

midsumma festival

ANNUAL REPORT
2020/21



midsumma.org.au



Cover image: The Midsumma Festival World was created by XR artist Marc-O-Matic

This page: Still from 'Queery' Glynn Urquhart, as part of Queerantime and Queeratnine in the Flesh - Midsumma Festival 2021

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WHAT IS MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL?

Midsumma is Australia's premier LGBTQIA+ arts organisation, for and by communities who live with shared experiences around diverse gender and sexuality.

Although the primary festival is usually held in summer each year, Midsumma works year-round to provide artists, social-changers and culture-makers with support and tools to create, present and promote their work. Midsumma plays a vital role in the life of the many varied communities with which we regularly engage.

This year, the impact of ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and safety measures made many regular Midsumma Festival events impossible to activate for early 2021. In November 2020, when Midsumma would normally have announced the upcoming festival program, most venues remained closed as the Victorian roadmap for staged recovery had only just been released. Many Midsumma Presents programming partners and Open Access event producers raised with us that they had little or no ability to produce successful events in time for Midsumma Festival's usual summer dates; even if restrictions lifted in time to enable this. Independent artists and arts/event producers in Victoria had been generally 'paralysed' in terms of event planning, with a very low level of confidence. This was a symptom of continued COVID-19 restrictions and the necessary slow and uncertain timeline for reopening of the events sector.

Midsumma progressed revised planning based around three key points:

- Securing certainty for the 2021 festival framework from a practical point of view, whilst maintaining a flexible model of delivery that could continue to respond to changes occurring over the coming months.
- Ensuring that revised plans remained consistent with core purpose, current priorities, curatorial direction and organisational industry leadership trajectory, as well as aligning with strategic and financial immediate, mid, and long terms goals.
- Considering how Midsumma could address our diverse communities and arts industry needs throughout a critical community and industry 'recovery' period.

The core arts festival then took place from 19 April to 5 May (between Melbourne Comedy Festival and Yirramboi Festival), and Midsumma Pride March was held, for the first time, as a stand-alone event a few weeks later on Sunday 23 May.

A few select Midsumma Present events that could meet COVID requirements at that time were still presented in February to mark our usual festival period, and one project had to be moved to July to ensure that it could still take place due to suitable venue availability.

With strategic focuses that include intersectional communities such as LGBTQIA+ and First Nation, disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, diverse families, and seniors, Midsumma Festival engages with broad communities across age ranges and cultural demographics; truly representing inclusion and diversity in all its forms.

Midsumma works hard to make the many diverse queer communities in Victoria more visible, more effectively interconnected, and to provide a platform for cultural



voices and stories that are often not heard otherwise in the broader community.

Over the past few years Midsumma has re-imaged and activated its position as a major nexus for queer arts development. Central to this vision is our aspiration to become a 'proactive' developmental arts organisation year-round, recognised locally, nationally and internationally, as a hub of artistic leadership in queer arts and culture development.

Midsumma is a globally relevant cultural influencer with artistic leadership, learning and diversity at its heart. We have gained artistic and community recognition for the vital role we play in the development and profile of queer cultures across Victoria and nationally.

Over the winter lockdown period of 2020 Midsumma pivoted to digital strategies, set up support programs for our artists and continued to support, elevate and empower our communities and mentorship participants through difficult and uncertain times.

A clear curatorial vision now underpins all of Midsumma's programming, with a focus upon defined strategic priorities and a goal to strengthen the creative voices of LGBTQIA+ communities whilst developing our leadership position at the forefront of LGBTQIA+ artistic development within our geographical region of the world.

Midsumma has two clear objectives:

- **To be the leadership arts organisation cultivating queer arts culture unique to Australia with local, national, international engagement; leading LGBTQIA+ cultural conversations.**
- **An artistic powerhouse investing in diverse LGBTQIA+ artistic voices to develop powerful new work, across disciplines, that inspire, share unique stories, and build meaningful connections spanning all cultures, age/generations, gender/sexual identities and disability.**

It is the aim of Midsumma that the activities we undertake and events we produce will have long- term cultural and industry impact beyond just immediate KPIs and outcomes.

Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl by Suzanne Balding.

Midsumma Festival

AUDIENCE ATTENDANCE DEMOGRAPHICS

Age demographics included earlier in report

Gender self-identity of audiences

Male	38%
Female	49%* (45% in 2020 & 44% in 2019)
Transgender	1%
Non-Binary	7%
Other	2%
Prefer not to say	2%

Sexuality self-identity of audiences

Gay	32% (38% last year)
Heterosexual	18% (18% last year)
Lesbian	15% (13% last year)
Queer	15% (13% last year)
Bisexual	11% (11% last year)
Pansexual	4% (3% last year)
Asexual	<1% (1% last year)
Other/Prefer not to say	4% (3% last year)

Household / Living structure of attendees

Couple	31%
Single	27%
Share House	23%
Family	19%

Household Income

Over 100k	38%
\$80k-\$100k	13%
\$60-\$80k	11%
\$40k-\$60k	12%
Under \$40k	12%
Prefer not to say	14%

* as above 8% of audiences identify as transgender or gender diverse.

** Female identifying attendances have increased 15% in the last 4 years

OUR PARTNERS

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



MAJOR PARTNER



GOLD PARTNERS



SILVER PARTNERS

PRESENTING PARTNERS



COMMUNITY MEDIA PARTNER



MEDIA PARTNERS



WHO ARE OUR AUDIENCES?

Sexuality Diversity

Gay	32%
Heterosexual	18%
Lesbian	15%
Queer	15%
Bisexual	11%
Pansexual	4%
Asexual	<1%
Other	5%

Gender Diversity

Female	49% (up 9%)
Male	38%
Gender non-binary	7%
Transgender	1%
Intersex	1%
Agender/No gender	1%
Prefer not to say	<1%

Diversity (other than sexuality or gender)

26% of those surveyed also answered the following questions.

Of them:

5%

Identify as Deaf/hard of hearing

8%

Identify as Autistic/Neurodiverse

Age

31%

25-34
year olds

22%

18-24
year olds

14%

35-44
year olds

11%

45-54
year olds

Household Structure



Income (per annum)*



*14% prefer not to say

Residence



\$11.3 million

Economic impact for the state of Victoria. According to independent analysis, the festival provided a direct economic impact of \$11.3 million, with the broader gross economic impact of the 2021 festival to the State's economy estimated at \$32.4 million.

CO-CHAIRS' REPORT

As the 2020-2021 year approached, we on the Midsumma Board knew that it would be at least as difficult a year as its predecessor, with the effects of COVID-19 having thrown all arts organisations into unknown, uncertain and particularly stressful territory. However, and despite the challenges experienced over the past 12 months, Midsumma has continued to live up to and indeed add to its well-deserved reputation as Australia's leading LGBTQIA+ arts and culture organisation for and by communities who live with shared experiences around diverse gender and sexuality.

While COVID-19 affected our ability to deliver our program in the ways and on the platforms which we have been used to since our inception in the early 1990s, our extraordinary CEO and her team of staff and volunteers were able to work with artists and event producers from across our diverse and proud communities to deliver a different, and in many ways, an even more amazing alternate program.

This initially included working with writers and artists in mid 2020 to turn Midsumma's website into a digital hub where people could come together and share their stories during the difficult lockdowns. Many will recall the heart-warming stories and videos of the resulting highly successful "Living in Queerantime" program.

Midsumma Pathways, our artist development and capacity building program for emerging LGBTQIA+ creatives with a disability, saw an expanded participation in 2020/2021 with significant outcomes in career and personal development. The quality of all artists and mentors (from all over Australia and overseas) was extraordinary.

With significant COVID-19 restrictions stretching into the Summer months, Midsumma staff and Board were forced to rethink the timing and nature of the core Midsumma Festival. This involved developing an extensive face-to-face and online program stretching from February to July 2021, with the core festival activities taking place from 19 April to 5 May 2021. The Board acknowledges the long and stressful hours of work, and the incredible commitment of our CEO, staff and volunteers in producing one of our most successful Festivals ever.

Co-Chair Judy Small





163 events were offered during the festival period, with 49 presented or co-presented by Midsumma. And despite all the restrictions hampering gatherings, not only did Midsumma maintain audiences, but those audiences increased, with a 60% increase in ticketing over the last two years. It is a tribute to all who participated in Midsumma 2021 that, despite this being the first year we were unable to present our signature Midsumma Carnival, we still had 209,865 attendees across the entire Festival.

For the first time Midsumma curated/produced a rainbow families project- PRISM - focused on queer artists making works for children and queer families.

As in previous years, Midsumma continued to develop our support and encouragement for intersectional communities such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, people of colour, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, rainbow families, and seniors to engage in the myriad events of the Festival, both as artists and as audiences, and the numbers of participants from all of these intersectional communities increased this year.

The newly-presented livestreamed events such as the fabulous Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl, and Midsumma Pride March, were highly successful, with an online audience of over 28,000.

Midsumma continues to be a highly accessible Festival, with 38% of events being free to attend or participate in.

Independent data collected by Culture Counts highlights the Festival's just over \$11 million of direct economic impact for Victoria, with the generation of an estimated 71 full-time positions - an

amazing achievement for a Festival with the limited budget and the small but dedicated team at Midsumma who make it all possible.

Given the positive, if at times exhausting challenges of 2020-2021, the entire Midsumma Board looks forward to working in conjunction with our sponsors, government partners, private donors, and all our intersectional communities, to make 2021-2022 an even more successful year!

Co-Chair Aaron O'Shannessy

2021 MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Our Audiences

272,947

Average attendance each year over the past three years. Midsumma Festival 2021 achieved 209,923 attendees despite impacts by COVID-19 capacity restrictions

14,055

audiences at Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl; 57.3 % of these audiences engaged online

25,001

audiences for the 2021 Midsumma Pride March; of these audiences 5,718 were marchers, 10,483 participated in the livestream and 8,800 visited a trader in St Kilda to watch the march

71%

returning audiences; a 5.9% increase in audience retention from 2020

43,939

total ticket attendance, compared with 35,611 in 2020 and 27,247 in 2019), the second year running that we have recorded a substantial increase in this area. 23.4 % increase on 2020 and 60.2% increase over the past two years.

Our 2021 Program

163

Events

representing a 63% increase on target number of events for 2021 post COVID-19

38%

Free events

8.6% increase in free events from 2020

29%

of audiences were attending their first Midsumma Festival.

3%

of audiences attended 10 or more shows

Our Communities

85%

increase in social media engagement - 31,349 total for 2021, 2020 had a total of 16,938

28,004

audience members for Midsumma Festival online

234,744

visits to the Midsumma website, from 155,671 separate users, during Midsumma Festival 2021

118,550,981

reach recorded across all media platforms

52,249

total social media followers

8%

of audiences identify as Transgender / Gender Diverse

17%

of audiences identify culturally diverse or a person of colour

26%

of audiences identify as living with disability

2021 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Significant growth in ticketing
attendances of

60%

paid attendances increase
over the last two years, with
an increase in 2021 of 23.4%
(over 2020 results).

Total box office increase of

15.9%

from previous year

\$30.15

average ticket price for
paid event in Midsumma
Festival 2021

16% ▲

increase in gross box office
income, on 2020 results

Increased visitation and associated economic impact for Victoria

89% of attendees

were from metropolitan Melbourne

5% of attendees

were from regional Victoria

5% of audiences

travelled from interstate

13% of audiences

engaged in the festival online

\$11.3 Million

direct economic impact to Victoria, according to an independent analysis

\$32.4 Million

broader gross economic impact for the festival to the state's economy across multiple employment sectors

71 FTEs equivalent created

across tourism, transport, retail, food and beverage sectors.

“Midsumma attracts a broad attendance across age ranges and demographics; truly representing inclusion and diversity in all its forms.”

Karen Bryant,
CEO, Midsumma Festival



MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL 2021

Each year Midsumma seeks to continue to improve the depth, quality and variety of the program, responding to the broad range of our communities and audience demographics. A clear curatorial vision underpins all of Midsumma Festival’s programming, with a focus upon defined strategic priorities and a goal to strengthen the creative voices of LGBTQIA+ communities whilst establishing a leadership position as Australia’s LGBTQIA+ premier arts and cultural festival.

Significant adjustments were required to planned events due to COVID-19 and Midsumma faced many challenges in relation to program development due to restrictions and ongoing impacts of the pandemic on artists and audiences.

Midsumma was forced to abandon plans for its usual opening event, Midsumma Carnival, and several other planned arts events needed to be postponed, with artists and venues just not ready to finalise these events in time. Contrarily, new work emerged post lockdown with many artists responding directly to the impacts of the previous year, which Midsumma was able to include in the festival program as late and culturally timely additions.

Midsumma believes that is vital that LGBTQIA+ arts and culture events are presented within a national and international context and over the previous three years Midsumma Festival had built its capacity to collaborate internationally. This year this strategy



had to be put on hold with no international travel allowed, though a few international digital live streams were included and a creative development commenced with a UK artist (*Electric Fence*).

In the lead up to this year's festival, Midsumma noted an increased financial difficulty for many independent event producers due to reduced venue capacities and therefore reduced box office income capability for many projects. This led to increased financial risk at a time most intendant artists could least afford such risk. Midsumma needed to increase the number of events that we invested in financially to ensure the maximum number of events could take place. With additional support from Creative Victoria,

2021 Midsumma Festival achieved 120% increase of events that we financially invested in on previous year's figures.

The impacts of COVID-19 on revenue for Midsumma were substantial for this financial year, with over \$700k of regular income estimated early in the financial year to be lost due to direct impacts of the pandemic and restrictions/lockdowns.

Midsumma has always been highly successful in raising its own earned income each year outside of government grants and pre-pandemic, only 4% of its total revenue for core costs came from government funding.

Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl Photo
by Suzanne Balding.



This success has been split into two key revenue areas – corporate sponsorship and earned event income. The loss of Midsumma Carnival impacted significantly on event earned income, as did the need for Midsumma to heavily subsidise event registration fees to assist artists and venues to return to producing events.

Midsumma also saw a reduction in revenues from ticketing fees and commissions due to the overall lower number of events, and many venues unable this year to allow split ticketing provisions for festivals as has always occurred in the past. The uncertainty in the Australian economy saw most of our corporate sponsors; many of whom were in industries heavily impacted upon themselves by COVID-19, reduced their partnership staff or in some cases, loss these staff teams entirely. As a result many corporates had to put put sponsorship of events on hold for the immediate future.

Midsumma was able to successfully cover these losses for the 2020/2021 year with support from federal subsidies Job Keeper and Cash Flow Boost, and additional one-off state governments funding opportunities specific to the arts and events industry to meet COVID-19 challenges.

The program was made up of 163 separate events over 18 days.

2021 PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND HIGHLIGHTS

Midsumma is passionate about making the many diverse queer communities in Victoria more visible, more effectively interconnected, and to provide a platform for cultural voices and stories that are often not heard otherwise in the broader community. In 2021 Midsumma's successes in meeting objectives from our current strategic plan were particularly evident in the following key performance areas:

- Significant **growth in ticketing attendances** over the past two years. Total paid attendances increased by 60.2 % in the last two years, with an increase in 2021 of 23.4% (over 2020 results). Total attendances for Midsumma Festival 2021 were **209,523 attendees, of which 43,939** were paid attendances.
- Gross box office income increased by **15.9%**, on 2020 results, with majority of this income going directly into the hands of independent artists and producers. Ticketed attendances increase by 23.4%.
- New initiative - livestreamed events (including, Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl, and Midsumma Pride March) achieved a total livestream online event audience of **28,004**, successfully increasing accessibility and broadening reach of Midsumma Festival to new communities and audiences.
- **Attracting new audiences whilst maintaining ongoing audience loyalty.** Our figures across multiple years show that we successfully attract and then retain new audiences. On average in 2021, attendees went to **3 shows** each during Midsumma Festival. **3%** of attendees attended 10 or more shows on average, over the period of the festival. In 2020, **29%** of attendees were attending their first Midsumma Festival compared to 33% in 2019 and 42% in 2018.
- Attendee survey results show that Midsumma Festival attracts broad attendances across age ranges and demographics; truly representing inclusion and diversion in all forms.
- **8% of 2021 audiences** identify as transgender/Gender Diverse representation
- **17% of 2021 audiences** identify as culturally diverse or a person of colour
- **4% of 2021 audience** identify as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander
- **Increased attendance by disabled audiences, which made up 26% of attendees**, with a further 4% of audiences identifying as carers for people with disability. 7% identified as Autistic/ Neurodiverse and 5% as Deaf/hearing impaired. Midsumma has recorded a **51% increase** in disabled audiences over the past two years. Disability access and engagement initiatives continued to be a priority with many new initiatives offered for the first time this year. Midsumma increased its direct Auslan interpretation and audio description services by **112%** over the past four years. Midsumma Festival's program guide was provided in multiple formats to maximise accessibility, in collaboration with a range of experienced disability groups and services, delivering multi layered access and engagement initiatives.
- Increased female attendance was a goal in the current four year planning period. Midsumma achieved an increase this year of **8.8%** in female identifying audiences and has achieved increases in female attendances of **15%** in the past four years since seeking to address this in both programming and marketing.

SUMMARY OF ATTENDANCES 2021 FESTIVAL

- After much work in recent years to attract and retain **older audiences**, 12% of audiences attending Midsumma Festival are 55 years or older, half of which are over 65 years of age.
- 3% increase in family audiences attending with children under 11 years of age.
- Significantly increased presence/ participation in the festival program from Queer People of Colour (QPoC), Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander artists, with many of QPoC focussed events selling out in 2021.
- **Midsumma Festival remains highly accessible.** In 2021 38% of events were free to attend or participate in. Over the past five festival's Midsumma has averaged **over 40% of** events being free to participate in or attend.
- For the first time ever Midsumma produced a rainbow families focused major project **PRISM** (dedicated program within a festival) in partnership with: Artplay, City of Melbourne, Arts Centre Melbourne, Circus Oz, Australia Council for the Arts, City of Yarra and Rawcus Theatre. This project of national significance included seven projects with a focus on queer artists making and presenting work for children and queer families.
- Increased social media reach; recording an **11.7% increase in social media followers**, and an overall **increase of 85%** in social media engagement this year; following up a 44% increase the previous year.
- Significant economic impact for the state through both visitation of attendees from outside the state and local attendee event spend despite COVID-19 impacts and ongoing limitations in marketing the event outside of Melbourne.

Prior to COVID-19 Midsumma Festival's attendances had steadily increased by 41.9% between it's 2017 and 2020 festivals. COVID-19 however, meant that planning for the 2021 festival could never have been about growth in numbers, due to the need to meet State Government restrictions in place. The festival in 2021 commenced with indoor capacities limitations (many smaller venues saw these restrictions reduced only mid-way through Midsumma Festival 2021), as well as COVIDSafe plans limiting capacities at outdoor events. As such, many larger events had to be scaled down or cancelled this year, with reduced capacities that fitted less stringent Tier 2 and Tier 3 COVIDSafe guidelines. This was especially true for free events. Many event producers and venues, who were still not open or returned to producing live events by early 2021, were simply not ready or able to participate by April. Midsumma Carnival (usually attended by close to 120,000 people each year) was unable to occur in any form this year. Midsumma Pride March had to be scaled and reimagined to meet COVID permit requirements, with limited attendees' roadside to meet social distancing requirements.

Even within this context Midsumma Festival achieved an increase in the number of ticketed attendances and gross box office income (majority of which goes directly into the hands of independent artists and arts producers).

Total ticketed attendances were 43,939 (compared with 35,611 in 2020 and 27,247 in 2019), the second year running that we have recorded a substantial increase in this area. A 23.4 % increase on 2020 and 60.2% increase over the past two years.

Gross Box Office sales generated by Midsumma reached \$962,874 a 15.9% increase on 2020 (\$830,772) with a 52.8% increase over the last two years (\$630,000 in 2019)

Given the unique circumstances, Midsumma's target for event numbers had been to get to 100 separate events for the core festival dates and we were thrilled that a total of **163 separate events** were able to be held.

Total attendances for 2021 – 209,923.

With Midsumma Carnival unable to occur, normally our largest event in attendances, and limited capacity attendance at Midsumma Pride March, the total number of attendances recorded is extremely pleasing (total attendances in 2020 without COVID-19 impacts were 261,806).

Rather than simply being classified as a 'niche' festival, Midsumma has, for many years now consistently been one of the largest festivals in Victoria in terms of attendances.

Visitation and associated economic impact for the state of Victoria. Visitation from outside Melbourne has been a key target growth area for Midsumma in recent years, though of course for this year COVID impacted upon all international and some interstate (due to ongoing border closure uncertainty) visitation results. Whilst 89% of attendees this year were from metropolitan Melbourne / Greater Melbourne suburbs, 6% of audiences surveyed had travelled to Melbourne from outside the State. In addition to this, **5%** of audiences surveyed travelled to Melbourne from regional Victoria for Midsumma 2021. On average, regional Victorian respondents stayed 2.2 nights, interstate respondents stayed 4.5 nights.

According to primary data collected (independent external analysis) on visitor spending and financial reports on organisational spending, the direct economic impact of the festival was

\$11,387,650 million. After application of relevant gross value add multipliers (using recognised ABS multipliers), the broader impact of the festival events on local economies has been estimated by Culture Counts at **\$32,465,342 million.** This generated an estimated **71 FTE's** in terms of employment across the entertainment, retail, tourism and food and beverage sectors.

Audience demographics

- 1% children aged 4 years and under attending with adult/s
- 4% children aged between 5 and 11 years attending with adult/s (up from 1% in 2020)
- 4% young people aged between 12 years and 17 years of age
- 14% of adult audiences between the ages of 18 and 24
- 31% of attendees were from the 25 to 34 year old age group (39% last year)
- 23% were 35 to 44 year old's
- 11% were 45 to 54 year old's
- 8% aged between 55 years and 64 years
- 4% of audiences 65 years of age and over

The Midsumma Festival remains highly accessible. For 2020 38% of events were free. Over the past five festivals Midsumma has averaged 40.2% of events being free to participate in or attend.

Midsumma Festival is successfully and consistently attracting new audiences as well as maintaining the loyalty of long-term attendees. **29%** of the 2021 Festivals audiences were attending their first ever Midsumma Festival.



SIGNATURE EVENTS

MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL LIVE AT THE BOWL

A highlight of our festival this year was a partnership with Arts Centre Melbourne and City of Melbourne for access to the iconic Sidney Myer Music Bowl for a line-up of queer talent of a two night concert. Midsumma had never previously been able to afford to use this venue, but the State Government had supported Arts Centre Melbourne to set up the venue in full COVIDSafe mode. With a 3,000 person capacity, this made the venue the largest available space for a seated concert available to Midsumma, without having to set up all infrastructure from scratch.

The two night concert was free to the public. The ticket take up was successful and all 6,000 available tickets were booked, within hours (and very much in demand in the lead up to the events that occurred on 30 April and 1 May). Unfortunately, on both nights some booked seats were not

utilised, particular by VIPs and sponsor representatives who requested and were allocated tickets but did not attend.

Celebrating diverse journeys and communities, Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl was a soirée of free queer live entertainment with a fabulous line-up of live performance, comedy and music at the spectacular Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

The night was hosted by the glorious Virginia Gay and Aysha Buffet, with performances from Mama Alto, Trevor Ashley, Deborah Cheetham, Rachel Dunham, Michael Griffiths, Annie Aitken, Reuben Kaye, Jackie Loeb, Johnny Manuel and Sheldon Riley, supported by Missy LaMinx, Sasha Starr, Taylor Made, D Flowers, Miss Jay, Luma, Kali Forni-Kate, Bae L'amour, Justin Teliquire, Leasa Mann, Tequila Mockingbird, Nathan Smith and DJ Jake Judd.

Both nights were Auslan interpreted, livestreamed, audio described, and captioned.

Image: Mama Alto at Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl 2021. Photo by Suzanne Balding

MIDSUMMA PRIDE MARCH

The second major event this year was **Midsumma Pride March**, on Sunday **23 May 2021**. This important annual event was in its 26th year and brought together members of the community from across Melbourne and beyond.

Developing this event in a COVIDSafe way and to gain approval for it to proceed was a mammoth task and required key staff to work around the clock on a number of occasions to scope and address requirements of the State Government to enable approval to be gained in a timely fashion for the event to go ahead.

Overall, the event achieved estimated attendances on the day of 25,000. Of these audiences 5,718 being marchers, 10,483 participants/audiences in the livestream and 8,800 watching via local businesses traders in St Kilda.

For the first time ever Midsumma Pride March was complimented with the development and broadcast of a curated digital livestream, which combined live crosses to the march, dedicated interviews, pre-recorded artist performances and historical footage. This increased reach and accessibility for the march. The livestream was hosted **by Sarah Ward**, the multi-award winning, powerhouse and performer (known as Yana Alana), and Community Darling **Dean Arcuri**; plus our on-ground commentator was comedian, radio host, actor and celebrant - **Annie Louey**. The livestream also showcased performances by drag performer **Olympia Bukkakis**; **He's Every Woman stars Justin and Jamie** performing *ABBAlicious*; **Georgie Munroe** who was performing an original composition; **Elvin Lam**: Performing 'I Am What I Am' with support from Marc Ethan, Auslan Interpreter; and **Variation Three** performing a dance composition to activate Catani Gardens. To pay homage to our histories, Midsumma Pride March

Livestream showed exclusive video footage of the first-ever Pride March in Victoria in 1996.

The livestream included Auslan interpretation for Deaf and hearing impaired members of our communities, and a separate dedicated audio described version also was presented in collaboration with Description Victoria for blind and low vision members of our communities. The livestream recording is on the Midsumma YouTube channel and can still be viewed.

The audio described version of the march presented with Description Victoria had 983 listeners from blind or low vision communities.

To adhere to our COVIDSafe permit, the registration area at Ian Johnson Oval and entertainment precinct at Catani Gardens both had to be fenced, and we had to pre-register and ticket each march participant. Despite COVID-19 impacts, 218 separate groups were represented - down only slightly from 224 groups in 2020 and still an increase over 2019 (198 groups) and 2018 (181 groups). Spectators were not encouraged to attend physically in large numbers but to attend digitally via the Midsumma Pride March Livestream.

Dykes on Bikes proceeded the marching contingent as per tradition, with the march itself led by Boon Wurrung Elders and the Indigenous Pride contingent along with the Acting Premier of Victoria, James Merlino, Minister for Equality, Martin Foley, and outgoing Commissioner for Gender and Sexuality Ro Allen.

Groups of young people, often amongst the most vulnerable within our communities, were once again placed towards the front of the march as a positive and strong affirmation for LGBTIQA+

Midsumma Festival

youth. This is a deliberate empowerment strategy employed by Midsumma for a number of years now.

For the fourth year Midsumma continued the Midsumma Pride March Awards, intended to encourage colourful and innovative contributions from march participants. This year's judging panel Adolfo Aranjuez, Florin Douglas, Mx Munro (Georgie Munro), Nikki Viveca and Valerie Hex (James Welsby).

For the second year the Most Significant Message Award honoured the memory of Peter Dewildt, Pride March Victoria's first president, who passed in 2019.

2021 Pride March Award winners were:

Most Fabulous:

- **WINNER** : Samba Energia
- Special mentions : O'ziriguidum Escola de Samba and friends, Pacifique X and Melbourne Front Runners

Most Innovative:

- **WINNER** : Vic PaH
- Special mentions : Argonauts, Port Philip Council, Motafrenz car club, Bi alliance

Peter Dewildt Award - Most Significant Message:

- **WINNER** : LAHRC Latin American & Hispanic Rainbow community
- Special mentions : Indigenous Pride, Home style aged care service, Coburg High School and Performing Older woman's circus

At the conclusion of the march, attendees were led into Catani Gardens for celebrations and entertainment including a DJ and live performance from Max Lawrence and musicians from the Forest Collective, with MC Lou Wall. Formalities included a smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country by **N'arweet Carolyn Briggs**, City of Port Phillip Lake Ward **Councillor Katherine Copsey** representing **Mayor Louise Crawford**.

For the first time a series of community stalls and activations were at Catani Gardens, helping replace the inclusion of these each year at Midsumma Carnival which could not take place.

Memory boards for attendees to write on were installed in Catani Gardens and proved popular with attendees with many wonderful thoughts and reflections from our communities captured on the day.

Media coverage for Midsumma Pride March was once again very strong especially from commercial TV stations with evening news coverage.



MIDSUMMA PRESENTS PROGRAM

For the 2021 festival, Midsumma continued to improve the depth, quality and variety of our own curated program Midsumma Presents, responding to the broad range of our artistic communities and audience demographics and ensuring we play a leadership role in the development of queer arts and culture nationally.

We utilised partnerships with outstanding cultural venues and community groups to produce a significantly increased number of events that Midsumma either produced, co-produced or invested in. This was necessary this year due to the ongoing impact financially of COVID-19 on artists and venues, meaning that with reduced capacity (COVID-19 restrictions), many artists and producers just couldn't make their budgets or projects work financially with reduced box office income potential without Midsumma increasing its direct financial subsidy to help reactive the industry in a broader way. Partnerships for co-presented events included Arts Centre Melbourne, Australia Post, Chapel off Chapel, Minus 18, Artplay, Gasworks Arts Park and Museums Victoria.

49 events were presented or co presented by Midsumma this year, a 120% increase on the previous year.

Attendance at Midsumma Presents events in 2021 totalled at 163,107.

Due to the unique nature of COVID-19 this year, Midsumma Presented events spanned dates from our usual February summer period, our revised core dates in April to May, and through to one project that extended into the June/July School holidays.

PRISM

A highlight this year was the development and delivery of our new major 'signature' project produced and presented by Midsumma Festival. This project 'PRISM' focuses on queer artists making work for children and diverse/rainbow families. The project featured a suite of works from local artists, that ranged from final products to creative developments. It proved highly successful in terms of furthering development of Midsumma's relationship to the rainbow family community and placing Midsumma at the forefront of development of arts content that specifically shares and reflects the lived experiences of diverse families within our communities.

This was a project of national significance. The core of this program was a partnership with Artplay, one of the leading arts venues for children aged 0-12. Starting as an initial conversation around one work "The Rainbow Tree" this program is being curated to provide diverse content for communities that currently have very little specific engagement from artistic communities. Embracing Midsumma as a leader in development of queer arts and culture & Artplay's leadership in unique artistic experiences for children, this project aimed to build a foundation to cultivate significant cross-artform development for diverse rainbow families, upskill artists & expand both Midsumma and Artplay's practice.

The following projects formed PRISM:

- ***The Dinosaur Squad by Alice's Garage*** - The story was written collaboratively by a 12-year-old trans boy and a 69-year-old trans woman. It explores their multigenerational real-life journeys to finding pride in their gender identity and themselves. The story metaphor focuses on a herd of dinosaurs who were forbidden from making noise - only to rebel and find their Roar. Alongside this project a squad of supportive adults were formed to provide ongoing support



for the 12-year-old boy (who had been experiencing bullying) and his parents in an ongoing meaningful way and this 'SQUAD' support concept has generated significant interest in future SQUADS developed; particularly targeting support around an identified LGBTIQ youth suicide cluster in regional Victoria. This project included a digital video creation from the story and in person public reading of the story with a Q&A with the creators and a colouring book.

- **Drag Story Time - Online Series by PO PO MO CO** - Adapting to the COVID-19 environment, clowning trio PO PO MO CO took their Drag Story Performance online, reading three queer stories for children. The group dramatised each story in 3 separate episodes. The Three stories were *Most Marshmallows* by Rowboat Watkins, *Peanut goes for the gold* by Jonathan Van Ness and *Colour Me* Illustrated by Moira Court and written by Ezekiel Kwaymullina.

- **This is Grayson by Gold Satino** - Award winning queer collective Gold Satino further developed and presented their new work *This is Grayson*. The immersive performance takes place on a bus, taking the audience on a journey of site-specific performance work designed for children aged 9-12 and their adults. Taking the audience around sites set out through the Hobson Bay City Council area, audiences were literally taken through a story book come to life, as the artists explored the character Grayson, and how they exist a little in each of us. This was a sell-out season.
- **Workshop/Creative Development: A Resourceful Hero Struggling Against Incredible Odds by Rawcus Theatre** - Rawcas Theatre invited a group of people aged 13 - 25 to participate in a public creative workshop for a new

Image: This is Grayson by Gold Satino

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project. This process formed stage one in a process working towards an immersive gallery experience for 2022. The project recreates verbatim scripts from favourite action movies utilising the Rawcus Ensemble alongside young, LGBTQIA+ performers with and without a disability. The project examines our collective obsession with heroes, superheroes and supervillains, as performers try to embody the strength, cunning, unique abilities and ridiculous outfits of these worlds. Playing with the performativity of the hero, the work questions who we accept as a hero, especially when they don't look like Keanu Reeves, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlet Johannsson or Angelina Jolie. In the gap between our ordinary world and the extraordinary world of the big screen we find the humour, humility and power of the everyday, and celebrate queer disability identities.

- **Rainbow Families Cabaret by Circus Oz**
A line-up curated by Circus Oz Rainbow Families Cabaret showcased the joy of circus, singing and dancing for rainbow families and the wider community. This event took over the Sidney Myer Music Bowl Stage, bringing queer art and community to a very visible iconic performance space.
- **The Rainbow Tree by Sarah Ward and Bec Matthews from Little Fruit Projects, Jolyon James (video artist), Kirri Dangerfield (Auslan interpreter)**
- an immersive moving picture book and music work for children. Created by Artplay, Sarah Ward (Yana Alana), Bec Matthews (Circus Oz & Fruit Fly Circus) alongside 10-year-old songwriter Alia Von Sturmer. The work has been developed with Auslan language featuring as a key component, not simply as performance interpretation, with Kirri a core collaborator and performer. Developed in collaboration with children from rainbow families, trans children, queer children, and

queer allies from diverse backgrounds. This theatre show tells personal stories about what it means to belong to a family accompanied by song, live music, and projection art. Accessible to deaf and hard of hearing audiences through integrated live Auslan interpreting by Kirri Dangerfield, projections and song-captioning.

SUMMER FESTIVAL AT HEIDE - FEBRUARY 2021

- **LGBTQI+ Elders Dance Club** Presented by Midsumma Festival, Heide and All the Queens Men. Led by artists Bec Reid and Tristan Meecham this free event invited communities out, for some the first event in almost a year, to dance and be queer in the beautiful sculpture garden at Heide.
- **Diimpa x Forest Collective** - Presented by Midsumma Festival and Heide Museum of Modern Art. A new work commissioned by Midsumma featuring the work of composer Diimpa (a current participant of the Midsumma Pathways mentorship program for artists with a disability). Lead by artistic director Evan J Lawson, Forest Collective is a 15-piece chamber ensemble dedicated to new classical music. Lauded for unique and surprising performances Forest Collective is one of Melbourne's finest new music ensembles, working across disciplines from pop music to the avant-garde, from opera to contemporary dance. Working with queer, autistic, Aboriginal Gubbi Gubbi man Diimpa, the group presented an exciting contemporary sonic experience for crowds at Heide.

REUNION. EMBITTERED SWISH

Presented by: Midsumma Festival and Incinerator Gallery. The latest offering from performance art vehicle Embittered Swish REUNION saw its members reunited after a period of indefinite separation. Coming together physically, virtually, and psychically, the exhibition comprises installation, paintings, photography, and soundscapes, building to a theatrical exploration of what it might mean to come together now.

QUEERANTINE IN THE FLESH

Building on the developing relationship between Midsumma and the programming team at ACMI, the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Queerantime in the Flesh brought the online works commissioned by Midsumma for Living in the Queerantime in winter 2020 to an onsite, physical, live exhibition in the ACMI Swinburne Studio for four days during Midsumma Festival (April 22-26, 2021).

Many LGBTQIA+ people have come from isolation and combat this with community, creativity, created communities and safe venues. During COVID-19 lockdowns where we found ourselves once again isolated and separate from these key elements of identity, Midsumma Festival commissioned ten artists to creatively respond online to living in an era of quarantine- and we exhibited these on as an online exhibition 'Living in the Queerantime', presented during 2020 on the digital 'stage' of our Midsumma website.

As the world slowly re-emerges from isolation, this exhibition and its associated public programming took the works of Queerantime live and exhibited "in the flesh." More than celebrating the ten commissioned artists and the works themselves Queerantime in the Flesh also celebrated the ways Midsumma directly supports artists - during COVID and beyond. Where we, and many organisations in the arts sector, spent 2020 finding ways to "pivot" and present work online, this

exhibition joyously achieved the opposite - taking something first presented online in lockdown and welcoming it into the physical world. It was a significant celebration of the ways art endures, connecting people and creating community, and a celebration of the arts sector reawakening in the COVID new normal.

Queerantime in the Flesh was proudly co-presented by Midsumma Festival and ACMI, Melbourne Museums of screen culture, and supported by the City of Melbourne. The Midsumma programming team worked with Arie Offman (Programmer, Public Programs) and technicians Travis Geddard, Simon Dargaville and Dylan Bailey to curate and present the exhibition and the associated public programming.

Across the four days, the exhibition was attended by 472 people.

Living in the Queerantime and Queerantime in the Flesh featured:

- short films by Glynn Urquhart (Queery), Mark Salvestro (A COVID Coming Out Among the Gum Trees) and Susannah Thomas (Quiche);
- visual art by Frances Cannon (I Think of Them), Lian Beveridge (Still Here, Still Queer) and Simon Welsh (Queer Histories);
- a multimedia dance piece by queer Indigenous artist sallvage aka Rowan Savage (Re/membering paradise);
- filmed poetry by Nikki Viveca (All Teh Things);
- a new audio work by Patrick Gunasekera adapted from their online essays (long-awaited dream / interwoven zeitgeist/the pulse of A ferocious future everyday);
- and video "wiggle gram" portraits fusing anagram and digital photographic techniques by Logan Mucha (... and nowhere to go).

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Public programming elements included:

- Queerantime Q&A: Two panel discussions with the artists of Queerantime in the ACMI Gandel Digital Futures Lab 1, moderated by Artist Development Program Coordinator Mama Alto. Saturday April 24 featured Lian Beveridge, Logan Mucha, Nikki Viveca, sallvage - Rowan Savage, Simon Welsh and Susannah Thomas, with Rowan and Simon joining from interstate via teleconference. Sunday April 25 featured Frances Cannon, Glynn Urquhart, Mark Salvestro, and Patrick Gunasekera, with Patrick joining from interstate via teleconference. Audiences expressed to Midsumma and ACMI staff their interest in hearing more detailed stories and ideas from the artists unpacking the themes of their works.
- Queerantime Live Salon: Three live poetry and spoken word performance salons by Queerantime artist Nikki Viveca, accompanied on string instruments by Kitty san Pedro, performed in the ACMI Gandel Digital Futures Lab 1. Audiences expressed to Midsumma and ACMI staff their excitement and emotional responses to poetry that movingly and sensitively captured experiences of isolation from both the COVID-19 lockdown lens and from a queer, trans and asexual lens - and the intersections of those two experiences.

MIDSUMMA AND AUSTRALIA POST ART AWARD

Since its inauguration in 2016 the Midsumma and Australia Post Art Award has quickly established itself as the nation's leading queer art award and exhibition.

With finalists selected from across the country, the Midsumma Australia Post Art Award is a survey of outstanding queer artists reflecting their personal and political perspectives on the world.

This year's event continued to achieve national recognition in the Visual Arts

world. This is a nation-wide non-acquisitive annual award featuring both early-career and established artists working in any medium. This year, with a prize pool valued at \$10,000, the submissions were of an impressive professional standard. The public exhibition of finalists from this award was produced by Midsumma as a key component of the festival program at No Vacancy Gallery. The exhibition opened with a VIP function and awards ceremony on the evening of 28 April with the exhibition continuing until 8 May.

The 2021 Midsumma and Australia Post Art Prize Winners were:

- Major Award Winner (\$6000): Emma Armstrong-Porter (VIC)
- Bundoora Homestead Art Award (includes an artist fee, residency opportunity and public outcome): Selwyn Hoffman (VIC)
- People's Choice Award (\$1000): Reeve Bendixen (VIC)

Finalists of the 2020 Midsumma and Australia Post Art Prize exhibited as part of Midsumma were:

J Rosenbaum (VIC) | Mira Oosterweghel (VIC) | Glyn Urquhart (VIC) | Kate Tandoc (VIC) | Martin Lee (VIC) | Larissa MacFarlane (VIC) | Samuel Beatty (NSW) | John Gosper (VIC) | Kyle KM (VIC) | Reeve Bendixen (VIC) | Selwyn Hoffmann (VIC) | Nyulla Safi (VIC) | Matto Lucas (VIC) | Emma Armstrong-Porter (VIC) | Softwear (VIC)

MIDSUMMA SUNDAY SESSIONS

The Midsumma Sunday Sessions included two free piano bar style performances at the Malthouse Outdoor Stage on the final Sunday of the core festival dates for Midsumma Festival - May 2, 2021, supported by the City of Melbourne as one additional performance as part of a Midsumma VIP function for festival supporters and donors.

Curated by Midsumma's Artist Development Coordinator Mama Alto and musically directed by non-binary cabaret performer and music theatre composer Joshie Belle, the line-up included singers from across the festival and beyond including Dean Arcuri (To Sir With Glove), Joshua Sanders (Scoundrels), Margot Tanjutco (Lemon Comedy), Milo Hartill (Guerrilla Sabbath and We Are Here: The People of Cabaret), Miss Cairo (We Are Here: The People of Cabaret), Piera Dennerstein (Blue is the Colour), and Samuel Gaskin with the cast of Reckoning.

Audience feedback indicated Midsumma Sunday Sessions created a relaxed and ambient atmosphere for an enjoyable afternoon in the sun, and a nice farewell to the 2021 festival in its final days.

QUEER WOMEN IN MUSIC

Continuing from the POWER program that started in 2020, Midsumma continued with its priority to focus on queer women in music. According to a 2017 SBS sexuality article, "Australian music has long been a domain of straight white men, with minority voices fighting for their spot to be recognised. Overtly queer female identifying music is still overlooked by the mainstream or met with baffled response."

The centrepiece of this strategy this year was The Pier Festival presented by Midsumma Festival, Girls at Sea and AH Entertainment. This event was designed to create a safe space for queer women to come together and celebrate female artists and their work. Held at the iconic Seaworks on Saturday 24th April this showcase featured Casey Donovan, Harlow & Hart, Mz Rizk, Tomboy DJ set, Miss Burlesque Australia aka Bettie Bombshell and live art activations by Lisa Bishop. The event attracted an audience of 836, which was 90% capacity.

Three other specific events related to this priority:

- ***A Celebration of the Teaches of Peaches*** presented by blabrunner, Psychic Hysteria and Midsumma Festival. For this special Midsumma Festival event, local Melbourne artists V, Hearts and Rockets, Double Vanity, Zig Zag, Hunny Machete and more gathered at The Curtin to celebrate the iconic album, *The Teaches of Peaches*. An era-defining collection of electro-clash that was funny, sexy and outrageous, blurring genres and boundaries. The album smashed onto stereos with dirty Roland 505 beats, throbbing bass and trashy punk rock guitars, and Peaches singing and rapping pro sex, post-feminist themes that were queer, brash and so so danceable.
- ***Goddess Grooves at Chapel off Chapel*** Presented by Midsumma Festival and RiVid Media. Goddess Grooves is both a showcase and a celebration of some of our community's finest singer/songwriter musicians brought together in one evening of scintillating musical entertainment. This year, at Chapel off Chapel, Goddess Grooves presented another unique line-up of artists, while simultaneously introducing another local artistic endeavour by Melbourne filmmakers, Demetra Giannakopoulos, Vicki Jones and Ruth Katerelos.
- ***Goddess of Jazz at Chapel off Chapel*** Presented by Midsumma Festival. Accompanied by the amazing Graham Clarke on piano, Maude Davey and Ruth Katerelos presented their own spin on songs made sensational over the decades by the likes of Nina Simone, Judy Garland, Piaf, Billie Holiday, Madeleine Peyroux, Dusty Springfield, Peggy Lee and more.

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MEMORY LANE

This year brought the first collaboration between The Metro Tunnel Creative Program and Midsumma, working together to showcase the strength and adaptability of our artists and culture makers. After an EOI process 10 artists were selected by pitching their response to their favourite Midsumma Festival memory and the project creating an open-door gallery from these works capturing the essence of 'where we have come from' alongside community members personal memories and recollections of past Midsumma's.

Artist presented were:

Caoife Power (VIC) | Chelle Destefano (VIC) | Dionne Chambers (VIC) | KJ (VIC) | Kyle KM (VIC) | Lucy Weir (VIC) | Matthew Chan (VIC) | Matto Lucas (VIC) | Selwyn Hoffman (VIC) | Suzanne Phoenix (VIC)

This is program was so successful it has set up an ongoing relationship with The Metro Tunnel Creative Program for future projects.

A STRANGE SPACE

Presented by Midsumma in partnership with the new Melbourne arts precinct, Collingwood Yards. With projection as the backdrop A Strange Space celebrated the creativity and diversity of Collingwood Yards - and all that goes on within a public space - closed to the public for many years, reopened and then closed temporarily again for COVID-19 - acknowledging artistic connections, moments and human interactions that are integral to the spaces where we gather as artists and make work. Over four nights of the Midsumma Festival this enticing program of projection works, performances and events celebrated resilience, reflected on change, and on what 'A Strange Space' we have all found ourselves in. As we all know, even in the most challenging of times, we create.

DISCO INSTAMATIC

Presented by Midsumma and Abbotsford Convent, artist Tanzer showcased their innovative, glittering, and glamorous reimaging of the form of traditional music video. Created in collaboration with queer screen culture magazine Sissy Screens, Disco Instamatic is a large-scale, hyper-colour projection work underscored by the Butch Le Butch remix of Tanzer's new single Deep Fried Disco. Featured 20 superstars of Melbourne's queer arts scene, including Tanzer, The Huxleys, Mo'Ju, Karen From Finance, Atong Atem and Aysha Buffet.

EMO PHASE: DAN THORPE IN FOCUS

Returning audience favourites Forest Collective brought their new collaborative project, working with guest artist Dan Thorpe, to Midsumma audiences. The new work merges classical orchestral styles with Dan's musical mayhem on piano; exploring memories and emotions of Dan's emo phase, rebelling against normal forms. This was the world premiere concert by Cat Hope and Dan Thorpe and presented at Abbotsford Convent.

BECOMING US

Continuing from Midsumma's focus this year on diverse rainbow families programming there was also an increase in programming focusing specifically on LGBTQIA+ youth.

Midsumma Festival joined forces with Immigration Museum (Museums Victoria), Minus18 and Signal to present *Becoming Us* - a program for LGBTQIA+ teenagers and their parents / guardians, celebrating the idea of becoming an adult and uplifting the new LGBTQIA+ generation. This program aligned with the Immigration Museum's *Becoming You* exhibition, which focuses on coming-of-age moments by real-life contributors. These include people from the LGBTQIA+ community such as Andreja Pejic, Adolfo Aranjuez, Nevo Zisin, Noel Tovey, Karen From Finance, Jax Jacki Brown and Frances Cannon, speaking

about key life moments in understanding and celebrating their sexuality, gender and (dis)ability. The project focused on exploring ideas of self-discovery and coming-of-age for the LGBTIQ+ teen community.

The target audience was young LGBTIQ+ community aged between 13-18 (and their parents) with an interest in live music and the arts, as well as on justice issues. By platforming artists from these communities on stage, as well as creating opportunities for members of these communities to take part in support roles the project encourages ownership by young people over the event itself, creating a space where young audiences and families felt welcomed, celebrated, and empowered.

The *Becoming Us* program was supported by Department of Premier and Cabinet Pride Events & Festivals fund, in partnership with Midsumma Festival and Immigration Museum.

Multiple program elements of this project included:

- **Self-Portrait Workshop with Frances Cannon** Presented by Midsumma Festival and Immigration Museum - An intimate workshop class for participants aged 16 - 18 on body positive connected portraits.
- **Story in Motion Workshop with Adolfo Aranjuez-** Presented by Midsumma Festival and Immigration Museum, experienced dancer Adolfo led a digital dance class on how to tell stories with your body and music, and how to physically showcase yourself through art.
- **Heirloom Room! Sculpture workshop with Kenny Pittock** Presented by: Midsumma Festival, Immigration Museum and Signal. Objects play a huge role in moulding and holding our daily lives and identities. In this workshop devised by the SIGNAL Curators, artist Kenny Pittock imparted the sculpting skills to re-create sentimental objects from memories. Participants learnt the essentials of hand-building with air-dry clay, exploring how feelings imprint on perceptions of treasured objects.
- **Night at the Museum: Minus18 Youth Party** presented by Minus18 and Midsumma Festival. Giving control of Immigration Museum over to the Minus18 crew, though a youth nocturnal event, where only LGBTIQ+ youth up to 19 years old could attend. Pop up performances, participatory activities, and the chance for young people to explore the Immigration Museum's broader *Becoming You* exhibit at night.
- **Becoming Us Talk with Nevo Zisin, Adolfo Aranjuez, Frances Cannon + Jax Jacki Brown)** Presented by Midsumma Festival and Immigration Museum a conversation from *Becoming You* artistic contributors on their lives and journeys of finding identity in relation to the LGBTIQ+ community.

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MIDSUMMA'S - MALTHOUSE OUTDOOR STAGE PROGRAM

• **Take it From Me: Archer Launch**

A collaboration with Wheeler Centre, Archer Magazine and Midsumma Festival this event was designed to launch Archer's newest magazine. With readings from Archer Magazine contributors and editors, and a panel of hilarious non-experts this event presented a Midsumma special based on long time program *Take it from Me*. Hosted by the dashing Jess McGuire with a stellar line-up of queer agony aunts including Nayuka Gorrie, Vanessa Muradian, and Alistair Baldwin.

• **The People of Cabaret**

The People of Cabaret, founded in 2020 by Miss Cairo, is an organisation dedicated to amplifying, uplifting, nurturing, and supporting artists of who are Indigenous and/or Bla(c)k and/or people of colour (IBPOC) who work in cabaret. This vision aligned beautifully with Midsumma's values of inclusion and of platforming diverse communities within the festival program. The cabaret variety format of The People of Cabaret's gala shows was an excellent programming match to the Malthouse Outdoor Stage.

A phenomenal line-up of cabaret, burlesque, drag, circus and comedy talent included dynamic hosts Miss Cairo and Victoria Falconer; drag artists D Flowers, Limerance, Moxie Delite and Stone Motherless Cold; rapper Racerage; burlesque artists Demon Derriere, Jazida and Miss Kitty Obsidian; dancer Sham; comedian Aurelia St Clair; singers Mama Alto and Milo Hartill; and a club performance from Dawn Lee. An appreciative audience of 150 were tantalised, exhilarated, and spellbound by the range of artistry and talent presented.

• **Miss First Nation**

Working in collaboration with YIRRAMBOI FESTIVAL, Party Passport and Malthouse Theatre Midsumma Festival presented two nights of heats and a grand final (spanning the cross over dates between Midsumma Festival YIRRAMBOI 2021) of the ever-popular Miss First Nation. This season was a complete sell out season, one of the fastest sell outs of this year's Midsumma Festival. Celebrating 6 indigenous drag queens, dazzled, and competed to sell-out audiences over three nights. Cerulean being crowned Miss First Nation, and runner ups were Stone Motherless Cold and Estelle.

FERAL QUEER CAMP

As part of a growing commitment to the inclusion of literature and of the development of quality contextual critical appraisal for queer art. Midsumma Festival partnered for the second year running with WreckedAllpods, a cohort of industry professionals, to present *Feral Queer Camp*. Participants were selected from applications from queer artists, writers and academics interested in critical dialogue / writing for queer performance, who then attended a range of Midsumma events across the festival. Attendees also participated in a series of workshops throughout the program, exploring how queer identities shape artistic practise, how we talk about queer arts practise, how we review and support it. This process aimed to develop greater depth in critical dialogue, arising from an increased understanding of queer arts ecology, and how we can better place discussion of works when seen in context with queer performance history and current development arts practise. The workshops and overall program were facilitated by Alyson Campbell (Victorian College of the Arts) and Steve Farrier and supported by the Creativity and Wellbeing Research

Initiative and The Victorian College of the Arts - The University of Melbourne; Theatre Works; Royal Central School of Speech and Drama and The University of Manchester.

ELECTRIC FENCE

Created by international artist Anabel McCourt (UK based). Electric Fence is a thought-provoking and confrontational piece still in its early days of engagement and artistic development. The project encourages viewers to examine the perceptions, challenges and preconceptions that impact us all in modern life and compels us to turn to face them. Inspired by homophobic hate speech Electric Fence is grim yet unforgettable. This year initial creative development workshops/discussions took place online to feed into an ongoing development of this public art installation planned for 2022.

QUEERS IN SCIENCE

A first-time collaboration between Midsumma and Queers in Science. Queers In Science is an Australian initiative aiming to build community and improve support for LGBTQIA+ people working in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine) in Australia. During Midsumma, Queers in Science presented two lectures:

- Australia's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic - Speakers were Prof. Michael J Toole and Prof. Deborah Williamson
- Ecology Now - Speakers were Prof. Bob Wong and Guy Ritani

This was a great success platforming the lecture theatre at Melbourne Museum, connecting with words & ideas 'thought leadership' programming

SMUT

This event featured sultry readings by Alistair Baldwin, Jinghua Qian, Nkechi Anele, Tali Polichtuk, Vidya Rajan and Zoey Dawson; salacious performances by Ruby Slippers and Wilk Krate.

Kerrie and Dolly

After amazing success during lockdown Kerrie & Dolly returned to the small screen this time commissioned by Midsumma for three special festival episodes. The series showcased a suite of Midsumma artists participating in the festival.

MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL OPEN ACCESS PROGRAM

A diverse range of works are showcased through the open access registered program of events within Midsumma each year, representing a variety of vital cultural conversations taking place amongst local and interstate LGBTQIA+ communities by extraordinary artists and culture-makers and showcased to diverse audiences in increasing numbers.

All producers and venues registered as part of the festival receive a range of support services from Midsumma ranging from co-presentations to marketing, ticketing, and producer capacity building support.

As Midsumma has repositioned itself artistically over the past few years and invested year-round in a much higher level in the development of LGBTQIA+ artists and event producers and new work, it has become apparent that the depth, breadth, and quality of the open access program has also increased.

This year Midsumma invested financially in a selection of open access events

that were not otherwise able to proceed without additional financial support due to direct COVID-19 impacts. This investment enabled the following events to take place, presented as 'in association' with Midsumma:

- .CHURCH.
- Bent
- The Gospel According to Jesus, Queen of Heaven
- Love You Bitch
- That Which Was Once Familiar
- HELLO TITTY
- Blue is the Colour of Love
- To Sir with Glove
- Gay Stuff Markets
- Line Up, Sign Up, Muck Up
- Brothers No Longer in Arms
- The Thrills & Spills of One Woman's HIV Journey

Image: That Which Was Once Familiar, Midsumma Festival 2021. Image by Tan McCulloch



Heading up the open access Program are Midsumma Venue Hubs, recognising venues regularly supporting LGBTQIA+ artists presentations in their venues.

2021 Venue Hubs included:

- **Midsumma @ Chapel off Chapel.** Chapel off Chapel returned with high quality suite of programming: Dolly Diamond's Start for a Night, Goddess Groves @ Chapel presents Love Rewind, Goddesses of Jazz @ Chapel off Chapel and Scoundrels: A Boylesque Musical.
- **Midsumma @ Malthouse Outdoor Stage.** A new stage set up by Malthouse to combat the social restrictions of COVID-19. Midsumma used this as a hub for our presents program: Midsumma Sunday Sessions, Miss First Nation 2021, Take it From Me : Archer Launch Edition, The People of Cabaret: We are Here and Workshop: A Resourceful Hero Struggling Against Incredible Odds.
- **Midsumma @ La Mama.** La Mama returned as a venue hub in 2021. Their program included Guerilla Sabbath, Homophonic!, Sam I Am, The Will To Be and This Genuine Moment.
- **Midsumma @ The Hare Hole.** A long-time supporter of Midsumma and of new and intimate works Hares & Hyenas again presented (in partnership with Midsumma) a huge body of events across the 17 days of Midsumma. This included: Blue is the Colour of Love, Brothers No Longer in Arms, Gay Stuff Markets, HELLO TITTY, Line Up Sign Up Muck Up, Queenie Bon Bon - The Body is its Own Language, The Thrills & Spills of One Woman's HIV Journey and To Sir With Glove.

- **Midsumma @ Theatre Works.** Theatre Works in St Kilda joined the festival as a hub in 2019 and returned for a third year in 2021 with a wide range of performances, including: Bent, Love You Bitch, The Gospel According to Jesus Queen of Heaven, and hosting HERD a creative development.

Overall, the Open Access Program provided a huge and diverse range of events from music, comedy, cabaret, film, visual and digital arts, circus, variety, social events, forums, and walks – with the breadth and quality of the works continuing to improve due to investment Midsumma has made in building relationships (and providing capacity building developmental support) with producers, venues and artists over many years.

Across the open access program highlights included:

- **SAM I AM (Theatre)**, presented by La Mama Theatre and Antipodes Theatre Company Production. Written and performed by Sam Martin (Midsumma Pathways mentorship program participant), Sam I Am explores the experiences, memories, and unknowns that a boy from the inner Western suburbs of Sydney must learn to embrace as he accepts and defines his identity as your typical deaf gay millennial. This work attracted a significant deaf/hearing impaired audience each night across its entire season.
- **Homophonic (Classical music)** presented by La Mama Theatre. Celebrating 10 years of queer classical music, Homophonic has been a staple of the Midsumma program for many years.
- **Dolly Diamond's Star For A Night (Comedy)** by Adam Lowe Group. Dolly Diamond again brought her unique and dazzling performance back to Midsumma. Dolly's special guests for these performances included

Bob Downe, Silvie Paladino, Rhonda Burchmore, Lucy Holmes, Tash York and Matthew Hadgraft.

- **Matador (Circus)**- Presented by Bass Fam Creative. Matador fused many different forms together, dance, burlesque and circus, to tell its tale of forbidden love. This mainstage work was held at the iconic Her Majesty's Theatre.
- **The Kings (Cabaret)**- By Laura Hart. A night of celebration at the newly renovated venue Comedy Republic in the CBD. A variety of cabaret style performances by Drag Kings.
- **Duets with a Shapeshifter (Film/ Exhibition)** by James Welsby and the Bowery Theatre - this work was a fusion of costume design, film, visual art experience and Drag, a highlight of the Westside program.
- **I Have a Face by Jude Perl (Comedy)** - By Regional Arts Victoria and the Bowery Theatre. Jude Perl brought her award-winning show to Midsumma, exploring insights into identities, labels and how to be yourself despite them.
- **Let Me Get Something off my Chest (Words & Ideas)** By Josh Badge. Let Me Get Something Off My Chest was a night of polemical rants and righteous queer rage. A diverse array of LGBTIQ+ activists, artists and wordsmiths took to the stage to let the world know what's been making them angry, bemused or confused this year
- **Mission to Seafarers** - an initiative run venue and program by artists for artists, this was a new venue that hosted 12 separate events during Midsumma 2021, supported by funds from Midsumma.
- **Harry Wright - Smalltown Boy (Online)** - Streaming from the UK Harry Wright examined autism and his sexuality, and

how these intersect with their class identity, growing up in a deprived area of Yorkshire through this stand-up comedy show.

Midsumma Westside

A partnership between Midsumma Festival and a coalition of western region councils (Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley, Wyndham City Councils). Midsumma Westside is a revived program based on a ten-year-old program, GOWEST. Midsumma Westside actively supports and encourages event producers and local council venues in the western region to participate in Midsumma Festival. 18 events were part of this program who received additional marketing support, participation in a dedicated launch event and additional advice and support from the local council partner and Midsumma. Particularly pleasing was that this year saw an increase in events presented under the Westside banner over past years.

- 4PLAY - Pride of Our Footscray
- Ace of Hearts - Songs - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- Amplify: Crush - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- Creating Community in Melbourne's West - Laverton Community Hub
- Duets With Shapeshifter by James Welsby (Valerie Hex) - Bowery Theatre
- Fluid - Wyndham Art Gallery
- I Have a Face - Bowery Theatre
- Let Me Get Something Off My Chest by Sam Elkin - Bowery Theatre
- On Screen, In The Flesh - Trocadero Artspace
- Park Lounge - Kelly Park

Midsumma Festival

- Rainbow Families in Frame - Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre
- Rainbow Family Storytime - Newport Community Hub
- Rainbow Pride in Altona - Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre
- Ready, Set, Brunch! Bottomless Drag Brunch - Pride of Our Footscray
- SMUT - Footscray Community Arts Centre
- Sound in the Head: Workshops and Gigs - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- Tall Branches - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- The Pier Festival - Seaworks
- This is Grayson - The Substation
- Trans and Gender Diverse Writers Showcase - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- Unsorted - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- You Can't Say That in Front of Your Father! - Pride of Our Footscray

At Midsumma we recognise our responsibility to achieve genuine outcomes beyond written policies and procedures, and legislative requirements. True accessibility and inclusion go far beyond whether a venue is accessible or not, and over the past few years we have implemented plans to develop and deliver a broad range of accessibility initiatives to ensure that all Midsumma events are inclusive of the broadest possible participation and meaningful direct engagement.

Our approach aims to facilitate both the active participation of members of the LGBTQIA+ communities who identify as living with a disability, but also build new audiences for LGBTQIA+ artists within the various disability communities. In this way,

as well as ensuring that Midsumma Festival is as accessible as possible, our initiatives aim to rebuild disabled, low vision and deaf peoples' confidence in engaging with arts and cultural events. Our leadership in this area can become a model and support for other community and arts organisations in the future.

Our comprehensive disability activities have become integral to the whole culture of our organisation and the Festival is committed to ensuring we continue to further develop our relationship with a variety of disability communities through improved access and engagement strategies. The Festival actively partners with a wide range of established local disability organisations to both develop initiatives and to promote them.

Access and engagement strategies delivered during the 2021 Midsumma Festival

In 2021 Midsumma continued its commitment to providing increasing and meaningful access to Midsumma communities living with disability and to modelling best practice for all of Midsumma's own presented or co-presented events.

This year **26% of audiences** surveyed identified as having a disability with a further 4% of total audiences surveyed identifying as a carer of someone with a disability. There has been a significant **51% increase** over the past two years figures for audiences identifying as disabled. It shows a direct correlation between planned strategic investment over a number of years and results.

Ongoing partnerships with *Description Victoria*, *Arts Access Victoria* and *Auslan Stage Left* enabled a diverse range of extended services aimed at disability access and engagement.

Whilst this year Midsumma was unable to produce a printed program due to COVID-19 impacts on timelines, an online Program



Guide was produced in multiple formats designed to facilitate increased access to those less able to access our usual program guide and therefore often less likely to attend and engage with events.

- **Alternative Format Program Guides**

- Website for 2021 festival access friendly
- All the festival guide was online and screen reader friendly
- The guide was also provided in a printable PDF for audiences that have difficulty navigating websites.

- **Audio Described or Auslan Interpreted events for 2020 Midsumma Program**

- **Auslan Interpretation.** In 2021 there was Auslan Interpretation available at 32 separate events, approximately one fifth of our entire program. This was an increase of 25% from our 2020 total of 24 events. A previous 33% increase had been achieved the previous year, with a 54% increase before that - demonstrating an ongoing commitment to increasing access support for Deaf/hearing impaired audiences.

- **2021 Midsumma Presents Auslan Interpreted events:**

- A Strange Space - Collingwood Yards
- Midsumma Live at the Bowl - Sidney Myer Music Bowl (including Live Stream)
- Midsumma Pride March Live Stream
- Midsumma Sunday Sessions - Malthouse Outdoor Stage
- Night at the Museum: Minus18 Youth Party - Immigration Museum
- Queer Playwriting Award Showcase - ACMI
- Queerantine Live Salon - ACMI
- Queerantine Q&A - ACMI
- Rainbow Families Cabaret - Sidney Myer Music Bowl
- SMUT - Footscray Community Arts Centre
- Take it From Me: Archer Launch Edition - Malthouse Outdoor Stage
- The People of Cabaret: We Are Here - Malthouse Outdoor Stage
- The Rainbow Tree - Artplay

Image: Reuben Kaye at Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl. Photo by Suzanne Balding

Midsumma Festival

2021 Midsumma 'In Association' Auslan Interpreted events:

- .CHURCH. - The Toff in Town
- Sam I Am - La Mama Courthouse
- Yasemin Subuncu: Sick Bitch - Hare Hole (Hares and Hyenas)

2021 Midsumma Open Access External Registered Auslan interpreted events:

- All the King's Hens - Comedy Republic
- Date Night - Mission to Seafarers
- Displays of Affection - Temperance Hall
- Eat my Cake - Mission to Seafarers
- F*ck Fabulous - Arts Centre Melbourne
- Highway to the Twilight Zone - Mission to Seafarers
- Kong's Drag Kings - Mission to Seafarers
- Let Me Get Something Off My Chest by Sam Elkin - Bowery Theatre
- Like a Murder Off a Duck's Back - Mission to Seafarers
- Moist - Mission to Seafarers
- Park Lounge - Kelly Park
- Queers Draw This Exhibition - NECCHI Newlands
- The Breathwork Sessions - Mission to Seafarers
- Too Much - Mission to Seafarers
- Trans and Gender Diverse Writers Showcase - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- Unsorted - Bluestone Church Arts Space

*Please note that additional open access events advertised as organising Auslan Interpretation upon request

• **Audio Description, Captioning and Tactile Tours:**

2021 saw Midsumma Festival continue to offer a wealth of Audio Described, captioned performances or Tactile Tour initiatives for attendees who are blind or have low vision.

For the first ever interactive Midsumma partnered with Description Victoria to develop & deliver **dedicated Audio Described Live Streamed events:**

Described Live Streamed events:

- **Midsumma Festival Live at The Bowl and**
- **Midsumma Pride March Livestream**

Additional events:

2021 Midsumma 'In Association' Audio Described events:

- Homophonic! - La Mama Courthouse

2021 Midsumma Open Access External Registered Audio Described events:

- Queers Draw This Exhibition - NECCHI Newlands
- Terms & Conditions - Digital Event

CAPTIONED EVENTS

Several events had closed captions, displaying captions on screens so the audience can read along with the work.

2021 Midsumma Presents captioned events:

- Midsumma Festival Live at the Bowl Live Stream
- Midsumma Pride March Live Stream
- The Dinosaur Squad - VIDEO
- Drag Storytime - Online Series

2021 Midsumma Open Access External Registered captioned events:

- Absolutely FEMMEulous - Digital Event
- CLEAVE - Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre

RELAXED PERFORMANCES

For the fourth year Midsumma event producers were encouraged by Midsumma to consider Relaxed Performances intended specifically to be sensitive to and accepting of audience members who may

benefit from a more relaxed environment, including (but not limited to) those with autistic spectrum conditions, anyone with sensory and communication disorders or learning disabled people. Events that contributed with Relaxed Performances included:

2021 Midsumma relaxed performances:

- Homophonic! - La Mama Courthouse
- Queenie Bon Bon - The Body is its Own Language - Hare Hole (Hares & Hyenas)
- Tall Branches - Bluestone Church Arts Space
- That Which Was Once Familiar - Dancehouse
- Trans and Gender Diverse Writers Showcase - Bluestone Church Arts Space

More information on 2021 access activities can be found on our website www.midsumma.org.au/info/access-information/

FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

Midsumma acknowledges that Indigenous Australians are the first peoples of these lands and waters. We pay our respects to all Indigenous Australians, past and present, and we recognise their continuing spiritual and cultural connection to the land. Midsumma Festival occurs throughout the Kulin Nation on the lands of Boon Wurrung, Taungwurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri people.

Midsumma Festival takes place between High Summer and Late Summer according to the Wurundjeri calendar of seasons, on whose land much of this Festival is taking place.

We continued our commitment to having an Indigenous Engagement Coordinator for this year's festival, having initiated this important role in 2017. Craig Holloway and Rebecca Hunt joined Midsumma, reprising their roles as Indigenous Engagement

Coordinator. Craig did this role in 2020 following on from Rebecca Hunt (2019) and Mark Nannup (2017 & 2018). This was the fifth year Midsumma funded this role, which is responsible for vital work in engaging Aboriginal communities, organising the Rainbow Aboriginal engagement at Midsumma Pride March and arranging cultural ceremonies and general first nations community engagement across Midsumma events.

Midsumma also deepened engagement through several Midsumma Presents projects that connected with First Nations artists. Diimpa and Forest Collective elevated and focused on Diimpa's compositions linked to his identity as a Gubbi Gubbi man. Queerantine, The People of Cabaret and Becoming Us, all featured First Nations artists within their programming. Miss First Nation 2021 was a centre piece of our Midsumma Malthouse Programming, presented in collaboration with YIRRMABOI Festival, and focused on uniting intersectional Queer First Nation communities.

Formal Welcome to Country ceremonies were held at five Midsumma presented events including Midsumma Live at the Bowl and Midsumma Pride March. Acknowledgement of the country undertaken at all other events where this was appropriate.

Within the Midsumma Festival open-access program there were a number of independently produced first nations arts events.

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL WE'VE DONE

Midsumma Pathways mentorship program

Midsumma Pathways is Midsumma's artist development and capacity building program for emerging LGBTQIA+ artists who are disabled and/or neurodiverse/autistic and/or Deaf/hard-of-hearing and/or Blind/low vision and/or living with chronic pain. Consisting of a series of group workshops program, one-on-one mentorships and dedicated professional development and artistic development support, Midsumma Pathways is a nine-month program designed for 10-12 participants. The project is funded under an ILC (Information, Linkages and Capacity Building) Grant - originally through NDIA/NDIS but novated to Department of Social Services in mid-2020A.

In 2020-21 Midsumma accepted 14 participants, repurposing funding lines that could not be spent due to COVID-19 (such as venue hire and catering costs) towards supporting additional mentorships.

The workshop program was co-designed with the participants to feature a mix of topics and skills across artistic practice and the intersections of queerness, disability and the arts, including topics and speakers identified as priorities by Pathways participants and by Midsumma. All workshop sessions were Saturday afternoons, were on Zoom (due to COVID), were Auslan interpreted, with 2 interpreters, were live captioned, and ran between 60-90 minutes each.

The 20-21 cohort represented

- a diversity of art forms (including fashion/garment/textiles, performance/theatre, film, music, writing, circus arts, visual arts, photography, curatorship, dance, comedy and multidisciplinary creatives);

- a diversity of disabilities (including autism/ neurodiversity, chronic illness & chronic pain, endometriosis, cerebral palsy, Deaf/hard-of-hearing, short stature, and more);
- a diversity of LGBTQIA+ identities (queer, gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, gender diverse, pansexual, non-binary and more);
- and a diversity of cultural backgrounds (including First Nations, Anglo-Australian, Italian-Australian, Kazakh, Nigerian, Singhala, Muslim diaspora, Dutch and European).
- One of the priorities for the program was to platform those at the intersections - and ensure opportunities for underrepresented groups within disabled LGBTQIA+ communities. Of the 14 20-21 participants, at least:
 - 5/14 are people of colour
 - 5/14 are neurodiverse
 - 2/14 are Deaf/hard-of-hearing
 - 1/14 are Indigenous (Australian)
 - 1/14 are Indigenous (Internationally).

Professional mentors engaged of an extremely high calibre; to draw on their artistic and professional experience and expertise. Pathways connected program participants to mentors who are leaders in their fields and art forms, bypassing gatekeeping, inequality and systemic barriers that prevent participation and achievement for LGBTQIA+ people with disability in the arts.

Mentors include:

- 5 who have received OAM for their arts & community work
- performers who have won or been nominated for peak industry awards including the Helpmann, Green Room, AWGIE and AACTA awards and a winner of The Sidney Myer Performing Arts Award



- a visual artist who has represented Australia at the prestige Venice Biennale and is described by the Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney as one of Australia's leading contemporary conceptual painters
- a musician and music management expert who has won the Lighthouse Award for Music Management, won multiple AIR Awards (Australian Independent Record Labels Association Awards), and been nominated for the Australian Music Prize
- a winner of the DaDa Festival Lifetime Achievement Award for Services to Disability Arts.

Diversity of mentors selected and engaged included:

- 10/18 mentors identify as LGBTQIA+ or queer
- 5/18 as trans, gender diverse, genderqueer or non-binary
- 1/18 as internationally Indigenous (such as Maori, Pasifika or First Nations)
- 6/18 as CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse)
- 5/18 as POC (People of Colour)
- 6/18 as disabled

- 7/18 as living with chronic illness, chronic pain or lived experience
- 1/18 as Deaf
- 2/18 as Auslan users
- 3/18 as internationally based
- 12/18 as women.

Pathways partners with a range of disability led organisations and individual leaders as well as engaging broadly with external access providers.

The program actively increases the profile for LGBTQIA+ creatives with a disability. As well as providing capacity building through artistic and professional development, the Pathways program amplifies the achievements and artistic practices of our Participants, Mentors, Workshop Facilitators and other partners.

External outcomes for participants arising from the program included:

- Gaining professional agent representation (Joel Lago - BMEG - Joel had previously been told as a disabled actor he would never achieve agent representation)

Image: Fuck Fabulous at Arts Centre Melbourne, Midsumma Festival 2021. Photo by Alexis Desaulniers-Lea

Midsumma Festival

- Presenting solo exhibitions (Emma Armstrong-Porter - Swanston Series)
- Winner, Midsumma Australia Post Art Award 2021 (Emma Armstrong-Porter - "NOT URS")
- Presentations at Adelaide Fringe 2021 (Yasemin Sabuncu - "The Illest")
- Presentation at the Midsumma Festival 2021 (Sam Martin - "Sam I Am")
- Presentation at Midsumma / Summer at Heidi (Dimpa)
- Working towards presentations at the following year's Midsumma Festival 2022 proposed keynote AND/OR (Jamila Main - "Benched" & Pearl Blackk - "Demographic Dance Off")
- Launching a range of sensory-friendly, high quality, trans binder garments (Andy Amor - AMOR BINDERS)
- Pop-up performance opportunity at iconic Milk! Records Shopfront Series (Diimpa, through mentorship with Jen Cloher);
- Profiled in a national arts site ArtsHub feature on artists with disability (Jamila Main & Yasemin Sabuncu)
- Profiled in international newspaper The Guardian arts feature on artists with chronic illness (Yasemin Sabuncu)
- Profiled in Junkee media's feature on chronic illness (Yasemin Sabuncu)
- Multiple featured spots in the Adelaide Advertiser during Adelaide Fringe (Yasemin Sabuncu)

Evaluation identified high levels of participant satisfaction with the program, and self-reported high levels of growth and capacity building - personal growth, artistic development, professional and skills development.

Midsumma Pathways Participants and their Mentors 2019:

Evie Clayton

(circus artist) mentored by
Anni Davey OAM

Joel Lago

(actor and poet) mentored by
Daniel Monks

Jasmine Shirrefs

(writer) mentored by **Fi Murphy**

Fox Kennedy

(visual artist) mentored by **Jaye Hayes** and
Julia Young

Diimpa

(composer, soundscape weaver) mentored
by **Jen Cloher**

Emma (Ruby) Armstrong-Porter (visual
artist) mentored by

Jenny Watson

Sam Martin

(theatre maker and filmmaker) mentored
by **Jodee Mundy OAM**

Jamila Main

(actor and playwright) mentored by
Kate Mulvany OAM

Dasha Tan

(dance and experimental/contemporary
performer) mentored by **Krishna Isthā**

Pearl Blackk

(storyteller) mentored by **Mack (Juliemc)**
Mcnamara

Leisa Prowd

(dancer and physical theatre performer)
mentored by **Maude Davey OAM**

Patrick Gunasekera

(interdisciplinary artist) mentored by
Nathaniel Hagemaster

Andy Amor

(fashion and textile designer) mentored by
Ryan King

Yasemin Sabuncu

(multidisciplinary artist) mentored by
Tj Dawe and **Victoria Falconer-Pritchard**

QUEERANTINE DIGITAL GALLERY

The Midsumma Blog is a tool used to share stories and artforms from artists and culture makers and has become a platform for queer voices to connect audiences to queer art at a deeper level.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, Midsumma was able to activate the following initiatives as a response to the mass loss of the Melbourne queer arts and event industry (due to COVID-19).

ARTISTS DIGITAL WORKS

Nine artist blogs were commissioned from our LGBTQIA+ arts and culture communities to give Midsumma audiences an insight into the practices of the queer arts and to make queer arts and cultures more accessible to diverse audiences in this time of social distancing and uncertainty. The artist blogs were commissioned to:

Martha Ackroyd Curtis
Reality Check

Christopher Bryant
New Balance

Acacia Christensen
Late Night TV Then and Now

Sophie delightful
I Just Wanna Make Love To You

Mikki Michelle
Here Lies an Enigma

Aria Scarlett
A Drop of Change

Kimberley Twiner
Campness and Clownness

Tama Sharman
Tui 2020

Nikki Viveca
The First Poetry Slam I Ever Entered

LIVING IN THE QUEERANTINE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Midsumma Festival acted quickly to launch the small grants program “Living in the Queerantime”. We selected 10 artistic projects to receive up to \$1,000 each to create a new piece of art that could engage people through Midsumma’s online channels. The works were shared throughout June and July, via eNews, blog posts and social media.

The selected participants are presented below:

Lian Beveridge
Still Here, Still Queer: Portraits of a Pandemic (Visual Arts - Painting)

Frances Cannon
I Think About Her (Visual Arts - Illustration)

Patrick Gunasekera
(Literature - memoir & essay)

Logan Mucha
...and nowhere to go. (Film - video portraiture)

sallvage
Re/membering paradise (Performance/
Sound art/Video art)

Mark Salvestro
A Covid Coming Out “among the gum trees” (Theatre/Film)

Susannah Thomas
Quiche (Film)

Glynn Urquhart
Queery (Digital and graphic arts/Film)

Nikki Viveca -
(Literature/Performance)

Simon Welsh - Queer histories
(Visual arts - collage)



FOCUS AREAS IN 2021

Midsumma attracts wide-ranging attendances across a broad age range and demographics; truly representing inclusion and diversity in all its forms. For this reason, we are ideally placed to make the many diverse queer communities in Victoria more visible by providing a platform for creative voices and stories that are often not heard or seen otherwise in the broader community.

Midsumma is a festival that intrinsically creates safe and inclusive places for communities, with diversity at its very core. We know that when our communities feel safe and supported, they are able to build stronger connections within their own groups and then with other groups they interact with.

Success in this area was particularly evident in 2021 in these nine ways:

1. Increased Engagement with First Nation Communities

Midsumma continued to build upon the strong and meaningful engagement with LGBTQIA+ Aboriginal and First Nation communities for the 2021 festival and throughout the year. This was further amplified with strong representation of First Nations artists engaged through a collaboration with YIRRMABOI Festival to present Miss First Nation across three performance nights, plus the development and presentation of a new contemporary classical music work with composer Diimpa and Forest Collective, which focused on Diimpa's compositions linked to his identity as a Gubbi Gubbi man.

Craig Holloway and Rebecca Hunt were both engaged in the joint role of Aboriginal Engagement Coordinators for Midsumma Festival 2021. This was the fifth year Midsumma funded this role, which is responsible for vital work in engaging Aboriginal communities, organising the Rainbow Aboriginal contingent at Midsumma Pride March and arranging cultural ceremonies for our major events.

2. Increased Engagement with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Audiences and Artists

Midsumma continues to increase participation with Victoria's LGBTQIA+ multicultural communities through our curated arm of the program, Midsumma Presents. Attendance surveys show that Midsumma Festival attracts broad attendances across age ranges and demographics; truly representing inclusion and diversion in all its forms. In the 2021 festival 17% of 2021 audiences identified as culturally diverse or a person of colour.

3. Increased Focus on Multigenerational Engagement

As an arts and culture festival, Midsumma is committed to the exchange of potent stories. LGBTQIA+ communities often don't have places where our elders and emerging members can interact to share history, knowledge and experiences. Midsumma believes creating space for this is an integral part of our mission. As well as ensuring this approach sits across all our curated and produced activities, in 2021 Midsumma supported the specific development and presentation of the beautiful and moving intergenerational project The Dinosaur Squad.

4. Sharing the stories of Young People

Over the past three years Midsumma has worked with youth organisation, Minus18, to create a strong presence of young people at Midsumma Pride March each year. As part of Midsumma's core values, this sends a clear message to young people that they have a safe space for creativity, connection, artistic collaboration, and that they are not alone. This was amplified even further in 2021 by partnering with Immigration Museum (Museums Victoria), Minus18 and Signal to present Becoming Us - a program for LGBTQIA+ teenagers and their parents / guardians, celebrating the idea of becoming an adult and uplifting the new LGBTQIA+ generation.

5. Enriching Engagement with Older Audiences

In 2021 Midsumma created a guide category specifically for older audiences. The category was established to encourage older audiences to participate in Midsumma Festival and to feel safe and connected to their local and broader communities. Engagement and attendances by our senior communities at Midsumma events have increased in recent years and in 2021, 12% of audiences attending Midsumma were 55 years or older, half of which were over 65 years of age.

6. Deeper Relationships with Queer Female Artists

Midsumma initiated a strong and more meaningful engagement with LGBTQIA+ women for the 2021 festival and throughout the year. Midsumma was able to deepen our connection with female identifying artists, producers and audiences through a range of initiatives with a focus on queer women in music. According to a 2017 SBS sexuality article, "Australian music has long been a domain of straight white men, with minority voices fighting for their spot to be recognised. Overtly queer female identifying music is still overlooked by the mainstream or met with baffled response." The centrepiece of this strategy this year was a collaboration with The Pier Festival presented by Midsumma Festival, Girls at Sea & AH Entertainment. This event was designed to create a safe space for queer women to come together and celebrate female artists and their work. Other projects presented by Midsumma Presents in this area in 2021 were A Celebration of the Teaches of Peaches, Goddess Grooves @ Chapel Presents Love Rewind and Goddess of Jazz @ Chapel off Chapel.

Increased female attendance has been a goal in the current 4-year planning period and Midsumma achieved an increase this year of 8.8% in female identifying audiences and has achieved increases in female attendances of 15% in the past four years since seeking to address this in both programming and marketing.

7. Increased Engagement with Disability Cultures

Midsumma is proud to be a national leader in disability access and engagement initiatives.

Our Midsumma Program guide is made accessible through multiple formats with plain text, audio described and screen readable versions and Auslan video.

In the last four years Midsumma has achieved a 112% increase in Auslan interpreted and audio described events within the festival program; this has been attained alongside an overall increase in deepening the engagement of key strategies across all areas of disability culture initiatives, maximising real outcomes. This year Midsumma initiated for the first-time dedicated audio described live streamed performances across two of our major events.

Disability identifying audiences made up 26% of attendees this year with a further 4% of audiences identifying as carers for people with a disability. This represents a 51% increase over the past two years.

Midsumma partners with Description Victoria and Auslan Stage Left to deliver numerous multi layered access and engagement initiatives.

For a third year, Relaxed Performances were included, shows intended specifically to be sensitive to and accepting of audience members who may benefit from a more

relaxed environment, including (but not limited to) those with autistic spectrum conditions, anyone with sensory and communication disorders or learning-disabled people.

Extending our work in this area year round, Midsumma is proud to be in year two of a new three year skill development mentorship program, Midsumma Pathways, working each year with up to ten creative LGBTQIA+ members of the community who also identify as living with disability (see pages 20-21).

8. Increased Engagement with the Transgender and Gender Diverse Communities

As a direct result of increased engagement, we have seen an increase in audience attendance from our transgender / gender diverse communities and an increase in our volunteer workforce identifying as transgender and gender diverse.

8% of audiences in 2021 identify as Transgender and /or Gender Diverse

9. Developing Increased Engagement with Diverse Families

A new focus area for Midsumma this year. Professional arts events for diverse rainbow families are visibly lacking in Australia. Such works are even rarer for those families with young children or with children with disability.

Diverse families rarely see themselves and their lived experiences reflected in books, TV, advertising or on stage. Building upon Midsumma's role as a leader in queer arts and culture development, and starting as an initial conversation around one work, The Rainbow Tree, by Sarah Ward and Bec Mathews, the extended PRISM program was curated and commissioned by Midsumma to provide increased diverse content for children that currently have very little specific engagement that reflects their family's experiences.



Image: Rainbow Tree. Image by Alexis Desaulniers-Lea

OUR REACH

Publicity

Midsumma again engaged an external PR firm to work with us, ID Collective. This is the second year we have worked with this PR company, after achieving significantly increased results last year.

Midsumma sent 10 media releases in total across November 2019 to February 2020 across March 2021 to May 2021 with a total of 380 media hits/published media releases across TV, radio, print and online.

Total PR & AD value generated over the festival period is estimated at \$6,047,7 across March 2021 to May 2021 with a total of 380 media hits/published media releases across TV, radio, print and online

Total PR & AD value generated over the festival period is estimated at \$6,047,787, with an estimated total media circulation of 115,660,701.

For the first time the #ALLABOARD tram was live before and during Midsumma Festival, promoting the festival dates and Midsumma logo reaching 560,100 people at an average frequency of 2.9 times.

Midsumma also produced a 90 second promotional 'sizzle' reel representing events as part of the larger marketing campaign. Promotional sizzle reel end frame featured with Principal and Major partner logos next to the CTA and website. This video used on Midsumma's social media platforms and received 1,382 organic views.

Promotional Posters: During March to May 2021, 1000 Midsumma Festival Promotional Posters were distributed around Melbourne's cafes, cultural hotspots, 75 event venues and five Midsumma Hubs. During this time, 5 Midsumma Billboard Posters were displayed in Melbourne inner city, South, East, West, North and the Monash Freeway - all posters had customized copy for geographic targeting. Culture Counts reported a 66.6% increase in attendees finding out about Midsumma Festival from Postering since 2019.

Website

From program launch (March 2021) to the end of Midsumma Festival 2021 the Midsumma website saw:

- 155,671 users (an increase of 0.34% from the 2020 festival period)
- 00:01:51 av session duration
- 80.8% new visitors

We recorded an overall 0.34% increase in website traffic during Midsumma Festival 2021 compared to the festival period for 2020.

Social media

We recorded a significant increase in social media exposure/engagement across the festival for 2021.

Midsumma Festival 2021 saw an overall 85% increase in social media engagement - 31,349 total for 2021, 2020 was a total of 16,938. Midsumma's social media followers for 2021 saw 49,492 total followers/fans across the four active platforms. This is an 11.7% increase from 2020.

92.3% increase in audiences finding out about Midsumma Festival via social media over three years.



Program guide

Due to the impacts of COVID-19 Midsumma had to leave event registrations open for venues, artists and producers as long as possible and right up until our program launch mid-March. This meant that for this year it was not practical to produce our usual printed program guide (printing deadlines would have meant closing off registrations when many artists and venues were still unsure of when they might be able to return to in person events). This year's program was produced in the same style as usual years but purely online as a downloadable file.

Image: MATADOR, Midsumma Festival 2021.
Photo by Nikki Russian

Risk management

Midsumma Festival employs an external and highly experienced risk management consultant Frank Martinuzzo of Public Safety Australia. This is in line with current best practise for all major events. Frank and his company undertake risk assessments and management at events of scale all over Australia.

In the months leading up to the event Frank and his team completed a review of draft event plans and provided Midsumma with a comprehensive 'Principal Risk Assessment' which outlined all identified risks and mitigation strategies for all of our event sites. These included comprehensive new risk assessments and strategies related to COVID-19. Specific dedicated COVIDSafe plans were in place for all events and we followed the State Government's Events framework to identify all our events as Tier 1,2 or 3 for COVIDSafe permit approval requirements.

Midsumma Festival

All strategies identified to ensure the safety of participants, volunteers, staff and attendees were put in place. All event documentations are always treated as 'living' documents, continually refined as required right up until the event to address any changing environmental impacts.

Public Safety Australia were involved in training / briefings for all event staff and volunteers and worked directly with us on the day of one of our largest events, Pride March, in the dedicated Event Operations Centre's (EOC) for that event. The Midsumma EOC is the key logistical management centre on the day of large events and is staffed inclusive of representatives from Ambulance Victorian, Victorian Police, contracted professional first aid company's, City of Port Phillip (Pride March only), Altus Traffic Management, Yarra Trams (Pride March only), Midsumma Festival and Security contractors. All representatives in the EOC are in direct radio contact with their contract teams on the ground, facilitating cohesive and immediate coordination for all areas across the whole event site and operations. EOC is coordinated and managed by Midsumma senior staff with support from Public Safety Australia. Professional communications staff are engaged to manage multiple radio channel communications coming into the EOC and responses out and ensuring that all incidents and responses/actions are formally recorded in the event log as they occurred throughout the day.

Senior staff from Victoria Police arrange a yearly 'pre event test' for Midsumma management staff where a range of emergency scenarios are put before all key event staff to test readiness for dealing with anything from managing assessment of a suspicious package, to handling protestors, right through to a full-blown terrorist attack occurring. This process provides high level practical training for Midsumma staff and a level of confidence for Victoria Police that Midsumma staff are 'read for anything', as well as clear delineation and communication processes regarding lines of authority between event staff and external emergency agencies should any incident occur at a Midsumma event.

Extensive safety briefing for all staff and volunteers for the festival occur pre-Festival with additional dedicated briefings held for Pride March.





TREASURER'S REPORT

As was the case for many, 2021 required Midsumma to adapt to and overcome great levels of uncertainty. I am very proud of the way the whole team did this in such an amazing way, delivering a blend of physical and virtual experiences in a time when we all needed our communities the most. These adaptations required additional infrastructure for online streaming and virtual stalls as well as managing the risks posed by **COVID 19 and associated event restrictions**. Though the blended model of delivery saw great outcomes for our communities, Festival income fell by \$395,000, making it over 85% less than 2020. Midsumma was not alone in feeling the financial consequences of 2021, with our corporate sponsors seeing reductions in their own industries their total sponsorship almost halved. All this lead to some significant financial headwinds during the year for Midsumma.

Fortunately for Midsumma, Creative Victoria was able to provide significant financial assistance through their Strategic Investment Fund, which saw Midsumma receive over \$550,000 in additional funding. Added to that was money provided through the Jobkeeper and Cash Flow Boost. This resulted in a net surplus of \$86,309 for the 2021 year, which is reflected in the audited financial statements for the year are presented below, down slightly from \$94,864 in 2020.

Of course, there is more to Midsumma's financial success than government and corporate support. I would like to recognise the significant support from our communities, attendees, volunteers, and staff, none of this could have happened without you. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to another great year of Midsumma in whatever format it takes on for 2022.

Michael Fuller-Smith
Treasurer, Midsumma Festival Inc.

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income			
Members Fees		936	632
Festival income		60,658	455,906
Donations & patron support		60,028	38,212
Public Funding - Federal, State & Local	2	1,207,042	596,299
Corporate Funding & Sponsorships		245,770	421,800
Grants	2	113,375	252,910
Interest received		-	867
Other income		43,409	-
JobKeeper payment		184,200	36,000
Cash flow boost		50,000	50,000
Total income		1,965,420	1,852,626
Expenses			
Accountancy & audit		8,095	3,132
Advertising and promotion		79,273	92,348
Amortisation Expense		7,967	5,381
Bad Debts		3,864	-
Bank & Merchant Fees And Charges		1,567	3,022
Board Amenities		258	666
Cleaning/rubbish removal		17,512	58,818
Computer expenses		50,673	41,370
Consultants fees		29,398	53,138
Contract payments		24,513	35,039
Donations		24	5,326
Festival expenses		687,249	535,273
Hire/rent of Plant & Equipment		21,212	45,968
Insurance		18,508	20,819
Legal fees		-	800
Printing & stationery		11,918	6,762
Production expenses		42,969	38,362
Rent on land & buildings		10,495	30,638
Replacements (tools, etc)		1,424	5,749
Research & development		8,000	13,000
Security		16,092	47,359
Workshop and survey equipment		-	7,862
Staff recruitment		4,021	2,551

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Income and Expenditure Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2021

Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Superannuation	73,207	58,944
Telephone	12,058	3,272
Ticketing expense	540	2,439
Travel, accom & conference	5,226	8,559
Wages	735,954	624,663
Workcover	7,095	6,501
Total expenses	1,879,111	1,757,762
Profit from ordinary activities	86,309	94,864
Net profit attributable to the association	86,309	94,864
Total changes in equity of the association	86,309	94,864
Opening retained profits	235,809	140,945
Net profit attributable to the association	86,309	94,864
Closing retained profits	322,118	235,809

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash assets	3	1,535,512	667,890
Receivables	4	77,018	23,616
Other	5	-	3,637
Total Current Assets		1,612,529	695,144
Non-Current Assets			
Intangible assets	6	26,489	30,819
Total Non-Current Assets		26,489	30,819
Total Assets		1,639,018	725,963
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Payables	7	2,564	90
Current tax liabilities	8	120,575	16,296
Provisions	9	113,862	75,953
Other	10	1,079,900	397,816
Total Current Liabilities		1,316,900	490,154
Total Liabilities		1,316,900	490,154
Net Assets		322,118	235,809
Members' Funds			
Retained profits		322,118	235,809
Total Members' Funds		322,118	235,809

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2021

2020

Cash Flow From Operating Activities

Receipts from customers	1,908,154	1,844,905
Payments to Suppliers and employees	(1,040,532)	(1,539,306)
Interest received	-	867
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	867,622	306,466
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	867,622	306,466
Cash at the beginning of the year	667,890	361,424
Cash at the end of the year	1,535,512	667,890

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Preparation

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act of Victoria. In the opinion of the committee the association is not a reporting entity because it is not reasonable to expect the existence of users who rely on the association's general purpose financial statements for information useful to them for making and evaluating decisions about the allocation of resources.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the Associations Incorporations Act of Victoria, the basis of accounting specified by all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of Accounting Standards AASB 101: Presentation of Financial Statements, AASB 107: Cash Flow Statements, AASB 108: Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors, AASB 1031: Materiality and AASB 1054: Australian Additional Disclosures.

The association has concluded that the requirements set out in AASB 10 and AASB 128 are not applicable as the initial assessment on its interests in other entities indicated that it does not have any subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures. Hence, the financial statements comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards.

The association has not assessed whether these special purpose financial statements comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(a) Accounts Receivables and Other Debtors

Accounts receivable and other debtors include amounts due from members as well as amounts receivable from donors. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

(b) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

(c) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

(d) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

(e) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

The association has applied AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers (AASB 15) and AASB 1058: Income of Not-for-Profit Entities (AASB 1058) using the cumulative effective method of initially applying AASB 15 and AASB 1058 as an adjustment to the opening balance of equity at 1 July 2019. Therefore, the comparative information has not been restated and continues to be presented under AASB 118: Revenue and AASB 1004: Contributions.

(f) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.

(g) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the association remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

2021

2020

Note 2: Funding & Grants

Creative Victoria OIP Multiyear funding	75,000	75,000
Creative Victoria Strategic Investment Fund Stage 1	79,164	
Creative Victoria Strategic Investment Fund Stage 2	295,630	
Creative Victoria Strategic Investment Fund Stage 3	175,714	
City of Port Phillip	90,000	90,000
Department of Premier and Cabinet	243,500	225,000
City of Melbourne	147,000	117,799
Australia Council for the Arts	89,830	99,500
National Disability Insurance Agency	104,580	
Cross Yarra Partnership	20,000	
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions		200,000
City of Stonnington		23,910
City of Yarra		15,000
Multicultural Affairs		3,000
	1,320,418	849,209

Note 3: Cash assets

Cash at bank - Midsumma Donations	81,328	32,427
Cash at bank - Midsumma Operations	1,336,817	522,142
Midsumma Interest Bearing Acct	107,393	107,393
Debit card - Production	9,894	5,842
Petty cash	79	86
	1,535,512	667,890

Note 4: Receivables

Current

Trade debtors	77,018	23,616
	77,018	23,616

Note 5: Other Assets

Current

Prepayments	-	3,637
	-	3,637

Note 6: Intangible Assets

Other intangibles:		
- At cost	39,837	36,200
- Less: Accumulated amortisation	(13,349)	(5,381)
	26,489	30,819
	26,489	30,819

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2021

2021

2020

Note 7: Payables

Trade creditors	2,564	90
	2,564	90
	2,564	90

Note 8: Tax Liabilities**Current**

GST clearing	97,311	1,052
PAYG withholding	23,264	15,244
	120,575	16,296

Note 9: Provisions**Current**

Employee entitlements	95,162	54,470
Accruals	18,700	21,482
	113,862	75,953

Note 10: Other Liabilities**Current**

Advance payments	1,079,900	397,816
	1,079,900	397,816

Note 11: In-Kind Contributions

We note that significant in-kind contributions have been made by various organisations, including but not limited to the Creative Victoria, City of Melbourne and City of Port Phillip

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Statement by Members of the Committee
For the year ended 30 June 2021

The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee the Income and Expenditure Statement, Statement of Financial Position, and Notes to the Financial Statements:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Midsumma Festival Inc. as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Co-President



Treasurer

Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Independent Auditor's Report to the Members

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Midsumma Festival Inc. (the association), which comprises the Statement by Members of the Committee, the Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021, a summary of significant accounting policies and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the association as at 30 June 2021 and [of] its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.

**Midsumma Festival Inc.
ABN 50 783 159 198
Independent Auditor's Report to the Members**

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Signed on :



James Babbage

Babbage & Co

Melbourne

02/09/2021





OUR PEOPLE

MIDSUMMA BOARD

Co-Chair

Judy Small

Co-Chair

Aaron O'Shannessy

Deputy Chair

Jo Whyte

Treasurer

Michael Fuller-Smith

Secretary

Stephen Hanlon

Ordinary Board Members

Andrea Pearman

Fraser Orford

Michael Parry

Richard Noonan

Samuel (Rhys) Cranney

Volunteer to the Board

Amanda Edwards

MIDSUMMA FESTIVAL TEAM

Chief Executive

Karen Bryant

Program Manager

Patrick Hayes

**Program Coordinator -
Artist Development**

Mama Alto

Finance & Office Manager

Damira Rogoznica

**Marketing &
Communications Manager**

Felicity McIntosh

**Video, Streaming and
Media Coordinator**

Edwina Landale

Content Coordinator

Dani Leever

IT & Applications

Alan Drummond

Production Manager

Sasha Catalano

**Production Assistant
and Melbourne Pride
2021 consultancy project
manager**

Tom Lambert

Production Coordinator

Serene Lorimer

Administrator

Matt Hirst

**Ticketing Manager and
Producer Services**

Jason Marsiglia

Volunteers Coordinator

Georgia Smedley

Summer Work Placements

Lauren Bennett —

Programming

Caitlin Wilson — Marketing

Sydelle Saldanha —

Marketing

**Midsumma and Australia
Post Art Prize Coordinator**

Brigit Ryan

Risk Consultant

Public Safety Australia

Midsumma Festival

OUR VALUABLE PATRONS

Midsumma would like to thank the wonderful and generous patrons of the 2020/21 financial year:

Diamond Patrons (\$5,000+)

Anonymous patron
Judy Small (AM)

Gold Patrons (\$2,000 - \$4,999)

Jamal Hakim

Silver Patrons (\$1,000 - \$1,999)

Brad Danaher
Tony Dang
Tony Egan
Nathan Grech
Leigh Johns OAM
Kean Mac
Mark Matthews &
Antony Jarvis

Jason May
David Sellin & Brett
Condron
Tim Smyth
Adam Trumble &
Peter Herewila
Gail Veal

Rainbow Patrons (\$500 - \$1,000)

Dennis Altman
Liz Austin
Wendy Brokenshire
Alyson Campbell &
Julie McNamara
Rhys Cranney
Jason Forde
Michael Fuller-Smith
Ian Gould
Stephen Hanlon
Jytte Holmqvist
Sue Jackson and
Nadia Poliszczuk
Nick Johnson
Mark Meierjohann
Carol Nichols
Richard Noonan
Garry Oliver
Fraser Orford
Aaron O'Shannessy
David Owen & Henry

Ruge-Rojas
Michael Parry
Andrea Pearman
Jaclyn Pearson
Jo Whyte
Marcus Williams

Life Members

Ray Arthur
Angela Bailey
Tim Bateson
Claire Beckwith
Dean Bryant
Scott Campbell
John Caldwell
Glyn Cryer
John Cummins
Sasha Cunningham
Michael Dalton
Kris Darmody
Alan Drummond
Jeff Dycer
Peter Edmonds
Sue Fletcher
Luke Gallagher
Brenton Geyer
Ian Gould
Jeffrey Grad
Nigel Higgins
Crusader Hillis
Leigh Johns

Geraldine Kirby
Matto Lucas
Lee Matthews
David Micallef
Letizia Mondello
David Owen
Kaye Sera
Ron Thiele
Rowland Thomson
Danny Vadasz
Tracey Wall
Will Walton
Lisa Watts
Roxy B. Wilde

OUR VOLUNTEERS

The festival is much loved by the Victorian and broader LGBTQIA community and for this year's festival **269 volunteers** contributed **rostered shifts of 1,933 volunteer hours** to assist the delivery of events over the 22 days.

Volunteer ages	This Year
Under 20	6%
20-29	60%
30-39	20%
40-49	8%
50-59	0%
Over 60	6%

Occupation	This Year
Employed	38%
Retired	4%
Self-employed	2%
Student	46%
Unemployed	6%
Arts & Culture related field	4%

APPENDIX

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

MIDSUMMA PRIDE MARCH PROGRAM

Midsumma Pride March 2020 – Registered March Participants, in order

Pre-March Procession

- 1: Dykes on Bikes Melbourne
- 2: Rainbow Riders Victoria
- 3: Melbourne Motorcycle Tourers

Wave A: Indigenous Pride & Council Representatives

- 1: Indigenous Pride
- 2: City of Port Phillip

Wave B: Youth

- 1: Minus18
- 2: St Kilda Park Primary School
- 3: St Kilda Primary School
- 4: Swinburne Senior Secondary College
- 5: Carey Baptist Grammar Pride Group
- 6: McKinnon Secondary College Pride Club
- 7: Buckley Park College
- 8: Coburg High School
- 9: Brighton Secondary College - Safe Space Alliance
- 10: Eltham High School
- 1: Overnewton Anglican Community College (OACC)
- 12: Rainbow Connections Mornington Peninsula
- 13: Scouts Victoria
- 14: Girl Guides Victoria

- 15: Knox Youth Services
- 17: Kingston Youth Services
- 18: Manningham Youth Services

Wave C: Access & Inclusion

- 1: Lifeview Residential Aged Care
- 2: Homestyle Aged Care Services - You are Welcome here!
- 4: POW (Performing Older Women's) Circus
- 5: Pride Vic Disability Services
- 6: Deaf-initely Pride
- 7: Queer South Asians of Melbourne
- 8: Yellow Kitties
- 9: LAHRC - Latin American & Hispanic Rainbow Community
- 10: Seahorse Victoria
- 11: Pacificque X
- 12: The Shed: Trans-masc Peer Support Group
- 13: Transcend Australia
- 14: Samba Energia
- 15: O'Ziriguidum Escola de Samba and friends
- 16: 1991 - 2021: Switchboard Victoria celebrates 30 years!
- 17: Out & About

Midsumma Festival

Wave D: Queer Community Groups & Organisations

- 1: Victoria Pride Centre
- 3: Victorian Pride Lobby
- 4: Transgender Victoria
- 6: Melbourne Bisexual Network (MBN)
- 7: Bi+ Community of Melbourne
- 8: Bisexual Alliance Victoria
- 9: Aces+ Melbourne
- 11: Casey Rainbow Community
- 12: Goulburn Valley Pride Inc.
- 14: Vicbears
- 15: Vic PaH
- 16: Thorne Harbour Health
- 17: City of Melbourne Highland Pipe Band
- 18: Drummond Street Services - queerspace

Wave E: Queer Community Groups & Organisations

- 1: Motafrenz Car Club
- 1.1: Living Positive Victoria
- 2: Melbourne Gay and Lesbian Chorus
- 3: shOUT Youth Chorus
- 4: Melbourne Rainbow Band
- 5: LINE Wangaratta
- 6: Australia's GLBTIQ Entertainers & Friends
- 7: Melbourne Queer Film Festival
- 8: Low Rez Melbourne Male Choir
- 9: The NOMADS Outdoors Group
- 11: That Gay Label
- 12: Spaced Out LGBTI Sci Fi Group
- 13: GLOBE
- 14: JOY - Australia's Rainbow Community Media Organisation

Wave F: Queer Sports Clubs & Political Representatives

- 1: Proud 2 Play - Rainbow Sports Alliance
- 2: Melbourne Argonauts Rowing Club
- 3: Melbourne Spectres Basketball
- 4: Shuttlecats
- 5: Melbourne Smashers Badminton Club Inc.
- 6: Melbourne Frontrunners
- 7: Bent Kranks Cycling & Mountain Bike Club
- 8: Pride Outside
- 9: Sixty Niners Ten Pin Bowling Club
- 10: Glamourhead Sharks Aquatic Club
- 13: Rainbow Labor

Wave G: Individuals, Friends & Families

Individuals, Friends and Family inclusive of Melbourne Marching Girls Footy Pride Performance, The Queer Poly Crew, Tits Out For (TO4), St Hilda's, Crystal Queer, 2 Hufflepuffs 1 Slytherin, Very Greer Impressive AND Nunga the Magnificent Wonder Dog with 20 of Nunga's Friends and their owners.

Wave H: Cultural, Sports, and Spiritual Organisations

- 1: Jews of Pride
- 1.1: SKIF Melbourne
- 2: TBI Pride
- 4: Jewish Lesbian Group of Victoria
- 5: NCJWA Vic
- 6: Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV)
- 7: Pathways Melbourne
- 8: Netzer Melbourne
- 9: Habonim Dror Melbourne
- 10: AJDS (Australian Jewish Democratic Society)
- 11: Jewish Care Victoria

- 12: Acceptance Melbourne
- 13: Melbourne Inclusive Church
- 14: Richmond Football Club
- 15: Cricket Victoria - Proud Cricket
- 15.1: Pride Cup
- 16: St. Kilda Football Club & Saints Pride
- 17: Melbourne Skaters - Skating With Pride
- 18: South Sea Roller Derby

Wave I: Organisations Showing Pride

- 1: NAB
- 2: The City of Melbourne
- 3: AGL
- 4: RACV
- 5: Dan Murphy's
- 6: Proud at Woolworths
- 7: PostPride
- 8: SEEK
- 9: Mantel Group
- 10: Yarra Trams

Wave J: Emergency Services

- 1: Emergency Management Victoria
- 2: Victoria Police
- 4: The GEO Group Australia
- 5: Ambulance Victoria
- 6: St John Ambulance
- 7: Victoria State Emergency Service
- 8: Country Fire Authority
- 9: Fire Rescue Victoria
- 10: Life saving Victoria
- 10.1: IGEM
- 11: ESTA000
- 12: EMPNV: Emergency Management Pride Network Victoria

Wave K: Organisations Showing Pride

- 0: Liberal Pride
- 1: John Holland Pride Network
- 2: PRISM: CPA Australia's LGBTQ+ Network
- 3: PRIDE@KPMG
- 4: Nike
- 6: Pride @ Coles
- 7: Australian Association of Social Workers (Victorian Branch)
- 9: Bodhi and Ride
- 10: LUBR STORE
- 12: The Walt Disney Company
- 13: Jacobs
- 14: Proud & Pawsome
- 15: Greyhound Racing Victoria and Greyhound Adoption Program

Wave L: Community Care

- 1: YMCA
- 2: Fostering Connections
- 2.1: Lighthouse Foster Care
- 3: Kids First Australia - Rainbow Tick Committee
- 4: Life Without Barriers
- 5: Berry Street Victoria
- 6: Better Place Australia
- 7: headspace National Youth Mental Health Foundation
- 8: Australian Psychological Society
- 11: The Salvation Army - Social Mission
- 12: Melbourne City Mission
- 13: CLEAN AND SOBER
- 14: Harm Reduction Victoria
- 15: SECASA (South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault)

Midsumma Festival

16: Taskforce

17: Wellways

19: The Society of Australian Sexologists

Wave M: Primary Health Care & Political Representatives

1: Queer Greens

2: The Royal Children's Hospital

3: DPV Health

4: Nexus Primary Health

5: Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health

6: Kilmore District Health

7: Hume Whittlesea Primary Care
Partnership

8: Northern Health - Pride in the North

9: Western Health

10: Eastern Health

11: Merri Health

13: Epworth Healthcare

Wave N: Charity & Healthcare

2: VincentCare

3: Anglicare Victoria

4: Uniting Network - Uniting Church
LGBTIQ Network

5: Uniting Vic.Tas

6: Sacred Heart Mission

7: Asylum Seeker Resource Centre

9: Burnet Institute

10: Walter and Eliza Hall Institute
of Medical Research (WEHI)

11: BreastScreen Victoria

12: Peter Mac Pride

14: Cancer Council Victoria

Wave O: Educational Institutions & Union Groups

1: QueersInScience

2: Swinburne Queer Collective

3: The University of Melbourne

4: Melbourne University Law Students'
Society Queer Portfolio

5: University College

6: RMIT University

7: Victoria University

8: La Trobe University

9: LA Trobe University Students
Association (LTSA)

10: Monash University

11: MSA (Monash Student Association)
Queer Department

12: MONSU QUEER

Wave P: Local Councils and Representatives of Political Parties

1: City of Stonnington

2: City of Kingston

3: Glen Eira City Council

4: Darebin Council

5: Manningham Council

6: Inclusive Banyule

7: Moreland City Council

8: City of Yarra

9: City of Whittlesea

10: Knox City Council

11: Cardinia Shire Council

13: Team Bass Coast

Wave Q: Government Affiliated Organisation

- 1: Parks Victoria
- 2: V/Line Pride
- 3: Transdev Melbourne
- 4: Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman
- 6: Victoria Legal Aid
- 7: Victorian Public Sector
- 9: WorkSafe
- 10: Pride in Water

Wave R: Organisations Showing Pride

- 0: Victorian Trade Union Movement
- 1: Rainbow Professionals Australia
- 2: Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (Vic Branch)
- 4: JLL Pride
- 5: Northern Trust Pride
- 6: Deloitte Australia
- 7: Norton Rose Fulbright
- 8: bp pride
- 9: Pride @ IAG
- 10: Corrs Chambers Westgarth
- 12: Rotary International
- 13: TEN - The Equality Network
- 14: Vespa Club of Melbourne

Wave S: Midsumma Festival

- 1: Midsumma Festival

midsumma
festival



midsumma.org.au