

# The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia

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## The Peter Mitchell Churchill Fellowship

### To study and observe overseas international touring Theatre Companies

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Signed: Lisa Kellie Pixie O'Shaughnessy Dated: 20<sup>th</sup> August 2004

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**Introduction:**

My passion and preoccupation with the theatre was kindled in my primary school years, as I was blessed with a principal and the drama teacher who took the school on a magical journey of musicals. Once I was shown the way there was no turning back. After school I went on to the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts to study an Advanced Diploma and Degree in Performing Arts. I am enrolled, but presently on leave, at the University of South Australia studying Arts Management. Over the past seven years I have worked professionally in all areas of the theatre and performing arts industries with a multitude of companies and venues across Australia. I have also had the opportunity to teach in the Theatre Arts. Some of my favourite interactions include Yirra Yaakin, Sydney Theatre Company, The Australian Theatre for Young People and The Glynn Nicholas Company, The Awesome Children's and Perth International Arts Festivals, Gordon Frost, Wakakirri Story Dance, AFTRS, The City of Sydney, The Royal National Theatre (UK), The Boshi and English Ballet (UK) and The Diva Awards. It would be remiss of me not to mention the following venues; The State, Capitol, Regal and His Majesty's Theatres, The Royal Opera House (UK) and The Moonlight Cinema.

My Churchill project idea was the result of an enlightening conversation with Duncan Ord a mentor of mine, who considering that I am here now writing this report, I am extremely grateful for his time and assistance. At the time (way back in early 2001) we were discussing the rather sad state of theatre touring in Australia but specifically in Western Australia. The timing of this conversation was extremely indicative as Perth was gripped in the chaotic fever of The Perth International Arts Festival. Local companies were struggling to get a look in, as the festival committee was bringing some National, but mainly International Arts Companies to saturate the Perth Theatre scene. So as you can guess the general gist of the conversation centred on how and what needed to occur for the local talent to get more than their 15 minutes.

Continuing my discussions with Duncan throughout 2001 I created a programme for my proposed fellowship that took me to some of the most interesting and well known companies that have a proven track record in successful theatre touring around the world. My project evolved, and the premise finalized, to meet and observe international companies who have enjoyed success with a strong and definitive touring programme; the USA, Canada and the United Kingdom, at least four major companies across the three continents. And away I went.

My time on this juggernaut around the world exploring was timely in its capacity to inspire and rejuvenate me to the core. The arts industry is not a kind industry, it can be quite brutal. As an actor you are often rejected, as a producer, losing money can become second nature and as a technician you can be haunted by the knowledge that the person who got the gig was just in the right place at the right time and not necessarily based on his/her capabilities. So every now and then a little inspiration is required to remind yourself why you have chosen this work as your career. This inspiration can come in a simple form such as walking backstage in the grand old theatre in Chicago, ducking your head so as not to cause physical damage from the overhang of folding seats in a small studio space in Calgary, or jumping out of the way in the busy hub of a major theatre producing company office. All of which made the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. You would have been hard pressed not to be affected by such an incredible experience. My time was spent watching play readings, closed line readings, rehearsals, full productions, attending conferences, meetings and discussion groups and appreciating all the glory of watching talented and dedicated theatre advocates practice their craft, striving to give their best performance. I have indeed been privileged to share with others, this global theatrical experience.

## **Acknowledgements:**

There are many people and organizations to whom I will be eternally grateful and wish to thank them now. I am indebted to Peter Mitchell for his sponsorship and the Churchill Fellowship for this life changing opportunity that has allowed me to push the boundaries and explore with zeal the world of theatre which is not only my passion but also fortunately for me, my chosen career. This wonderful opportunity has served to remind me that you should never miss a chance to improve your understanding and skills by seeking out and striving to gain the knowledge and experiences for self improvement.

Naturally a huge thank you must go to all the companies and their staff from around the world for allowing me to visit them, for opening their workplaces to me and for being so generous especially with their time. With each new introduction, visit, meeting, play reading or show, I was propelled along my journey with renewed excitement and vigor.

It is extremely important to me to thank those people who have played a leading part with my ongoing love affair with the stage. Firstly the Herrons, Greg and Pat for showing just how bright the stage lights could be when I was just a child. Rosalind Jennings and Vanessa Macaboy for guiding me when I was a big ball of uncontrollable teenage energy, and to the lecturers at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts for helping me to find my feet and focus. Duncan Ord whom I first met at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and then had the privileged of work with, for introducing me to the Churchill experience, helping to create my project and provide his continued support. A special mention to all those people who were willing to give me an opportunity to do what it is I love to do. Your support and assistance in enabling me to gain experience has helped me to continue to develop in my career. Thank you too, to those who doubted me and were reluctant to take the risk, because in some ways you added to my accomplishments because it gave me the incentive to try harder to succeed.

To my friends, extended family and especially my brother, Barney for humouring me and the life style I chose, for showing patience and understanding for years of always attending important celebrations and events after the fact or not at all. For the gentle whispers when they work me up in the early morning and for not yelling when I would wake them within the middle of the night or for sitting through a lifetime of performing arts and never challenging my all black wardrobe. Their faith is both enduring and gratefully received. I hope that my support is just as substantial and that I have given them just as much in return.

My acknowledgements would not be complete with out the following. I am only here today because for every second of my life I have been loved, encouraged, supported and inspired by, in my opinion the two greatest people on this earth. They are my parents Barney and Carmel O'Shaughnessy. Never have I ever thought that there was a goal unobtainable, a quest not capable of being finished nor an outcome too outlandish to be real, because they dared me to achieve both personally and professionally. My success is because of their success. There are no words to encapsulate the gratitude and thanks I feel towards my parents. Instead I promise that just as before this adventure, the rest of my life will be lived with the same zest, sheer determination and heart that they have always encouraged and fostered in me.

## **Executive Summary:**

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*The Project – To study and observe International Touring Theatre Companies.  
United States of America, Canada and United Kingdom*

In America I enjoyed the hospitality of the Steppenwolf Theatre Company, The Goodman Theatre and The Goat Island Performance Theatre. All of these companies were extremely helpful and generous. In particular the Goodman Theatre was overwhelmingly friendly and took special interest in my project, and myself on a personal level. Julie Massey was responsible for this in-depth attention and she was and is a valuable professional resource. I now consider Julie a personal friend.

Canada took me to a Festival called the High Performance Rodeo and opened up the world of One Yellow Rabbit Theatre Company to me. It was at this festival that I saw some of the most alternative, innovative and entertaining live performances. My involvement was relaxed and rather free form, I came and went as I felt appropriate, and I was able to maintain a casual level of association with the festival.

My final destination was the United Kingdom and the theatrical division of Clear Channel Entertainment. Here I was immersed completely into their extremely busy producing and production department. Daily I was involved in meetings and debriefs about some of the biggest shows that are currently touring the world and being presented in the West End.

There were many important lessons that I bore witness to in my travels. For instance, Australia has first class theatres which can hold their own on the world stage; we just need a little hand to get out there more often. Theatre is unlike many other professions, it is different; the traits that you need for success are often considered at best, unique and can not be classified in the same way as other types of industries. This is what we should embrace about working in theatre, our uniqueness, it makes us distinct. Theatre is something that you can dedicate yourself to if you love it, because we are certainly not in it for the money or the unsociable hours!

To be able to seize these opportunities, a strategic formula needs to be designed and executed. Through trial and error as well as planning and preparation, Australia can streamline and economize on the operating costs of its touring procedures. A part of this formula would be the need of individual theatre companies to realise their own limitations. To be truly successful you need be aware of your strengths and weaknesses such as financial stability to size and structure of the company. It is to be expected that not all organizations involved in the Theatre Arts would tour. It would be more beneficial that a few companies toured well rather than all the companies doing it poorly.

The first and foremost way in which I will disseminate this information into the Australian Arts community will be by the publication of this report through the Churchill Fellowship and making it available to any industry professionals who are proactive with the same cause. It would also be implemented through my practical application of, and the sharing of my new skills within the industry.

**Program:*****6 December – 23 December 2003******Chicago – United States of America***

My journey began in the United States of America, in particular the windy city of Chicago. Considering this was my first trip outside Australia, shall I say ‘jumping in at the deep end’ is definitely a phrase that comes to mind. In Chicago I received star treatment whilst visiting a varied array of theatre companies. My time was spread sporadically as the opportunities presented themselves with the companies listed below. I had plans initially to spend some time with the Chicago Shakespeare Theatre Company, however due to time restrictions it did not eventuate.

Enjoying the Chicago’s theatre community afforded me the opportunity of seeing some amazing performances. I even indulged in my theatrical weakness of tacky musicals. The rush I get from a loud and extravagant opening number just doesn’t compare to anything I have ever known. But my favourite performance was a fantastic production of *A Christmas Carol*. Having never seen a production of *A Christmas Carol* before, as it not a popular choice for Australia since Christmas is enjoyed in the heat of summer, I relished the change. I could not help but feel that I had experienced something magical, especially when just as I was leaving the theatre, the snow began to fall ever so lightly and momentarily the city streets of Chicago had been ‘dusted’. There were many people who contributed to my time in Chicago by being both informative and friendly, thereby making my time there enjoyable. I have listed them below.

*Steppenwolf Theatre Company*

1650 N. Halsted Street, Chicago, IL 60614

- Robert McGarvie – Technical Director
- Claude Binder – General Manager
- Cat Tries – Company Manager
- Robert Satterlee – Stage Manager
- Jessica Umhpress – Intern Co-Ordinator

*Goodman Theatre Company*

170 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL 60601

- Julie Massey – Assistant to Artistic Director
- Steve Scott – Associate Producer
- Roche Schulfer – Executive Director
- Scott Conn – Production Manager
- Vivienne Dipeolu – Company Manager
- Les Kniskern – Associate Production Manager
- Patricia Nicholson – Marketing Director

*Goat Island Performance Theatre*

1144 North Hoyne, Chicago IL 60622. USA

- Lin Hixson - Director
- Margaret Nelson – Technical Director

***24 December - 31 December 2003 – Festive Season with Relatives in West Virginia***

***1 January - 19 January 2004******Calgary - Canada***

My time at One Yellow Rabbit was particularly exciting as my timing landed me smack bang in the middle of their major festival that is known around the world as 'The High Performance Rodeo'. It was also a nice change to focus on one company instead of having my attention divided and therefore having to jump around. Despite the cold in Calgary which was truly unbearable, I saw a wealth of varying live performances that were not restricted to just theatre. As with Chicago, I had the pleasure to be involved in rehearsals, closed play readings and relaxed meetings for both the company and the festival. Another credit to my timing was that piggy backed onto the festival was a forum called Performance Creation Canada where anybody, who was anybody in the Canadian Performance scene, attended a three day event to discuss the current and future state of the Performing Arts Industry in Canada. Listed below are those people with whom I worked closely and who guided me through my experience of the festival.

One Yellow Rabbit Performance Theatre 225 - 8th Avenue SE Calgary, Alberta T2G 0K8

- Stephen Schroeder - Managing Producer
- Kirk Miles – Associate Producer
- Ian Wilson – Production Manager
- Blake Brooker - Director

***20 January - 24 January 2004******Rest and Relaxation in Vancouver******27 January - 27 February 2004******London – United Kingdom***

When I hit the United Kingdom and Clear Channel I had a change of pace, instead of coming and going just for meetings and observations I worked full time in the office. This was an interesting experience and yet another gradual step up in focus. Although at times this process was frustrating, because I was a willing and eager addition to the office I ended up doing my fair share of photocopying and filing. However, working full time also afforded me extra time to reflect on my new experiences after meetings and discussions. After which I was able to walk down the hall and follow up my queries and ask more questions, as opposed to rescheduling for a second chat as I had done at my two previous attachments.

Clear Channel Entertainment

35/36 Grosvenor Street, London UK W1K 4QX

- Garry McQuinn – Executive Producer
- Adrian Bourke – Production Manager
- Dave Wilkinson - Production Associate
- Regan Clapp – Assistant to Executive Producer
- Jennie Hutchinson – Associate Producer
- Liz Koops – Producer of Bookings Division
- Kate Reed – Bookings Associate

**Main Body:**

There are not many situations in my life that can compare to the excitement that I felt when I was told that I had been granted a Winston Churchill Memorial Fellowship. The excitement soon turned to terror and then to doubt when I started to realize the enormity of what I had achieved and what would then be required of me to back up my initial achievement. Now it had nothing to do with doubting my own abilities nor was it about the importance of what I was about to do. Theatre is a magical world, and it is a very important both socially and culturally to the community. It is one of the ways we as humans, have interpreted our past, our history, and to give voice to the social, economical and political signs of the times, it is indeed a powerful medium. My concern evolved from the fact that so much about the execution of theatre is a feeling and not a formula. What you experience is not always easy to describe; it can not fit into a neatly packaged formula that is used to classify other fields. Theatre is special and different; it is what makes the whole experience captivating.

Initially I was overwhelmed by the tremendous accomplishments of my honoured colleagues and Fellow Churchill recipients. Winners in my year were Doctors, Lawyers, Senior Health Care Professionals and Educators. I doubted that my experiences during this Fellowship would match up to the spectacular discoveries of other Churchill Fellowship recipients. However it dawned on me that in fact that was the wonderful thing about what I was doing, it was different and special and just as valued as any information that any Fellow may report regardless of the field. That is what makes the Churchill Fellowship unique, the recognition of all fields.

America marked the beginning of my magnificent adventure. It was a particularly refreshing experience to be able to view the simplistic differences of the American theatres and companies to what I was familiar with back home. Funny little things, like in the United States of America, removing all the production related contents from a venue is a 'get in and get out' as opposed to the Australian term of a 'bump in or bump out.' Different terminology and small quirks meant that my learning curve at times was extremely steep. Although in theory I did in fact know what there were talking about, it just took me a while to realize that I knew what they were talking about. It was an interesting lesson as it is exactly these types of challenges that any touring company that tours internationally, is likely to encounter. The United States of America was also a good example of the tried and tested method of producing and touring, which results in the companies to be both successful and industry leaders. Years of creating and implementing touring systems and touring routes have evolved into definitive and workable structures.

When I arrived in Canada I was looking forward to being swept up in the infectious excitement of a festival. It was fantastic and it worked, I was carried away. A highlight of my visit would undoubtedly be the Arts Conference hosted by One Yellow Rabbit Theatre Company, Performance Creation Canada. The conference let me share in all the dreams and hopes that Canada's arts professionals have for both the future of the arts and the wider vision of the effects of the arts on Canada as a nation. It is just the situation that I would expect to experience if you put all the passionate and talented Australian arts professionals in the same room. The irresistible vigor was astonishing and I enjoyed the banter and discussions using words and terms like; fear and function, just playing, inspire, enjoying but not achieving a result, engage and invigorate. I also gained an understanding of the personal issues involved as well as the big picture vision and goals. I could talk for hours about the many ideas and ensuing conclusions that were a result of the conference, however there isn't sufficient time or space here to do justice to the conference. In a nutshell the

experience was really and truly inspiring and a special gift for me. It can also be viewed as an important reminder to never forget what theatre is truly about. We are here to entertain and engage, to offer an escape and special moments to remember, the chance to see a show and a world that we are not usually privy to. We are here to share the things that we love about theatre with the audience. That is what makes this industry magical.

Clear Channel Entertainment is a massive Limited Company that covers all of the communication genres such as radio, television, the print media, advertising and the division that I was attached to, the theatre division. England was yet another chance for me to discover the differences and quirks of vastly alternative theatre industries. It was here that with awe I saw major decisions that had repercussions into the millions of pounds happen frequently and with out as much as a blink of an eye lid. The key to these decisions being made competently is due to the extensive amount of planning and preparation and a mountain of meticulously prepared paperwork. Meetings when executed incorrectly can be a waste of time and energy. However, with micromanagement and succinctness during the process of information sharing, these meetings were productive for the company and the individuals concerned. I believe that through some of my own experiences that well executed meetings are vital but are often an under valued resource. An organization runs efficiently when the left hand is aware of what the right hand and is doing. All stakeholders need to know and understand their roles within the big picture through effective communication.

Something that was made abundantly clear to me throughout all three countries via my many attachments is that although theatre is a business, it certainly does not strive to achieve the same goals as most other corporate businesses and therefore can not be treated as one. I explained earlier that information about what makes the theatre industry function successfully is not always quantifiable. As I have already executed in this report the majority of ideas and discoveries indeed can be noted down in documents but there is still a large percentage of the information, which is just a feeling, a sense, knowing that there is a right and a wrong way to do things. A simplistic description would be that there is a general vibe that cannot be explained until you see it in action. This is something that could only truly be transferred in to the Australian Arts community through my practical application.

The end of the my Churchill Fellowship was uneventful, almost two months had come and gone, three different countries and well over two lifetimes worth of experiences had been enjoyed. At six o'clock on the day in question I grabbed my coat, beanie and umbrella and battled the rain and the crowds to the tube station and I went home. It seemed such an insignificant manner in which to end such a grand adventure. My Churchill Fellowship was over. Those with their ear to the ground will know that this is not the way the adventure finally ended. In fact the adventure is still in full swing and I am loving every minute of it. I had planned to take a well earned holiday, enjoying the sites of the City of London and catching up with a few ex-pats. Not one to sit still for long, I actually sought out and successfully gained work for the time that I was supposed to be relaxing. Through working, I realized I have a wonderful opportunity to gain first hand experience and to put into practice some of the ideas and insights I gained through my attachments. The Churchill Fellowship was a real gift and even though I fully intended and still do, to return to Australia and share with both my local arts and the wider national community some time in the near future all the knowledge that I have gained I felt it would be unwise for me to return when I was continuing to learn and fortify all that I had gained over the previous two months. You must give yourself every chance to be subjected to the experience fully.

So I am still living the Churchill experience, each day I absorb more and more of what the United Kingdom theatre industry (and everything else) has to offer me. In reality if I wanted to, I could continue to write and write until the day that I come home, but you have to hand in your report some time and I have taken long enough as it is! I hope you enjoy my experiences through my report and that it has left you with the desire to see your next cultural event through new eyes.

## **Conclusions:**

A major conclusion that I came to whilst executing my fellowship, and yet it was not at all surprising to me, was that Australia produces amazing world class theatre. We are a very talented and unique nation that deserves more time and space on the world stage. We are a well respected and liked nation partly because of our relaxed and social demeanor, but also because of the work that we have produced that has ventured beyond our shores. The only real shame is that due to a multitude of inhibiting factors of which distance and cost are the major factors; we are not seizing opportunities to strut our innovative and polished productions before more of the world's audiences. I hope that having been given the opportunity through the Churchill Fellowship, I will be able to, in some small way and with considerable effort and determination, to play a part in reversing this trend.

To make a valid attempt at being truly successful at touring locally, nationally and internationally, a formula that takes into account the historical, cultural, economical and social factors needs to be established. Being such a large land mass and still a fairly young country comparatively to the rest of the world, there are many considerations that would influence the way in which we tour. Once a formula has been established it then needs to be refined and documented extensively so it can be accessed by and shared with the entire Australian Arts community. Importance must be placed on treading a path for others to follow, breaking down the barriers and the acknowledgement for trial and error which will all play a big part in the process. Included in this formula there needs to be a commitment to creating a support network that continues to grow and flourish by building on to and sharing past experiences.

Something that I had suspected due to my own personal experiences of touring, and was confirmed by my investigations, is that touring is not something that should be done because it is expected of a successful theatre company. It is not something alone that can make a company successful and a risk far too great to be relied upon. Touring is expensive and time consuming; it requires effort, patience and deep pockets to be executed successfully to high standards and with pride in the work that is being presented. It is not something that should ever be embarked upon half heartedly or that can be tacked on to the end of a company's already brimming season even if it means that it will generate a little extra income. Focus and dedication are essential attributes for a company that is considering touring. Companies should do what it is that they do best, not stretch themselves thin. There isn't an expectation in our world today that people or indeed companies have to be specialists at every thing or to be able to offer a full service package so to speak, in presenting goods and services to the community.

It is my belief, although based on minimal experience but at the same time using the knowledge gained through the Churchill Fellowship, that Australian Theatre companies need to become more specialized and streamlined to be at the very least, the first options to be considered.

Another key discovery that is not unfamiliar to any business success is that of the four P's which are planning, preparation, paperwork and persistence. Through all my discussions with the touring theatre companies, I was amazed at just how detailed the paperwork was for every aspect of the productions. Every minute detail had been covered from all angles, debated, reworked and analyzed with persistence, some may say to the point of exhaustion.

Together with the attention to detail in preparing for all productions a well organized, productive company values the passion of a talented, versatile and experienced staff, as well as, providing opportunities for young, enthusiastic graduands to keep the flame alive. Acknowledgement of continued professional development for all, and across all levels is not only recognized as an important part of the company's vision but it is also planned for within the company's strategic planner. Ongoing training and the induction of staff through an established mentoring system will contribute significantly to a successful company.

The right to fail, to play, to experiment and always to continue discovering was also revealed to me as an important factor in the continued growth of the any driven arts community not just the touring aspect.

There are so many ways in which I will disseminate this information into the arts community as I have previously stated. Firstly I will publish this report via the Churchill Trust. I will open a dialogue with industry leaders and encourage them to set realistic and achievable goals for their touring program. As an active arts professional working in the industry my knowledge will be shared with other professionals of all levels who in turn will share the information with other colleagues.

National and International success is one step close by supporting organizations that are already in existence such as Performing Lines and Australia Council. Also as an individual I, with the support of whatever institution that I may be associated with, shall build relationships with other companies and continue to establish and fortify touring routes within Australia and overseas. I will also seek and maintain mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships with International companies who have the same vision and drive to succeed as the Australian Arts Community.

**Recommendations:**

The first thing that I wanted to do when I had reached the end of my long awaited fellowship was to go back to the beginning and start again. I had seen and taken in so much information, there were now so many ideas racing around my head and the creative energy was just bursting out of me. I was loaded to the roof tops with all this knowledge that I had absorbed, and all I wanted to do was go back and build upon that information. There were questions that I now knew to ask, dialogues that I wanted to engage people in and discussions that just need to be had. But I have had my time.

Now, I am not the first person to embark on this type of journey attempting to discover the key to a stronger and more successful touring strategy for Australia. However I add to the quest through my knowledge and experience gained through my Churchill Fellowship, which is to bring about change in the Australian Arts community. I have to play pass the parcel with the information that I have and which I have acquired with vigor. My task now is to reflect on my journey, kneed it and present it in the best possible light to allow the next person the opportunity to benefit from, and be enriched by it so that he/she can take from my experiences what they will, to continue the information flow.

Personally I can also either begin, or continue to stimulate my colleagues to look for opportunities and avenues for professional development such as the Churchill Fellowship or an Australia Council Grant. It is important that our creative energy is harnessed to its full potential so that it does not go to waste, the process will be kick started in the beginning by publishing this report on the internet via the Churchill Trust.

As an educated and active practitioner of the Arts industry in Australia, I intend at the very least, to inspire and invigorate those around me as I was and continue to be, by the artists that surround me on a daily basis. I will open a dialogue with industry leaders and be active in promoting the need for attention on this topic and encourage funding for the greater good for the Australian Touring Arts Community.

I will foster and maintain links with companies and organizations that are already in existence such as Performing Lines and Australia Council. I will also as an individual, and with the support of whatever institution that I may be working for or with, continue to build relationships with other companies and look to establishing and fortifying touring routes within Australia and overseas. Added to this, I will seek and maintain mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships with International companies who have the same vision and drive to succeed.

I believe that Australia is still finding its feet in relation to its attitude towards touring. It is essential that any associations that are already in existence as a result of the continued and great work of established companies like Performing Lines and all the Arts Councils should be constantly nurtured and expanded upon where possible. Similarly I cannot help but think that an experienced, knowledgeable and skilled Arts person, or an innovative theatre organization, needs to stand up and take the lead and perhaps the responsibility for the touring industry as whole. I know that there are companies and organizations as I have mentioned above, that are currently serving such a need. I would recommend that they be supported within the financial capabilities of Local, State and Commonwealth Governments and all private funding bodies to enable our Australian Arts talent to experience and be appreciated on the world stage.

This arts community doesn't function on the same basis that almost every other industry does. Therefore the solutions to its problems can not be applied to a typical format. Awareness of the industry as a whole would be extremely beneficial so that all sectors of the arts need to be informed of the goals and ambitions that they would be collectively striving to achieve.

Unfortunately as in all industries the application of extra funding or an excess of money would be a tremendous advantage, only of course if it was administered with long terms results and in line with the goals and aims of the format. There also needs to be realistic outcomes about the budgets and capabilities required to fund a project throughout the process to ensure a successful outcome for all stakeholders.

I would also suggest that across Australia, theatres and companies form and join an association created specifically for the use of sharing resources and knowledge, and most importantly to learn the lessons from mistakes made, as well as, sharing the success stories. The industry needs to take its time and not to expect or seek instant gratification. Finally, when the desired result is not achieved the first time, be patient and positive so that the experience can be viewed not as a failure but rather just a starting point, or a model of what not to do next time.

After all of the above considerations and recommendations I personally feel that whatever the production is, and regardless of the circumstances in which the production is being presented, we as theatre practitioners can never afford to lose sight of our integrity, our professional striving to inspire, engage and entertain our theatre audiences.

I believe this passion and commitment has been succinctly written by George Farquhar

"Like hungry guests, a sitting audience looks:/ Plays are like suppers; poets are the cooks. / The founder's you; the table is this place:/ The carvers we; the prologue is the grace. / Each act a course, each scene, a different dish." ~George Farquhar, 1702