Major Donors Ian and Jill Green

\$1000+

Clair & Chris Shenton Mark Hateley Shane Colquhoun Sue McDonald Willoughby Park Wines

\$250-\$999

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\$0-99

Thanks to all 60 donors for giving up to \$100

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Zainab Syed

Deputy Chair: Arts Management + Community Engagement

Tanya Payne

Treasurer: Finance + Accounting

Liesbeth Goedhart (until May)

Secretary: Philanthropy + Marketing + Arts Administration

Sam Nerida

Secretary (from May): Arts Industry + Artist

Ian Wilkes (until May)

Elected Member: Arts Industry + Artist

Emily Mclean

Elected Member: Arts Industry + Artist

Ella Hetherington (From May)

Elected Member: Arts Industry + Artist

Ali Martin (From May)

Co-opted Member: Marketing

+ Communications

Kaitlin Tinker (May - October)

Elected Member: Arts Industry + Artist

Clara Millet (From July)

Co-opted Member: Fundraising

+ Philanthropy

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Program Manager Rose Kingdom-Barron

Operations Manager

Mitch Thomas

Community Engagement Producer

Caro Duca (From March)

Program Coordinator

Caro Duca (Until February)

Amy Howell (From March)

Communications Coordinator

Amy Howell (Until February) Amber Kitney (From April)

Front Of House & Ticketing Coordinator

Scott McArdle (Until March) Ruby Short (From March)

Technical Coordinator

Ryan Kok (Until June) Graham Piper (From July)

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Scott McArdle

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Zendra Giraudo

A Big Thank You To

All our wonderful volunteer ushers for the year



The work of The Blue Room Theatre is supported by the Western Australian Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries and the City of Perth. In 2022, our Annual Season was assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

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TERMSOFSERVICE™

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The Blue Room Theatre is the trading name of the Performing Arts Centre Society Inc.

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