

Outstanding Year for MTC

Melbourne Theatre Company announced today that strong box office results in 2014 helped deliver a modest operating surplus for the Company which, along with several other key artistic and executive achievements, led to a wonderful year for Victoria's state theatre company.

In 2014 MTC generated \$21.9 million revenue, comprising 68.3% ticket sales (including ticketing fees), 9.8% government grants (net of government duties), and other revenue. Having generated \$12.3 million net at the box office MTC returned an end of year net surplus of \$65,000.

MTC Chair Terry Moran AC said, 'By any measure, Melbourne Theatre Company had a very good year in 2014. The plan had been ambitious. Building on a successful 2013, we sought to maintain and surpass our benchmarks of excellence in theatre production, extend our impact on the vibrant cultural life of this city, and widen our appeal towards new audiences. That we clearly achieved this in 2014 while still posting a modest operating surplus is a great achievement.

'Though we had budgeted for a manageable deficit to achieve all of our 2014 artistic and executive goals, happily box office revenue was approximately \$1.2 million over target, and this was utilised to cover the planned deficit, to carry out much needed maintenance in key areas across production, IT and Southbank Theatre, and to ameliorate the strain of the current economic climate on our sponsorship income,' Mr Moran said.

MTC Executive Director Virginia Lovett said, 'The recurring theme to come out of running MTC in 2014 was sustainability. Throughout the year, in all our major decisions, we were thinking long term. At current levels of box-office income, government support and private and corporate giving, I'm sure we will survive for a few more seasons. But, if we want this sixty-one year old company to be around for its centenary, we must act now to secure its future. In 2014, we made the first crucial steps in that direction and happily, it was an outstanding year financially and artistically.'

MTC Artistic Director Brett Sheehy AO said, 'In 2014 our mission was to consolidate a new vision for MTC and to strengthen all aspects of our operations. While we were thrilled that our box office result was over \$1.2 million higher than the target we set ourselves, the significant artistic risks we took were equally as important. These included touring internationally, expanding our education and family programs, staging the second year of our landmark NEON Festival of Independent Theatre, co-producing our first multi-artform dance theatre production *Complexity of Belonging* (which has just very successfully toured to the Netherlands, Berlin and Paris), continuing our Women Directors Program and our MTC Connect diverse artists program, and expanding our Cybec Electric public play readings – all with the aim of extending our reach, relevance and impact here and abroad.'

Among MTC's key achievements in 2014 are:

- The company presented a total of 676 performances with a total paid attendance of 236,835 and 42% of the audience new to MTC.
- Produced 11 mainstage productions including 3 world premieres of new Australian works and 3 Australian premieres of international plays.

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- Produced 2 season add-on productions – a family production and the company’s first ever choreographic theatre co-production.
- Maintained a strong subscriber base of 20,050 and sold 55,959 single tickets to mainstage productions.
- Toured regionally, interstate and internationally – *Yellow Moon* undertook the company’s first tour of regional Victorian schools; *Cock* toured to LaBoite in Brisbane; and MTC’s *Rupert* travelled to Washington DC marking the company’s first international tour in 30 years.
- MTC worked with over 500 artists and industry professionals including 108 actors, 72 creative artists and 287 casual and full time staff.
- Mentored 16 emerging and mid-career directors – 12 through the inaugural Women Directors Program and 4 through MTC’s Assistant Directors Program.
- Worked with 11 artists of culturally diverse backgrounds through MTC Connect.
- Had 12 Australian writers under commission and developed 4 new Australian plays through the Cybec Electric play reading series – with *The Waiting Room* later programmed in the 2015 Season.
- MTC’s Education won two Best Performance Awards at the 2014 Drama Victoria Awards for its productions of *Yellow Moon* and *Marlin* (a co-production with Arena Theatre Company).
- 4,223 students attended MTC mainstage productions, 3,791 people attended at MTC Education productions and 1,429 students participated in education and learning activities provide by the Company.

For a copy of MTC’s 2014 Annual Report, go to mtc.com.au/annualreport

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