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The Blue Room Strategic Plan 2009 – 2011 has been developed in consultation with Blue Room Board and staff; informed by feedback from members, producers and audience and written by Executive Director, Jansis O’Hanlon. This plan has been created as a living document to be progressed over the 2009-2011 triennium.

The Blue Room is a trading name of the Performing Arts Centre Society (PACS) a not for profit incorporated association.

PACS is registered as a charitable cultural institution and has ITEC and GRO status.



## Executive Summary

*Through the effective delivery of this strategic plan, The Blue Room will fulfil*

### OUR PURPOSE

To be a leading arts organisation that supports the development of outstanding performing arts practitioners by providing affordable and accessible resources, services and support.

*By aligning*

### OUR GOALS & STRATEGIES

#### **GOAL 1: Contribute to the uniqueness and diversity of Australian theatre by supporting the development of bold, risk taking, relevant new performance**

Identifying outstanding, independent artists and companies, of diverse practice, experience and background, and providing opportunities for these artists to develop and present a broad range of new performance will contribute to the vitality and richness of Australian theatre.

#### **GOAL 2: Provide programs, services, resources and connections that are highly valued by artists**

Providing an increasingly high level of professional guidance throughout the course of an artist's engagement with The Blue Room; continuing to improve the standard of resources and technology offered; providing relevant information, as well as providing connections between artists and other artists and wider opportunity, all increase the value for the artist of working within The Blue Room.

#### **GOAL 3: Participate as a leading organisation that is recognised locally, nationally and internationally for our uniqueness, integrity and professionalism.**

Engaging in the external environment as a leader with The Blue Room voice identifiable with the voice of its constituents; collaborating with cultural organisations of compatible purpose and values to maximise the benefits of individual programs; and developing a higher level of recognition of The Blue Room and the artists it supports through effective promotion and marketing will strengthen The Blue Room's position as a leading arts organisation.

#### **GOAL 4: Cultivate whole of organisation commitment to operating with the highest standards of integrity and accountability.**

Ensuring The Blue Room attracts, develops and retains a highly effective team, of both Board and staff, who understand and are committed to The Blue Room's purpose, values and goals; and ensuring good governance and business practice is in place at all levels of operation is imperative to maintaining credibility.

#### **GOAL 5: Sustain excellent financial health**

Expanding and diversifying sources of income to create a stable base of operating and program support; and undertaking rigorous financial analysis are key to sustaining our financially strong position.

*And the effective delivery of*

### OUR PROGRAM

**Working within a rich mesh of networks The Blue Room provides resources and support to a wide circle of artists, with a range of artistic visions, creating a diverse range of Australian contemporary theatre, through the following initiatives<sup>1</sup>:**

The Blue Room Performance Program

The Blue Room Seasons – Random Acts – The Blue Room Auspice

The Blue Room Resource & Service

Venue Management – Resources – Information – Networking – Advocacy



*And day to day activities with*

## **OUR VALUES**

**Productive** – The Blue Room is committed to the effective use of resources that maximise our capacity to provide high quality service, programs, and opportunities for theatre artists

**Accessible** – we are welcoming and open to a broad and diverse range of artists and audience

**Creative** – we embrace the new and thrive on dynamic, productive exchange between The Blue Room panel, board, staff, artists and the wider environment.

**Supportive** – we value artists as creators and producers of their own work, we listen and respond to their needs and interests and support them in reaching their creative aspirations

*To show that*

**Our clarity of purpose, strong broad industry support and diverse program of activities make The Blue Room a unique cultural organisation that is acknowledged within the sector as a centre of excellence that offers significant opportunities for the development of outstanding new work and for new artists and new companies to emerge.**

## **A VISION OF THE FUTURE**

In 2012 we envision a Blue Room that has strengthened its position as a leading arts organisation.

The Blue Room remains vital to the growing health of theatre in WA and continues to identify, support and promote the newest generation of outstanding theatre makers.

The cultural landscape has evolved over the last three years and we have taken good advantage of new initiatives and opportunities that have arisen. The Blue Room is forming co-operative and productive relationships with cultural partners, both locally and beyond, united in a common purpose to maximise opportunities for outstanding Australian theatre artists to create new theatre.

We continue to provide critical connections between artists, peers and opportunity and a new generation of artists supported through The Blue Room are producing an extraordinary and diverse range of new theatre that is gaining praise and recognition on a local and national platform.

The artists working within The Blue Room greatly appreciate the increased level of support we are offering and the new and expanded opportunities available. Over the last three years we have sustained what works, developed our resources and added new value to existing programs.

We have also attracted a loyal new sponsor who supports new local work, innovation and risk-taking – like us they are in it for the long haul, building sustainability within a changing landscape.

Within this picture, The Blue Room continues to work in service to a broader vision of the arts in Australia characterised by a rich, strong, diverse environment of organisations, artists, and audiences and growing access and participation in the arts for more people.

*“When it comes to the small to medium performance in WA there is only phrase you need to know, The Blue Room...”*

Vicki Laurie: ABC Radio National, National Arts Roundup December, 2007



## The Blue Room Context

The Blue Room is a trading name of The Performing Arts Centre Society, constituted in 1989 by Perth-based theatre artists with the aim of supporting greater development opportunities for professional theatre practitioners and generating better communication across the sector.

Today, The Blue Room is a vibrant and highly-regarded organisation that has benefited from clarity of purpose; clearly aligned values; broad industry support and good planning. Supporting a continuous program of diverse, new theatre and providing resources, services and advocacy for independent theatre artists, The Blue Room is particularly valued for identifying and supporting the development of new and emerging artists, companies and work.

Situated in Northbridge WA, The Blue Room is housed in a heritage building owned by the State Government of WA. As well as housing The Blue Room administration, the venue is an active centre for artists to meet, develop, rehearse, produce, review and network offering two theatre spaces, two rehearsal rooms and a great bar all under Blue Room management. In 2006 the venue was significantly refurbished as part of a capital work program implemented by the State Government of WA greatly improving access and facilities for artists and audience members.

Curating a continuous program of diverse, new work, The Blue Room seeks to support what is urgent and interesting. Our performance program provides artists working across a broad spectrum of theatre practice with practical opportunities to explore their craft and develop their skills, as well as opportunities to build professional profile and present new work. The Blue Room has an exceptional record of providing outstanding artists and their work with critical entry points into the professional arena. These artists are now working across the country contributing to the richness and diversity of Australian culture<sup>2</sup>.

The Blue Room is a well connected organisation that has a strong track-record of working collaboratively with cultural partners on a local, state and national level to support, develop and deliver strategic initiatives that ensure greater opportunity for independent theatre artists working within the small to medium sector.

The organisation is in excellent financial health and has a strong track record of meeting financial, performance and audience development targets over a ten year period. Gross income for 2008 is forecast at \$645K. For these dollars, The Blue Room's impact is substantial: In fiscal year 2007, The Blue Room supported more than 200 artists in 21 productions that attracted more than 11,000 audience members.

The Blue Room is currently supported on a triennial basis by The Australia Council for the Arts; The Department of Culture and the Arts WA and on an annual basis from The City of Perth through their cultural partnership program.

Governed by an effective and skilled board of management, The Blue Room is chaired by industry leader, Natalie Jenkins and managed by a strong management team of 4.8 permanent staff, ably led by Executive Director, Jansis O'Hanlon since 1999.

*"I think it is because we are a very supportive industry. Things like ... The Blue Room – they are so wonderful because they just give you hope. There is freshness and risk taking. We have an extraordinary industry and I'm very proud to be part of it."*

Kate Mulvany, actor/writer  
Storyline issue 21 Summer 2008



## Artistic Rationale

The Blue Room is an artist focused organisation that supports the development of theatre artists and the work they create through the provision of professional services, programs and resources.

The Blue Room is open to and accessed by a wide circle of theatre artists. For emerging artists The Blue Room offers critical entry points into the professional arena. For established artists it offers greater opportunity to take risks and drive the development of their own work. The diverse range of skills, background and experience of participating artists is critical to the success of the program providing opportunity for dialogue and skill sharing between artists at all stages of career development.

### **The Blue Room Performance Program:** The Blue Room Seasons – Random Acts – The Blue Room Auspice

The Blue Room performance program supports the development of a bold and diverse program of new Australian theatre. Theatre supported through the Blue Room program is defined within a wide context that includes: text based, visual and physical theatre; circus; cabaret; comedy; music theatre; dance; puppetry and hybrid performance.

### **The Blue Room Resource & Service:** Venue Management – Resources – Information – Networking – Advocacy

The Blue Room Resource and Service, provides artists with access to resources, networks, critique, information exchange and formal and informal mentoring. The Blue Room is also an active advocate for artists working in the small to medium theatre sector.

### **Over the next triennium 2009 – 2011 The Blue Room will:**

Continue to review programming and selection policy to ensure our program remains responsive to external changes and artists' needs;

Offer an increasingly high level of management, administrative, production and marketing support to participating artists, and

Ensure equipment, technology and physical resources are well maintained and suited to the needs of our program.

Through these activities The Blue Room will make a significant contribution to the development of Australian cultural life by identifying, supporting and promoting new work and new artists.

Detailed Artistic Program attached

“In an environment of research and development The Blue Room is like a Petri dish - The Blue Room being the vessel that provides the right environment for living culture to grow and flourish. The Blue Room supports multiple and complex relationships often at the earliest stages of development. For many artists and their work this is a critical and complex stage. Not all of the experiments will work and some will fail to thrive outside the dish. Experience also shows that there will be outstanding and remarkable successes. This is the risk-taking nature of the work that we do ...”

Jansis O’Hanlon, Executive Director The Blue Room



## Marketing Plan

### Products and Services

The Blue Room is located at the western end of the Perth Cultural Centre, gateway to James Street Northbridge, Perth's nightlife and entertainment district. The Blue Room is only a two-minute walk from the Perth train station and bus services.

The Blue Room manages two theatre venues, The Blue Room and The Blue Room Studio. Both venues are intimate, flexible and unpretentious, seating 59 and 50 respectively. They are both fully equipped and offer separate dressing room facilities. The Blue Room manages its own box office and operates a friendly and atmospheric bar. Other services offered by The Blue Room include rehearsal rooms; membership access to office resources including photocopying, telecommunications, email and computers; and advocacy.

The Blue Room offers a variety of services and resources to artists, audiences and stakeholders.

To artists The Blue Room offers resources, services and opportunities for professional development; it supports artists in positioning and producing their work in a public arena and provides auspice services to professional productions; it provides collegiality and connections within the industry and regular information about industry opportunities and promotions; and advocates for greater opportunity for artists working within the small to medium theatre sector.

To audiences The Blue Room offers a continuous program of risk taking new performance in an intimate and welcoming venue.

To sponsors and stakeholders The Blue Room offers the opportunity to partner with a creative organisation with clear purpose and strong values and a proven track record in supporting the development of outstanding artists and a diverse range of new Australian theatre.

The Blue Room is a membership organisation and enjoys a high level of support from the performing arts community as well as an increasing number of associate members who support The Blue Room's purpose. Benefits of full membership include access to resources, services and programs and a fortnightly e-bulletin. Associate members are offered discount tickets and are kept in the loop about Blue Room performances and activities. The Blue Room also has a student associate membership encouraging students to develop a relationship with the organisation.

The Blue Room was accepted onto the register of cultural organisations in December 2006 allowing donations made to The Blue Room to be tax deductible.

### Context

The Blue Room currently enjoys strong industry and audience support and has sustained membership growth over a ten year period. Current membership is 360 with membership continuing to grow at more than 10% each year. In 2007 The Blue Room attracted an audience of over 11,000 with an average venue capacity of 67%. The program is particularly well supported by young people aged 18-35 years who represent just-under 40% of The Blue Room audience.

Marketing initiatives undertaken by The Blue Room over the last three years include: Strengthening The Blue Room brand by marketing all activities under The Blue Room brand (including developing style guides and logo bars for producers ensuring consistency of branding across a diverse range of work); increasing our capacity to support Blue Room producers by employing a communications and audience development manager; participating in MAMAS WA<sup>3</sup> pilot program undertaking research into the social and cultural interests of international students; enhancing The Blue Room's online presence with the launch of its new website in June 2008 and introducing The Blue Room subscription seasons and gift packs in 2006.



Marketing is recognised within The Blue Room as a whole of organisation responsibility with all staff highly valued for their role in ensuring a welcoming and enjoyable visitor experience. Providing marketing support to more than twenty production teams each year, The Blue Room has gained extensive knowledge and experience in positioning and promoting a diverse range of new work in an intimate theatre environment.

Whilst our achievements are considerable there are areas to be strengthened.

We are currently operating with an outdated and sometimes unreliable database limiting customer relationships management. Developing technological hardware, resources and customer management system so that The Blue Room is able to support more sophisticated communications, networking and program delivery is critical to becoming better connected, locally and nationally.

Whilst The Blue Room has a good reputation for being an organisation of integrity, authenticity and conviction, particularly within a local environment, the opportunity exists to have a greater impact on both a local and national platform.

Building better and more productive relations with sponsors, business partners and philanthropic sector is an area that The Blue Room aims to develop.

As an organisation that supports risk taking theatre in an intimate theatre environment audience growth is somewhat limited by venue capacity.

### **Blue Room Markets**

Blue Room markets include The Blue Room artists, The Blue Room audience and Blue Room sponsors and key stake-holders. Common link between markets is their passion and support for the performing arts industry.

### **Competitive Advantage**

The Blue Room is the only venue in Perth that supports a continuous program of new theatre and consistently takes risks on supporting unknown theatre artists and their work. The Blue Room's record of achievement for supporting new artists and new work, along with our artist driven selection process and strong industry support make us competitive and unique within the WA theatre sector.

For audiences, the support of independent artists, risk taking new works, an intimate theatre setting and welcoming atmosphere all contribute toward a unique cultural experience.

Our central location and ease of public transportation also encourages involvement and attendance.

The Blue Room's position statement is: "Theatre worth thinking about"

### **Competitor Analysis**

Whilst the Blue Room offers a unique suite of services and products that are highly valued by artists and audiences there is some overlapping of services across the sector.

For artists PICA, Downstairs at the Maj, Artrage and Perth Theatre Company all offer theatre artists opportunities to develop new work. The New Performing Arts Centre<sup>4</sup> and MAPS WA<sup>5</sup> also promise to offer new opportunities in this area. King St Arts Centre and CIA also offer artists access to resources including rehearsal and meeting rooms.

It is the Blue Room's position to work collaboratively with these organisations and to view those initiatives that provide greater opportunity for artists to develop high quality new work as positive. This stance clearly aligns with our purpose and values.

For our target audiences there are many other activities vying for their time and interest. These include other local theatre producers and presenters, a wide range of entertainment choices (such as live music, film, festivals and large scale events) as well as lifestyle demands such as work and study and spending time with friends and family.

Positioning, programming and pricing The Blue Room in relation to those activities and organisations that compete for the interest of our target audience is necessary if we are to continue to succeed. Continuing to clarify the wants, needs and values of the different segments of The Blue Room market is critical to meeting this aim.



### **Market Research**

To realise the above aim The Blue Room undertakes market research across defined segments.

Feedback from **producers** and data on production teams has been collected since March 2002 with all producers participating in the program requested to complete a project evaluation report and survey. This is supported by a face-to-face production evaluation meeting with the Executive Director.

**Membership** needs are researched on a bi-annual basis through electronic or postal survey; membership feed-back is also sought through self-completion surveys provided at events and workshops.

**Audience** trends and profiles have been researched since May 2002 with self completion surveys provided at all Blue Room performances. In addition, Blue Room Front of House and box office provide valuable and immediate feedback on shifting patterns and audience trends.

### **The Blue Room Artists**

Theatre practitioners accessing The Blue Room display a diverse range of skills, interests and experience. A common link between artists is their aspiration to create high quality new professional work and to enhance their professional careers.

Presently 50% of artists participating in the Blue Room Seasons identify as **young and emerging** artists. Benefits sought include experience and learning; broadening of peer networks; opportunity to develop reputation and make industry connections as well as vital entry-level opportunities into professional practice.

**Developing and established** practitioners are also well represented and serviced through our program. These artists seek opportunities to explore and experiment with new ideas as well as opportunities to diversify and expand their skills. They particularly value industry information and will often seek out individual support and advice including support through auspice services. Other benefits sought include collegiality and connectedness.

Artists can also be segmented by area of professional practice/interest with production teams supported by The Blue Room including **creative, marketing** and **production** personnel. Individual artists seek to enhance their skills, within their particular area of interest and practice, whilst working within a strong and well supported team environment. Inter-generational connections are particularly valued across each segment.

Survey results show that there is a high level of appreciation of the services provided through The Blue Room across the diversity of needs that we cater to. Ensuring we have the capacity to provide an increasingly high level of support to each of these segments is a top priority over the next business period.

### **The Blue Room Audience**

For Perth audiences The Blue Room delivers a year round program of new, relevant, live performance.

Survey results show that audiences regard The Blue Room highly and with considerable emotional warmth<sup>6</sup>. In particular, they appreciate that the work presented is risk taking and rewarding. They also greatly appreciate the intimacy and closeness of the theatre experience; the friendly and welcoming atmosphere; great bar; and knowledgeable and supportive staff.

The Blue Room audience consists mainly of young, well-educated people who are open to new ideas and influences. Identified as risk taking Social Initiators they are willing to experience new works from emerging artists.

They are most likely to be a young woman<sup>7</sup> tertiary or university educated, living in Perth metropolitan areas (primarily in the northern suburbs: Mt Lawley, North Perth, Subiaco and Nedlands areas and South Perth) and aged between 18 and 34 years<sup>8</sup>.

They are most likely to attend Blue Room shows with one other person<sup>9</sup> and will almost definitely use The Blue Room online or telephone booking service<sup>10</sup>. For most of the audience this will be their first visit to The Blue Room<sup>11</sup>. For those who have attended The Blue Room



previously 48% will have attended three to four times within the previous twelve months. The shows themselves and the ticket prices are the major factors that audiences appreciate about the Blue Room. They are also fond of the location.

Benefits sought include social needs, intellectual stimulation and entertainment.

### **Sponsors and Partners**

The Blue Room's existing business partners include: Jane Brook Estate Wines, Swan Brewery, Lanier Photocopiers (Ricoh), Moore Stephens (Auditors), Luna Palace Cinema, QDI Printing, RTR along with a variety of Northbridge traders such as Il Padrino and Tiger Tiger.

In 2007 The Blue Room received \$5,000 in cash sponsorships; \$3,000 in in-kind sponsorship and \$1,000 in tax deductible donations.

The Blue Room fundraising activities have however, been limited by available resources. Over the previous business period the PACS Board has elected to direct resources towards strengthening our core program and increasing earned income through activities such as The Blue Room Bar and Resource management and Blue Room memberships.

Allowing for increased resources being allocated to this area over the new business period, The Blue Room has reasonable confidence of attracting an increased level of support from sponsors and donors. In directing additional resources towards fundraising initiatives the Board is keenly aware of ensuring a reasonable expense to cost benefit ratio. The Blue Room Giving Plan is currently in development and due for completion by December 30<sup>th</sup> 2008.

Developing and implementing an effective Giving Plan has been identified as a full Board priority to be overseen by The Blue Room Executive Director and supported by the Associate Producer over the 2009 – 2011 business period.

### **MARKETING OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND TARGETS**

Our strategic marketing objectives, strategies and targets over the next triennium are:

#### **Develop and implement marketing and communication strategies that build awareness and increase recognition of The Blue Room and our purpose locally and nationally.**

- Sustain strong audiences and continue to attract a new and younger audience to Blue Room productions by promoting to five identified target markets: students, visitors, Blue Room producer circle, Blue Room loyal and peer and industry.
- Better promote Blue Room services and programs to artists, through professional networks as well as to graduating theatre makers, highlighting that The Blue Room supports risk taking new work and the range of services available.
- Continue to build online presence and implement effective e-marketing strategies. Ensuring online presence is up to date, easy to browse and relevant is essential if we are to remain connected locally, nationally and internationally.
- Improve customer management systems ensuring more effective promotion to local and national network.

Measured by:

- Ten percent audience growth over the triennium with a target of 65% average of venue capacity for all productions
- Strong support from younger audience members with target of 40% under 35 years
- Strong support from students with target of 20% of audience each year
- Healthy number of applications to Blue Room with target of 50 applications each year.
- Strong growth in Blue Room membership with target of 10% growth each year
- Strong support for young and emerging artists with a target of 50% each year
- Growing traffic to website with a target of 70,000 hits by end of triennium
- Growing number of contacts nationally, internationally and locally
- Number of e-communications sent



**Increase desire to attend Blue Room productions and participate in Blue Room initiatives.**

- Provide a high level of resources, services and professional development opportunities ensuring experience of high value to artists.
- Ensure enjoyable and welcoming visitor experience by ensuring smooth operations of Blue Room Bar and Front of House including booking service.
- Continue to develop and promote products encouraging greater involvement with The Blue Room including Blue Room membership; The Blue Room Awards; Blue Room Subscription package offering pricing incentive to buy early and Blue Room Gift Certificates; and introducing post show talks
- Continue to review and develop program in response to external environment taking into consideration other activities competing for customer time (particularly relevant to end of year exams and PIAF given Blue Room audience profile). Ensure diversity of program encouraging new and younger audience members to attend and greater cultural inclusion.

Measured by:

- Audiences highly value Blue Room program, Blue Room staff and visitor experience with a target of 90% satisfied or highly satisfied
- Producers highly value Blue Room support with a target of 90% satisfied or highly satisfied
- Members highly value resources and information and industry presence with a target of 90% satisfied or highly satisfied
- Review program selection criteria, programming and pricing annually

**Build good and productive relations with sponsors, key stake-holders, business and philanthropic sector with goal of increasing income from donations and sponsorship from current 1.5% (10,000) of total annual income to 4.5% (\$30,000) within three years.**

- Research and shortlist three potential new donors (individual, business or foundation) who offer a good fit, identify decision makers and ways we could establish connection and set up meeting by 30<sup>th</sup> December 2009;
- Continue researching and updating information on prospective individual and business donors and short-listed foundations in second and third year;
- Ensure targeted and personalised promotion of giving program with particular focus on building relations with previous donors and better promotion of program to associate membership and Blue Room audience;
- Maintain and build relationships with new and existing sponsors and donors

Measured by:

- Attract \$5,000 in donations through Blue Room Giving program by end of triennium;
- Secure contribution of \$15,000 from major donor (individual, business or foundation) to support new and emerging artists within three years
- Increase support from existing sponsors to \$10,000 within three years

**Provide meaningful and actionable research to guide strategies and actions of The Blue Room activities.**

- Conduct research over three core markets: membership, audience and producers with the aim of gaining greater insight into who they are and what they want; listening to feedback on how we can better deliver service; and tracking trends over time.

**With the targets of**

- Bi-annual e-survey of membership needs with the target of 60% response
- Ongoing audience self-completion survey with the target of 10% response of total audience
- Producer survey with the target of 100% response of all producers



## **The Blue Room Audience – Target Markets**

### **The Blue Room Producer Circle**

For these audience members the main reason for attendance is to support their friends and/or family or a particular artist/company they admire. Their attendance primarily satisfies social needs. For some productions this can be a large proportion of box office.

Employing artist social networks to connect with wider audience is an effective promotional strategy. These audience members are generally very loyal to the show or artist and may be encouraged to on sell the production and become an advocate for the work. For this reason they should be encouraged (and offered incentives) to attend early. Some of these audience members may also be encouraged to see more shows at The Blue Room. Inviting audience members to join e-subscription and mailing lists is a good tactic for encouraging further attendance. Within this segment there are also often group bookers. Identifying social initiators through box office and developing good relations with these audience members can harvest rich rewards.

### **Industry, Peers and Media**

To the artists we support this is a particularly important and valuable segment as segment includes industry decision makers who can be critical in connecting Blue Room artists with opportunities beyond the Blue Room Season. Individuals in this segment are also often well connected and will promote work of quality and interest to the people who need to see it.

Benefits sought include looking for new ideas and inspiration; opportunity to see new artists of interest and growing reputation; supporting their peers (will often give quality, informal feedback); sharpening their own practice (seeing what works and what doesn't); being in touch and collegiality.

In promoting work to this segment it is important to remember that for some there may be blurred definition between work/social activities. Therefore The Blue Room needs to ensure visit is easy to plan (and enjoyable) alongside other professional commitments. Honest promotion of the work, whilst important at all levels, is particularly vital to this segment in order to maintain our role as a credible reference point within the sector. Currently 20% of The Blue Room audience identify as working in the arts.

### **Students**

In 2007, 19% of people completing surveys identified themselves as students. Gaining deeper penetration into this segment is a value rich tactic potentially reaching both new artists and developing new audience. Active promotion of Student Associate memberships to this sector is a good strategy for gaining greater penetration into this segment.

### **Visitors to Perth**

The Blue Room represents a distinctly 'local' cultural experience that is centrally located, affordable and unique. In addition our continuity of programming offers advantage over other companies currently working in Perth. Visitors to Perth including regional, national and international will often seek us out suggesting there is an opportunity for greater penetration in this area.

Whilst currently a small section within total audience, visitors to Perth represent a section of the audience that the Blue Room will continue to build through activities such as partnerships with backpacker promotional networks, City of Perth initiatives and tourist maps; concierge and taxi networks; travel guides and Tourism WA.

*"As a visitor to Perth who likes to see live theatre, this was a terrific show in a great venue. The versatility and impact of the acting and its closeness was most appreciated."*

*Zen's Red Mouth, July 2007*



## Financial Plan 2009 – 2011

### Current Situation

The Blue Room is currently in excellent financial health and has a good track record of sound financial planning and management. Financial ratio forecasts for 2008 are:

- Working cash ratio of 3:1
- Cash reserves of 21%
- Cash reserves in weeks – 10 weeks

The Blue Room's forecast income for 2008 is \$645K representing a 10% increase from 2007. Income mix for 2008 is forecast at 45% earned income and 55% government (being 33% state; 19% federal and 3% local government).

Looking at our forecast budget for the 2009 – 2011 triennium, you will see that The Blue Room gross annual income has reduced in the first two years of the plan from current position. This is primarily due to loss of income from venue hire of Rechabites'.

Under advice from key stake-holders we have budgeted for the worst case scenario (being that we will earn no income from venue management of the Hall over the 09 –11 triennium). Whilst there is a reasonable likelihood that this situation will change, The Blue Room Board and management agree that this is the most responsible position to take. In the event that income is earned from the management of the Rechabites' the venue will operate on a cost neutral / minimum profit basis. Therefore it should be noted that whilst gross turn-over would increase (and therefore proportion of earned income) the bottom line remains essentially the same.

In light of the uncertainty of the future of Rechabites' Hall a key challenge for The Blue Room Board and management over the next triennium will be to investigate new opportunities for generating income. Whilst the present forecast assumes a modest increase in earned income of 3% over the next business period, the longer term aim should be to plan for new activity in the 2011 – 13 business period. This will be achieved both through strengthening and diversifying business activities as well as seeking greater support from the business and philanthropic sector.

The proposed budget reflects expenditures of approximately 44% on core costs and staffing; 48% on program and marketing; and 8% on resource management.

### Financial Goals

Over the next triennium The Blue Room will achieve our goal of maintaining excellent financial health through the following objectives, strategies and meeting of financial targets:

#### Maintain high standards of financial/operational management by:

- Undertaking rigorous examination of cost drivers/business case for income earning activities (bar, room hire, memberships, auspice productions etc) by October 30th each year.
- Implementing capital resource plan ensuring office technology, communication technology and theatre resources are well maintained and best meet producers' needs.
- Implementing staff equity plan ensuring bench lining and indexation of all staff wages.
- Implementing financial investment plan ensuring best use of reserves to maximize income.
- Maintain cash reserves at 20% or greater of gross turnover by budgeting for a surplus of less than 1%.

#### Expand and diversify sources of income to create a stable base of operating and program support

- Increase earned income (from all sources) to 41% or greater of gross turnover (income) representing a three percent increase over the triennium.
- Increase sponsorship and fundraising from current position in 2008 of \$10,000 to \$30,000 within three years.

**Budget 2009 – 2011**

	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Income			
Grants			
Australia Council Recurrent	\$125,000	\$129,125	\$132,998
State Arts Recurrent	\$216,711	\$223,862	\$230,578
City of Perth Cultural Partnership	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$35,000
<i>Total Grant Income</i>	<i>\$371,711</i>	<i>\$382,897</i>	<i>\$398,576</i>
Earned Income			
Earned income - bar and resources	\$103,500	\$110,000	\$120,000
Sponsorships, Donations, Fundraising	\$15,000	\$25,000	\$30,000
Sundry (Other Earned) Income	\$6,000	\$6,500	\$7,000
Blue Room Box Office	\$100,000	\$110,000	\$120,000
<i>Total Earned Income</i>	<i>\$224,500</i>	<i>\$251,500</i>	<i>\$277,000</i>
<b>Income Total</b>	<b>\$596,211</b>	<b>\$634,487</b>	<b>\$675,576</b>
Expenditure			
Box office Paid to artists	\$100,000	\$110,000	\$120,000
Fees paid to artists / creative personnel	\$90,000	\$100,700	\$122,021
Other Salaries and Wages	\$290,760	\$299,483	\$308,467
Total Salaries, Wages and Fees	\$480,760	\$510,183	\$550,448
Production / Program / Direct Costs	\$43,000	\$45,000	\$46,000
Marketing and Promotion	\$26,000	\$27,000	\$28,000
Administration Overheads	\$46,000	\$48,000	\$49,000
<b>Expenditure Total</b>	<b>\$595,760</b>	<b>\$630,183</b>	<b>\$673,488</b>
Surplus/Deficit	\$451	\$4,304	\$2,088
Reserves	\$136,000	\$140,304	\$142,392



## Organisational Structure

### Legal Structure

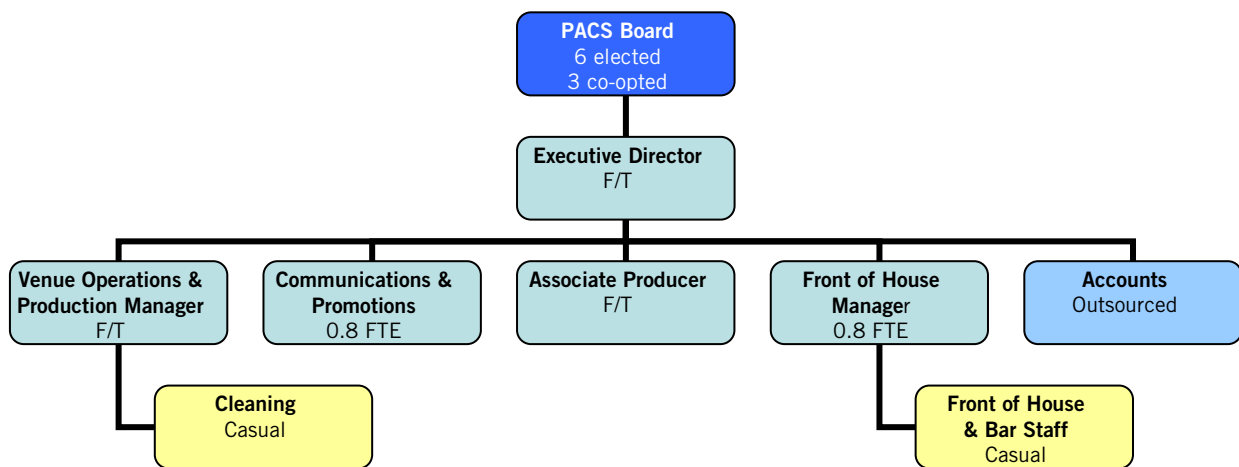
The Blue Room is a trading name of the Performing Arts Centre Society (PACS) a not for profit incorporated association. PACS is registered as a charitable cultural institution and has ITEC and GRO status.

### Operational Goals

Through the effective management of our corporate structure The Blue Room aims to achieve our goal of cultivating a whole of organisation commitment to operating with the highest standards of integrity and accountability

### Board Structure

The Performing Arts Centre Society Inc is governed by an active and skilled Board of Management comprising up to six elected members and up to three co-opted members.



### Staffing Structure

PACS Board appoints an Executive Director who supervises a core team of operational and administrative staff. In 2007 PACS employed 30 full time and casual staff members. To meet the aims of the current business plan PACS plans to maintain current structure employing 4.6 FTE core staff.

### Governance Calendar

Board meetings are held monthly. The Blue Room AGM is held in April each year and a staff and board planning day is held each year in June.

### Succession Planning

Changes to core staff, board and executive leadership both planned and unplanned are inevitable in any business. It is therefore the policy of the PACS Board to ensure that clear procedures and processes are in place so as to ensure that any change will have minimal disruption to business.

### Board Succession

Identifying and recruiting new Board members is the responsibility of the Board overseen by PACS Chair.

A Board skills audit is conducted on an annual basis ensuring an appropriate range of skills and background including strong management skills coupled with good industry awareness. This includes ensuring the Board is represented by an appropriate range of skills and background with strong alignment to PACS values.

Board members are elected by Blue Room membership at the PACS AGM (up to six members)



or co-opted onto the Board by sitting Board members (up to three members) according to the rules of the PACS constitution.

Board members are elected for a two year term and may stand for re-election at the end of this period. Chairs may not occupy the position for longer than five years.

### Board Skills

Board Member	Status	Years On	Term ends	Skills/Expertise
Natalie Jenkins – Chair	elected	2	2010	Industry+Strategic Planning
Jeremy Choy – Treasurer	elected	2	2010	Finance (CPA)
Mike Nanning – Secretary	co-opted	2	N/A	Industry+Technical
Julia Moody	elected	4	2010	Industry+Training
Adam Mitchell	elected	4	2009	Industry+Directing
Renee McIntosh	elected	2	2009	Industry+Producing+Acting
Chris Isaacs	elected	2	2010	Industry+Youth+ Writing
Jo Wynaden	co-opted	1	N/A	Law

### Staff Development

Attracting, retaining and supporting committed and skilled staff is key to our ongoing success.

In the event of a change to Executive Leadership the succession plan will be implemented by the Board of Management.

Changes to core staff are overseen by Executive Director in communication with Board of Management.

Recruitment of casual staff is overseen by Front of House manager in communication with Executive Director.

Key elements of the PACS Board and Staff Development Plan are:

- Ensure induction policy in place with clear procedures for induction of all new Board and staff members.
- Encourage development and training opportunities for all Board and Staff and ensure that resources are allocated to this area.
- Conduct Board evaluation on an annual basis ensuring Board aware of and aligned to strategic direction and purpose of PACS and their role as a Board member.
- Conduct Staff performance review on an annual basis employing 360 degree feedback. Performance reviews to be conducted with Executive Director.
- Conduct Executive Director performance review on an annual basis. Review to be conducted by Board Executive or delegated Board member(s).
- Review staffing needs on an annual basis as part of budget review to ensure staffing structure best meets organisation's needs.

### Other Governance Issues

Adopting best practice governance including documentation and review of systems and processes and making such available to key stakeholders remains a firm commitment of The PACS Board over the next business period. This includes reviewing procedural documents; monitoring risk management plan; operating ethically; and communicating values and purpose to whole of organisation.

## Risk Management

The plan's goals and objectives, and the strategies to carry them out rely on both our internal capacity as well as many external factors including the policy and funding environment, state and federal budget allocations to the arts, the vision and aspiration of WA theatre artists, changes to our immediate environment and the interests of private funders. The following areas have been identified as being of the greatest risk to The Blue Room operations over the next business period:

**Increase in program and operating costs:** Rising costs are likely to affect all areas of expenditure over the next triennium. Rigorous financial analysis ensuring realistic cost/benefit ratio and profit margins are maintained (or grown) is essential to ongoing sustainability.

**Maintenance of equipment and venue technology:** In order to best meet the needs of members, staff and Blue Room producers it is essential to ensure maintenance and replacement plans are in place for both venue and office equipment and resources allocated appropriately.

**Record keeping and archives:** Ensuring The Blue Room directs resources to ensuring good practice in record keeping and storage of archives is highly recommended.

**Changes in arts practice:** Ensuring that The Blue Room program is responsive to changes in arts practice is essential. Reviewing our programming policy and maintaining close contact with the sector is essential if we are to maintain relevance.

**Other cultural and entertainment products as alternative for potential audience:** The Blue Room audience has many alternative entertainment choices vying for their time and money. In order to be competitive in this environment it is essential that The Blue Room communicates value to our audience. Continuing to undertake market research that identifies what our audience want and value is key to minimising this risk.

**Workload:** The Blue Room is a high achieving organisation supporting a continuous program of live performance. Ensuring that we provide good working conditions including realistic workloads; building leave for core staff into annual program and ensuring procedures in place for ensuring accountability and stability of organisation during temporary leave are all key to minimising this risk.

**Rechabites' Hall, uncertainty over future management and use:** The uncertainty of the future of the Rechabites' has meant that we are not currently in a position to predict how management of the Hall is likely to impact on our business operations. Our current position assumes minimal management of the Hall in 2009 with no performance targets set for the three years of this Business Plan. There is a reasonable likelihood however that this situation may change. In this instance a contingency budget and management plan will be developed and forwarded to key stake holders.

**Rechabites' Hall – communication with and access to its decision-making processes:** EPRA has not yet shown themselves to be the most communicative of landlords. Ensuring that resources are available to follow up on communications and to advocate for strong, creative presence in Northbridge is key to obtaining the best outcome.

**Changes in government policy and funding priorities:** Funding should never be taken for granted. Whilst it is our belief that it is the role of government to support the development of a thriving and unique Australian culture (and therefore a good alignment with The Blue Room's core purpose) The Blue Room needs to respond to changes in cultural policy proactively. If a situation should arise where there is no longer a beneficial alignment The Blue Room should be prepared to adapt program and level of activity accordingly. Diversification of income streams is key to minimising this risk. Maintaining good awareness of political climate and providing strong advocacy for a thriving Australian culture is also essential.

The Blue Room strategic plan has been developed with due consideration for all of the above risks and we will continue to review and update the plan in light of external events and trends as well as internal capacity.



## Goals and Strategies

Strategies	Goals	Contribute to the uniqueness and diversity of Australian culture by supporting the development of bold, risk-taking, relevant new theatre	Provide high quality resources, programs and services that are highly valued by artists	Participate as a leading organisation that is recognised locally, nationally and internationally for our uniqueness, integrity and professionalism	Cultivate whole of organisation commitment to operating at all levels with the highest standards of integrity and accountability.	Maintain excellent financial health
Provide opportunities for artists to create and present a broad range of new performance		YES	YES	YES		
Provide good guidance throughout the course of an artist's engagement with The Blue Room		YES	YES	YES		
Ensure high standard resources supporting a high quality curated production and presentation program		YES	YES	YES		
Connect artists with other artists (peers, mentors) and wider opportunity		YES	YES	YES		
Develop recognition and understanding of The Blue Room and the artists it supports through effective promotion and marketing		YES	YES	YES		
Engage in the external environment as a leader with The Blue Room voice identifiable with the voice of its membership			YES	YES		
Ensure the human resources necessary to meet business needs		YES	YES	YES	YES	
Ensure a well-informed, skilled and effective Board		YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Ensure good governance and sound business practice at all levels of operation				YES	YES	YES
Undertake rigorous financial analysis						YES
Expand and diversify sources of income to create a stable base of operating and program support						YES



## Goals and KPI Set

MEASURE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2008 (target)	2009	2010	2011
		<b>GOAL 1: Contribute to the uniqueness and diversity of Australian culture by supporting the development of bold, risk-taking, relevant new theatre</b>			
<b>Quantity of work supported</b>	Number of productions supported through Seasons, Random Acts & Auspice Productions	21	21	21	21
	Total number of Blue Room performances and events	new measure	240	240	240
<b>Quality and diversity of work supported</b>	Percentage of Blue Room program supporting cultural diversity	new measure	10%	10%	10%
	Percentage of Blue Room program new Australian work	70%	80%	80%	80%
	Number of works supported through BR that go on to further development or production each year	6	6	6	6
	Number of audience attend Blue Room each year	9000	9,500	9,750	10,000
	Percentage of Blue Room audience under 35 years	50%	40%	40%	40%
	Percentage of audience satisfied/extremely satisfied with productions	80%	90%	90%	90%
<b>GOAL 2: Provide high quality resources, programs and services that are highly valued by artists.</b>					
<b>Level of activity</b>	Number of artists supported through Blue Room (performance) each year	new measure	200	200	200
	Number of professional development workshops supported each year	2	4	4	4
	Number of e-communications sent to member each year	12	24	24	24
	Number of enquiries each year	4500	5000	5500	6000
	Number of days room usage (rehearsal and meeting) each year	600	600	600	600
<b>Value of activity</b>	Percentage of artists in Blue Room performance program identified as young or emerging	60%	60%	60%	60%
	Percentage of Blue Room producers satisfied/extremely satisfied with support provided	80%	90%	90%	90%
	Percentage of Blue Room members satisfied/extremely satisfied with information	2007 target 80%	90%		90%
	Percentage of Blue Room members satisfied/extremely satisfied with resource and support	2007 target 80%	90%		90%



MEASURE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR					
		2008 (target)	2009	2010	2011	
<b>GOAL 3: Participate as a leading organisation that is recognised locally and nationally for our uniqueness, integrity and professionalism</b>						
<b>Active Participation</b>	Number of strategic collaborations/dialogue, work parties and research activities participated in by Board and Staff	Local	10	10	10	10
		National	New	4	4	4
		International	New	1	1	1
	Number of contacts on opt-in e-list		1500	1750	2000	2250
<b>Level of recognition</b>	Membership growth per annum		10%	10%	10%	10%
	Awards and nominations for shows and artists supported by The Blue Room		New measure	20	20	20
	Number of hits to website		35,000	65,000	70,000	75,000
	Percentage of members satisfied/extremely satisfied with industry presence		2007 target 80%	90%		90%
<b>GOAL 4: Cultivate whole of organisation commitment to operating at all levels with the highest standards of integrity and accountability.</b>						
<b>Operational</b>	No substantive damage to reputation, people or property		100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Board &amp; Staff development</b>	Board understand value and purpose of organisation		New measure	100%	100%	100%
	Number of Board meetings		10	12	12	12
	Staff satisfaction level and belief that BR is achieving its purpose		New measure	80%	80%	80%
	Number of training opportunities for Board and staff		20	20	20	20
<b>GOAL 5: Maintain excellent financial health</b>						
<b>Financial Health</b>	Cash reserves in weeks		New measure	> 10 weeks	> 10 weeks	> 10 weeks
	Reserves ratio		> 20%	> 20%	> 20%	> 20%
	Working Capital Ratio		New measure	2:1	2:1	2:1
<b>Financial Growth</b>	Income generated through business activities and fundraising		100K	125K	136K	157K
	Income generated through box-office		New measure	100K	110K	120K



STRATEGY	KEY ACTIVITY	PRIORITY	MEASURES AND MILESTONES	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>Provide opportunities for artists to develop and present a broad range of new performance</b>	Blue Room Seasons 1 & 2	1	March – June / July – October each year (16 productions supported each year)	Executive Director with support from Programming sub-committee
	BR Random Acts	2	December – March each year (20 performances/events each year)	
<b>Provide good guidance and support throughout the course of an artist's engagement with the Blue Room</b>	Blue Room Auspice	2	Three productions or developments auspiced each year	
	Professional Development workshops & seminars	2	Four professional developments supported each year	
<b>Ensure high standard of resources supporting a high quality curated production and presentation program</b>	Identify office technology, web and CRM needs and establish priorities	1	Producer Evaluation – All Member evaluation – Bi-annual (08/10/12) Audience Evaluation – Annual ongoing	Associate Producer with support from Executive Director and SPSC
	Identify technical, production & physical needs and establish priorities	1	Review resource needs July each year as part of Board planning day.	Venue Ops Manager with support from House Manager and SPSC
<b>Connect artists with other artists (peers, mentors) and wider opportunity</b>	Provide network opportunities & information	2	E-news sent fortnightly Membership events and launches – four each year.	Communications Manager
<b>Develop recognition and understanding of Blue Room and the artists it supports through effective promotion and marketing</b>	Marketing Plan	1	Research – ongoing Report – Quarterly Review July each year as part of Board planning day	Associate Producer with support from Communications Manager and Executive Director
<b>Engage in the external environment as a leader with the Blue Room voice identifiable with the voice of its membership</b>	Track achievements	2	Report – March each year	Communications Manager with support from Associate Producer
	Advocacy & industry participation	1	Report – Monthly Review July each year as part of Board planning day	Executive Director with support from AP and SPSC
<b>Ensure the human resources necessary to meet business needs</b>	Staff Development plan: performance reviews and HR structural review	1	Performance reviews: annual HR structure reviewed October each year as part of budget review.	Executive Director with support from SPSC
<b>Ensure a well-informed, skilled and effective Board</b>	Board Development plan: skills and diversity audit	1	Report & Review – February each year	Chair with support from ED
<b>Ensure good governance and sound business practice at all levels of operation</b>	Oversee Risk Management Plan	2	Report – monthly Review – January each year and revise as required	Executive Director with support from Venue Operations
	Review and revise procedural documents	2	Review & update all proc docs by December each year Report – annually in February	Associate Producer
<b>Undertake rigorous financial analysis</b>	Financial management	2	Report – quarterly including budget variation & cash flow Annual Audit by April each year (unqualified) Review – October each year	Executive Director with support from SPSC
<b>Expand and diversify sources of income to create a stable base of operating and program support</b>	Develop and implement fundraising plan	1	\$30K income generated through fundraising activities by end of triennium.	Executive Director and full board



## Attachment 1: Artistic Program (detailed)

### The Blue Room Seasons

The Blue Room Seasons produce new work, discover and nurture new talent and target and develop new audiences.

Artists whose work is selected to be produced through The Seasons are offered four weeks access to a fully equipped venue, with a three week production season in either The Blue Room Theatre or Blue Room Studio. Both venues are intimate and flexible black box theatres (60 and 50 seats respectively). The small scale and intimacy of The Blue Room venues make them ideally suited for new and emerging producers to develop and showcase new work. Risk is minimised and artists are given the freedom to work with a high level of artistic autonomy.

Throughout their engagement with The Blue Room, artists will receive a high level of professional support including technical and production support and advice; marketing support including promotion as part of The Blue Room Season; front-of-house and booking service as well as support in business and project development.

Producers will also receive a production allowance of \$1,500 to assist in the initial development of the work.

Producers will also be able to apply for an additional \$500 through the professional support fund. These funds are available for artists to work with a recognised professional artist to enhance the experience of any area of development or production (including technical, producing or creative). Professional advisors will be chosen by Blue Room Executive Director in consultation with the producer.

Blue Room Season production teams work on a profit share basis with box office income released to the producer at the end of the production. The Blue Room receives a 10% share of gross box-office.

A digital recording will be made of all Blue Room Season productions to ensure a record of Blue Room activities and to assist artists with further promotion and development of their work.

The Blue Room supports two seasons of new work each year with each season supporting the presentation of eight new works.

### Selection Process

Participation in the program is through written application with all applications assessed by an external peer review panel of three members. A new panel is selected for each round with each panel including at least one member who has sat on a previous panel and one member under twenty-five. Peer panels are selected by the Executive Director in consultation with the programming sub-committee.

### Selection Criteria

The Blue Room supports an artistic policy and selection process that endorses risk-taking, recognising that testing and experimentation are an essential part of developing contemporary theatre. Applications are assessed by the peer assessors employing the following criteria: artistic merit – including value and urgency of opportunity; suitability to program and venue; newness of form, content and ideas – relevance; evidence of planning; and experience and background.

Productions selected include the work of both emerging and established artists and while most of the work presented is new, productions of existing scripts, which fulfil all other criteria to a high-level will also be considered.

### The Blue Room 2009 Application Closing Dates:

Season 1 (2009)	September 15th 2008
Season 2	March 15th 2009
Season 1 (2010)	September 15th 2009

### The Blue Room 2009 Season Dates:

Season 1	March 2 <sup>nd</sup> – July 4 <sup>th</sup> 2009
Season 2	July 20 <sup>th</sup> – November 7 <sup>th</sup> 2009



### **The Blue Room Random Acts**

Random Acts has been created in response to changes in audience trends and artist needs providing a fluid and flexible programming model that will allow for greater freedom and responsiveness to new ideas than may be available through the Blue Room Seasons or through other programs currently being offered to new and emerging artists and risk-takers in Perth.

Random Acts will allow artists, working across a diverse theatrical landscape, to take risks at the very earliest stage of developing new work.

Random Acts will provide space for artists to play, perform and experiment.

Random Acts will provide structured events in which the unstructured can happen.

Random Acts will be open to outlandish ideas and giving artists permission to explore The Blue Room and its environs in new and unusual ways.

Random Acts could include:

- A curated season of short performance, such as ViewFest model, offering a festival of variety which could include: screenings, music, cabaret; magic and illusion; stand-up; spoken word and readings, live art and dance.
- Development Space with limited public viewing
- Short seasons of risky new work programmed outside of main season (maximum of two weeks)
- Readings and showings of work in development.
- A warm up season of an existing performance prior to undertaking a national or international tour

Random Acts will be programmed by The Blue Room Executive Director in consultation with the programming sub-committee.

Applications for Random Acts will be called for in September each year with events programmed during December and January.

#### **Random Act 2009**

Number of events/performances	24
Venue	Blue Room Theatre/Studio/Kaos or Old Office
Dates	January 14 <sup>th</sup> – 31 <sup>st</sup> 2009 December 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 13 <sup>th</sup> 2009

### **The Blue Room Auspice Service**

The Blue Room offers auspice service to professional producers who are not associated with a funded company structure. This service offers producers in receipt of government funds a high level of administrative and financial management of their projects.

Producers having their work auspiced by The Blue Room maintain complete artistic control of the project and are also responsible for marketing and promotion of the production. Producers accept responsibility and control for any liability or surplus relating to the project.

Provision of this service fulfils our core goal of providing programs, services, resources and connections that are highly valued by artists.

The Blue Room has provided professional auspice services for independent professional projects since 2003.

The Blue Room aims to support three professional auspices each year of the triennium.

*"I like the venue and the "non-mainstream" nature of the shows. The Blue Room is always good value and sometimes the theatre is brilliant" –*

*Audience Member: Dirty Pretty Nails*



## **The Blue Room – Resource and Network**

### **Resource**

The Blue Room will continue to operate as an active performing arts resource centre providing members with access to information, affordable rehearsal spaces, administration resources and business, marketing and professional advice, and providing the general public with information about contemporary performance in Perth.

### **Information**

The Blue Room will continue to send a fortnightly e-bulletin to our membership advising them of industry opportunities and promoting independent performance.

### **Advocacy**

The Blue Room will continue to be an active advocate for increased opportunities for independent project based theatre artists to develop and present new work providing advocacy and support both on a state and federal level for independent professional performing arts practitioners generating their own work.

Ensuring The Blue Room is an informed participant in and responsive to the dynamic sector within which it operates and has a presence at local and national forums and within local and national networks is essential to remaining relevant and growing value for Blue Room participants. Tracking of the Blue Room's achievements and the artists and the work we have supported is key to realising this strategy and communicating the impact of our program over time.

The Blue Room will also continue to assist artists in establishing strong creative development partnerships as well as identifying and promoting opportunities for Blue Room artists and their work to move within and beyond the region.

In 2009 – 11, The Blue Room will continue to advocate on behalf of our constituents for increased opportunities for the development and presentation of new Australian performance, increased training and creative development opportunities for performing arts practitioners and the provision of high quality, accessible and affordable resources for artists and audiences.

### **The Blue Room Professional Development**

The Blue Room will continue to work in partnership with cultural partners including MEAA national training program; Country Arts, DCA, City of Perth and Australia Council to present and promote seminars and master classes of interest to independent theatre artists.

The Blue Room will also take advantage of those opportunities where available to connect Perth based theatre artists with the opportunity to participate in master classes with visiting artists.

The Blue Room will support four professional development workshops or seminars in each year of the triennium.

### **The Rechabites' Hall**

PACS had been managing the Rechabites Hall since 1998 as a 120 seat venue available for hire at below commercial rates to independent theatre producers.

In November 2007 ownership of the Rechabites' Hall was transferred from the State Government of WA to EPRA<sup>12</sup>. Whilst this was not an entirely unexpected outcome, PACS has yet to get a clear understanding from EPRA of their proposed time-line or scope for refurbishing of the Hall.

PACS is not currently taking bookings for hire of the Hall in 2009 and is waiting for clarification from EPRA of what PACS' relationship will be to the Hall in 2009 and beyond.

PACS' interest in managing the Rechabites' Hall continues to be ensuring the availability of affordable performing arts facilities for contemporary performance in Perth and maintaining the visibility and integrity of the venue whilst awaiting the major refurbishment of the Hall as a cultural facility.

In 2009 – 11 we will be working with EPRA on furthering this aim

## Attachment 2: Staff Biographies

### **Jansis O'Hanlon: Executive Director (F/T)**

Jansis O'Hanlon has been working with The Blue Room as Executive Director since July 1999. Originally trained as an actor, Jansis received a BA from WAIT (now Curtin University) before going on to further training at the Victorian College of the Arts. On graduating Jansis worked for eight years as an actor, pursuing an interest in physical theatre and the creation of new work. In 1992 Jansis started working as an independent director receiving a grant from ArtsWA through their emerging director program. In 1994 she received an Australia Council fellowship through the Artistic Director Traineeship program to work with Barking Gecko Theatre developing skills in company direction. On the completion of the traineeship Jansis worked from 1995 – 1996 with Unley Youth Theatre (now called Urban Myth Theatre) as their Artistic Director. On her return to Perth, Jansis again worked with Barking Gecko Theatre as their Associate Director for two years before taking up her present position. In 2007, Jansis received a Margaret Lawrence Bequest Scholarship to attend a leadership course at The Mt Eliza Executive Centre. Jansis has a strong commitment to the development of new Australian theatre and the provision of creative development opportunities for performing arts practitioners and the work they produce.

### **Roger Miller: Venue and Operations Manager (F/T)**

After attending the Victorian College of Arts in 1981, Roger worked as a stage manager for the Ensemble Theatre in Sydney for two years where his responsibilities included lighting and sound design and operation as well as stage management. In between operating sound for touring productions including for Victorian State Opera and The Australian Opera he worked as a lighting operator at the Sydney Opera House until 1985. After national tours as sound operator he returned to the Sydney Opera House as a sound operator working with companies like The Australian Opera, Sydney Theatre Company, Sydney Dance Company and Sydney Symphony.

Roger moved to Perth in 1994. Since relocating to Perth he has worked as a lighting operator and designer, sound operator and designer, and stage manager at venues including His Majesty's Theatre, Playhouse, Concert Hall, Subiaco Theatre Centre, Regal Theatre, PICA, Rechabites' Hall and for companies such as Black Swan, Perth Theatre Company, Yirra Yaaken, Tura New Music Festival, Perth International Arts Festival, Barking Gecko, Awesome festival and Skadada. Roger has also taken tours to Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne and to Chiang Mai in Thailand and to Shanghai in China. Roger started working at the Blue Room in January 2006.

### **Diana Starceвич: Communications and Audience Development (0.8 FTE)**

Di graduated from Murdoch University with a BA Media Studies in 2004. In 2003 Di began work as a freelance production assistant, marketing manager and publicist for a series of local independent theatre productions (mostly at the The Blue Room) and touring comedians, while also employed as Event Coordinator of the Laugh Resort Comedy Club (2003 – 2007). A Blue Room member since 2003, Di was first employed as front of house/bar/usher by PACS after returning from working at the Adelaide Fringe in 2004. In 2006 she took up the position of Office and Front of House Manager, moving into Communications in 2007. Since then she has completed the post-graduate Arts Marketing unit at Melbourne's Deakin University (online), thanks to a study grant from the Australia Council and Deakin University's Faculty of Business and Law.

### **Karen Connolly: Accounts (Contract)**

Karen Connolly has been working as a freelance bookkeeper and administrative assistant since 2000. Karen is an arts graduate from UWA and a qualified secondary school teacher. As well as maintaining PACS' accounts Karen is also a freelance proof reader for Fremantle Arts Press and a part-time Graduate Research Assistant at the Centre for Integrated Human Studies at UWA. Karen started working for The Blue Room in May 2001.

**Sally Martin: Front-of-House Manager (0.8 FTE)**

Sally Martin studied classics and languages at the University of Western Australia, became an Associate of the Trinity College of London and gained her Performer's Shield in dance before going on to train in the theatre course at WAAPA.

In addition to working an actor in theatre, film, television and radiO Sally also has extensive experience in retail and in hospitality and wine promotions. Sally commenced working at The Blue Room in January 2007.

**Shalini Nair: Associate Producer (FTE)**

Shalini arrived in Perth in 2005 to complete a three-year arts management degree at WAAPA. Prior to furthering her studies, she worked for five years as senior administrator at The Necessary Stage in Singapore, managing operational budgets and ticketing systems, maintaining databases and website, executing marketing activities, and front-of-house management for main season productions and theatre festivals. She is also trained in graphic design and has worked in publishing, printing and multimedia design companies.

During her stint in Australia, she has been involved in various capacities with The Blue Room, Black Swan Theatre Company, Perth Concert Hall, The Regal Theatre and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. In 2006, she was part of Black Swan Theatre Company's BSX Hot Bed program. Shalini thrives best in the arts industry and is committed to contributing to the growth of WA's professional theatre scene. Shalini commenced full-time work at The Blue Room in January 2008.

*"This place is great. It's so important for our industry and society as a whole."*

Blue Room Member feedback

*"...I found the staff support incredibly helpful for my first full scale production and all the aspects this entailed..."*

Aimee Smith (choreographer/producer 53')



## REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> Abstracted from Australia Council definition of Artistic Hub

<sup>2</sup> The Blue Room has a rich history of supporting outstanding artists at the entry point into professional practice. Some of the many exceptional artists and companies whose work has been supported within The Blue Room include:

Companies and producers – Red Ryder, Thin Ice, Last Seen Imagining, kompany M, yellowglass, Happy Dagger, Mythophobia, Duck House and pvi

Directors and choreographers – Matt Lutton, Bill McCluskey, Mel Cantwell, Marcelle Schmitz, Shannon Bott, Sally Richardson, Humphrey Bower, Emily McLean, Adam Mitchell, Simon Clarke, Glenn Hayden, Chris Kohn

Playwrights – Ian Wilding, Hellie Turner, Ingle Knight, Rob Jeffreys, Allanah Valentine, Kate Mulvaney, Ross Mueller, Stephen House and Luke Milton

Designers and technicians – Brian Woltjen, Aaran Beach, Kingsley Reeve

Actors, performers and creators – Tim Minchin, Rove McManus, Geoff Kelso, Kate Behan, Sophia Hall, Clare Hooper, Alison Van Reekin, Sophia Hall, Thomas Papathanassiou, Nigel Luck, Monica Main, Scott Koehler

There are many more. These artists are currently working across the country supporting a thriving, diverse Australian culture.

<sup>3</sup> MAMAS WA – Multicultural Arts Marketing Ambassadors Strategy, and audience development jointly funded by the Australia Council and the Department of Culture and the Arts WA focusing on Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Audiences (CALD).

<sup>4</sup> The new performing arts centre is currently under construction on the site adjoining the Blue Room (corner of William St and Roe St, Northbridge). It is due for completion early 2010.

<sup>5</sup> Marketing and Production Services WA, a three year initiative commencing in June 2008 offering marketing and production support to high calibre artists. This initiative is to be managed by Performing Lines.

<sup>6</sup> In 2007, 82% of audience expressed a high level of satisfaction with venue facilities

<sup>7</sup> 59% of audience identified as being a woman

<sup>8</sup> 42% of audience identified as being aged between 18 – 35 years.

<sup>9</sup> 48% of audience had attended with one other person

<sup>10</sup> 78% had booked their seats through The Blue Room booking service (online or by phone)

<sup>11</sup> 56% of audience were attending The Blue Room for the first time.

<sup>12</sup> EPRA – the East Perth Redevelopment Authority, a statutory body with the charter of developing urban renewal programs in the Perth urban area.