

How the Live Arts Incubator came about *Jude Anderson, Artistic Director, Punctum*

The Live Arts Incubator is in the refurbished basement of Castlemaine's ex-hospital. The ex hospital is leased for a "peppercorn" rate to Workspace – a small business incubator based in central Victoria..

Punctum has an office in the Castlemaine Workspace. There was a strong need expressed by many of the artists we work with for a research, development, and presentation space. Audiences in the area suggested to us that they were keen to support contemporary live arts works outside of Melbourne.

We formed a partnership with Workspace Australia that enabled us to apply for infrastructure funding through Arts Victoria to meet OH and S standards so that artists and audiences could occupy the space.

How the business incubator began

- Keating initiative funding so that empty public buildings were used productively through small business incubator program
- Group of voluntary board members formed and constituted a not for profit organization to run a small business incubator in Gisborne, Dunolly, Eaglehawk, Bendigo, Castlemaine
- Each centre has its own identity : The small rooms in the ex hospital in Castlemaine are ideal for administrative/design/production work
- The Castlemaine Workspace has an excellent cafe drawing people to the building and providing a great gathering point.

The process for setting up:

- partnership: project management, builder interviews, quotes
- grants
- internal infrastructure designed and built by Punctum artists
- opening
- program : SeedPod, Undue, Drome, incubator usage

The live arts incubator has been open since September 2007 and is booked out until December 08.

- Statistics: **Successful processes – short term: Sept 07 to June 08**
 - number of participants: 283
 - number of audience members: 433
 - number of artists/technicians employed through contract: 24

Punctum programs via the Live Arts Incubator

There are six programs:

- *SeedPod* (6 new works assisted by Punctum artists),
- *Undue Voice* (Performance poetry and contemporary acoustic work - presented and assisted by Punctum artists).
- *Drome* (April artist curated day bringing artists together for research, development and recording),

- *Undue Noise* (4 sound art concerts presented by Punctum and assisted by Punctum artists),
- Punctum works:
 - *The Big Bed* (April – an installation/performance for poets and public in a big bed for the Australian Poetry Centre Festival),
 - *Dinner in a Dry Dam* (new pocket opera - work in progress shown at Malthouse Theatre as part of Regional Arts Victoria’s “Small Stages”),
- Education models - Professional Development models, school kits, and VELs programme initiatives in collaboration with ‘The Capital’ – Bendigo’s Performing Arts Centre, Bendigo Art Gallery and Ballarat Fine Art Gallery
 - level of service: responses to 196 requests, assistance to over 60 artists,
 - website hits: 1720
 - number of construction days: 70
 - number of events: 9
 - creative developments: 5
 - new works: 6
 - professional development and research workshops: 2

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