Our Shared Passion For Music
Philanthropy Impact Report 2015-16
$1.3 million raised through philanthropy.

Philanthropy now provides 11% of the Centre’s income.

Accessibility programs for over 1200 Share the Music participants.

The launch of the *Mary Vallentine Limitless Stage Fund* with over $190,000 pledged in support.

The launch of the *In Conversation series* supported by *Amplify* donors.

A strong community of 6000 donors.

and so much more...
Thank You
This is my first opportunity as CEO to acknowledge and thank you for your generous support that has enabled Melbourne Recital Centre to present extraordinary and memorable performances in 2015-16.

You have helped the Centre present over 306 concerts, music education and access events experienced by 71,161 people from all walks of life.

Highlights have included Helpmann Award-winning concerts, a lively commissioning program, significant growth in the Centre’s access initiatives and an exciting legacy gift in honour of departing CEO Mary Vallentine AO, all made possible by you.

The Centre’s ambience, sublime spaces and engaged audiences draw inspired performances virtually every night of the year. Internationally-renowned musicians comment on how much they enjoy performing for us. Pierre-Laurent Aimard’s magisterial performance of Messiaen’s Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus was honoured with a Helpmann Award, and baritone Florian Boesch with pianist Malcolm Martineau’s thrilling readings of the three great Schubert song cycles were nominated.

Contemporary music presentations grew significantly in number and scale, led by the September premiere of the Centre’s new commission A State of Grace: The Music of Tim and Jeff Buckley.

A robust music commissioning program is vital to our role in the city’s and nation’s musical eco-system. This year, the Centre hosted 78 Australian or World Premieres, four of them commissioned by the Centre and supported entirely by philanthropy.

This year also saw the expansion of the Centre’s education and outreach programs reaching audiences who would otherwise be unable to enjoy and participate in uplifting musical experiences. 1210 Share the Music guests attended concerts at the Centre free of charge, 682 seniors enjoyed the Centre’s superb musical ensembles in aged care settings and new partnerships were initiated to present concerts in regional Victoria.

Mary Vallentine’s retirement saw the establishment of the Mary Vallentine Limitless Stage Fund. Your generosity was overwhelming, with gifts in excess of $190,000 pledged in Mary’s honour for projects that extend access through digital broadcasts, webcasts, recordings, and other forms of outreach.

The Centre is in very good health and it is a privilege for me to follow Mary’s leadership. I look forward to working with you to deepen the Centre’s already substantial impact by embracing new opportunities and bringing artists and audiences closer together in the Centre and beyond.

We all share a life-long passion for music and aspire to reach Melbourne Recital Centre’s goal to become the heart of a global creative community.

Euan Murdoch
CEO
Philanthropy and sponsorship play an essential role in the ongoing success of Melbourne’s *Best Place to Hear*. It now represents about 11% of the Centre’s annual income through the support of our 6000 strong community of donors.

The Centre’s growth over the past seven years has been made possible entirely through private sector support, including increased commercial and hire income, box office and 179% growth in donations.
Music Circle

Your support creates a vibrant place to hear and share superb music.

This year the Centre consolidated its reputation as one of Australia’s most exciting presenters of a broad range of music, representing the pinnacle of the art form as practised by Australian and international performers. Performances by singer-songwriters, visceral ambient soundscapes, towering figures in classical music and legendary artists in every genre provided a rich array of 302 Melbourne Recital Centre Presents concerts and events.

With the support of Music Circle patrons, the Centre now presents concerts virtually every night of the year. Five per cent year-on-year growth in attendance was driven by increased occupancies at a total of 537 events, supporting the careers of over 460 ensembles, 362 of them Australian and reaching audiences of 173,934.
Music Circle

We celebrated music from the *American Songbook*, with performances from Anthony de Mare in his *Liaisons Project*, dozens of arrangements of Sondheim’s songs for solo piano and Michael Griffiths presenting his tribute to Cole Porter in 2016. In *American Songbook* July 2015, Bobby Fox and Michael Falzon performed the Bacharach and Costello’s *Painted from Memory* and countertenor cabaret artist Mama Alto gave a compelling interpretation of the Billie Holiday songbook.

World Music continues to grow at the Centre. In 2015–16 we presented thrilling Colombian jazz harpist Edmar Castaneda in his Australian debut tour. We continue to partner with the Nataraj Cultural Centre to present *Spirit of India*. José Carbo and Slava and Leonard Grigoryan reprised their showcase of Latin-American tango and popular song and Malian rock band Songhoy Blues sang about the experience of refugees and the vitality of their heritage and traditions.

Our popular matinee series *Mostly Mozart* continued this year. And while we were sad to see the end of the partnership with Orchestra Victoria after four years of wonderful performances, we are now delighted to partner with the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) to present concerts in this series. The partnership began with new artistic director Nick Deutsch leading the ensemble, and Paavali Jumpannen performing Beethoven’s ‘Emperor’ piano concerto.
Leadership Circle

The Centre’s eight program pillars are the foundation of the rich and varied concert program presented each year. Each pillar has a group of Leadership Circle Benefactors and Patrons whose exceptional generosity inspires so many and ensures the Centre’s capacity to pursue its mission.
Leadership Circle

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Programming superb quality music for young people is a priority for Melbourne Recital Centre - helping to nurture the next generation of concert-goers.

Over 12,000 young people participated in educational programming at the Centre in 2015-16.

This year’s annual Music Play Children’s Festival introduced new programming including Yalka Dayan’s indigenous cultural workshops exploring Aboriginal stories in music, song and dance and workshops for children on the autism spectrum.

For Victoria’s aspiring musicians there was also a significant funding boost for the Accelerando mentoring program targeting regional Victorian music students.
Leadership Circle

LIFE-LONG LEARNING

Gifts to the Life-long Learning Leadership Circle ensure the Centre’s educational initiatives fulfil its potential as a hub where musicians and audiences connect with the best in music.

A year-round schedule of *Music on the Mind* talks and *Musical Explorations* lecture demonstrations is augmented by the Centre’s Learn microsite where visitors can use our *VisiTour* App, listen to our podcasts and download learning resources.

2015-16 saw us pilot two research studies, including with The University of Melbourne on the impact on wellbeing of attending concerts at Melbourne Recital Centre.

*Click here to read the report*
Leadership Circle

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

Inspiring creative leadership and developing young Australian artists is one of the Centre’s key strategic directions.

In 2015-16, over 100 young musicians participated in the Centre’s young artist development programs including the Accelerando mentoring program. Now in its second year, it has provided unique and effective training and guidance for young music students, in conjunction with the Bach Competition and Great Romantics Competition, a commissioning program for emerging composers and master classes.
Leadership Circle

LOCAL HEROES

The innovative Local Heroes and the Spotlight series continue to provide a platform for dozens of Melbourne-based ensembles. In 2015-16, our Salon chamber activities expanded to include the Southbank series. Together these provide a platform for 41 Australian ensembles each year.
The year’s master classes featured artists who are internationally revered as educators and performers, including violinists Pinchas Zukerman and Midori and soprano Camilla Tilling (pictured). They provided inspiring artistic and technical advice for eight of our best up and coming young musicians.
At the heart of the Centre’s new music program is the Metropolis New Music Festival, presented in partnership with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. The Festival featured 13 Australian premieres and 17 world premieres.

A line-up of innovative, world-renowned ensembles and music-makers including Speak Percussion, Melbourne Piano Trio, Syzygy Ensemble, Forest Collective, Zubin Kanga, Lisa Moore and Ensemble Offspring performed in the intimate surrounds of the Centre’s Salon.

Melbourne contemporary chamber ensemble PLEXUS presented a concert series that featured five new works per concert, including a total of fifteen world premieres that reflect the ensemble’s devotion to Australia’s rich and diverse cultural landscape. And the musicians of Syzygy Ensemble provided virtuosic performances promoting contemporary repertoire that speaks to all with relevance and passion.
Signature Events showcase outstanding large-scale international chamber orchestras, positioning the Centre as a key venue on the international touring circuit and a world music city.

This year, Monteverdi’s *Vespro della Beata Virgine* was performed by Concerto Italiano and directed by Rinaldo Alessandrini.

Standing ovations for this outstanding ensemble were a feature of each night, celebrating and acknowledging the exquisite performances from these singers and instrumentalists.
Our Great Performers series continues to lead the way in Australia as a platform for solo recitalists to present their artistry in the most intimate art form.

We welcomed American virtuoso organist Cameron Carpenter (pictured) and his astounding International Travelling Organ to Elisabeth Murdoch Hall. The unveiling of the International Touring Organ was a first for Melbourne audiences. Carpenter’s performance received a standing ovation from audience members in awe of his power and technique. We were also delighted to welcome acclaimed pianists Garrick Ohlsson, Dejan Lazić, Alexander Gavrylyuk, Nikolai Demidenko and Pierre-Laurent Aimard, violinist Pinchas Zukerman with pianist Angela Cheng and soprano Camilla Tilling with pianist Leigh Harrold to the series.
Legal Friends of Melbourne Recital Centre brings together music-lovers from the legal profession in support of the Centre’s Great Performers series.

In 2015-16, Legal Friends of Melbourne Recital Centre supported *A Schubert Journey*, an astonishing three-concert Schubert song cycle featuring commanding Austrian baritone Florian Boesch and celebrated Scottish pianist Malcolm Martineau.

Legal Friends of Melbourne Recital Centre is a special group of advocates formed in 2014, under the leadership of Inaugural Patrons, The Hon Justice Michelle Gordon and The Hon Kenneth Hayne ACQC, and barristers George Golvan QC, Peter Murdoch QC and Meredith Schilling.

Elisabeth Murdoch Creative Development Fund

Nurturing young artists.

The Elisabeth Murdoch Creative Development Fund was established in 2011 to support the Centre’s then fledgling artist development and accessibility initiatives. We knew then that the Centre could play an important role in providing performance and professional development opportunities for Australian musicians at every stage of their career.

Through your generosity, the Fund has provided opportunities for over 200 young artists through competitions, master classes, and other performance opportunities in this year alone.

In 2015-16 our inaugural In Conversation series, where emerging artists and the public can meet and be inspired by contemporary masters was supported by Amplify donors.

Melbourne Recital Centre’s Seventh Birthday Gala Dinner was a celebration of the Centre’s role at the heart of our city’s vibrant musical life and our special community of supporters. Proceeds of the Gala Dinner benefitted the Fund, which directly nurtures the next generation of performers and makes the Centre accessible to all, from the youngest to the oldest of music lovers.
Mary Vallentine Limitless Stage Fund

Reaching beyond the Centre through digital channels and live performances in community settings.

Introduced to honour the extraordinary contribution of retired CEO, Mary Vallentine AO, the Mary Vallentine Limitless Stage Fund now has over $190,000 in pledged support for projects of the Centre that provide opportunities for outstanding artists to reach broader audiences, via digital broadcast or other forms of outreach, realising the limitless potential for musicians to move, inspire and educate. We thank Mary for the true spirit of leadership she has demonstrated in being a Founding Donor to this initiative.
Share the Music

Providing access for all members of our community to quality music heard in inspiring spaces.

The Centre’s Share the Music program continues to provide outstanding music programs to Victorians of all ages and backgrounds, inspiring every child and adult to explore the rich gift of music.

Share the Music, the Centre’s ticket and transport subsidy scheme supported the attendance of 1210 adults and children from a range of schools and 26 community organisations and schools throughout Victoria.

A program of backstage tours, meet the artist opportunities and Q&A sessions complemented attendance at the concerts. The Tate Street Primary School Marimba Taters have taken it one step further with their annual foyer performance before the Centre’s December presentation of The Snowman.
The Centre also aims to ensure the long term sustainability of its activity levels by building the Public Fund corpus to $10 million by 2019 through one-off bequest donations that are retained in the Public Fund.

The Encore Bequest Program was officially launched on 3 May 2016 and acknowledgement was given to the Centre’s known bequest donors who lead the way for others to follow.

A bequest to Melbourne Recital Centre is a gift to all Victorians and to the future of culture and the arts in our community, which we preserve as a legacy on behalf of those making such gifts. Money received from bequests continues the music in perpetuity.

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Betty Amsden AO
Jenny Anderson
Barbara Blackman
Jennifer Brukner
Jim Cousins AO & Libby Cousins
Ken Bullen
Elizabeth O’Keeffe
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Mary Vallentine AO
Inspired Giving

The Leadership Circles comprise individual lead donors whose gifts of $8000 and more support the Centre’s eight program pillars.

ARTIST DEVELOPMENT
*Inaugural Artist Development & Music Education Benefactor:*
Betty Amsden AO

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Betty Amsden AO

GREAT PERFORMERS
*Inaugural Great Performers Benefactor:*
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LIFE-LONG LEARNING
Kathryn Fagg

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NEW MUSIC
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SIGNATURE EVENTS
*Inaugural Signature Events Benefactors:*
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Music Circle

Providing support essential to the breadth, diversity and quality of the Centre's artistic program.

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Elisabeth Murdoch Creative Development Fund

Named after the Centre’s Founding Patron, this Fund supports projects that make a difference to young artists and accessibility to music.

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* Ensemble Giovane: Donors in support of Masterclasses
* Amplify: Young Donors in support of Artist Development
Legal Friends of Melbourne Recital Centre

Each year the group brings together music lovers from the legal profession to help fund one or more concerts by an artist appearing as part of the Centre’s Great Performers series.

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Mary Vallentine Limitless Stage Fund

In honour of Mary Vallentine AO’s outstanding achievements at the Centre, we have established the Mary Vallentine Limitless Stage Fund, dedicated to bringing musicians and audiences together through digital broadcasts, recordings and other forms of outreach.

($20,000+)
Naomi Milgrom AO
Kim Williams AM
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Share the Music

Enabling disadvantaged children and adults to attend concerts by providing tickets and transport free of charge.

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Thank You!