

Wednesday, 6 September 2006

CRAZY HAIRSTYLES AND IDEAS – IT’S FRINGE TIME AGAIN

‘Irreverent’, ‘risk-taking’ and ‘accessible’ were the words used by Arts Minister Mary Delahunty to describe the 2006 The Age Melbourne Fringe Festival program, launched today.

“Melbourne Fringe is where young artists can cut their teeth and established artists can experiment with new ideas,” Ms Delahunty said.

“This is why the Bracks Government will increase its base funding in 2007 by 50 per cent, to \$300,000.”

Ms Delahunty said the festival was an important forum for creative development and innovation.

“Melbourne Fringe is full of crazy hairstyles and crazy creative ideas, but ultimately it is an open forum for artists to express themselves, explore confronting ideas and attitudes and entertain audiences.

“The result is a program packed with some of the freshest, exciting and occasionally challenging arts experiences of our annual calendar,” Ms Delahunty said.

“Fringe is also one of Melbourne’s most accessible festivals. This year, Melbourne Fringe events will take place in more than 100 venues and galleries right across greater Melbourne, including events in Clayton, Frankston, Deer Park, Doncaster, Bulleen, Altona and Footscray.”

The 2006 festival program features approximately 3,000 artists in 250 events.

Highlights include:

- The Festival Hub – more than 50 events in venues in and around North Melbourne Town Hall Arts House, including the popular Festival Club;
- Fringe Furniture - a Melbourne Fringe institution returns to Melbourne Museum with the theme *Going For Baroque* to inspire emerging and established furniture makers with the excess of design;
- *Material World* - a major installation at Federation Square featuring a fairytale house, woven from the diverse journeys of refugees who seek to make Melbourne their home. Produced by Melbourne Fringe in association with the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

Ms Delahunty said the Bracks Government provided \$200,000 per annum towards the festival’s operations, as well as supporting individual artists and works presented as part of the program.

“Like Fringe, the Bracks Government is committed to providing more arts opportunities for Victorian artists and audiences. Through a range of programs we provide artists with crucial funding to help get new ideas off the ground.”

The Age 2006 Melbourne Fringe Festival will be held from 27 September to 15 October.

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