

**PREMIER ARTS FESTIVAL SEASONS**

*Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts)** [2.01 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the achievements of Western Australia's premier arts festival seasons and the contribution they make to creating jobs and attracting audiences to WA. This year saw huge successes for both the Perth Festival and Fringe World Festival seasons, with a collective attendance of over 800 000 people to paid events and a combined box office of over \$13.6 million, representing a significant cultural, social and economic contribution to the state.

In its sixty-fifth year, Perth Festival has exceeded its \$3.6 million box-office target from the main festival. With four weeks remaining for the Lotterywest film season, the festival hopes to reach a total of \$3.8 million. With an attendance of over 450 000 people to ticketed events, Australia's largest and longest-running curated multi-arts festival continues to bring joy and delight to Western Australian audiences. This year, the annually curated event brought to Perth over 700 international performers, with nine Australian exclusives, two world premieres, five Australian season premieres and two commissions, among 270 music, theatre, dance, literature, film and visual art events. This year's festival commenced with the ethereal *Siren Song* and the songs and harmonies of the Noongar women of Gnarnk-Ba Karla Waarnginy sharing their stories and entrancing listeners up and down St Georges Terrace at sunrise and sunset.

Offering a different experience to Western Australian audiences, the open-access Fringe World Festival, now in its seventh year and the third-largest fringe festival in the world, presented 750 events from international and local artists performing at almost 130 venues across the city and the state. The 2018 festival reported sales of more than 360 000 tickets and generated box-office returns of almost \$10 million. With more than 800 000 people attending ticketed and non-ticketed events, the festival once again delighted audiences and delivered a significant impact for the WA economy. In 2017, the Fringe World Festival impact report stated that the total gross economic impact of the festival was \$84.3 million, which equates to a return on investment of \$77 for every dollar invested by the state government. The 2018 festival is set to deliver a similar contribution.

The state's creative sector provides jobs and is vital to our economic diversification and growth. Building a strong arts and cultural industries sector is one of the pillars of the McGowan government's Creative WA policy. More than 41 000 Western Australians are employed in the creative sector. Events such as Fringe World and Perth Festival help create jobs directly through the hundreds of events staged, but also indirectly through associated jobs in areas such as hospitality and tourism. We should all be very proud of the successes of these two significant cultural festivals and the contribution that they make to the state, delivering significant social and economic impact and providing enjoyment to the Western Australian community.