

Melbourne Recital Centre Raises Over \$160,000 for Local Artists



A time of despair for local artists turned to joy for many with a wonderful initiative to support local musicians during the COVID-19 crisis.

Melbourne Recital Centre closed on Sunday 15 March due to COVID-19 and remains closed until restrictions are lifted. During this time; however, it has continued supporting local musicians through its new Performer Support Fund, which provides financial support and opportunities in lieu of cancelled concerts. The fund has now raised in excess of \$160,000.

With an original target of \$50,000, the fund was given a huge boost on its first day by an extraordinary lead gift of \$20,000 from one generous patron. Since then, over 1000 people have made contributions to the fund - many donating the value of their ticket refunds back to the Centre.

Melbourne Recital Centre's Director of Programming, Marshall McGuire, said:

'We know the connections between artists and audiences are deep, and this initiative has proved that in spades. It speaks to the strength of the relationships we build through music and has hopefully enabled us all to keep a little more afloat than we otherwise would, with a view to bringing everyone back together as soon as we can.'

MEDIA ALERT

More than 347 local artists have been supported so far, including pianist Kristian Chong who summed up how many musicians who benefited from the fund felt about receiving the gift:

‘The Performer Support Fund has provided crucial support in a time of uncertainty for many artists, like myself, who would normally be performing at Melbourne Recital Centre. Whilst every little bit counts in these times, it is heartening to know that local musicians are being thought of through this fund.’

Tamara Kohler from Rubiks Collective also expressed her gratitude to the donors:

‘We are extremely grateful to Melbourne Recital Centre for providing an honorarium and deeply respect how the Centre has supported artists during this crisis.’

Beyond making these payments to artists in place of their cancelled concerts, the Centre is also using the Performer Support Fund to create paid employment opportunities for local artists as it works to take some of its *Learning and Access* programs online, including its *SongPlay* early childhood music program.

Further donations will enable the Centre to aid even more artists in the community, create employment opportunities and enable the continued programming and support of local musicians once the Centre reopens.

For more information and to make a donation visit: melbournerecital.com.au/donatenow

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