

Performing Arts Touring Workshop:

21st Nov 2012

A SNAPSHOT OF THE DAY Introduction	Pathways to presentation – learn about the various touring pathways and how you can interface with them. Facilitated by VAPAC.	Presented by; Shayne Price [Whitehorse Centre]
Getting the ideas right	Marketing your show to a) presenters and b) audiences. Facilitated by Auspicious Arts Incubator.	Presented by; John Paul Fischbach [Auspicious Arts Incubator]
Getting the mechanics right	Tech-tips for touring work. Facilitated by the VAPAC Tech Managers Network.	Presented by; Matthew Schroeders [Riverlinks, Chair of the Tech Manager's Network]
Getting the business right	Budgeting and employment. Facilitated by Theatre Network Victoria.	Presented by; Nicole Beyer [TNV] and Bethany Simons [Independent Artist]
Cyberpaddock tips and trips	Learn about the ins and outs of Cyberpaddock, and how to make it work for you! Facilitated by Regional Arts Victoria.	Presented by; Kane Forbes [Regional Arts Victoria]



A SNAPSHOT OF THE DAY Introduction

PATHWAYS TO PRESENTATION - Presented by Shayne Price [Whitehorse Centre on behalf of VAPAC]

Hello everyone my name is Shayne and I am a presenter – Sounds like a twelve step program. It's not, and hopefully the pathway between producers and presenters is a relationship that is engaging and delivers good outcomes for everyone.

So in this session, I will talk about who are presenters; what our objectives are and then with this context we will look at the possible pathways to make the connection?

Define Presenters.

- Presenters are the venues who present the shows that are produced
- These presenting venues are everywhere - metro Melbourne, they are in the suburbs and they are regional Victoria and of course they are dotted all across Australia. So the touring network of shows is potentially quite large.
- In Victoria, there are over 50 venues who are members of the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres – known as VAPAC

Who is VAPAC.

- VAPAC is the peak body representing performing arts centres across Victoria, playing a key role in developing and maintaining a vibrant and sustainable performing arts sector.
- Its mission is to promote, support and foster a network of performing arts centres, to promote and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders and provide leadership in the development of the performing arts industry's best practice in programming, presentation and venue management contributing to community cultural development.

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So the link here between Presenters and Producers is core to both VAPAC and venues. In fact, it's vital.

So if I put a producer's hat on I may think great there are 50 venues in Victoria that I can sell my show to?

Potentially... yes

Realistically.... no

And why not –not all venues are the same and it is important to understand the marketplace

So before you take the path of engaging presenters, and this is certainly not a one-sided initial engagement, in some instances I will engage a producer in the first instance.

From here as a producer I think it's important for you to know the presenters market. So it comes down to:

- Research
- Targeting who is the best fit
- And then building the relationship

Research

Venues are all different –so build the knowledge base- speak with people, visits venue website and see what is being programmed

- We all have different spaces – multiple spaces, proscenium, black box, halls, capacity, - technical capability of venue – scale of production (too big or too small). Who is the programmer at the venue – manager or designated programmer
- Demographics – who is the audience – is it a youth, experimental, mainstream. Whitehorse/Karralyka/Dandenong/neighbouring venues and competition
- catchments – (metro vs. regional) – neighbouring venues and conflict of product
- Type of program – many sit under a season banner - subs, some membership, some shows that will be purchased through-out the year
- Time frames – how far we work out.

So what are the presenters looking for in show they programs? What are the objectives? At a VAPAC meeting earlier this year we had this conversation. And there are many reasons venues program shows.

Some of these are:

- It allows an insight into another person's journey and so offers the audience a perspective different to their own
- It can be a social commentary of where we have been, where we are now and perhaps where we are headed
- It looks at other cultures and experiences
- It tells our own stories on stage
- It introduces people to new art forms they have not previously had the opportunity to experience
- It is local to our audience
- It forms an important civic role in providing arts and culture for our community

These are but a few of the important factors we consider in our programming, another key consideration and one I will always check-in with is simply will this entertain our audience. Of course the term entertainment is a broad one.

It can be more than a light hearted romp (although that has a place in a season and is very much appreciated by some) but it is also works that are serious, challenging, subversive, deeply moving and confrontational. A show that will linger longer after the curtain has fallen. Sometimes the risky choices are the more exciting programming choices but not always great for the box office. And what one person finds entertaining is not the same for another. You can't keep everyone happy and so variety is the key.

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A successful show for me is not always a full house, our programming selection is always looking at providing quality choices that will excite, that will entertain and extend both the audience who attend and hopefully bring in new audiences. It is a long term approach with our community engagement.

If a venue says no to a show pitch it is necessarily a call on the show quality but a call on the suitability of the show for the venue.

I recommended you do the research, we also research - for every show I book I will either have seen the play, read it, spoken to someone who has seen it or knows about it, consider the reputation of the producing company and who is attached to the project. I need to feel confident that what I am presenting to our audience is a good fit for them.

Some shows are easy choices and it's an instinctive decision but others I ponder and I try to gather enough information as possible to make an informed decision. We also do a lot of research.

We are also looking at the community engagement component of the programs—how a particular show will resonate with the community—this may be in content, by its very nature health and well being but are there other elements to the mix, are there activities on offer more than just the show. For example workshops, master classes, community involvement in shows like a community choir, education kits. Not everything can or needs to tick every box but we are looking for the right fit.

So once the presenters market is known how do you do it?

Thankfully there are a number of avenues to source shows:

- **Cyber Paddock/Long Paddock mechanism**— presenter profiles, twice a year process, producer uploads (synopsis, creative's, financials, availability, technical requirements, marketing material and strategy). Is it a good fit for my audience, its subject matter, who is in the cast are there any warnings that I need to be aware of, are there people whom it would not be appropriate to see the show. Who is the target market— will this attract new people to the venue, the discussions around marketing and again open to what is necessary for the respective venue.

If you are invited to pitch then again what is the best way to give presenters the best opportunity to get an understanding of your show— some producers get up and talk about the show, others also show dvd excerpts and some do live pitches based on the time allowances. There is no right way— it's what is going to tell your story the clearest.

- **Showcase Victoria**— collaboration between VAPAC and RAV. This process is looking at Victorian tour coordination. One of the great features is the expo which is direct communication between producers and presenter
- **Direct engagement with producer** for a show/music as a standalone. I will also be looking out for what other venues are doing and what is out there that I think may work for touring. Venues also talk about shows— so we have our own pathways.
- **Invitations to see shows** that have a potential to tour— note timing of shows straight out of season or remount.
- **Other ways include...** A Company used our studio space and then had production week in our theatre and then premiered in our venue and went onto to tour. In the previous few years we have also co-produced a show with Ellis Productions as part of our season. This has been done in at the start of the year when theatre availability is good. This has not only provided a show for us in February when there is not always a lot of product but we have a venue available that can assist in getting work up in the market place and provide professional development opportunities for our staff. It's a win/win.

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Budgets – programming money available – limited, break even, decisions are made on what are financially viable, Show fee, door split, and residency. So there are different models to getting your show up and out there.

Producer/presenter relationship

A strong and collaborative relationship exists between presenters and producers. A path that is open, honest, and works for both parties.

I think the sector needs more good quality producers in the market, competition is good.

So research, target and engage. And the engagement that is the most successful is not just through the show pitch and negotiation it is the entire process that concludes with the debrief after the show has left the venue.

Getting the ideas right

MARKETING YOUR SHOW TO PRESENTERS AND AUDIENCES - Presented by John Paul Fischbach
[Auspicious Arts Incubator]

No notes available at this time.

Head to the [Auspicious Arts Incubator](#) for more information...

Getting the mechanics right

TECH-TIPS FOR TOURING WORK - Presented by Matthew Schroeders
[Riverlinks, Chair of the Tech Manager's Network]

All Documents have been prepared by Matthew Schroeders on behalf of VAPAC.
Documents can be downloaded by clicking on the links below.

- [VAPAC tech tips for touring.pdf](#)
 - [Example Risk Assessment.doc](#)
 - [Technical Specification Template.doc](#)
 - [Special Performance Condition Form.doc](#)
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Getting the business right

BUDGETING AND EMPLOYMENT; SOME NOTES AND SOME CONTACTS – Presented by Nicole Beyer
[Theatre Network Victoria]

(Not legal advice, just our interpretation of some information)

Theatre Network Victoria – tnv.net.au

Theatre Network Victoria leads, strengthens and supports the professional, non-profit theatre industry. We focus on the small to medium and independent sectors, and we work with the major companies to increase connection and collaboration amongst all parts of the sector. TNV is based in Victoria and runs a comprehensive Victorian program including the annual Victorian Theatre Meeting. We also undertake national work through the Australian Theatre Forum and Theatre Network Australia.

Our resources page on the website has theatre articles, guidelines, fact sheets etc. It is a work-in-progress so do send things our way! tnv.net.au/resources

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Theatre Network Victoria's 2011 Remuneration Report analyses results from an online survey with questions about organisation size, salaries, benefits, and professional development budgets of 92 small to medium Australian arts organisations. tnv.net.au/resources/post/2011-tnv-remuneration-report/

To join TNV – just sign up and agree to our values, it's free (at the moment!): tnv.net.au/join-tnv

SOME OTHER BODIES:

Live Performance Australia – represents employers in performing arts. Has a focus on commercial theatre, but provides valuable advice for the subsidised sector, especially on Human Resource issues, industrial issues such as taxation, superannuation, changes to HR legislation, etc. Base rate is affordable for small companies. www.liveperformance.com.au

MEAA (Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance) – Represents employees such as actors. www.alliance.org.au

NB. As a producer you are an employer, even if you are also an employee of the project, i.e. taking a salary or fee.

MEAA and LPA work together on tasks such as the Live Performance Award, but do also work in opposition on some issues, e.g. 4 hour call for performers (supported by MEAA, challenged by LPA).

MEAA Has Developed a CO-OP KIT for PROFIT SHARE PRODUCTIONS: Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance: www.alliance.org.au/documents/co-op_kit.pdf

Arts Law Centre – funded by Australia Council
Provides specialised legal and business advice and referral services, professional development resources and advocacy for artists and arts organisations. Sometimes run workshops in Victoria (annually). www.artslaw.com.au

OTHER BUSINESS ADVICE:

Business Victoria www.business.vic.gov.au

Pilch Connect: www.pilch.org.au

Provide free and low-cost legal assistance to not-for-profit community organisations and to advocate on their behalf. E.g. changes to incorporations act. Run training in Melbourne (around \$50.)

Royalties

Australian copyright council has information sheets. www.copyright.org.au

E.g. Screenwriters and playwrights

“The Australian Writers’ Guild provides its members with information on its website at www.awg.com.au on recommended minimum rates applying to work done by writers for theatre, film, radio and TV. The site specifies the rights covered by these rates and indicates the changes to be made where different rights are to be licensed. Further information (including Theatre Industry Handbook which contains various sample agreements, and assistance with contracts) is also available.”

Note: Playwrights traditionally get 10% royalty, but there are tricky areas now with co-devised work etc.

National Employment Standards (NES)

From 1 January 2010, employers and employees in the national workplace system are covered by the new National Employment Standards (NES). Under the NES, employees have certain minimum conditions. Together with pay rates in modern awards (which also generally take effect from 1 January 2010) and minimum wage orders, the NES makes up the safety net that cannot be altered to the disadvantage of the employee. www.fairwork.gov.au

Superannuation for contractors:

“If you pay your contractors under a contract that is wholly or principally for labour, you have to pay super contributions for them. This is even if the contractor quotes an Australian business number (ABN). These contractors are considered your employees for Superannuation guarantee purposes.

Generally, a contract is principally for labour if more than half of the value of the contract is for the person's labour, which may include:

- physical labour
- mental effort, or
- artistic effort.”

ATO website: www.ato.gov.au

Superannuation Increase

And also note that super is going up to 9.25% in July 2013 (and then gradually up to 12%.)

www.ato.gov.au

Getting the business right

BUDGETING AND EMPLOYMENT – Presented by Bethany Simons [Producer/Writer/Performer]

THE PRODUCTION – The Weather and Your Health

Inspired by regional stories. Simple production, small team, low budget and minimal design. More than a show, a community experience. Engaging with your audience adds to the touring experience. (We held a supper in the foyer - provided by locals or CWA groups - and had a visitor's book for recording audience responses).

TOURING JOURNEY - View the 2011 and 2012 itineraries [here](#).

1. **Cyberpaddock:** Touring budget determined using the online template. Things to consider for remount and weekly costs, royalties etc. This budget outline was used for the Arts Victoria funding application following Showcase.
2. **RAV Showcase 2010:** Live excerpt pitch and votes following the state touring forum resulted in a funding application to Arts Victoria for a 9-week tour.
3. **Regional Victoria Tour 2011:** Fully funded regional tour to 38 venues across Victoria in 2011. Itinerary was a combination of performing arts centres and
4. **'Satellite tours'** to surrounding community halls and sheds.
5. **Longpaddock 2010:** Live excerpt pitch and votes following the national touring forum resulted in national funding application to Playing Australia. Unsuccessful.
6. **National Tour 2012:** Combination of state funding from Arts Victoria and the education arm of RAV (due to VCE playlist selection) as well as self-presented seasons (made possible through private fundraising efforts, box office splits and outright purchases from presenters). 35 performances over 9 weeks in a range of venues (PAC's, community halls, nursing homes and school gyms).

2012 TOUR BUDGET

1. **Tour itinerary:** Gaps were filled with self-presented and co-op seasons to make the most of the show being up and running.
2. **Payment Schedule and Cash Flow:** The RAV contract outlined a payment schedule for funding amounts which covered all artist and crew fees, accommodation, travel, per diems, allowances, remount costs and petty cash. We made a cash flow spreadsheet showing income/expenditure. This revealed budget gaps/cash flow issues.
3. **Wages:** Weighed up the options of weekly, casual rate, lump sum. Compared equity rates (MEAA and LPA) to find the most viable option.

4. **Fundraising:** Our 2012 tour shortfall was covered through a crowdfunding campaign on Pozible, private donations and by saving where possible (contingency, petty cash, in-kind support, corporate sponsorship).

FINANCIAL TIPS

1. **Professional Help:** Bring someone in to share the load. There comes a time as a producer/performer when you are required to focus more on the show than the business. I split my producer fee with my tour manager who kept on top of income/expenditure on the road. I also had Auspicious Arts Projects working to manage all of my questions, fundraising outcomes, payroll and revised budgets. Auspicious charge 5% of project expenditure to take care of budgeting, payroll, royalties and the acquittal process. Worthwhile as an independent because they also auspice the grant and provide Public Liability Insurance.
2. **Keep on top of your spending:** Our cash flow spread sheet was constantly being updated and resaved. Expended/received items in red. Running totals.
3. **Receipts:** Devise a system before the project begins. Bundle receipts and keep them in one place! Keep records of reimbursements and continue updating information throughout the tour in order to save time later.
4. **Fundraising:** Networking is critical. It pays to make a good impression, to follow up, to say thank you and to invite supporters to see your work. The money IS out there - you just have to find it!
5. **Acquittal:** Showing income and expenditure for the project. Proving how you spent the money. Keeping on top of things throughout the project will make things easier come acquittal time and ensures you are not forgetting items or doubling up on payments.
6. **Built to Tour:** If it's a great show, more people deserve to see it. Less is more! Design with touring in mind. This saves redesign costs later on and will probably force you to be more creative with your set. The Weather and Your Health consisted of 6 chairs and a few props that fit into the back of a 4WD. (NB: Even though it's simple, we still outlined the tech specs for all venues. Be specific and honest.)
7. **Contingency:** If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. You won't always need it, but you'll be glad you budgeted for it!

Cyberpaddock tips and trips

Learn about the ins and outs of Cyberpaddock, and how to make it work for you! Presented by Kane Forbes [Regional Arts Victoria]

Head to the [Cyberpaddock](#) website for more details.