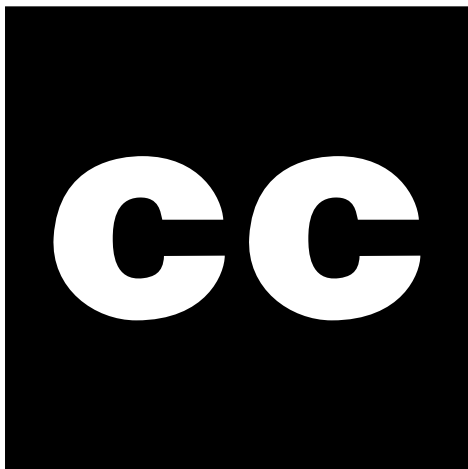
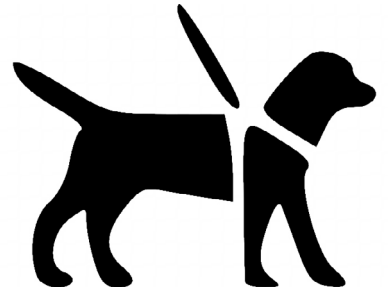
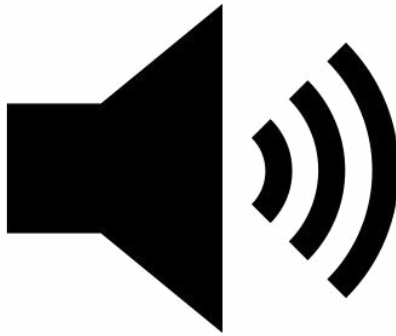
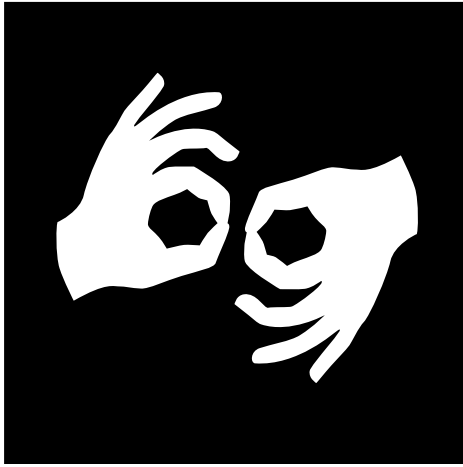


# LA MAMA ACCESS GUIDE & CHECKLIST FOR ARTISTS



**LA MAMA**



La Mama Theatre is on traditional land of the Kulin Nation. We give our respect to the Elders of this country and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people past, present and future. We acknowledge all events take place on stolen lands and that sovereignty was never ceded.

La Mama is financially assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council – its arts funding and advisory body, Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund - an Australian Government initiative, the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, and the City of Melbourne through the Arts and Creative Partnerships Program. We are grateful to all our philanthropic partners and donors, advocates, volunteers, audiences, artists and our entire community as we work towards the La Mama rebuild. Thank you!



Office Phone: (03) 9347 6948

Office Hours: Mon – Fri | 10:30am – 5:30pm

La Mama HQ 205 Faraday St, Carlton VIC 3053

[www.lamama.com.au](http://www.lamama.com.au) | [info@lamama.com.au](mailto:info@lamama.com.au)



# La Mama Access Guide & Checklist for Artists

La Mama aims to provide equitable access to and engagement with arts and cultural opportunities at La Mama and beyond. This is underpinned by our [Accessibility Action Plan](#) seeking to remove the barriers which inhibit the full participation of artists, audience and staff at La Mama.

La Mama encourages all artists to make their productions as accessible as possible and seeks to engage with various communities about their access preferences for works.

Some access elements will require additional costs that need to be factored into your overall budget, please feel free to contact our Outreach and Community Engagement Producer, Myf Powell at [myf@lamama.com.au](mailto:myf@lamama.com.au) to discuss this further.

## Venue Access Information

La Mama offers fully physically accessible spaces and facilities at the rebuilt La Mama HQ on Faraday Street and the La Mama Courthouse on Drummond Street.

After the devastation of the fire in 2018, the rebuilt La Mama HQ opening December 2021 offered the chance to make La Mama far more accessible; the chance to create a dedicated rehearsal space; to improve front of house amenities and theatre facilities; including dedicated lifts for full access to the space, hearing loop within the theatre, tactile paving, braille signs, accessible toilet facilities and bar.

La Mama Courthouse has undergone extensive renovations significantly improving accessible facilities. This means that we are wheelchair accessible for both audience and artists (please note that the doorway to the theatre is approximately 1 metre wide so wheelchair users with a mobility device wider than this will need to contact La Mama to arrange access). Due to the building being Heritage listed, there are still some access improvements in plan for 2022 to increase greater access for artists in this venue.

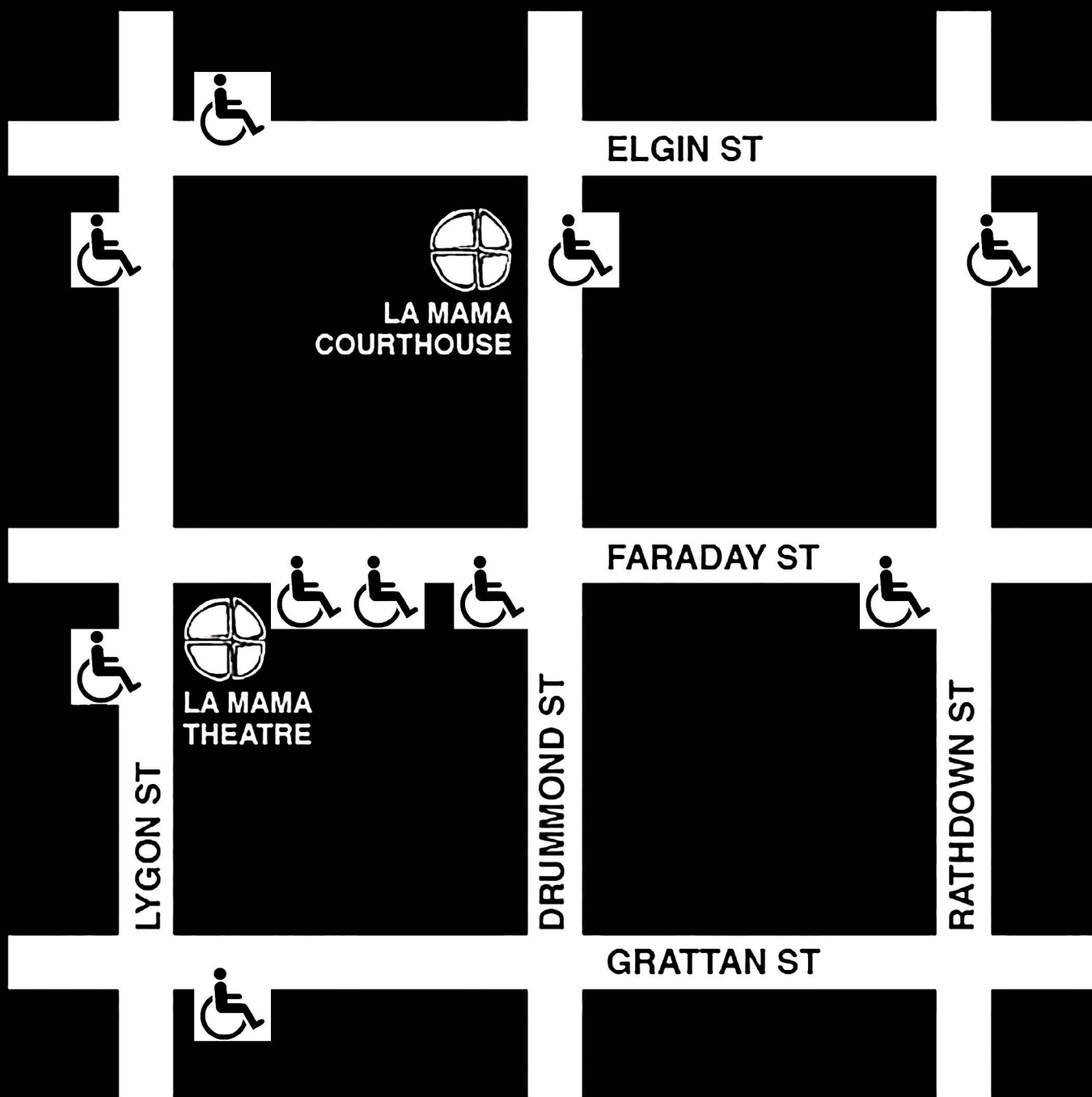
La Mama accepts Companion Cards and assistance animals are most welcome.

Please see the map on the next page for accessible parking spaces.



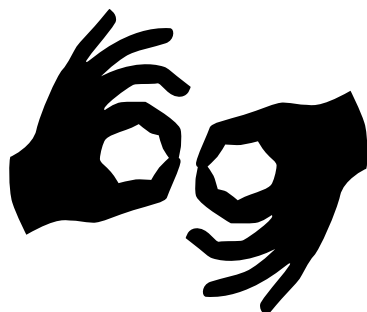


## ACCESSIBLE PARKING MAP



# Here are some Access points to consider in your production:

**Making Performance Accessible for d/Deaf and hard of hearing Audiences**  
**Auslan Interpreted** - suitable for people who are d/Deaf and communicate using Australian Sign Language (Auslan).



La Mama offers Auslan interpretation for a select number of performances and encourage artists to build in Auslan Interpreted performances into their season at La Mama.

La Mama engages the services of [Auslan Stage Left](#) and welcomes assisting you to build their services into your budget and book these into your season.


## Points to consider:

- Allow time and budget for interpreters to attend rehearsals or earlier performances to familiarise themselves with the show.
- Give the interpreters as much information about the event, in advance, as possible—a script, video or summary of the show. Please consider that complex language, poetic text, comedy, music will take more time to prepare.
- Consult with the interpreters on the best location for their position on stage to allow optimum viewing.
- Ensure there is adequate stage lighting for the interpreter with the top half of their body is clearly lit with no shadows on their face.

# Captioning

You may also consider captioning your performance so that d/Deaf or hard of hearing audiences – particularly those who are not Auslan users – can engage with your work.

**Open Captioning** - during the performance, captions prepared from the script of the play, are displayed on a screen, enabling the audience to read what is being said, without obstructing the performance. **Open captioning** is always in view and cannot be turned off – it is often presented as a projection above or behind the action (subtitles).



**Closed Captioning** can be activated or deactivated by the viewer – it is often presented on a tablet or other electronic device the viewer can use as they wish.



Captioning can be a cost effective option – e.g. a PowerPoint presentation with the script. However, many d/Deaf or hard of hearing people are native Auslan users, with English being a subsequent learned language for them. So, please remember for these people that captioning a show in English is not the same experience as providing an Auslan interpreter.

# Visual Rating System

Artists should give their performance a Visual Rating which can be viewed online to inform audiences of whether a performance can be accessible to them. This can be helpful for audiences who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing, or if English isn't the primary spoken language.



## 100% Visual Content

The event contains no music or dialogue, so d/Deaf or hard of hearing audiences can engage fully with the event.



## 75% Visual Content

The event is fully subtitled or has minimal dialogue, some background music and/or sounds, so d/Deaf and hard of hearing audiences can have close to the full experience of the event.



## 50% Visual Content

Events are partly subtitled or include dialogue, background music and/or sounds, so d/Deaf and hard of hearing audiences can have some engagement with the event.



# Making Performance Accessible for Blind and Low Vision Audiences

There are a number of ways to make your show accessible to blind and low vision audiences, including:

## Audio Description



**Audio Description / AD** - enhances the live performance experience for people who are blind or have low vision by providing additional narration, either live or recorded, that complements the performance. Audio Description can be live through a headset or in person.

If appropriate, you could also consider creating your own pre-recorded description. This could be a podcast style description of all the visual elements. This could be provided on an audio player at La Mama or be downloadable from the website prior to the performance.

If you have an audio-described event, it is best practice to include a Tactile Tour in the same performance, organised prior to the event.

## Tactile Tours

**Tactile Tours** - enhance the live performance experience for people who are blind or have low vision, providing the opportunity for audience to experience key elements of a performance like the props, set and costumes prior to the show starting.

Tactile tours are fully guided and facilitated to provide a hands-on experience of the important visual elements of the performance. Performers can be part of the tour, dressed in their costume – they describe themselves and introduce their characters, including any physical traits they have.





La Mama encourages artists to build in AD & Tactile Tour performances into their season and recommends the services of [Vitae Veritas](#) for providing these services and/or training. La Mama welcomes assisting you to build their services into your budget and book these into your season.

La Mama are currently working towards training staff and FOH to be able to offer in-house personal audio description of shows at a subsidised rate.

Should Artists want to provide AD through a headset, La Mama can assist in hiring equipment for this through Arts Access Victoria. Artists will still need to budget and cover a fee, however it would not be as much as a fully trained audio describer delivering it traditionally through technology.

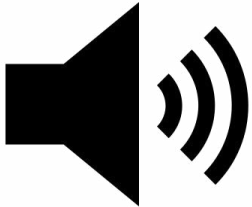
La Mama currently provides an advance program to all ticket holders, sent in an electronic version in PDF and Word Doc as well as a large print version displayed on the wall in the front of house area.

### **Other tips for Blind / Low Vision Audience:**

- Consider providing pre-show notes for the blind and low vision community via email or a website prior to the event. Things you can describe include set, costumes and other visual elements of the show.
- Collate these notes in a document that audiences can access using screen reader software or text to voice apps, ensuring that print is available in 20 point sans-serif font. As an alternative, you could also record audio notes.

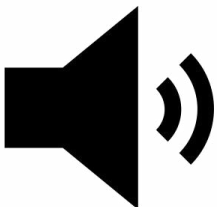
# Aural Rating System

Artists should give their performance an Aural Rating which can be accessed online to inform audiences of whether a performance can be accessible to them. Aural Ratings are designed to give audience members who are blind or low vision a better understanding of how they can access an event.



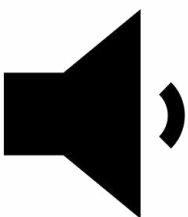
## Aural Rating 100%

Entirely sound-based with no visual elements and can be fully experienced by blind or low vision audiences.



## Aural Rating 75%

Mainly sound-based, with visuals only incidental to the work, so blind or low vision audiences can have close to the full experience of the event.



## Aural Rating 50%

Has both sound and visual components, but sight isn't essential to be able to engage with the event.

# Relaxed Performances



Relaxed performances welcome people who find it difficult to follow the usual conventions of theatre, including sitting still and quiet in a dark space, elements of production which may cause distress. This can include people with learning disabilities, movement disorders, autistic spectrum disorder, Tourettes, neurological conditions, those with young children or babies.

Relaxed Performances offer a more relaxed performance environment with less intense lighting and sound, these also allow for noise and movement in the auditorium, a chill-out space for audience who may need time away from the performance, and the acceptance that they may re-enter when ready/needed. Relaxed performances also take a laid-back approach to noises or movement coming from the audience.

## Relaxed Performances at La Mama include the following:

- house lights left on dim throughout the performance
- lighting and sound adjusted to be less intense
- no strobe lighting used
- no loud, sudden sounds effects
- the capacity for audience to exit/re-enter space as required
- a quiet space for audience to access during the performance

## At La Mama all Relaxed Performances involve:

- A clear explanation for all audience members about what a relaxed performance is when they book
- Pre-show information describing what to expect from the performance
- An introduction at the start to remind the audience that it's a relaxed performance and giving anyone who needs to move or be noisy the freedom to do so.

## Pre-show information

As part of a 'Relaxed Performance' offering pre-show resources, such as a Visual Story, can aid in adapting the theatre environment and preparing the audience prior to coming to the theatre. Pre-show resources may include:

- A plot synopsis or script breakdown (if appropriate), along with a guide to where/when any particularly loud or sensory surprises may occur.
- Pictures of the performers and a guide to what the characters are like.
- A thorough content warning list.

## Content Warnings

Content warnings alert audiences to potentially triggering content – such as mentions or descriptions of violence, death, suicide, miscarriage or self-harm, and/or to any visual and auditory effects such as strobe lights and loud noises.

Please see La Mama's [Content Warning Policy](#) for more information.

## Post-show resources

La Mama recommends the provision of post-show resources to be included in productions where content may include themes such as violence, death, suicide, miscarriage or self-harm. La Mama are available to assist in providing relevant post-show support and resources to assist artists in developing these around their productions.

# LA MAMA 4 ALL

## ACCESS CHECKLIST

Please check that you have read and understood the La Mama Access Guide for Artists. You can complete this checklist online [here](#).

Indicate Yes or No if you wish to engage these Access points into your season, have any further questions regarding these and provide the relevant details below:

Name: \*

Your answer

Production: \*

Your answer

Email: \*

Your answer

Do you or your team have any Access requirements you would like us to know about?

Your answer

Please check that you have read and understood the La Mama Access Guide in terms of the following: \*



☐ Physical Venue Information



☐ Auslan Interpretation



☐ Open Captioning



☐ Closed Captioning



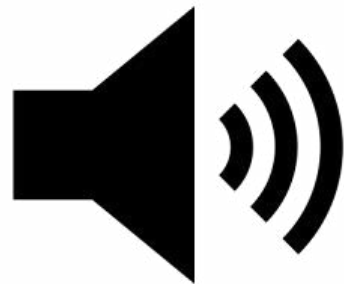
☐ Audio Description



☐ Tactile Touring



☐ Visual Rating System



☐ Aural Rating System



☐ Relaxed Performance

**Large  
Print**

☐ Pre-show Notes



☐ Content Warnings



☐ Post-show Resources



Do you wish to have Auslan Interpretation &/or Captioning for your production? \*



☐ Auslan Interpretation



☐ Open Captioning

☐ None of the above



☐ Closed Captioning

If YES to Auslan &/or Captioning, please indicate preferred date & time:

Date

Time

dd/mm/yyyy

:

Do you wish to have Audio Description &/or Tactile Tour in your season? \*



☐ Audio Description only



☐ Tactile Tour only

☐ None of the above



☐ Audio Description and Tactile Tour combined

If YES to Audio Description &/or Tactile Tour, please indicate preferred date & time:

Date

Time

dd/mm/yyyy

:

Do you wish to include a Relaxed Performance &/or pre & post show resources in your season (tick all that apply): \*



☐ Relaxed Performance

**Large  
Print**

☐ Pre-show notes



☐ Content Warnings



☐ Post- show resources

☐ None of the above

If YES to a Relaxed Performance, please indicate preferred date & time:

Date

Time

dd/mm/yyyy

:

Is there any other access elements or information you would like to tell us about?

Your answer

Thank you for your responses, if you have any questions please add below or contact Myf at [myf@lamama.com.au](mailto:myf@lamama.com.au)

Your answer