

## 1.2 CREATIVE COMMUNITY: MONASH ARTS & CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2007-2010 YEAR ONE PROGRESS REPORT

(JR:ARTS35)

Responsible Director: Andi Diamond

### **RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council notes the progress of actions 2007/08 outlined in the attached summary of the Creative Community: Monash Arts & Cultural Development Strategy 2007-2010.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report advises Council on the progress of the strategies listed for the 2007/08 implementation of the *Creative Community: Monash Arts & Cultural Development Strategy 2007-2010* the first year of this current strategy.

### **BACKGROUND**

The first Monash Arts Strategy was adopted by Council in 2002, providing a foundation for significant arts and cultural development in the City. Following on from the previous strategy, this *Creative Community: Monash Arts & Cultural Development Strategy 2007 - 2010* adopted by Council in June 2007, builds on and consolidates achievements of the first strategy while setting new challenges to meet community needs, aspirations and evolving demographics.

The *Creative Community* Strategy comprises initiatives of the Arts & Cultural Development, Monash Gallery of Art, Library Services and includes initiatives of other Council departments where relevant.

### **ANALYSIS**

The *Creative Community* Strategy has established a comprehensive framework for a coordinated and effective approach to arts and culture in the life of the City. The ongoing level of activity achieved during this timeframe demonstrates community support for the strategy. As the attached report demonstrates, 2007/08 has delivered a successful program of arts and cultural activity across the city. According to Council's Community Satisfaction Measurement Survey undertaken in November 2007, community appreciation and support of Council's commitment to the arts and cultural life continues through participation in services, activities, exhibitions and events delivered by the Monash Gallery of Art, Arts & Cultural Development Unit and Monash Public Library Service.

Together, these services received a very high community satisfaction index rating of 76, one of the highest satisfaction ratings across the Council service areas tested. The major focus of the Arts & Cultural Development Unit continues to be community engagement for neighbourhood events. This has involved liaison with local arts, cultural and other community groups, service clubs and local businesses to deliver participation in local events. Attendances at these events remain viable and are endorsed by a high level of support in the community. In a year with

extreme weather conditions experienced at Oakleigh Festival, keeping attendances down, over 48,000 people have attended Arts & Cultural Development events in Monash current year to date, with the rescheduled Mulgrave Fun Day yet to be held on 30 May. A review of Council's festivals program is recommended to occur in 2009/10.

Library Services activities and events are routinely well attended, with the current year being no exception. In the 2007/08 year to date, over 18,000 people have attended 626 activities, including the Monash Literature Festival, story times, Book and Homework Clubs, youth programs, author and special interest talks and poetry forums. It is anticipated that the new Clayton Community Centre, including an expanded library, will provide an exciting new focus for cultural activity.

The attached *Creative Community: Monash Arts & Cultural Development Strategy 2007-2010* Year One Progress Report highlights the significant achievements of Monash Gallery of Art (MGA) during the past year, with attendances at the Gallery on target to pass 75,000. This achievement has been facilitated by free gallery entry, made possible by sponsorship from ConnectEast. The Monash Gallery of Art Foundation has entered its third year of supporting projects for MGA, particularly the Winifred and William Bowness Photography Prize, awarded to Ray Crooke for his work *For God's Sake, Somebody Throw a Pie* (2006). A separate report from the MGA Committee of Management informs this meeting of Council on the MGA exhibition program and activities.

As advised in last year's progress report on arts activities in the city, the Monash Arts Network was established. This has been a successful initiative, attracting over 70 people to the three sessions conducted this year to learn about planning a community event, applying for arts funding, and contemporary Australian Art.

Council's support for public art funding has commenced in 2007/08, with an allocation of \$50,000 to the Wellington Reserve Community Centre Project. Short listing of artists has occurred and installation of the work is anticipated in the first quarter of 2008/09. Capital funding for future projects ensures this contemporary and thought provoking aspect of community life and urban design can now be pursued. The Clayton Community Centre will feature two public artwork projects: an internal work by Jenny Stein commemorates the RSL, while an external work will act as a marker of the Centre's entrance.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Council's Monash Community Arts Grants Program was administered in a single round in September 2007, with 29 groups receiving part of the \$60,000 funding available from 34 applications submitted. An emerging issue for Council is the requirement for increasing support of risk management at community events funded wholly or in part by Council.

### ***CONCLUSION***

The attached report highlights the progress of strategies during 2007/08 of Council's *Creative Community* Strategy. Council Plan 2007/08 targets are on

track to be met, ensuring its stated objective to foster an “Inclusive and Connected Community” has been well served by a vibrant arts and cultural life.

Council’s ongoing commitment to the creative life of the Monash community is evident in the attached report on its program of events, exhibitions, activities, creative learning opportunities and community arts initiatives by Council staff, Committee advice and supported by the implementation and participation of an enthusiastic and inclusive community.