

LYRIC THEATRE

November 2014

Background

The Committee for Perth is the leading think tank on Perth's future growth and development. Not only do we catalyse debate around issues that affect the liveability of the Perth metropolitan area we also offer our support to those projects which we believe will add to the vibrancy and world-class amenity of the region.

The Committee for Perth strongly believes that Perth needs high quality cultural infrastructure in order to be a liveable and competitive region, and our 2013 research report *Examining Perth's Performing Arts Infrastructure* identifies the need for a dedicated lyric theatre for Perth as a priority, <http://www.committeeforperth.com.au/pdf/Advocacy/ExaminingPerthsPerformingArtsInfrastructureJune2013.pdf>.

Lyric theatres are theatres that are specifically designed to accommodate performing arts mediums that incorporate music and/or dance including opera, ballet, musicals and theatre. A lyric theatre in Perth should have seating capacity of between 1500 and 2000 seats, catering for our growing population.

Our report establishes that performing arts attendance in Perth is increasing which is in contrast with declining audiences elsewhere in Australia. It also shows that there has been growth in multi-category festival attendance (such as the Perth International Arts Festival and Fringe World) as well as ongoing healthy gains in the reported attendance figure and box office income of Perth's major performing arts companies including Black Swan, the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra and the Western Australian Ballet. This is a particularly pleasing part of Perth's recent population growth and with the right infrastructure, will see our arts and cultural sector growing from strength to strength.

However, this growth is placing pressure on the region's performing arts infrastructure as well as on festivals and performing arts companies who are competing for use of both rehearsal and performance space. In addition, even if attendance rates remain stable, population growth to 3.5 million people or more by mid-century will result in audience growth of between 24% and 34% in the next eight years and 80% to 100% by 2056 meaning that the capacity of the region's performing arts infrastructure will need to at least double in just 40 years.

Our report also establishes that Perth is already undersupplied with some forms of performing arts infrastructure including lyric theatres, concert halls and contemporary music venues.

Perth currently only has one relatively small lyric theatre, His Majesty's, and does not have a lyric theatre dedicated to musicals. This compares to four lyric theatres in Sydney (three of which are dedicated to musicals); five in Melbourne (four of which are for musicals) and one in Brisbane (which has a seating capacity of 2,000 people).

A Lyric Theatre at Elizabeth Quay

The Committee has been a long term supporter of the Elizabeth Quay development. The development and associated land sales process being managed by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, provide an opportunity for developers to be incentivised to provide a lyric theatre.

Elizabeth Quay project provides a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity for iconic new cultural infrastructure to be incorporated into what will be Perth's premier waterfront destination and therefore incentives should be provided in order to deliver a world-class lyric theatre as an important cultural element of Elizabeth Quay.

Examples

Following are images of a number of modern lyric theatres in Australia and overseas.

Images of Sydney Lyric Theatre



Images of The Lyric Theatre Belfast



Images of The Lyric Theatre Belfast (Continued)



Images of Brisbane Lyric Theatre



Images of Festival Theatre Adelaide (designed as a lyric theatre and concert hall and part of Adelaide's Festival Centre)

