

Media Release

The Hon Steve Dimopoulos MP
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Creative Industries



Friday, 28 April 2023

CURTAIN UP ON MAJOR UPGRADES AT ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE

Hundreds of jobs will be created as the next stage of the Andrews Labor Government's Melbourne Arts Precinct transformation ramps up – with works starting on the Arts Centre Melbourne Theatre upgrade and new urban garden.

Minister for Creative Industries Steve Dimopoulos visited the site today to view construction starting on the first upgrade to Arts Centre Melbourne's State Theatre since it was built almost 40 years ago.

Lendlease has been selected to undertake the works which will breathe new life into the iconic venue, upgrading the heritage State Theatre and creating new places to drink and dine before or after a show.

Around 80 workers are currently on site, which will grow to 300 in the next 6 months. The project will bring the theatre's sound and staging technology up to world-class standards and vastly improve accessibility with wider aisles, bigger lifts and new wheelchair-friendly viewing positions.

An expanded underground loading dock will open up opportunities for more productions to be staged and a new rehearsal space and studio, the same size as the State Theatre stage, will allow performers to rehearse and warm up on site for the first time.

Most of the Theatres Building is underground and sections of the specialist engineering system that protects the building's foundation from corrosion will be replaced, safeguarding the building's future. Above ground, work will start on the foundations for the new public garden, about the size of the MCG, in the heart of the precinct.

Over the life of the build, the Transformation project, which also includes the construction of Australia's biggest contemporary art and design gallery The Fox: NGV Contemporary, will create over 11,000 jobs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Steve Dimopoulos

"The Melbourne Arts Centre Precinct transformation will not only ensure we bring the biggest and best creative offerings to Victoria but it will also create hundreds of jobs for Victorian tradies to work on this iconic project."

"We understand how important the creative industries are to Victoria's economy – that's why we're backing local workers to build the most prestigious home of fine art and culture in Australia."

Quote attributable to Member for Albert Park Nina Taylor

"This project will deliver long-lasting benefits for our local cafes, restaurants, hotels and retailers – which will all get a boost from extra visitors coming to our city to enjoy the amazing creative and cultural offerings on display."

Quote attributable to Lendlease Apprentice Sam Fallon

"As a proud born and bred Melburnian, working on a project of this significance and scale is an incredible opportunity. I am extremely excited to be a part of a team that has been entrusted to deliver Australia's largest cultural infrastructure project for the community."

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