



LA MAMA

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

2022 - 2025

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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!



Cover Image: Soma, image by Wilson Liew

La Mama Theatre: facilitating fearlessly independent theatre making.

La Mama is Australia's most vital, responsive, inclusive and diverse home of independent theatre-making. We believe in the power and possibilities of theatre and art for all people.

La Mama is committed to a diversity of artistic approaches, to innovation and to exploring minority as well as general concerns. A vibrant space and prolific production house, La Mama has given initial exposure and support to thousands of playwrights, directors, actors, and technicians as well as poets, musicians, performance artists and experimental film-makers.

Our Mission is to discover, uncover, and provide a platform for new voices and ideas through theatre and art.

Our Fundamental Purpose is to provide independent artists from across Australia with opportunities to develop, practice and present work, by:

- **Enabling art making:** Our unique programming and presentation model provides artistic teams with a modest production budget, full 'no-rent' venue access, marketing, ticketing, front of house, technical support and 80% box office return, allowing artists to focus on making art
- **Enhancing opportunities for artists:** Our programs support artists in Presentation, Creation, Outreach, Festivals, Engagement, First Nations Theatre, and La Mamica (Multi-arts)
- **Empowering artistic freedom:** As a hub for truly independent theatre in Australia, our commitment to minimal intervention in the creative process supports artistic risk and freedom
- **Engaging audiences as a community:** We offer an affordable and hospitable cultural experience that appeals to a broad range of people
- **Equipping independent artists with skills to thrive:** We provide services to independent artists including: script appraisal, industry advice, sharing opportunities and a space to connect, reflect, develop and create

Values:

- **Artistic Freedom:** We do not impose artistic parameters
- **Artist Driven:** Artists are at the core of our programming, programs and pathway opportunities
- **Theatre for All:** We value participation and inclusivity for all (artists and audiences alike)
- **Diversity at Our Core:** Works by First Nations artists, artists with a disability, artists from all cultures, ages and genders are not labeled 'diverse', they are celebrated, championed and regularly programmed
- **Celebrating Creativity:** We encourage exciting, adventurous, intimate, ambitious, risk-taking theatre and art

La Mama Model:

La Mama provides independent artists with a fully supported environment, offering each production a one or two week season rent free, with a production budget (in 2021, \$2000 per production) to get the show up and 80% of the Box Office to share equitably among the entire creative team. La Mama provides ticketing, front of house, marketing and technical support, ensuring a facilitated experience that allows artists to focus on making art.

Our model extends, with minor variations, to our Explorations season (three nights in development), La Mamica program (one off-events) and playreadings. Each year, we support approximately 2000 independent artists and present approximately 200 productions.

La Mama was established in 1967 to nurture new Australian theatre and ever since has played an important role in the development of the Australian dramatic voice and theatrical landscape.

In the devastating fire of 2018, we lost our home of more than 50 years. The support felt from the community afterwards and the commitment to rebuild has strengthened us and provided new opportunities. The rebuilt Faraday Street venue will open in October 2021. The theatre space will retain its original intimate dimensions and features; the addition of a second building housing an office and rehearsal venue will provide essential extra space and resources. For the first time, La Mama will be completely accessible with the inclusion of a platform and full lift and accessible bathrooms. The addition of water tanks and solar panels makes us sustainable and environmentally responsible. Improved theatrical technologies will allow technicians and designers increased capacity to develop their craft.

From 2022 – 2025 La Mama will continue its core business of programming adventurous, exciting and ambitious theatre across both La Mama and La Mama Courthouse. In 2022, we will stabilise in our new home, programming much of the work that has been delayed and postponed due to the pandemic.

From 2023, we will continue regular programming across both venues. In addition, we have consolidated our work into these programs: Creation, Outreach, Festivals, Engagement, First Nations Theatre, and La Mamica (Multi-Arts), continuing to develop meaningful relationships and partnerships for a sustainable future while adapting to meet various and changing needs of artists, the industry and broader Victorian arts ecology.

From 2023, we have introduced six-weeks of dedicated space at the Courthouse across July/August for workshops as part of the La Mama Emerging program, extra rehearsals for Playreadings and one-off events for La Mama Community. Our Explorations program will now take place during this same period at La Mama HQ, meaning office-staff primarily have a one-venue focus during the busy Explorations season. We have also created La Mama Residencies to give artists the Courthouse for up to two weeks to develop and create new works.

For Midsumma, Comedy and Fringe Festivals we will become a hub venue, especially supporting regional artists. We have already introduced, and will continue to develop an Indigenous Theatre Festival, following our decades of in-depth work with First Nations communities, dedicating an in-house biannual festival for First Nations led programming, in tandem with Yirramboi, Melbourne's biannual First Nations festival. We will continue to provide the only free script appraisal service in the country.

As has always been the case, we will respond and adapt to our community and will find ourselves presenting an array of work.

This Strategic Plan presents our Commitments, Operations and Programs for 2022– 2025. It articulates the vision and priorities for the coming years of organisational and artistic activity at La Mama. It is both a document to share with our stakeholders and a document to be used internally.

La Mama knows who she is. She is solid, strong and has the wisdom to know how to move through the next transition with grace and clarity. This plan outlines how she will be reborn within the new building, operating in a modern world, sustaining those who care for her while providing for the generations to come.

La Mama was born when its founder, Betty Burstall returned to Melbourne after a period in the mid-1960s living in New York City. During her time there, she fell in love with the off-off-Broadway Greenwich Village coffee-house theatre scene, the centrepiece of which was Ellen Stewart's thriving La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club. Current Artistic Director Liz Jones took over from Betty in 1976, and has been here ever since. She has expanded the idea of what La Mama is, and what it can be, and has advanced La Mama's rise as the home of alternative and experimental, culturally inclusive and diverse, fearlessly independent theatre making.

La Mama's list of alumni is impressive! But perhaps more importantly La Mama has provided a creative home and low-financial/high-artistic risk-taking environment for many thousands of lesser-known names who have become the backbone of the Australian theatre, film, television and comedy scenes across more than five decades. La Mama is proud to have played such a crucial role in fostering the distinguished careers of so many emerging and established Australian artists and to have played a part in championing the voice of marginalised and particularly First Nations artists.

Summary of recent highlights:

- Artistic Director Liz Jones awarded Australia Council Theatre Award in 2018 and the Sue Natrass award for exceptional services to the live performance industry at the Helpmann Awards, 2019
- In 2017 La Mama turned 50 celebrating with a gathering of 300 La Mama community members, a season of alumni and a 50th anniversary commemorative book, published by Melbourne University Press. We received national recognition for our contribution to the arts
- In 2017, the last year we operated out of two venues, 2031 artists presented 100 works (787 performances) at La Mama and La Mama Courthouse
- The International Festival of Puppetry (2015, 2017, 2021) hosted Australian and international works, engaging new family audiences
- Indonesian collaboration with Mainteatre in Bandung developed the bilingual work Hades Fading for presentation as part of AsiaTOPA 2020
- The conclusion of a significant seven-year project Coranderrk: We Will Show the Country, a La Mama initiative was awarded an Australian Research Council (ARC) grant in partnership with Melbourne University, ILBIJERRI, and the wider First Nations community
- The growth of La Mama Mobile to regional venues including Birdcage Thursdays (2017), Of Cows Women and War (2016), How's Your Acting Going?, The Shrink and Swell of Knots (2015) Button, Two Mortals (2014)
- The durational site-specific performance of Uncle Vanya to regional Victoria, Bundanon (NSW) and the Adelaide Festival (2014 – 2019)
- In 2019, La Mama Learning welcomed 2017 students from 99 schools across the country
- Annual participation in the Melbourne Fringe, Comedy, Seniors, Yirramboi, Asia TOPA and Melbourne Writers (Blak and Bright) Festivals
- La Mama Encore took La Mama productions A Room of One's Own (2019) L'amante Anglaise (2016) and Mein Kampf, My Life In The Nude (2014) to Fortyfivedownstairs for return seasons by popular demand
- In 2019, La Mama presented 12 productions at community venues across regional Victoria.
- In the lockdown of 2020, La Mama supported, produced and partnered with 10 online projects, one of which reached more than 17,000 audience.
- The innovative online historical platform [La Mama: The Biggest Little Theatre in Australia](#) created in association with Melbourne University won the 2020 Victorian Community History Award and the Digital Storytelling Award in the Victorian Premier's History Awards.
- In 2020 co-CEO Caitlin Dullard won the *Green Room Geoffrey Milne Memorial Award for Outstanding Contribution to Independent Theatre*.
- La Mama Chair Richard Watts received the Sidney Myer Facilitator's Award (2019) and The Green Room Lifetime Achievement Award (2020).

THE FIRE AND REBUILD:

On May 19, 2018, La Mama theatre was struck by fire. We were overwhelmed by the immediate generosity and commitment from all corners of the globe to rebuild.

The \$1 million contribution towards rebuilding from the Victorian Government demonstrated solid faith in our future. Designs were created for a restoration and rebuild that extends to include a new building and improved facilities. An ambitious campaign to raise **\$3,226,541** was successful with support from insurance, community, government and philanthropy.

The response from the community was galvanising. It was made clear that La Mama is an essential creative institution that must rise from the ashes.

The rebuilt La Mama was designed by architect Meg White with a wonderful team of consultants. The original building has been restored to honour its original, intimate self but with completely new 21st century facilities and technology. The size of the performance space has not changed, maintaining its mood, simplicity and magic. The internal staircase, trapdoor, fireplace and all the doors and windows – features that made our theatre so unique – have been reinstated. A new, second building will house the administration team, taking the pressure off staff and artists who previously shared the increasingly crowded office/greenroom/ dressing-room of the original La Mama. The annex allows for future organisational growth. The new building's ground floor rooms will provide a much-needed rehearsal space for artists by day and an undercover foyer space for audiences by night.

For more information on the Rebuild see: <https://lamama.com.au/rebuild-la-mama/>

LOCKDOWNS:

In sync with the rest of the world, La Mama shut up shop in March 2020 and was closed for most of the year. Across 2021, we have been at the mercy of regular lockdowns and capacity restrictions. With support from Creative Victoria, we've been able to offer a Box Office Guarantee to artists and staff were supported through the governments Jobkeeper program, both which had a significant impact. It remained our priority to ensure all programmed works had a season. This constant rescheduling and shuffling will have an impact into 2022.

LOSS OF FUNDING:

In April 2020, La Mama received news of an unsuccessful application to four year funding from the Australia Council for The Arts. Operations had relied on this funding for almost fifty years and it was an unexpected and devastating outcome. We received much media and community support and lobbying but the outcome was final. Through a very generous private donation and a successful federal government RISE application, much of this money has been recouped. La Mama's intention is to have Australia Council funding re-instated for the next four year cycle but are also actively diversifying income streams to ensure a sustainable future.

LA MAMA FUTURE

The team move into La Mama HQ in September 2021 and plan to host an opening War-Rak/Banksia festival in December 2021. From this time, we will be back to operating across two venues.

The La Mama brand is widely recognised and respected locally, nationally and internationally and over the past 50+ years the organisation has built up a loyal base of artists, audience, staff and supporters. La Mama's curatorial model ensures that the organisation is constantly reflective of and responsive to cultural, environmental, social and technological change within the broader community.

La Mama will continue to play a vital role in the small to medium sector and the national arts ecology. We will continue to service the needs of our community through presenting 70+ productions each year, most of which are new Australian works. With increased capacity with the La Mama rebuild, we will be able to offer free rehearsal space and open our doors to all as a fully accessible venue. Through our consolidated programs, we will continue to adapt to the various needs of artists.

The important challenge for La Mama moving into our next chapter and new home, is finding the balance between looking backwards and looking forwards. As a much-loved home to many Australian artists, it is essential to honour the rich history and original vision, while ensuring relevance and accessibility for younger cohorts and future generations of artists.

The transition into the new space for 2022 – 2025, embraces this challenge with a long-term and embedded leadership succession plan and clarity of vision.

COMMITMENTS 2022 – 2025: Accessibility, Sustainability, Reconciliation and Wellbeing are the organisational priorities underpinning all that we do. These commitments, imbedded in all operations and programs, are categorised through: Best Practice, Venue, Communications and People.

OPERATIONS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022– 2025 include our goals, strategies and measures for operational activities: Supporting Artists; Sustaining Audience; Communications; Venue; Development; System Management; Staffing & Governance.

CREATIVE PROGRAMS 2022 – 2025 is a summary of all programs (see Appendix 1 for program descriptions):

- **Presents:** La Mama Presents, La Mama Encore, La Mama Online
- **Creation:** La Mama Explorations, La Mama Emerging, La Mama Residencies, La Mama Playreadings, La Mama Script Appraisal
- **Outreach:** La Mama Mobile, La Mama Community
- **Festivals:** La Mama Festival Partnerships and Hubs, La Mama for Kids
- **Engagement:** La Mama Learning, La Mama Tertiary, La Mama Archives, La Mama Experience, La Mama Advocacy, La Mama Alumni
- **La Mamica:** La Mama Musica, La Mama Poetica, La Mama Cabaretica, La Mama Cinematica
- **First Nations Theatre:** Festivals, Mentorships, Blak Stage, Seasons



Enter Ophelia Image by Theresa Harrison

La Mama Presents: Our existing regular artist-driven programming will take place across both venues. Each production receives a modest production budget and the infrastructure to support the presentation of work. Presentations will vary from one and two-week seasons and will reflect the range of themes, styles, ideas and artists that La Mama is well known for.

In response to identified artist, industry and organisational needs, we have created a sustainable and relevant program schedule. We have:

- Employed a First Nations Producer to design and lead the First Nations Theatre program including reasons, mentorships, festivals and Blak Stage music program
- Responded to current industry gaps and artists needs by providing additional space to develop and create in Residencies, Emerging, and Playreadings; by developing an inbound exchange program as part of Mobile, and by better promoting the essential service we offer in Script Appraisals
- Re-contextualised Musica, Poetica, Cinematica & Cabaretica into La Mamica, offering increased support and developing partnership opportunities for existing programs
- Re-vitalised La Mama Emerging, La Mama Kids, La Mama Community
- Formalised La Mama Festivals, prioritising more meaningful partnerships and collaborations to leverage our resources, engage new audiences and activate hubs of activity to inspire and excite community, artists and audiences
- Consolidated much of the work we have always done into La Mama Engagement, building on existing relationships with tertiary institutions and celebrating our advocacy work, experiences for volunteers, interns and work experience students
- Streamlined programming across both La Mama HQ and La Mama Courthouse. La Mama Presents takes place across both venues; Explorations will be held at La Mama HQ, and all other programs at La Mama Courthouse
- Created a program of events (see Road Map) that optimises resources (ie. staffing and venue) for a sustainable future
- Introduced La Mama Online, working with artists to increase audiences and accessibility, through streaming and recording



Instinct + Inertia, Image by Imagelab



Hallowed Ground, Image by Theresa Harrison

From 2022 – 2025 La Mama is committed to **ACCESSIBILITY** through:

BEST PRACTICE:

- Taking a whole of organisation approach, including responsibilities in all position descriptions
- Generating positive attitudes within the organisation and sector
- Ongoing consultation with Arts Access Victoria and Arts Access Australia and continuing to engage consultants with lived experience of disability
- Continuing to develop collaborations and processes that actively create access for all
- Promoting best practice accessibility initiatives and programs
- Programming works that address issues of inclusion and equity

VENUE:

- Providing a physically accessible, inviting experience for artists and audience
- Committing to all La Mama events being accessible
- Maintaining improvements of the recent La Mama rebuild to ensure venue accessibility
- Striving to improve venue access at the La Mama Courthouse

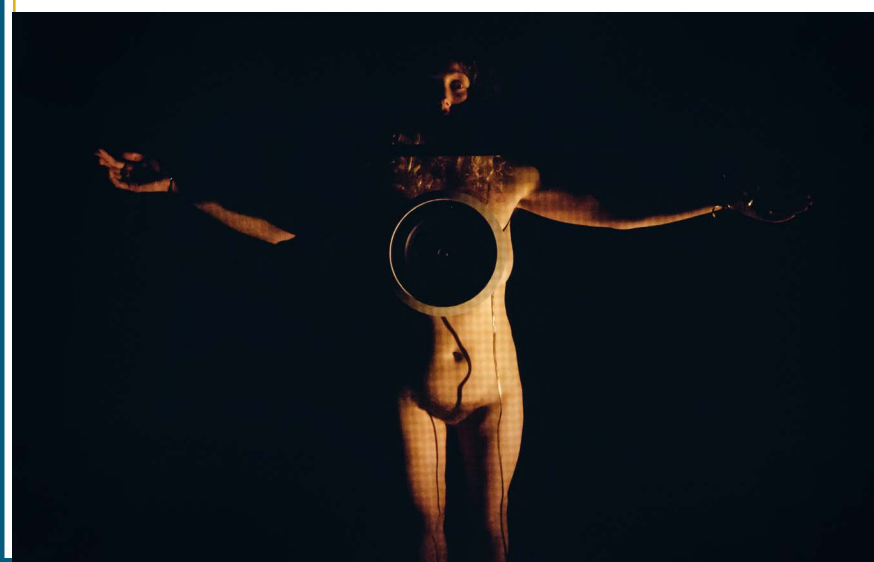
COMMUNICATIONS:

- Ensuring La Mama marketing material and artist information is accessible and available in a variety of formats and through a variety of channels to suit different needs
- Ensuring the website is screen reader friendly and print material is in appropriate format
- Ensuring accessible performance and other relevant information is easily locatable on our website and targeted communications reach relevant communities
- Include ALT text on enews and image descriptions on all social media posts
- Promote/provide online alternatives for people that cannot get to the theatre

PEOPLE:

- Maintaining affordable ticket prices at various price points for audience, honoring companion cards and welcoming guide dogs
- Encouraging artist awareness of access and inclusion, providing resources and 'how to' guides, including the development and distribution of an access checklist and guide for artists
- Engaging more broadly with the deaf, blind, and vision impaired communities, surveying which works to Auslan interpret, audio describe, and provide tactile tours
- Striving to provide financial support for artists whose shows will be interpreted
- Promoting the employment of people with disabilities, actively removing discrimination
- Consulting with the Neurodiverse artistic community to develop Relaxed Performances
- Actively removing barriers for economically and socially marginalised communities through La Mama Community and Ticket Access Program and promoting such opportunities
- Programming works and nurturing opportunities for artists with disability
- Providing training and professional development for staff in creating accessible and welcoming environments for all
- Ensuring digital environments are accessible, inclusive, and safe for artists and audiences
- Employing an Access Producer

For more detail please see the [Accessibility Action Plan 2021 – 2024](#) and [Access Guide and Checklist for Artists](#).



Stretch, Image by Darren Gill

From 2022 – 2025 La Mama is committed to SUSTAINABILITY through:

BEST PRACTICE:

- Taking a whole of organisation approach; including responsibilities in all position descriptions
- Showing artistic leadership and programming eco-conscious works each season
- Showing leadership by providing only vegetarian food and avoiding plastic at all events
- Advocating for sustainable thinking in the independent arts

VENUE:

- Making our venues and office practices more sustainable and lowering our carbon footprint
- Transitioning to a paperless system for FOH and book-keeping
- Implementing best practice sustainability initiatives in the development of the new building at Faraday Street and rented Courthouse
- Actively lowering the energy and water consumption across buildings through increased conscientiousness, management and engagement
- Maintaining community and green space at the new and existing venues with vegetable gardens and the planting of new trees

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Communicating the sustainable improvements within the La Mama rebuild. The design includes best practice eco-friendly approaches including water tanks, solar panels, double-glazed windows, the use of recycled and local materials wherever possible, the introduction of efficient LED lighting, and excellent insulation
- Reducing quantities of printed collateral and continuing printing on 100% recyclable paper
- Continuing to offer paper-free tickets and online show programs and actively draw awareness to these initiatives
- Encourage people to use the QR code to obtain the show program

PEOPLE:

- Educating audience, artists and staff about La Mama’s environmental priorities
- Raising artists’ awareness about their energy use and encouraging them to make more sustainable choices around set design, energy use and printing
- Advocating more sustainable modes of audience transport; incentivising sustainable travel through a rewards/ green tickets program

For more detail please see the [Sustainability Action Plan 2021 – 2024](#).



Spescha Barakat, Bipolar Karaoke

From 2022 – 2025 La Mama is committed to RECONCILIATION through:

BEST PRACTICE:

- Reconciliation will be led through the power of language, Indigenous protocols and ways of working, self-determinism, respect, Indigenous diversity, and First Nations theatre
- Taking a whole of organisation approach; including responsibilities in all position descriptions
- Following the leadership of our First Nations peers and elders, and following protocols
- Providing a meaningful context for self-determination processes to drive the development of First Nations theatre and other initiatives by First Nations artists
- Non-Indigenous staff attending a wide range of First Nations works and events to actively follow opportunities for understanding, engagement and insight
- Programming First Nations artists and continuing to develop meaningful relationships with First Nations playwrights, creatives and companies
- Developing and cementing career pathways and mentorships for First Nations staff identifying more entry point opportunities (for example technical staff, stage managers, designers, Elders in Residence)

VENUE:

- A visual acknowledgement of country and displaying of the Aboriginal flag at both venues
- Ensuring that cultural considerations are embedded in the built environment and design of the new La Mama theatre through appropriate consultation
- Recruitment, mentoring and training of First Nations casual technical and venue staff

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Continuing to Acknowledge Country at all La Mama performances and events, and when appropriate provide a Welcome to Country
- Acknowledging Country in all written communications in a prominent and meaningful way
- Work closely with First Nations Producer to ensure all First Nations communications are reflective of and appropriate to the First Nations community
- Highlight opportunities and resources for First Nations artists and audiences

PEOPLE:

- Continue to employ a First Nations Producer to implement Cultural Safety Plan, Reconciliation Plan and Indigenous Theatre Strategy
- Collaborating with First Nations artists and arts-workers to embed all aspects of our Reconciliation Action Plan across all aspects of activity, and continue to employ a First Nations Producer to lead programming
- Continuing to foster First Nations programming and support individual artists through partnering with festivals e.g. Yirramboi, Blak and Bright, and Yellamundie
- Inviting First Nations playwrights into a script-reading cohort
- Building on our twenty-year relationship with ILBIJERRI Theatre to further collaborations and opportunities
- Providing resources as needed to ensure Indigenous works are supported to be realised

La Mama is committed to the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety Framework \(DHHS\)](#), and is currently consulting on and developing a Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 – 2025 and First Nations strategy.



Lloyd Jones and Greg Fryer

From 2022 – 2025 La Mama is committed to WELLBEING AND SAFETY through:

BEST PRACTICE:

- Taking a whole of organisation approach; including responsibilities in all position descriptions
- Retaining membership in the Arts Wellbeing Collective and keeping up to date and informed of initiatives and developments in the mental health space for both staff and our artistic community
- Showing cultural leadership through compassion, humanity and understanding
- Creating a program of activities that accurately reflects the possibilities and limitations of our resources and implementing systems and structures that optimise resources to encourage a safe and well working environment

VENUE:

- Creating an office environment that allows for quiet work, artist access and connection to other staff members, and the addition of the resting space in the mezzanine in the La Mama rebuild
- Implementing access and venue systems and manuals that allow for freedom and safety with a high volume of activity
- Ensuring Stage Manager induction covers all safety requirements and needs to manage a well and safe artist team
- Maintaining the improved safety features that have come with the La Mama rebuild

COMMUNICATIONS:

- Communicating up-to-date policies to staff, artists, volunteers and committee of management to ensure clear, accessible and fair processes for complaints, concerns, and any issues arising
- Encouraging positive staff morale through good internal communications, regular connection at staff lunch and space for dialogue
- External communications with wellbeing resources for our sector

PEOPLE:

- Ensuring staff work-loads are clear and manageable, responsibilities are equitable, expectations are reasonable and encouraging staff Mental Health Days and flexibility around staff needs
- Supporting artists wellbeing by promoting breaks and reasonable bump-in hours, offering flexibility and lead time for (ie. Marketing) requirements wherever possible
- Having staff available for artists concerns and queries wherever possible

For more detail please see: [Complaint Handling and Investigation Procedure](#); [Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy](#); [La Mama Code of Conduct: Workplace Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying](#); [Summary Reporting: Complaint Handling and Investigation Procedures](#).



A Quarrelling Pair, Image by Darren Gill

GOALS:

- To continue to offer numerous access points for independent artists (local, regional, national and international) to engage with La Mama
- To foster a hub for artist development and pathway programs for independent artists
- To encourage and advocate for diverse representation across all programs, with a particular focus on meaningful engagement with First Nations artists
- To foster clear open channels of communication between artists and La Mama, including feedback structures and systems for artists communication and services (technical, marketing, and front of house)

STRATEGIES:

- Provide a supported artist-driven experience that allows for a focus on making art; including offering a modest production budget, fully serviced venue, technical and marketing support
- Continue to accept all unsolicited scripts and proposals via transparent systems and evaluate them for programming
- Reduce artists costs and support the development of work through offering free rehearsal space at Faraday Street for programed shows
- Implement formal feedback structures between artists and La Mama staff
- Diversify artist support through Programs. For example: Residencies, hosting supported residencies for local, regional and interstate artists; Outreach and Encore, providing opportunities for artists to repeat and develop work in different contexts; Creation, allowing the space for artists to make art; Advocacy, providing advice and opportunities for industry connection. See Program Descriptions for more information

MEASURES				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total number of artists engaged with La Mama	2500+	2600+	2700+	2800+
Number of artists engaged with La Mama Presents	-	1500	1500	1500
Number of artists through other programs: Creation, Outreach, Festivals, Engagement, Multi-Arts	-	1100	1200	1300
Number of artists new to La Mama	400	450+	500+	550+
Number of First Nations artists	20	25	30	35
Representation of diversity of artists: cultures, genders, abilities, sexual orientation, ages, etc.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Artist feedback demonstrates artists feel welcome, supported, and want to come back.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing



A Quarrelling Pair, Image by Darren Gill

GOALS:

- To continue our core business of offering high-quality, accessible, diverse, theatrical experiences in a safe and welcoming environment
- To create a culturally safe space and encourage and advocate for diverse audience participation at all La Mama events
- To maintain a consistently broad and engaged audience, with high numbers of attendees who are a mix of new and returning patrons
- To grow new audiences through community partnerships, broad outreach and strategic marketing

STRATEGIES:

- Reinstate Community Access Tickets and actively remove barriers to access for economically and socially challenged communities and schools and those living on the margins and to promote such access programs through targeted and committed marketing and promotion
- Develop a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) to effectively track, measure and engage with audiences, and to assist in creating targeted marketing where necessary
- Ensure all Front of House staff are trained and up to date with La Mama happenings, to continue to create a friendly, safe, hospitable experience for our audiences
- Increase Front of House staffing to two staff per shift at La Mama Courthouse shows, one with technical/venue knowledge
- Continue to implement different methods to further engage audiences, ie. through Q&As, opportunities to meet cast and creatives and access to relevant literature/reading
- Maintain affordable ticket prices
- Ensure free tea, coffee and water is always offered and a space for connection is created

MEASURES				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total number of audience in through La Mama	25,000+	26,000+	27,000+	28,000+
Number of audience through Primary Program, La Mama Presents	-	17,000	17,000	17,000
Number of audience through La Mama Online	10,000	20,000	30,000	40,000
Number of audience engaged with programs: Creation, Outreach, Festival, Engagement, Multi-Arts	-	9,000	10,000	11,000
New audiences attend La Mama	5% increase	6% increase	7% increase	8% increase
The audience represent our diverse community	Anecdotal	Anecdotal	Anecdotal	Anecdotal
Positive audience feedback and returning customers	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Number of community tickets utilised	50	75	100	150
Ticket prices remain affordable	\$30/\$20/\$10	\$30/\$20/\$10	\$30/\$20/\$10	\$30/\$20/\$10



Aphanisis Image by Darren Gill



Hotel Bonegilla. Image by Darren Gill

OPERATIONS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS: COMMUNICATIONS

GOALS:

- To ensure La Mama productions and the La Mama brand have local and national representation in diverse forms of media including our own multimedia content hub
- To increase audience engagement with La Mama performances, events, publications, online activity and enews, through quality content and targeted communications
- To support artists through La Mama marketing and communications, and up-skill and empower artists to learn more about marketing opportunities to drive their own success
- To optimise resources for greater reach and impact

STRATEGIES:

Art:

- Develop our own multimedia content hub that highlights La Mama productions, the artists behind the work and La Mama as a relevant and thriving independent theatre institution
- Finesse internal marketing systems, guidelines and style guides for consistency of approaches
- Promote networking and connectivity to ensure marketing staff are involved with industry opportunities (local, regional and national) and across industry news including regular training
- Work closely with producers of La Mamicas, Kids, Mobile, First Nations, Online and Festivals to ensure brand consistency throughout all La Mama programs
- Ensure all staff, including Front of House, are on message about La Mama's purpose, priorities and communications
- Develop partnerships with local businesses to promote La Mama and our programs
- Communicate La Mama's relevance and impact nationally and broadly through talking about the art we present
- Work with an external publicist to strategically target reviews and feature journalistic pieces in mainstream media

Audience:

- Continue to work closely with artists to access their communities and develop audiences who return
- Develop accurate and meaningful social media reporting tools to build and better use our social media data collection
- Utilise survey tools to develop our audience base and incentivise audience growth
- Undertake audience research to ensure marketing strategies remain relevant to various audiences
- Implement segmentation of audience lists through MHM Cultural segments for more effective, targeted and relevant communications to our audience
- Work closely with La Mamica Curators, La Mama Outreach and First Nations Producers to develop campaigns to reach various and diverse audience including local Carlton residents, First Nations communities, multi-artforms and national audiences
- Marketing team to play a key role in La Mama's CRM to build evidence around our audience trends and engagement
- Build on existing relationships with other organisations to engage arts-interested audiences
- Ensure invitation lists and mailing lists are accurate and up to date, and facilitated through our CRM; and create tailored segments for different programs
- Adapt to new forms of communication and the ever-changing social media landscape

Artists:

- Marketing support sessions will be offered to all artists to empower them in their own marketing campaigns
- Partner with similar organisations to access industry training/seminars/workshops in marketing, communications and social media for La Mama artists
- Share opportunities and resources with artists via social media, EDM, website, email and phone
- Offer free marketing and production photography for all upcoming shows and to ensure quality visual marketing for artists and where possible, consistency of La Mama's overarching brand
- Continue to provide all productions with comprehensive, up to date marketing information and ensure clear communication around what support La Mama is and is not able to provide. Create a web page with three headings: **Marketing and Communications, Social Media, Content Creation**
- Provide a small budget for each production for social media advertising

SOCIAL MEDIA KPIs

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Facebook Likes	14,884 (5% increase)	15,629 (5% increase)	16,410 (5% increase)	17,231 (5% increase)
Instagram Followers	7,382 (20% increase)	8,612 (20% increase)	9,842 (20% increase)	11,072 (20% increase)
Twitter Followers	7,752 (3% increase)	7,985 (3% increase)	8,224 (3% increase)	8,471 (3% increase)
Conversion rate of paid ads	569 (estimate in first year based on current google analytics ticket sale conversion rates via Facebook)	571 (0.5% increase)	573 (0.5% increase)	575 (0.5% increase)

MARKETING & COMMUNICATION KPIs

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Enews segmented into Cultural Segments	40%	60%	80%	100% Maintaining
Targeted communications through Cultural Segments	12	Review and refine	Review and refine	Review and refine
Enews contacts	11,777 (5% increase)	12,337 (5% increase)	12,897 (5% increase)	13,457 (5% increase)
Website general users growth	37,702 (11% increase)	42,226 (12% increase)	47,715 (13% increase)	54,395 (14% increase)
Ticket sales conversion from website	13,972 (0.5% increase)	14,042 (0.5% increase)	14,112 (0.5% increase)	14,183 (0.5% increase)

CONTENT CREATION KPIs

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Multimedia content hub website engagement	15,000 users (estimate in first year)	15,750 (5% increase)	16,538 (5% increase)	17,365 (5% increase)
Create and distribute seasonal launch videos	4 Ongoing engagement review	4 Ongoing engagement review	4 Ongoing engagement review	4 Ongoing engagement review
Create and distribute photojournalistic La Mamica pieces including interviews	4 Ongoing engagement review	4 Ongoing engagement review	4 Ongoing engagement review	4 Ongoing engagement review

Please see the [Marketing and Communications 2022 – 2025 Strategy](#) for more information.

GOALS:

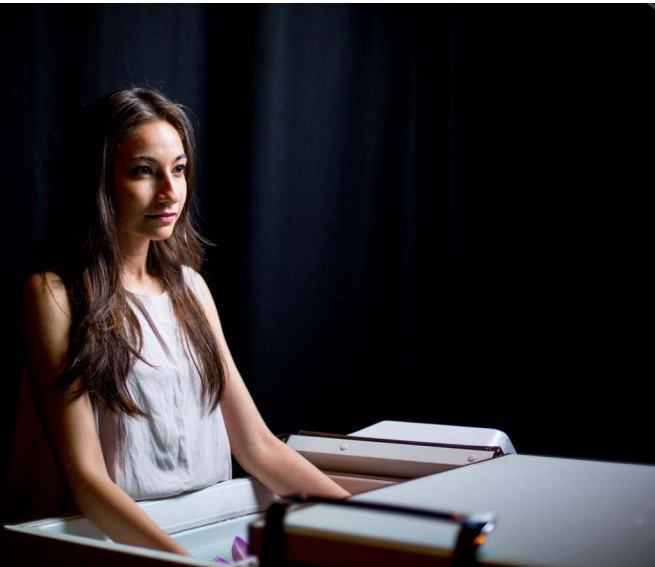
- To ensure safety, infrastructure and technology that best services the needs of all artists
- To continue good practices for venue management and maintenance including ongoing training
- To develop resources and training opportunities for artists in technical aspects of theatre
- To introduce contract-based Production/Stage Manager paid roles for Explorations and Festivals
- To encourage Stage Managers and technical and design teams to develop skills and draw on venue support as needed
- To ensure at least one Front of House staff member rostered on that has technical capabilities to problem solve and support productions as needed

STRATEGIES:

- Continue pre-season technical meetings with all artists and commence post-season surveys
- Provide up to date technical information pack for all shows (including a specific pack for playreadings and one-off events) and ensure this information is delivered to the correct team members and ensure these people also attend production meetings
- Provide regular training sessions/ workshops in various technical areas such as ‘How to use the Lighting Desk’ and ‘Qlab Basics’
- Create an induction pack for new staff and users which includes a tour of the venue and facilities
- Provide initial fire safety, RSA and technical equipment training where necessary and thereafter, annual refresher courses and ongoing technical training with a monthly focus
- Decreased the number of broken light globes and money spent on fixture repairs due to thorough inductions and training of stage managers and lighting personnel

MEASURES				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Equipment is maintained – records kept, number of incidents/damaged equipment reported	Maintenance Audit	Maintenance Audit	Maintenance Audit	Maintenance Audit
Technician/Stage Manager survey feedback shows the space was easy to use with limited complaints, good communication	Anecdotal	Anecdotal	Anecdotal	Anecdotal
Completing daily, weekly, monthly and annual checklists in the La Mama Management Plan.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Number of technicians/creatives engaged per season in training session for Qlab (audio, vision), Lighting console and fixture basics, Audio basics, Electrical/ Maintenance procedures, Stage Management at La Mama	4 sessions, 20 participants	6 sessions, 30 participants	6 sessions, 30 participants	6 sessions, 30 participants

* For further details please see the La Mama and La Mama Courthouse Venue Management Plan on the La Mama website



Make Me A Houri Image by Benjamin Laut

GOALS:

- To maintain momentum and build on success of Rebuild La Mama fundraising efforts by continuing relationships with trusts & foundations and individual donors
- To honour and continue to recognise the generosity of the community that supported La Mama’s future
- To increase annual revenue through philanthropic funding, specifically for programs: Engagement/Outreach, Festivals, First Nations Theatre, Emerging and Explorations
- To increase annual revenue through individual donors for operational costs

STRATEGIES:

- Continued development and maintenance of our CRM to carefully steward existing donors, target new ones and harness organisational contacts/data
- Keep donors and supporters engaged through regular and meaningful communication and invitations to events/gatherings, as well as private face-to-face catch ups where appropriate
- Initiate and implement an annual giving program for individuals
- Keep the bequest program active in communications and develop further
- Align partnerships with foundations and donors to support the ambitions of programs (Engagement, Outreach, Festivals, Emerging, Explorations)
- Continue to acknowledge donors, funders and supporters in online and print communications

MEASURES				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of private donations over \$1,000	10	20	30	40
Amount raised through private donations and sponsorship for operations	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$50,000
Number of trusts and foundations	0	4	4	5
Amount raised through fundraising and private donations: Outreach, Festivals, First Nations Theatre, Emerging, Explorations	0	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$250,000



Truth, Meaning, Value, Essence, Image by Darren Gill

GOALS:

- To continue streamlining digital system and information management practices
- To implement a digital FOH system
- To find suitable software and develop a comprehensive asset register for asset management
- To develop show report system for shows to be able to report faults and problems to ensure equipment is in good working order
- To implement a user-friendly and size-appropriate CRM
- To ensure the management of digital archives is aligned with internal systems and that systems are in place for La Mama to retain rights for ongoing use of photography and video
- To ensure that all files are backed up
- To maintain and optimise an internal communications digital system
- To maintain and streamline Dropbox and effectively use coordinated Calendar

STRATEGIES:

- Implement digital FOH, CRM, asset register, show report and internal communication digital system
- Develop streamlined procedures for copyright permissions of artists’ photos and artwork
- Develop effective communication with artists to streamline requests for scripts, images and documentation
- Undertake regular audits of La Mama’s data and records for accurate storage and sharing
- Clearly delineate tasks and responsibilities for staff

MEASURES				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
All systems are easy to follow for all staff, artists, and the interested community	Anecdotal	Anecdotal	Anecdotal	Anecdotal
Streamlined systems means staff time is not wasted and so people can do their jobs most effectively	Increased Productivity	Increased Productivity	Increased Productivity	Increased Productivity
Archives are maintained with easy access to images, scripts, that we have the rights to use.	Implemented	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing



Muliak Mulana, Image by Sarah Steiner

GOALS:

- To provide professional development, engagement and training opportunities for all staff and FOH to develop in their role (ie. management, safety, first aid, technical equipment)
- To actively recruit new staff and committee members who have the skills and experience necessary to service the needs of the organisation
- To uphold best practice in equal opportunity and diversity in recruitment, with staff and committee representing a broad cross section of the community
- To create rich, positive, manageable and flexible working conditions for all

STRATEGIES:

- Structure responsibilities so people work to their strengths and are supported to develop
- Create structures that optimise current skills and strategies for incoming staff/committee to fill the gaps
- Ensure staff and venue / technical and FOH managers receive regular training on fire safety, all new technical equipment, OH&S practices, rigging and lamp maintenance
- Ensure a rate of pay which is equitable and in line with industry standards
- Ensure open and clear online systems of communication between casual, contract and full-time staff and committee as appropriate
- Engage a Production/Stage manager specifically for Explorations and Festivals
- Employ a panel of Script Readers that represent a diverse range of styles and approaches
- Implement an aligned curators model for La Mama Festivals ensuring diverse and empowered programming (ie. LGBTQ+ for Midsumma)
- Ensure all new staff and committee are inducted with current systems, historical context and organisational culture understanding

MEASURES				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Annual staff appraisals show satisfaction, development and engagement and all staff feel supported and with the knowledge required to do their job;	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Attract new staff/committee that are dynamic, committed, skilled and curious in their roles.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
To hold at least 4 Committee Meetings, 1 AGM per year and ensure minutes, finances, agenda's and other documents are distributed in a timely manner.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing

* Please see Appendix for staff and governance structure document



Helping Hands, Image by Alexis Desaulniers

PROGRAMS: PRESENTS

Presents supports artists to present work through the standard La Mama model.

La Mama Primary Program

La Mama Primary Program offers approximately 100 productions per year a modest production budget, 80% Box Office and marketing, technical, administrative and Front of House support. This has been our model since inception and is our core business.

Program intention: To provide the infrastructure and support to allow artists to present work.

Timeline: La Mama happens approximately 47 weeks a year across both La Mama HQ and La Mama Courthouse.

Staffing responsibility: Artistic Director.

La Mama Encore

La Mama’s Encore program supports La Mama productions to have a further life beyond La Mama. We have had many successes with Fortyfivedownstairs and are open to proposals and opportunities with other presenting partners.

Program intention: To support productions in high demand, reach new audiences and encourage sustainable practice through partnerships.

Timeline: This program can take place at any time throughout the year, in conversation with artistic teams and partners.

Staffing responsibility: Artistic Director.

La Mama Online

In light of Covid-19 and the temporary closure of live venues, La Mama Online provides audiences with new opportunities to connect and experience theatre virtually. The rapid shift to online streaming highlights the value of digital engagement and providing accessible content and experiences for broader local, regional, national and international audiences.

From 2022 - 2025 we will create more digital works and access to theatre online. From 2022, the newly built La Mama HQ and La Mama Courthouse will have the capabilities of streaming and live-theatre broadcasting and will provide in-house technical support. A video-on-demand system will be developed, enabling artists to benefit from their digital rights and audiences to access content easily and affordably. First Nations arts will be amplified and greater access provided to First Nations audiences through online mediums. With digital and emerging technologies such as Virtual Reality (VR), Augmented Reality (AR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), La Mama Online enables risk-taking and experimentation in creative works and encourages people to reimagine live theatre experience.

Program intention: To add value to performance artists and audiences through creation, presentation and distribution of online content, to support innovation and experimentation, to reach and engage new and existing audiences.

Timeline: This program is available year-round

Staffing responsibility: Online Producer



Kingfisher Image by Wilson Liew



Perspective Artificialis Image by Sarah Walker

PROGRAMS: CREATION

Creation supports artists in the making of art.

La Mama Explorations

Operating since the 1980s, Explorations has presented works in development, adopting the standard La Mama model and offerings artists three nights in the space to explore their practice, a small pro rata production budget and box office split, technical, venue and marketing support as well as a community of like-minded creatives, and an environment for dialogue and evolution.

From 2022 La Mama will provide each Exploration with a Production/Stage Manager. We will program approximately 14 Explorations productions per year (three-night seasons not sharing the space).

Program intention: To engage with new artists and to offer an entry point to explore ideas and works in development in a supported environment.

Timeline: From 2023 Explorations is scheduled for six weeks across July – August each year at La Mama HQ

Staffing responsibility: Artistic Director

La Mama Emerging

For more than 20 years, La Mama collaborated with Platform Youth Theatre, which sadly ended with the defunding and closure of Platform in 2014. To continue to provide a much-needed home for these emerging artists, La Mama ran a series of youth programs from 2015 – 2017, encouraging young people, particularly individuals not associated with a tertiary institution, to develop their own voice and devise their own work in a collaborative environment.

From 2023, La Mama Emerging will facilitate the stimulation of ideas and the generation of works devised by an ensemble of 18-25 year olds. The program will be open access and the only requirement is a commitment to attend. It’s free for all participants (and like all La Mama shows, the box office is split between the team) and people can come back year after year.

Approximately 20 workshops take place over six weeks at La Mama Courthouse and there is a performance season held at either Courthouse or La Mama. La Mama Emerging is a way into the industry and practice for young people and many past participants have developed as artists through La Mama’s channels. La Mama is committed to continuing to support La Mama Emerging participants to find other opportunities and to continue to make their own work.

Program intention: To provide a structure for theatre-making workshops and performance outcomes for young and emerging theatre-makers.

Timeline: From 2023 La Mama Emerging is scheduled for six weeks across July – August each year at La Mama Courthouse.

Staffing responsibility: A La Mama Emerging Facilitator is employed on a casual basis to implement this program.

La Mama Residencies

La Mama Residencies offer theatre-makers, playwrights, directors, cross disciplinary artists, and other creatives the essential time required to develop practice in a focused and framed context. Based at the La Mama Courthouse, our residency program, whilst open to all, is designed to maximise opportunities at La Mama for regional, interstate and international artists. This is essential to build our artist network, to ensure La Mama is as open and accessible as possible and to offer ways to introduce interstate/ regional and international artists to our local artist community and visa-versa.

The program offers artists up to two weeks in the space, keys to the venue (in the usual La Mama fashion) and freedom to come and go as required. Artists aren’t required to deliver a formal outcome in exchange for the residency, however should they wish to present findings or a showing at the end of their time it would be welcome. Through partnerships with regional, interstate and international companies and collectives, the La Mama Residencies program will strive to secure additional financial support for travel and accommodation, but in the instance this doesn’t come to fruition, the space will remain available and through years of discussions with regional and interstate groups, we trust this would remain an attractive offering.

Program intention: To provide space for artists, particularly those not from Melbourne, to develop work without the pressure of a performance outcome.

Timeline: From 2023 residencies are scheduled once a year in February/December at La Mama Courthouse.

Staffing responsibility: Artistic Director.

La Mama Playreadings

La Mama has a long history of holding Playreadings on Saturday afternoons, in the set of another show. These public readings are often the first stage in the La Mama programming process and are an opportunity for writers primarily, but also for performers and directors, to hear the words aloud, with a live audience. From here, there are often redrafting processes before the work is ready for full production. La Mama staff attend the readings and are available to offer feedback and support in next stages. Tickets are \$10 and conversation about the work (formal Q&A/informal chat) is encouraged.

From 2022 – 2025 we will continue this tradition but in addition, from 2023 there will be more space available at the Courthouse for six weeks across July – August where Playreadings will have more rehearsal time in the space to strengthen the possibilities of developing the work and have more flexible presentation times. We try and create space for all Playreading requests and typically do 10 – 15 per year.

Program intention: To provide the space for a public reading where writers, directors and creative teams can test and hear the work and receive feedback at an early stage of development.

Timeline: La Mama Playreadings take place at either venue on Saturday afternoons and from 2023 at various timeslots at La Mama Courthouse from July – August.

Staffing responsibility: Artistic Director.

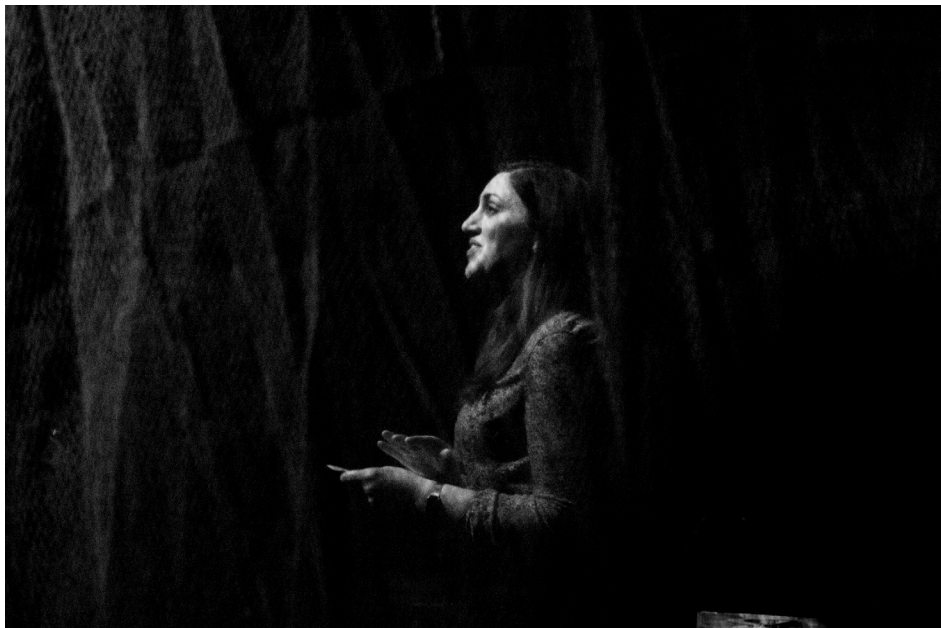
La Mama Script Appraisal

La Mama also has a long history of offering a script appraisal service for writers, offering written feedback and suggestions for opportunities moving forward. This has always been a national and very popular service and is also often a first step in the La Mama programming process. From 2023 we will have a panel of diverse script readers available to read unsolicited scripts from all Australian playwrights. Playwrights will have the option to receive one page of written feedback or a phone conversation (at no cost) with the option of an ongoing dramaturgical dialogue (at a small fee).

Program intention: To provide a national service for playwrights to have their work read and responded to.

Timeline: This program is available year round.

Staffing responsibility: A rotating panel of diverse script readers will be coordinated by the Artistic Director.



Poetica Curator Amanda Anastasi. Image by Brendan Bonsack

PROGRAMS: OUTREACH

Outreach takes La Mama off-site, actively reaching out to new artists and audiences, with a focus on supporting those facing barriers to access the arts.

La Mama Mobile

La Mama Mobile formally began in 2012 with the aim of increasing the reach, visibility and engagement with La Mama through touring, regional connection and community building. With the hope of creating the famous La Mama hospitality and spirit on the road, since its inception, the program has developed meaningful relationships with venues, communities and artists across regional Victoria and beyond, in recent years forging interstate and international partnerships and facilitating a multitude of possibilities of collaboration and exchange beyond a traditional touring model (ie. La Mama Residencies.) The program will continue to support local artists to share their work with new audiences, to develop and nourish meaningful relationships across the globe and to find ways to support incoming regional, interstate and international artists into La Mama (ie. La Mama Festivals).

From 2022 – 2025 we will continue this pursuit with the hope of presenting a La Mama Mobile outbound tour biannually, building on existing relationships and developing new relationships to support artists beyond Melbourne through regular programming, but specifically through La Mama Residencies, Festivals and Script Appraisals. We hope in this period to establish a better collaboration with La Mama Learning, touring a work on the VCAA syllabus to regional students and developing relationships with regional schools.

Over the next four years we also hope, through sponsorship, to acquire a van, to be stocked with the necessary equipment for quick and simple set up of touring and travelling shows, adaptable for any situation or location. This would include a set of LED lights, push up stands, truss, touring lighting desk and audio desk, portable PA system and appropriate cables and should include travel cases and a trolley to enable one person to easily load and unload. When not in use by La Mama Mobile, the van may be loaned out to other artists as a tour vehicle as an in-kind donation towards their tour.

Program intention: To reach audiences and artists beyond Carlton by partnering with venues and communities, to take the La Mama experience on the road and to develop collaborations for exchange.

Timeline: Inbound exchange every second year, outbound tour every other year (Pending funding opportunities).

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Outreach/Engagement Producer.

La Mama Community

The La Mama Community program has been developed from and always been responsive to requests and needs of the community. With a local focus, La Mama has partnered with service and support organisations such as Adult Multicultural Engagement Services (AMES), Disability Services (Back to Back, DVA, Rollercoaster), Neighbourhood Houses, drop-in-centres, international student services and hostels and accommodation providers. La Mama has run workshops, devised and presented performance, provided free tickets and transport through our Community Access Ticket Scheme, as well as provided many a free cup of coffee and a space to connect for disenfranchised individuals in the community. La Mama Community also focuses on cross-sector relationships within the community (ie. Mental health networks, Melbourne University Science Gallery, COASIT, Readings, Carlton Residents Association, local schools) to activate and nourish the local community, and provide access to the theatre for communities who might not be connected.

From 2022 – 2025 La Mama Community will draw on existing relationships and continue to respond to needs and opportunities, but will be able to provide more space for community events in the Rehearsal Hub in the newly built La Mama, as well as in the dedicated six weeks across July – August at the Courthouse (alongside Playreadings and Emerging programs). We will continue to offer free tours to schools, community groups and organisations and will continue to participate in Open House Melbourne, opening our doors for free community history tours. We will also involve a local First Nation’s elder to contextualise this recent history within an Indigenous history. We will continue our Community Ticket Access Scheme, providing free tickets and transport to those in need.

We also intend to introduce A Day in Carlton: Coffee, Cake and Culture: a project that partners La Mama with Carlton neighbours such as COASIT Museo Italiano, Readings Bookshop and Nova Cinema. Student groups, visiting tourists and other community groups (ie. CAE) would be able to learn of Carlton’s unique history, explore what Carlton now offers, visit Melbourne University, Kathleen Syme Community Centre, take a history of La Mama tour, enjoy the local food on offer and enjoy some culture with a film at Cinema Nova and a play at La Mama.

Program intention: To engage with the local community through partnerships and collaborations and to find opportunities to overcome barriers for those on the margins or experiencing difficulty in accessing the arts.

Timeline: This program is responsive and available year-round however there will be increased opportunity at the Courthouse July – August.

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Outreach/Engagement Producer.



DVA: Spin Me A Yarn. Images by Patti Green

PROGRAMS: FESTIVALS

Festivals connects our program to cultural events, highlights the work of particular communities and develops a hub of activity and connectivity.

La Mama Festival Partnerships and Hubs

For decades La Mama has participated in existing cultural festivals like Midsumma, Comedy and Fringe, programming aligned work in the regular La Mama model, and stretching our resources to accommodate the various needs.

From 2023 we intend to increase our participation, by turning the Courthouse into a festival hub, activating the space in a vibrant and exciting way and bringing in new artists and audiences through music and other events. We will employ a Festival Curator/Producer for each festival, with an aligned model that ensures curators represent the specified community (ie. Midsumma / Indigenous Theatre Festival) or specialise in the area (ie. Comedy). These Curator/Producers will work with the Artistic Director to curate the festival and take the administrative load off La Mama staff by producing the festival.

In adopting a hub model, multiple shows will be presented each night with tight turn arounds necessitating basic designs. For artists, the festival will offer all the regular La Mama support with additional rehearsal space, a provided Production/Stage Manager and Publicist and registration fees covered. These festival hubs will target interstate artists who need a bit of extra support and industry connection, especially in a competitive festival context. This hub model best leverages the festivals support while creating the possibility of more meaningful partnerships.

We will continue to participate in Asia TOPA and Yirramboi, and hope to develop relationships with Melbourne Writers’ (and Emerging Writers’) Festival and Melbourne Music Week, and will remain responsive to other relevant cultural festivals that arise.

Program intention: To provide extra artist support to thrive in festival contexts; to create a hub/festival atmosphere that stimulates and delights and to meaningfully partner with festivals for a more sustainable industry.

Timeline: The timeline will align with external festivals. See Roadmap.

Staffing responsibility: The Artistic Director with work with new casual Curators/Producers (Midsumma, Comedy and Fringe).

La Mama for Kids

La Mama for Kids began in 2008 and has mostly been a weekend and school holiday program for primary school aged children. Due to staffing, it hasn’t been in operation in recent years but in order to invite and entice future generations into the wonderful world of independent theatre, and in response to the very well attended children’s program as part of the Melbourne Festival of Puppetry, La Mama is committed to bringing this program back from 2022. Historically, the La Mama for Kids program has worked best when situated within a festival context, and so we will reintroduce La Mama for Kids as part of our Festival Hub Model, presenting one production per festival, as aligned with school holidays. Artistically, like all programming, the work will present a diverse range of themes and styles, and will be showcase the best of independent theatre-makers creating work for young audiences.

Program intention: To engage future generations or audiences and artists and provide opportunities for the joys of independent theatre for young audiences.

Timeline: The timeline will align with external festivals and school holidays. See Roadmap.

Staffing responsibility: A La Mama for Kids Curator/Producer will work with other festival Curator/Producers.



Lilly and May. Image by Darren Gill

PROGRAMS: FIRST NATIONS THEATRE

La Mama has a strong history of proactively nurturing First Nations theatre, including our continuous collaborations with ILBIJERRI since the late 90's. In 2012, Artistic Director Liz Jones was awarded an AO for her 'promotion of Indigenous playwrights and actors, and to the community.' This priority has been central to La Mama for decades and continues to strengthen.

Over the next four years La Mama will continue this vision by increasing and meeting the capacity of its First Nations content within its organisational structure. La Mama will provide a platform to create, challenge and inspire Aboriginal theatre by Indigenous artists which gives voice to all language groups in Australia. Especially Victorian Indigenous language groups.

La Mama's First Nations Producer (appointed in 2021), will design a First Nations Strategy in line with a Reconciliation Action Plan which will increase Indigenous opportunities, by providing community members the artistic and technical skills to participate in the development of the First Nations Theatre Program. This role will oversee and support the implementation of all Indigenous content within the structure of La Mama’s organisations, this ensures the capacity to meet this increased Indigenous need.

La Mama has the space to support Victorian Indigenous communities needs to share their story, songs and dances and will invest in the needs to increase Indigenous audience participation.

La Mama understands that Indigenous voices and stories need to come from an Indigenous standpoint perspective and acknowledges and respects the cultural process that Indigenous people need to go on to value their place in a society that has undervalued them.

La Mama understands that it is not our cultural responsibility to tell the Indigenous stories, songs and dances, instead recognising as an organisation that we have the capacity to provide the venue space and managerial skills to assist in building a strong, vibrant First Nations performing arts sector which can/is sustainable, through Indigenous programming and can/will support Indigenous artistic vision to support strong economic development for our Victoria Indigenous community members.

The Indigenous Strategy, created by First Nations Producer Glenn Shea, Elder/Respected Person and Community Person of the Year NAIDOC 2016/2020, Wathaurong Aboriginal Community/Coop, highlights the values that lead La Mama’s First Nations Theatre program. They are The Power of Language, Indigenous Protocols and Ways of Working, Self- determination, Respect and Indigenous Diversity.

Through all operations, La Mama is committed to the [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety Framework \(DHHS\)](#). The key elements are: Knowledge and respect for self, Knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal people, A commitment to redesigning organisations and systems to reduce racism and discrimination. The key domains for action are: Creating a culturally safe workplace and organisation; Aboriginal self-determination, Leadership and accountability.

Festivals: La Mama will participate in YIRRAMBOI biannual festival as well as host our own bi-annual Indigenous Theatre Festival. These festivals will be an opportunity to showcase the works of Indigenous theatre-makers, partner with relevant organisations and engage Indigenous audiences, celebrating the stories, songs and dances of First Nations artists.

Program intention: To highlight Indigenous theatre through internal and external festivals
Timeline: La Mama will present a First Nations Theatre Festival every two years. Every other year, we will partner with Yirramboi Festival.
Staffing responsibility: First Nations Producer Glenn Shae

Mentorships: La Mama’s mentorship program will attach First Nations mentees as stage managers, directors, designers, producers and makers with experienced artists (First Nations artists mentors will be prioritised) to develop skills through the journey of creating a production. These will be structured, supported roles.

Program intention: To develop more skilled First Nations theatre workers for future generations
Timeline: Mentorships will align with productions
Staffing responsibility: First Nations Producer Glenn Shae

Seasons: La Mama will continue to present works by, with and for First Nations communities as part of our regular programming. La Mama’s First Nations Producer will sit on the Script Appraisal Panel and invite other First Nations readers to participate, on rotation, in the works selection process. We will continue to prioritise First Nations works and artists in all our programming.

Program intention: To continue to prioritise First Nations voices in all programming
Timeline: Year round
Staffing responsibility: First Nations Producer Glenn Shae

Blak Stage: Each season, La Mama will present a night of First Nations music and storytelling, in line with our LaMamica program. These events, working in the set of another show are casual, accessible and attract a regular, engaged audience in partnership with Deadly Events.

Program intention: To regularly showcase First Nations story-tellers and musicians in an informal, accessible setting, engaging new audiences
Timeline: Sunday night x 4 per year
Staffing responsibility: First Nations Producer Glenn Shae and curator Troy Benjamin



NGARNK Giver of Life DarrenGill

PROGRAMS: ENGAGEMENT

Engagement engages school and tertiary students and institutions, opens the doors to experiences for the next generation of artists and arts-workers, advocates for artists and the arts and communicates La Mama’s rich and important history.

La Mama Learning

La Mama Learning attracts thousands of secondary school students per year, primarily through the VCAA Drama and Theatre Studies curriculum, but also through other subjects, excursions and events. Surrounding the VCAA selected productions, La Mama Learning provides post-show forums, end of year refresher study sessions and, in partnership with Currency Press, published versions of each script. La Mama staff support artists to submit for VCAA and program successful applicants.

La Mama Learning also provides year-round advice to teachers in selecting productions for their students, provides Professional Development workshop opportunities for teachers and students and responds to need and opportunity by providing students, schools and other educators to have access to, and connect with, artists and theatre-makers at La Mama.

Across 2022 – 2025 we will continue to develop on-going and productive relationships between schools, other education institutions and strive for three to four VCAA syllabus works to be programmed each year. We will introduce workshops for school students offering hands on experience in the technical elements of theatre-making. We also hope to pursue a School Residency program, creating a relevant and intensive project with a neighbouring school partner, with an outcome at La Mama/La Mama Courthouse.

Program intention: To promote a joy of theatre in school-age audiences and to inspire an enduring engagement through connection to the curriculum.

Timeline: Aligns with requirements of VCAA and selected productions. See Program Roadmap.

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Learning Producer.

La Mama Tertiary

La Mama has long worked with tertiary institutions across Australia, offering a pathway for final year students and graduates into the industry, assessing students, speaking at graduate information events, and partnering with student union bodies and courses to present work. We have ongoing relationships with national performing arts institutions (NIDA, WAAPA, VCA, Flinders) as well as universities (Melbourne, Deakin, La Trobe, Monash).

La Mama is as a great place for interstate students to present their first works in Melbourne after graduating and La Mama staff regularly meet with recently moved graduates to support in navigating the Victorian scene. La Mama staff make an effort to engage in the work of graduates and work with tertiary institutions to find pathways into the industry Across 2022 - 2025, La Mama will actively reach out to these students to foster communication and collaboration.

Program intention: To engage tertiary students, particularly those focusing on the performing arts, and to support the transition from tertiary to industry, creating a pathway for emerging artists.

Timeline: This program is available year-round.

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Outreach/Engagement Producer.

La Mama Archives

La Mama’s extensive archives have been preserved at the University of Melbourne since 1973. We hope to maintain a fruitful relationship with the University of Melbourne Archives and cement a partnership to ensure the continued housing of our archives.

From 2022 – 2025, we will ensure ongoing preservation, maintenance, growth and promotion of the La Mama Archive with a focus on digital archives and promoting and making our archives widely accessible. We have formalised our relationship with AusStage (The Australian Live Performance Database) and are committed to making our collection accessible. We we will follow protocols for archiving compliance, develop internal processes for digital archiving, and ensure standardised compatibility of material formats.

We will also, in response to the fire of 2019, develop a La Mama Lost History project, to capture aspects of La Mama’s past lost in the fire of 2018.

Program intention: To preserve and share La Mama’s rich history.

Timeline: This program is available year-round.

Staffing responsibility: General Manager.

La Mama Experience

La Mama Experience captures the long-term work La Mama has done and will continue to do in offering a place for curious souls to connect with La Mama and experience life in a theatrical context. Each year, this program offers one to two internships, up to 25 Year 10 Work Experience students and more than 40 Volunteers opportunities to engage, learn and develop at La Mama. La Mama endeavors to create rewarding experiences for all who give their time and we encourage people with all abilities to participate.

Program intention: To create opportunities for interested artists, arts-workers and community members to be engaged in a meaningful and productive ways.

Timeline: This program is available year-round.

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Outreach/Engagement Producer.

La Mama Advocacy

La Mama advocates broadly for the arts in a range of contexts, with the agenda of strengthening the whole sector and working collaboratively within the industry.

La Mama offers artists services to empower artists to advocate for themselves. Staff support independent artists with budgets, funding avenues, grant-writing, letters of support and broker relationships to networks of producers, dramaturgical support, casting, stage management and other creative connections. La Mama advises on pathways and connects artists to services, organisations, festivals and touring networks to help with the development of work and people. La Mama staff are available to discuss future programming initiatives, programs and productions.

This support is available to all but is particularly encouraged for artists engaging through all the elements of our Creation program.

Note that La Mama staff never impose artistic feedback but are available to offer a response if requested.

Program intention: To support artists and the arts industry through sharing knowledge, advocating and being engaged in the sector and society.

Timeline: This program is available year-round.

Staffing responsibility: All staff

La Mama Alumni

La Mama has hosted tens of thousands of Australian artists over more than 50 years. From 2022 – 2025 La Mama intends to capture a number of case studies that demonstrate the various trajectories of artists that have worked at La Mama, keep connected to our community through capturing artists contacts through a CRM and encourage artist return.

Program intention: To stay in communication with artists who have worked at La Mama, keep track of artists trajectories and monitor and promote the impact La Mama has on the development of artists.

Timeline: This program is available year-round.

Staffing responsibility: General Manager.

PROGRAMS: LA MAMICA

La Mamica includes our artist-driven programs that extend beyond theatre, across art-forms and into other realms of performance.

La Mama Musica

La Mama Musica is one of Melbourne’s longest running music nights, in operation since 1969. It is a curated concert series showcasing creative music, improvising musicians and sound-artists. The intimate settings and fabulous acoustics of La Mama’s two historic theatres allows fine musicians to perform in a very special environment, amidst the set of the current theatre production – so improvisation and flexibility of presentation is also part of our process. Musica encourages unusual collaborations, provides a vital space for creative risk-taking and supports the development of new work – giving each event a special air of excitement for artists and audience alike. From 2022 – 2025 we hope to develop a partnership with Melbourne Music Festival to connect, bring in new audiences and highlight and extend the program.

Program intention: To allow a space for musicians to experiment, explore and grow in different contexts and to offer diverse experiences for the La Mama audience.

Timeline: Monday night x 4 per year, Melbourne Music Festival.

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Musica Curator Gemma Horbury.

La Mama Cinematica

La Mama theatre has a rich history of presenting avant-garde and cutting edge film. Notably, in 1978 La Mama debuted a collection of films entitled Women on Film that included works by Peter Tammer, Lisa Roberts and Monique Schwarz.

Continuing this legacy, in 2020 La Mama launched Cinematica. A quarterly event to present experimental, the moving-image and avant-garde film. Looking to 2022 - 2025 Cinematica aims to create, develop and enhance partnerships with organisations such as Melbourne Women in Film Festival, Melbourne Queer Film Festival, National Film and Sound Archives, ACMI, Sissy Screens and Dogmilk in order to enlighten and engage new and existing audiences at La Mama through film.

Program intention: To provide a platform for Australian filmmakers to present their new work and for La Mama’s audience to be exposed to explorations of the moving image through various film mediums.

Timeline: Sunday night x 4 per year, Melbourne Women in Film Festival, Melbourne Queer Film Festival

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Cinematica Curator Tessa Spooner



Life is a Carousel, Image by Darren Gill



Puppet Festival Forecourt, Image by Darren Gill

La Mama Poetica

La Mama presented poetry for the first time in 1967 with Glen Tomesetti and Kris Hemensley. Following these wonderful events, Mal Morgan began to organise La Mama Poetica nights which took place every five weeks. Now curated by Amanda Anastasi, La Mama Poetica remains a night of some of the best spoken-word and poetry that Melbourne has to offer, with a diverse selection of both emerging and established poets. From 2022 – 2025 we intend to develop a partnership with Melbourne Writers Festival/Emerging Writers Festival to connect, bring in new audiences and highlight and extend the program.

Program intention: To allow a space for poets to share, connect and develop form and to offer diverse experiences for the La Mama audience.

Timeline: Tuesday nights x 4 per year, One week ‘festival’ for Melbourne Writers Festival/Emerging Writers Festival.

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Poetica Curator Amanda Anastasi

La Mama Cabaretica

As the latest addition to the sisterhood of La Mama’s monthly or seasonal events, La Mama Cabaretica provides a vivid celebration of the cabaret scene in Melbourne. Cabaretica is a new, quarterly, late-night performance to be held at The Courthouse, on selected Fridays, after the programmed show – beginning around 10pm or so. Three performers/acts will be invited by curators Isabel Knight, to feature in sets around 30 mins each: one will be the Conferencier/MC; one will perform before interval and the other after interval. Cabaretica offers an opportunity for established and emerging cabaret performers, and fans of cabaret, to come together to expand, explore and explode this bold and dynamic artform.

Program intention: To allow a space for cabaret artists to share, connect and develop form and to offer diverse experiences for the La Mama audience

Timeline: Late Friday nights x 4 per year

Staffing responsibility: La Mama Cabaretica Curator Isabel Knight

Program Road Map

This Roadmap is indicative only. Months and weeks are suggestive. This is intended to give an overview of the venue-specific programs and external (and changeable) cultural events that influence responsive programming. With this program, we achieve a reduction in venue costs and staffing workload, making operations more sustainable.

Denotes when both theatres are dark.

Denotes regular programming.

Denotes other programs. Festival programming (Midsumma, Fringe, Comedy) may also take place at La Mama HQ but Courthouse will be the 'hub'.

		2022		2023		2024		2025	
MTH / WK		LA MAMA HQ	COURTHOUSE	LA MAMA HQ	COURTHOUSE	LA MAMA HQ	COURTHOUSE	LA MAMA HQ	COURTHOUSE
Jan	1								
	2								
	3				Midsumma Rehearsals		Midsumma Rehearsals		Midsumma Rehearsals
	4	PRIMARY PROGRAM	PRIMARY PROGRAM	PRIMARY PROGRAM	MIDSUMMA HUB	PRIMARY PROGRAM	MIDSUMMA HUB	PRIMARY PROGRAM	MIDSUMMA HUB
	5								
Feb	6						Residency		
	7								
	8								
	9				Asia TOPA				Asia TOPA
Mar	10								
	11						VCE School Show		
	12								
	13				Comedy Rehearsals				Comedy Rehearsals
	14				COMEDY FESTIVAL / La Mama for Kids Comedy		COMEDY FESTIVAL / La Mama for Kids Comedy		COMEDY FESTIVAL / La Mama for Kids Comedy
Apr	15				VCE School Show				VCE School Show
	16								
	17								
	18								
May	19						Yirramboi Festival		
	20								
	21						Knowledge Week		
	22				Indigenous Theatre Festival				Indigenous Theatre Festival
	23						VCE School Show		
Jun	24				VCE School Show				VCE School Show
	25								
	26						Melbourne Cabaret Festival		
	27				Emerging Writers Festival				Emerging Writers Festival
Jul	28								
	29				La Mama for Kids Puppet Festival		VCE School Show		La Mama for Kids Puppet Fest
	30		PRIMARY PROGRAM		VCE School Show				VCE School Show
	31								
	32								
Aug	33			EXPLORATIONS	Emerging / Playreadings / Community	EXPLORATIONS	Emerging / Playreadings / Community	EXPLORATIONS	Emerging / Playreadings / Community
	34								
	35								
	36								
	37								
Sep	38						Melbourne Writers Festival		
	39	PRIMARY PROGRAM				PRIMARY PROGRAM		PRIMARY PROGRAM	
	40			PRIMARY PROGRAM					
	41				Fringe Rehearsals		Fringe Rehearsals		Fringe Rehearsals
Oct	42				Melbourne Fringe Festival / La Mama for Kids Fringe		Melbourne Fringe Festival / La Mama for Kids Fringe		Melbourne Fringe Festival / La Mama for Kids Fringe
	43								
	44								
	45				La Mama Mobile Exchange				La Mama Mobile Exchange
Nov	46						LA MAMA MOBILE TOUR		
	47								
	48	EXPLORATIONS 20 OCTOBER - 18 DECEMBER			Melbourne Music Week		Melbourne Music Week		Melbourne Music Week
	49				Residency		Residency		
Dec	50								
	51								
	52								

THE ARTIST EXPERIENCE (CASE STUDIES, ARTIST QUOTES)

La Mama's list of Alumni reads like a who's who of Australian theatre including such greats as David Williamson, Cate Blanchett, Jack Hibberd, Uncle Jack Charles, Patricia Cornelius, Susie Dee, Christos Tsiolkas, Graeme Blundell, Emma Valente, Judith Lucy, Barry Dickins, Glenn Shea and Julia Zemiro.

La Mama is proud to play a crucial role in fostering the distinguished careers of so many established and emerging Australian artists. Each year, works presented at La Mama go onto to have repeat seasons in a multitude of contexts. Artists come and go, spending a lifetime developing and refining their artistry at La Mama while advancing a career representing national festivals, major companies and following all sorts of international opportunities.

La Mama's artists demonstrate a critical and exciting cycle of growth and development of the individual.

These stories tell of artists who started at La Mama as emerging voices and who continued to develop via their relationship with the people and place that is this space. Such stories demonstrate the critical role that La Mama plays in the journey of artists: offering them a place to begin, starting small and going on to lead big creative lives, receiving national recognition and supporting the work of future generations.

"I always felt as though I was on the fringe of the performing arts here in Melbourne as an Aboriginal performer and people from La Mama said you should write something yourself Jack! So I did and we called it Jack Charles is Up and Fighting. La Mama has been a backbone of my early development in the arts. I couldn't have done it without the assistance ... I always felt welcomed. I didn't really feel as though I was on the fringe once I was doing production stuff here. The biggest highlight of working with La Mama has been in recent years when we did Coranderrk – a story of the trials and tribulations of the mob up there, William Barak, my great, great grandfather Johnny Charles, and many others up there in the Coranderrk mission in Healesville. It's become significant now, testament to La Mama's eyeballing significant moments in Victorian Aboriginal History. And it's so good for me because it's part of my history." **Jack Charles - Elder, Playwright and Performer.**

"My own artistic career could not have happened without La Mama, and could not have continued to develop and grow without the collaboration and support of La Mama. I first staged Woman in the Wall there with our new theatre company, Hildegard, in 1992. Since then I have acted in, directed and presented a number of projects: White Neda (1998), Spinning, Weaving, Trees and Songs (1998), Sarajevo Suite by Helen Lucas (2011) and Of Cows, Women and War (2014-6), both of which toured as part of La Mama Mobile. From 2014 – 2019 La Mama has produced the 'Uncle Vanya project with Bagryana Popov': a site-specific, durational version of Anton Chekhov's play, adapted to the Australian landscape. The work has been presented in Eganstown and Bundanoon. In 2019 Uncle Vanya was presented by the Adelaide Festival to sold out audiences receiving five-star reviews." **Bagryana Popov - Theatre Director.**

"The invaluable experience, exposure and learning that thousands and thousands of theatre practitioners have gained from making work at La Mama is unquestionable. The number includes playwrights, directors, actors, designers, creatives and crew. They have cut their teeth with the support from this essential company. I'm a playwright who has benefited immensely from making work here. My first play with the company was Witch. It gave me great insight into my craft and an understanding of the power of a small theatre and the relationship to audience. Another play, Lilly and May, had its premiere at La Mama. It was a work that was later developed into a play called Love, which has been performed across Australia and internationally and travelled to the Venice Biennale in July 2019 having been programmed for the Theatre Festival." **Patricia Cornelius - Playwright and recipient of the Windham-Campbell Prize for Drama.**

"La Mama allowed Little Ones Theatre to take risks, explore, and build a show from scratch, as though we were artists in residence – giving us full license to develop our devising skills on a style of work we had never attempted before. Getting to respond to the history and charm of the tiny and inspiring La Mama Theatre was a godsend that made my practice as a director richer. It showed me the beauty of time and space and how artists should be given more opportunities to inhabit space to build new works in this country. La Mama knew we needed this and provided it tenfold. They are the supporters of independent art – and that isn't about lip service, it is about their passion and bravery when it comes to the facilitation of new voices in Australia. The team showed absolute support of my company Little Ones Theatre and housed us as though we were part of the family. This kind of respect and nourishment of artistic practice does not occur anywhere else in this country and I shall be eternally grateful for the chance to work within this iconic theatre company. They made me fall in love with theatre again." **Stephen Nicolazzo - Theatre Director and founder, Little Ones Theatre.**

"As a young theatre maker and performer La Mama is an organisation that has been pivotal to my development and growth as an artist. I was fortunate to begin my time at La Mama as part of the Platform Emerging Theatre at La Mama in 2015. There, I developed a strong relationship with its staff and community – the sense of community, humbling support and love they provide is immeasurable. I have since worked with and performed within La Mama a multitude of times. As a young performer of a diverse cultural background, La Mama has been invaluable to me. The organisation has created a safe space for someone like myself to be free to be an artist – not an Asian artist, not a queer artist nor a 'youth' artist. The loss of funding for Platform Youth Theatre was significant for me – La Mama stepped forward to continue supporting youth initiatives such as the La Mama Youth Ensemble in 2017. La Mama's support and understanding of the importance of such initiatives makes the organisation a stand-out. As an emerging artist, I cannot express enough gratitude for their ongoing support of new, emerging and mid-career artist; for seeing our potential and giving us a space, along with technical and monetary support. La Mama is an institution built on passion and care for artists like myself – I cannot say I would know where I would be in my career without the organisation." **Sandra Chui - Theatre Maker.**

"From day one I've felt at home, and supported by the staff at La Mama. It gives me confidence to take risks, to program more adventurously, and to challenge myself and my audience. Since Homophonic! has become more successful, a few major venues have asked me to present the show with them, and I always say no. The home of Homophonic! is at La Mama, the culture and community of the space add more to the audience and performer experience than a fancy foyer ever could. In my career as a touring musician, I've played at every major hall around the country, and most of the smaller regional theatres on the major touring routes. All theatres have their own culture and community, but I've never come across another theatre like La Mama. The culture they've curated, both on stage and off, is built on years of community building. It's rare, it's precious, and it's true. A commitment like theirs to the arts ecology of Melbourne can't be faked, and we'd be lost without them." **Miranda Hill - Musician.**

APPENDIX 4 MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

'Clara is delightful. Elena Mazzon is beguiling as Clara Schmann nee Wieck [...] Mazzon spellbinds her audience in an unassuming yet totally centred manner. [...] Nothing is out of place or unnecessary in this truly captivating solo performance.' - Suzanne Sandow, Stage Whispers

'A haunting fusion of Indonesian and Western performance traditions, Hades Fading uses spellbinding visual theatre, bilingual text and gamelan music to explore contemporary themes through ancient mythology. [...] an exquisitely crafted cross-cultural performance.' - Cameron Woodhead, The Age ★★ ★

'Homophonic! brings an abundance of individuality on stage, in performance and a long term community following.'
– Alice Mooney, Theatre Travels

'Both dancers are extremely skilled, graceful, authentic, and an absolute delight to watch.'
- Jaya Berged on 'Rehearsal for Death' ★★ ★

'Running with Emus has some beautiful and thought provoking moments, a stellar cast and plenty of poignance and relevance to the current political climate to warrant a viewing of a piece which will no doubt go on to become a staple in the library of important Australian works.' - Ross Larkin, Theatre Press

'The Rabble had a long, largely unheralded gestation at La Mama – the mother of much independent Melbourne theatre – before becoming internationally recognised feminist theatre mavericks.' - Cameron Woodhead, The Age

'Vadiveloo is very talented [director]: the synergy between screen art and live performance rarely breaks down, and the performances are sculpted into a series of memorable and imaginative provocations.'
- Cameron Woodhead, The Age, Unsuckle ★★ ★

'Iranian Bauhaus is a strongly feminist work, reclaiming the feminine in creation myth, in history, and in the world's engagement with art and storytelling.' - Liza Dezfouli, Arts Hub

'The indefatigable Liz Jones, who helped to establish La Mama with Betty Burstall in the 1960s, hits the target precisely when she invokes a 1973 speech from Gough Whitlam, which stresses breadth of engagement as more important than any simple notion of excellence to a healthy artistic climate.'
- Cameron Woodhead, The Age, Victorian Seniors Festival Reimagined 2020 ★★ ★

'La Mama Poetica Online rises to the challenge and continues to provide the opportunity to celebrate new and established artists.' - Patricia Di Risio, Stage Whispers

'Cactus brings to life the awkwardness and vulnerability of adolescence through well-crafted and vital performance.'
- Cameron Woodhead, The Age ★★ ★½

'This play is a joyous celebration of the strength of Nyoongar women, written, directed and performed by Nyoongar women. It smashes through the stereotypes reminding us all of what Aboriginal women have overcome and continue to fight against. It is a call to wider-Australia to recognise its ugly history and take a stand to ensure it doesn't become the future for more generations of Aboriginal children' - Kamarra Bell-Wykes, Blak Critics

'Mark Salvestro, as a charmingly dorky William O'Halloran, is so compelling and a master of storytelling that you will be lost in the world of the show. Successfully building an emotional connection to the audience with his earnest and deeply empathetic portrayal of his character's suffering, Salvestro is a delight to watch perform. His use of the middle and far gaze throughout the flashbacks, effectively creates the invisible presence of other people and pulls the audience into those intimate moments with him.' - Stephanie Lee, Theatre Travels

'It was wonderful to experience film on La Mama's stage; the intimate space worked well for showcasing and supporting the experimental artworks.' - Lucinda Naughton, Theatre Travels

'Maude Davey's direction is skilled and well thought-out, and lends cohesion to the show, bringing together all its parts in tonal complementarity.' – Jaya Berged on 'Marvellous' ★★ ★



Stretch. Image by Darren Gill

'As part of La Mama Theatre's mini festival Love Fest, Grand Gesture cracks through the fragile façade of Hollywood love, picks up the pieces, and then smashes those again for good measure.' – Valerie Ng, Time Out

'Grand Gesture is a playful romp of a show dealing with serious themes, namely how women are groomed by popular culture to respond positively to being treated badly by men.' - Liza Dezfouli, Arts Hub

'Fish has crafted a tribute to circus humour and clownperformance that demonstrates both an understanding of thebreadth of the art and a tribute to its many forms.' - Gully Thompson, Witness Performance

'Jofus & The Whale contains much intricately crafted physical comedy; it is a family friendly show that children will enjoy, and connoisseurs of clowning will want to see.' - Cameron Woodhead, The Age

'It's a really beautiful production, with warmth, care, thought and imagination. There's a strong undercurrent of magical realism that weaves the messages together, taking leaps of fantasy that manage to feel natural.'
– Isabelle Oderberg, Arts Hub on 'Picasso and His Dog' ★★ ★

'The Mermaid often presents the world of words as a confusing and limited way to portray the nuances of adolescent and transgendered experience, and some of the show's most striking moments come when, amid all the sound and fury, the performers simply exist onstage in eloquent silence, mermaids in their element. [...] Indeed, director Cassandra Fumi uses silence rather brilliantly to insist upon unspoken truths.' - Cameron Woodhead, The Age ★★ ★

'A joyous piece of collaborative invention by the teenage cast and adult theatre makers. [...] Here is a show that makes a protest – a persuasive, non-hectoring one – against stereotyping and the suppression of identity – and does it with wit, ingenuity, tempered anger, and a real feeling for how live theatre works.'
- Michael Brindley, Stage Whispers

“That's one of the big things about this process, it's about community, this deep, genuine care for each other,” says Fumi. “It has radicalised my practice ... Pop culture and puberty and boys and loneliness: all these things have come together to create this surreal, absurd, heightened piece of theatre.” Boltman was 12 when they started working on the play; they are about to turn 16. “There are so many shows about teenagers written by 40-or 50-year-olds. This is created by us, about us.” – Kerrie O'Brien, The Age

KEY PERSONNEL, GOVERNANCE AND STAFFING STRUCTURE

La Mama Inc is our operational entity. It is governed by a committee of management, and leadership reports to this committee. All (13) office staff and all (9) Producers/Curators will report to the CEO/Artistic Director. All (20) FOH staff report to the FOH Manager.

Liz Jones, Artistic Director and Caitlin Dullard currently share the role of CEO. Throughout the course of 2022 – 2025, Liz will take on the role of an involved elder, advising and guiding, working on the lost history project, while Caitlin Dullard takes over as Artistic Director/Creative Producer.

From 2023, we will employ 'aligned' casual Curators/Producers for Festivals and Multi-Arts Programs (Through a combination of organisational and philanthropic support).

Each year La Mama provides experiences for approximately 40 Volunteers, 25 Work Experience Students and 2 Interns. We intend to continue to do this from 2022 – 2025.

Current Committee and Staff roles and biographies are available here:

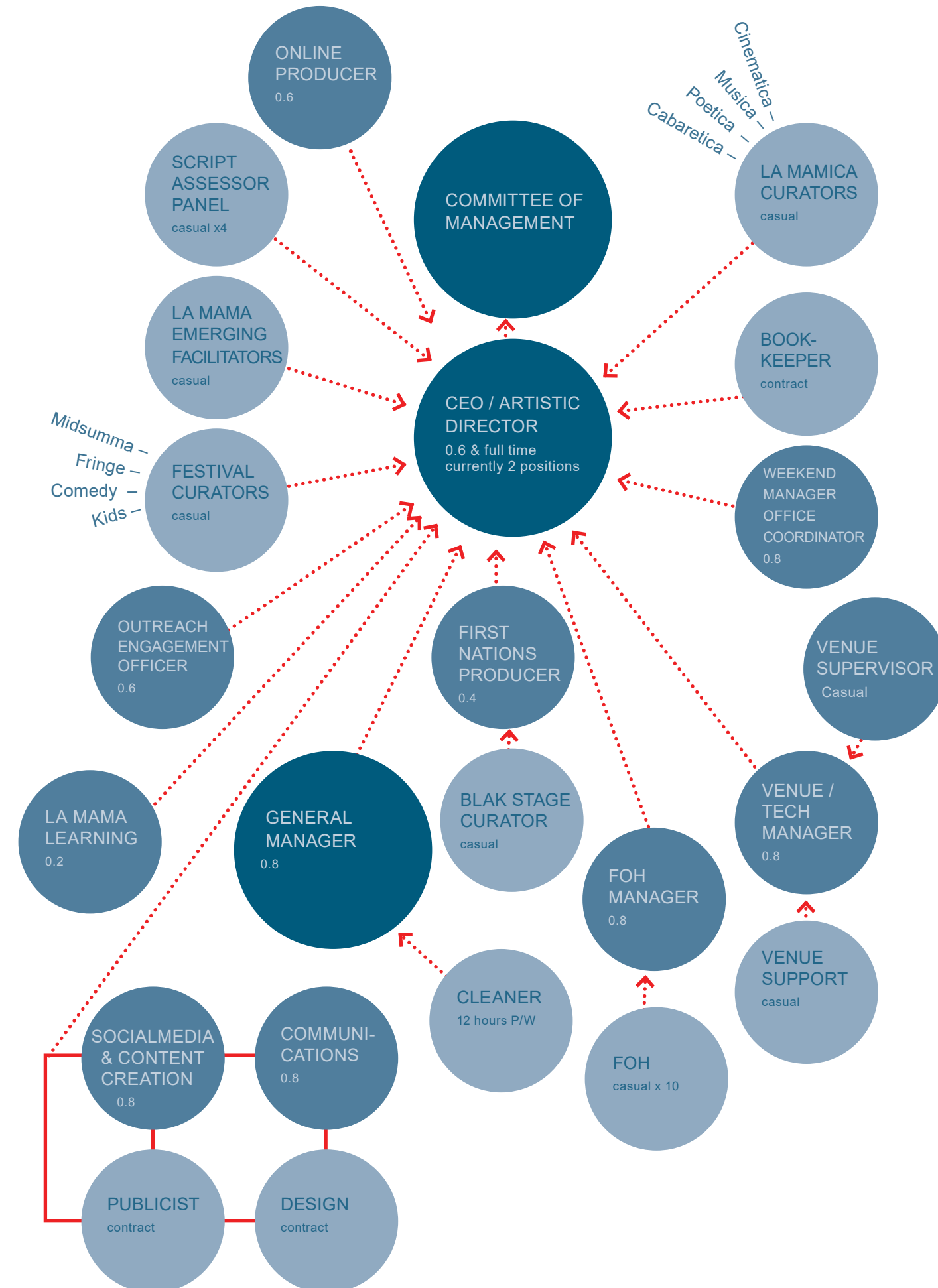
<https://lamama.com.au/about-la-mama/la-mama-staff/>

LA MAMA OFFICE STAFF 2021:



Top to bottom, left to right: Liz Jones (Artistic Director & Co-CEO), Caitlin Dullard (Co-CEO), Tessa Spooner (General Manager), Hayley Fox (Venue Technical Manager), Maureen Hartley (Learning Program Producer), Sophia Constantine (Marketing & Communications Coordinator), Amber Hart (Front of House Manager), Glenn Shea (First Nations Producer), Isabel Knight (Weekend Manager), Ruiqi Fu (Online Producer), Myfanwy Powell (Outreach and Engagement Producer), Adam Cass (Script Assessor & Marketing Design).

Staffing-Governance 2022 - 2025



La Mama has a multitude of stakeholders and partners and speaks to a range of markets. Throughout the time of the fire, fundraising campaign and rebuild, La Mama's profile has increased and the number of invested and interested parties has expanded. We continue to develop relationships for sustainability, cultural relevance, leveraging opportunities for artists and extending our audience reach to different contexts. La Mama has a strong history of meaningful partnerships and is open to collaborating with arts and non-arts organisations and responds to needs and interests.

La Mama is recognised as making a significant contribution to the arts ecology, providing essential services in developing, producing and presenting new Australian theatre. The State Government, through Creative Victoria have long recognised the fundamental contribution of the small-to-medium arts sector, supporting a robust and fulsome ecology of diverse organisations. At a local Government level, the City of Melbourne has demonstrated strong commitment to cultural development and La Mama aligns strongly with the council's emphasis on inclusion and access, environment and sustainability. We hope to continue these relationships into the future. At the same time, we hope to build on the fundraising work done through the Rebuild La Mama campaign and better develop philanthropic, community and business partnerships to garner meaningful support and exchange.

Stakeholders and Partnerships

- Independent Artists (local, state, national and international)
- Government and funding bodies (Federal, State, Local)
- Committee of Management (present, future, past)
- Office staff (present, future, past)
- FOH (present, future, past)
- Volunteers, Interns, Work Experience (present, future, past)
- Contract workers, Curators/Producers (present, future, past)
- Media outlets (print, radio)
- Online followers (FB, Twitter, Enews, Instagram)
- Diverse range of audiences (25,000+ annually)
- Diverse range of artists theatre-makers, writers, producers, designers, technicians, stage managers, directors, actors, musicians, poets, ensembles, independents, companies (2000+ annually)
- Artistic alumni
- Founder Betty Burtall and family
- Community of elders
- Arts Industry (National, State, Local)
- Heritage Victoria, National Trust
- Other small to medium arts organisations (e.g Next Wave, Melbourne Fringe)
- Service organisations (TNA, MEAA, LPA)
- Donors (La Mama Rebuild philanthropists and community donors)
- Potential future donors
- Competitors and collaborators
- Local Carlton businesses and residents
- Local Community organisations (La Mama Community)
- La Mama Rebuild architects and consultant team
- Melbourne University Archives
- Working Heritage (landlords)
- Previous, present and future project partners
- Arts and culture interested national community
- Festivals and festival staff
- Encore venues/organisations (La Mama Encore)
- Schools, tertiary institutions (La Mama Engagement)
- Regional venues (La Mama Mobile)
- Bar stock suppliers/future sponsors



Truth, Meaning, Value, Essence. Image by Darren Gill



Reciproco Bump In Image by Sophia Constantine

APPENDIX 8 RISKS, THREATS AND KEY ISSUES

- **Staff burn-out:** Please see pg. 12 for our commitment to staff wellbeing
- **Loss of funding:** It remains an organisational priority to continue to secure government support and diversify income streams through philanthropic support and partnerships
- **Unsuccessful succession plan:** A long-term strategy is in place to ensure smooth transition
- **Unsatisfactory new staffing:** A trial period will exist for all new staff
- **Irrelevance/Perceived irrelevance:** The Communications strategy will detail the approach to managing any perception of La Mama's irrelevance. Responsive, artist-driven programming will ensure continued artistic relevance
- **Lack of Resources:** La Mama's core business is sustainable with government operational funding. Additional programs will seek philanthropic support and the size and possibility of them will be managed accordingly
- **Managing Demand:** Demand will be managed through equitable, transparent programming and clear communication
- **Competing Artists Markets:** While La Mama does compete for funding with other small to medium arts organisations, we have an essential role in the market as we offer a national service to artists unparalleled in Australia
- **Competing Audience Markets:** The rise of online entertainment options are the biggest threat to live theatre. We believe in the power of human engagement through live art and will share this belief through programming excellent work
- **Loss of reputation:** As it stands, it would take a significant amount of time or unexpected circumstances for La Mama to lose our reputation. The employment of a PR company means we have someone to assist should this threaten to occur
- **Treasuring the past while adapting to the future:** With a cross-generational staff with various relationships to La Mama's lifespan, together we navigate the appropriate balance between past, present and future
- **Negative Public Relations i.e. staff/committee member, La Mama rebuild, controversial art:** In the instance of unexpected negative PR, La Mama's PR company will advise
- **Significant damage or fire to building:** The La Mama Rebuild comes with sophisticated preventative infrastructure and La Mama Courthouse is well protected. Given recent circumstances, the team at La Mama are hyper-diligent when it comes to building safety



The Rug. Image by Luis Enrique



Queens on a Rug. Image by Darren Gill