

Sydney's arts institutions come together to make the arts more accessible to young people



Image: Playwave young ambassadors Nicole Pignon and Zack Lewin, with Lord Mayor of Sydney, Cover Moore (centre). Photography © Tim da-Rin

Sydney, Australia:

This week Sydney's finest arts institutions gathered at the Eternity Playhouse in Darlinghurst to celebrate Playwave, a youth arts initiative set to reenergise audiences across Sydney's theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls. Guests spanned arts organisations as diverse as the Sydney Festival, Museum of Contemporary Art, Riverside Theatres, Bell Shakespeare, Sydney Fringe and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, all coming together with the common goal of making the arts more accessible to young people.

The initiative, Playwave, is a youth arts access scheme developed in partnership with Shopfront Arts Co-op and the City of Sydney. Playwave connects young people aged 15-19 with the best of Sydney's art and culture, with unprecedented access to discounted tickets, exclusive events, and original online creative content. With more than 30 arts organisations signed up as presenting partners with Playwave, the evening was an opportunity to celebrate the initiative, its new partnerships, and the many young members who have signed up to its online platform since Playwave went live last October.

In her speech, the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore, addressed the need for an initiative like Playwave.

“Playwave came out of our first creative policy for the city, and it was really about how we could support our creative talent,” the Lord Mayor said.

“For the arts to grow, it needs constant renewal and the involvement of young people, and we know that often young people can feel alienated from the established culture. Playwave aims to change all of that by creating new ways for people ages 15 to 19 years to enjoy and become part of the cultural life of the arts and our city,” she said.

The evening was hosted at the Eternity Playhouse, home to Darlinghurst Theatre Company, a proud presenting partner of Playwave. Creative Producer & CEO of Darlinghurst Theatre Company, Glenn Terry, summarised the importance of young people to the arts, and vice versa.

“It [Playwave] allows the different organisations all involved with Playwave to share our art form with new audiences,” Terry said.

“Involving young people in the arts is absolutely vital. It can be a real game changer. It can be a real life changer, as it was for me as a 15-year-old craving more from life than conformity and conservatism, and wanting to know more about life in the world, and basically have some great adventures. The arts has certainly given me that, and I definitely see Playwave as a door to that, too,” he said.

For Shopfront Arts Co-op Executive Director and CEO, Daniel Potter, the program which followed rigorous research, planning, and feasibility studies, was driven by the needs of the arts sector and young people alike.

“The youngest people in our venues are often the artists, yet young audience voices are very much under-represented. They are the one group that is frequently, consistently, missing from our audiences,” Potter said.

“Playwave is a whole of sector initiative, driven by Young people, bringing young voices into the conversation about programming and what our art-form looks like long term. It’s a program providing unprecedented access to the city’s cultural offering, and developing new audiences. Playwave will have a direct impact on the makeup of our future audiences,” he said.

Playwave.com.au is live and open for 15-19 year-olds to sign up for discounted tickets, exclusive events, and original online content.

END OF RELEASE

ABOUT PLAYWAVE

Playwave is a new initiative created by Shopfront Arts Co-op and the City of Sydney, with the mission to connect Young People to the best of Sydney’s art and culture. Playwave is an experimental arts space creating connections between Young People and the Arts through immersive online and in real life experiences. Through the Playwave membership platform, Young People aged 15-19 can see and curate their own original content, and gain unprecedented access to discounted tickets, exclusive and bespoke events, and connect with a diverse range of art and culture across Sydney.

Playwave is Art. But different.

www.playwave.com.au

ABOUT SHOPFRONT ARTS CO-OP

Shopfront is for Young People, by Young People - we make sure their voices are heard. Shopfront has been creating socially relevant, youth-led, multi-art form work since its inception in 1976.

Shopfront is a space where Young People come together to express themselves. To learn, share and bring their imaginations to life. A space for celebrating the amazing ideas and creativity generated by Young People and emerging artists.

We're known for our daring, adventurous and socially relevant work with Young People across Australia and internationally, and are still the only dedicated youth-led arts organisation in the Southern Sydney and Illawarra region.

We've got big plans for the future, and we hope you'll join us in promoting our mission to empower the young artists and social change makers of tomorrow. Starting today!

www.shopfront.org.au

We acknowledge the Bediagal and Kameygal people of the Eora nation who are the traditional custodians of the land on which Shopfront is built. We pay our respects to those elders past and present, and to all our brothers and sisters of our first nation's people.

Shopfront acknowledges the assistance and generous support from our core funding bodies: The Federal Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, the Commonwealth Government's funding and advisory body Arts NSW, Bayside Council and Georges River Council.

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