



Minutes

Gorman Arts Centres Resident Advisory Group

Meeting #G-22-003-G

Date: Thursday, 24 November, 2022 **Venue:** Main Hall, Gorman Arts Centre

Start time: 11:37 am

End Time: 1:02 pm

Chair: Hugh Withycombe

Facilitated: Carly Davenport Acker, CEO

Residents attending:

Amelie Langevin (QL2 Dance)

Cathy Adamek (Ausdance ACT)

Franki Sparke

Helen Wojtas (Canberra Youth Theatre)

Hugh Withycombe (Musicale)

Kimmo Vennonen

Kirsten Biven

Luke Rogers (Canberra Youth Theatre)

Natalie Wade (QL2 Dance)

Phoebe Porter

Lucy Alexander

Robin Davidson (Rebus Theatre)

Ruth Osbourne (QL2 Dance)

Sarah Black (Australian Dance Party)

Stuart McMillen

Arts Capital board/staff attending:

Adelin Chin A+G Business Manager

Carly Davenport Acker CEO Arts Capital, Director A+G

Elizabeth Curry A+G Venue Hire Coordinator

Isabelle Sheppard A+G Administration and Customer Service Officer

Lachlan Johnson A+G Major Projects and Strategy Officer

Lauren Honcope Arts Capital Board Member

Rebecca Worth A+G Marketing Coordinator

Apologies:

Andrew Sikorski

Mark Van Veen

John MacCulloch

Jodie-Lee Trembath



Agenda Item

Item 1 Welcome and Apologies

Hugh Withycombe (HW), began the meeting by introducing himself and welcoming everyone to the meeting, passing over to Carly Davenport Acker (CDA) to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Ngunnawal and Ngambri Peoples in an Acknowledgement of Country.

Item 2 First Nations Strategy

CDA Informed the group that Arts Capital is developing a First Nations Strategy in line with the recently completed Strategic Plan. This strategy will incorporate training and capacity building opportunities and initiatives not just for A+G staff but also for the residents. CDA then invited HW to discuss the minutes and action items from the previous Resident Advisory Group held in August.

Item 3 Previous Meeting Minutes & Action items

HW provided a summary of the action items that arose from the August 18 Advisory Group meeting. Noting Carly's letter to residents (3 September, see portal) outlining recent progress with artsACT following their visit to Gorman on the 18th, the resulting in AC and artsACT collaborating in new and more regular ways. He informed the group of AC actioning a Employee Assistance Program to be made available to residents in near future (kickstarted 15 December). No attendees raised questions on the minutes.

Item 4 Capital Works Centenary Renovation Update

CDA provided further information, describing the more collaborative approach with artsACT however confirmation and presentation of the pre-concept draft plans was slow in terms of capacity to finalise plans and be able to communicate estimated timelines. This is also due to listening to feedback from residents, with architects and costings needing re-consideration.

There has been some headway in achieving more equity for a variety of artistic disciplines, particularly dance and theatre/performance spaces as key hubs within the renovation plans. CDA acknowledged the frustration felt by all due to the lack of information provided since early September, stating that she is seeking to gain more information before the end of year shutdown from artsACT to share with everyone.



CDA confirmed that it is business as usual for residents until at least June 30th 2023, with July/August 2023 as the tentative date for stage 1 renovations to begin.

CDA acknowledged the risks for resident studio artists so to continue practice/livelihoods needs thorough planning and mitigation. CDA raised that she is eager to understand these risks to convey them to artsACT to speed up Disruption planning. She described need for a risk register that AC can facilitate and work with all residents on to nominate needs, concerns, relocation plans etc.

The design plans are still in development and still unfolding. Costs for materials and contractors are inflating, heritage process will take a long time. There is still no confirmed project manager within the artsACT lead PCG (project control group). It was noted that due to the slow pace to finalise draft plans that the presentation from the architects will be delayed into the new year TBC.

The group discussed ways in which residents might be able to receive updates and view renovation documents, possibly through an online portal or notice board on the A+G website, with a way for questions to be asked by residents. Rebecca Worth (RW) A+G Marketing Coordinator will look into that possibility. It was noted that information needs to be shared collectively and at the same time and not with residents individually.

Item 5 Arts Capital Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission and Goals

HW guided the conversation onto the Strategic Plan, inviting CDA to share various initiatives, missions and goals in the plan (shown in the PowerPoint). The strategic plan is in the process of being revised in line with the announcement of the artsACT Investment Framework funding outcome as to what's possible. CDA reiterated that Arts Capital is committed to ensuring residents are at the centre and priority of the plan and the organisation's purpose. CDA noted the four key goals and strategies foundational to AC's operations. CDA noted this plan will be publicly available as soon as possible, either prior Christmas or the new year.

Collaboration, partnerships, wellbeing and sustainability are the integral values that uphold the various initiatives included in Arts Capital's strategic plan. CDA shared information relating to: First Nations strategy; Cultural



and Linguistic Diversity priorities; a Disability Inclusion Action Plan; and a focus on wellbeing and sustainability for all. These strategies will provide increased training and skills development opportunities for residents/staff in 2023. Action: CDA to circulate a proposed schedule of training/ skills/ capability building opportunities for interested residents by February 2023 so residents can include in schedules.

Another aim to broaden Arts Capital fundraising efforts, through Creative Partnerships Australia's (CPA) support of a Fundraising Strategy and application for a Plus 1 in July next year. It was noted by Canberra Youth Theatre and Australian Dance Party (others) are also communicating with CPA there may be ways to join forces or collaborate and avoid any potential competition between organisations. Action: CDA to communicate AC's approach with residents in the NY.

Item 6 artsACT Investment Funding Results

CDA passed to Adelin Chin (AC) to discuss Arts Capital's Investment Framework outcome. Like many other arts organisations who applied, Arts Capital did not receive the amount applied for. We received \$360K per arts centre (two), substantially less than other arts centres were funded, with approximately 1/3rd of the \$360K for Gorman already going towards utilities bills. Due to this, time is being taken to review operations and processes so a plan to ensure financial sustainability can be created. Arts Capital were granted the Head-License of both Ainslie and Gorman Arts Centres and await the Deed and Head-licence.

CDA informed the group that she hopes to hold a forum in 2023, if there is interest, to engage residents/sector regarding their needs, with the intent to invite and involve artsACT and or document views feedback.

The group conveyed interest for a forum. Group discussed limitations of the funding notably disconnect with the Statement of Ambition. Actioning a forum, further discussion, ideally will be aligned post distribution of the forthcoming A New Approach (ANA) report regarding the state of arts investment throughout Australia and the National Cultural Policy in mid 2023.

Item 7 Wellbeing: Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Update

Lachlan Johnson (LJ) conveyed updates on the progress of implementing an Employee Assistance Program. Arts Capital has engaged Work Happy,



who will provide resident studio artists and organisations up to 4 hours of counselling and wellbeing services per person. Set to go live on 15 December 2022, A+G will distribute information on this initiative.

Item 8 Programming, Resident Services & Opportunities in 2023

Rochelle Whyte (RWH) shared with the group that A+G have been reframing programming, focusing on a creative approach rather than an event based outcome. This creative approach allows for programming to centre on collaboration, engagement and increased support for residents. Initiatives including:

- An application process to access up to 100 hours (arts organisations) and 40 hours (individual artists) of in-kind venue hire,
- Networking and collaboration opportunities,
- Opportunities focusing on artistic development and experimentation.

These initiatives will be available in early 2023. More information, including the application for in-kind venue hire will be provided.

A Venue Hire Policy, including 2023 rates, is being drafted, which will include greater discounts for Residents. The Policy and rates will be made available on the resident portal once finalised. These initiatives, place resident's programs, work, practices, achievements and activities - at the forefront of Arts Capital's strategies and outcomes.

Item 9 Precinct Culture, system's reform – moving forward

The group provided suggestions and shared their needs regarding improvements to communications between residents and AC.

HW spoke about need for the AC Board to be more engaged. The group shared a consensus for increased involvement between the Board and residents. CDA spoke of the past constitutional change. Residents communicated their need for more frequent and better communication by AC, as well as access to information regarding staff comings and goings, day-to-day operations and centenary renovations.

RW explained that A+G have 2 channels of regular electronic communication to residents, the Resident Bulletin, sent out to A+G Residents fortnightly Thursdays and the A+G Newsletter that is sent out to all A+G stakeholders and wider community monthly. Communicating that A+G is eager to use the fortnightly Resident Bulletin to communicate not



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only A+G updates but build the Resident sense of community by communicating and celebrating achievements, updates, news that Residents are interested in sharing with others. Action: AC team to ensure the bulletin, newsletter is accessible and look to revamp the Resident Portal.

With no further discussion points, HW and CDA thanked the group for their time, communication and suggestions. HW invited everyone to join in the lunch and music.

Meeting ended at 1:02pm.