

An aerial night view of a city skyline, likely Melbourne, Australia. The image shows a dense cluster of buildings, many of which are illuminated with warm yellow and white lights. In the foreground, a large, ornate Gothic-style church is brightly lit with blue and purple lights. To the right, a large, multi-story building is illuminated with yellow lights. In the background, several tall skyscrapers are visible, some with blue and white lights. The overall scene is a vibrant and colorful representation of a city at night.

RISING:

2023 ANNUAL REVIEW

RISING ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL
CUSTODIANS OF THE LANDS ON WHICH WE LIVE,
LEARN AND WORK. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO
THE KULIN ELDERS AND ALL ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES.

Melbourne is a city defined by its creative culture and **RISING** is the festival that reflects that: progressive, inclusive, and unconventional. In only its second iteration, **RISING** gathered respected and world-renowned names in music, performance and public art, who joined a growing and more diverse audience base.

Under the glow of the **RISING** neon sign on Flinders Street Station, the CBD was immersed in a palpable festival atmosphere. The walkable festival footprint, abundance of free and low-cost offerings and blessing of mild weather drew more than 750,000 in attendance.

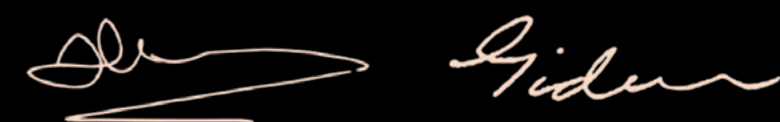
Half of this year's program was free or priced at less than \$30, bringing in families, international students, tourists and locals.

The festival engaged 941 artists, including 130 First Peoples artists, and created more than 1,800 jobs that brought art and culture to the masses. More than 110,000 people across 10,000 *Kazoos*, *Night Trade*, *Anthem* in St Paul's Cathedral, *SPARK* at Federation Square and *The Rink* at Birrarung Marr. Thousands more journeyed through Flinders Street Station's upper levels for *Shadow Spirit*; the largest commission of First Peoples contemporary art in Victoria's history.

RISING acknowledges our Principal Partner, the Victorian Government through Visit Victoria and Creative Victoria for their vision and steadfast support since the festival's inception. We also thank City of Melbourne, as well as the many dedicated public supporters, trusts and foundations, donors, corporate, brand and venue partners, whose support is integral to the festival's presentation and impact each year.

And of course, none of this would have been possible if it weren't for the **RISING** staff and board who dedicate so much to make this incredible festival happen—we cannot thank you enough.

RISING 2023 set the tone for what's to come and we can't wait to celebrate **RISING** 2024 with you next June.



HANNAH FOX GIDEON OBARZANEK
Co-Artistic Directors / Chief Executives





RISING IS AN EXPRESSION OF MELBOURNE'S IDENTITY – A DIVERSE CITY OF ARTISTS, MUSICIANS AND CREATIVE THINKERS WHO TOGETHER CREATE AN UNMISSABLE CULTURAL DESTINATION.

RISING's second iteration—which ran from 1 – 18 June with extended seasons for *The Rink* and *Shadow Spirit* – drew crowds in the hundreds of thousands.

A walkable festival footprint, abundance of free and low-cost offerings and blessing of mild weather helped to successfully attract a broader and more diverse audience than previous years. Families, international students, tourists and locals were invited to participate in an expansive and generous program that used the city as a canvas.

Awards

- Music Victoria Awards – Best Metro Festival
- VTIC Awards – Bronze in Major Events and Festivals Category
- Anthem Awards – Education, Art & Culture - Community Event Finalist, 10,000 Kazoos – Silver award

“THERE IS A CERTAIN *JE NE SAIS QUOI* THAT ELEVATES RISING ABOVE SIMILAR CONCEPTS. MAYBE IT'S THE ABUNDANCE OF WAYS IN WHICH IT MAKES THE CITY COME TO LIFE, WITH SO MANY SHARED MOMENTS WITHIN AND AROUND MELBOURNE'S FAMILIAR MONUMENTS.” – NME



10,000 Kazoos
PHOTO Shannyn Higgins

PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

Anthem by Wu Tsang
PHOTO Shannyn Higgins

Ghetto Biennale

Buygul

NTS Closing Party

Shadow Spirit Talks Series

Tracker

Waripa

*Esa's Afro-Synth Band Ft. Kamazu
and Mim Suleiman*

*KERFEW in-conversation with
Arushi Jain*

*Making Euphoria: in-
conversation*

The Rink

Multitudes

Wallabies

SPARK

Hide the Dog

10,000 Kazoos

Radical Access: in-conversation

SPARK: in-conversation

The Rink

Multitudes

Wallabies

SPARK

Hide the Dog

10,000 Kazoos

Radical Access: in-conversation

SPARK: in-conversation

Shadow Spirit

Electric: Spirit of the Lands

Euphoria

Cornelius & Shintaro Sakamoto

Liv.e & Obongjayar

RVG

Black Mass

The Damned and Witch

Thundercat

Madlib

Weyes Blood

Oil Pressure Vibrator

Real Lies

Liquid Architecture

An Australian Songbook

Birdz & Fred Leone Present: Girra

Lorraine James and Arushi Jain

Ethel Cain

Ichiko Aoba

Paul Kelly: Drinking

Yazmin Lacey

Ruth Radelet

Hand to Earth

TANZ

The Dan Daw Show

Tiny Infinite Deaths

Oh Deer!

Identity

Under Maintenance

Hear My Eyes: Good Time

Queer PowerPoint

Anthem

Consort of the Moon

Night Trade

THIS

First Peoples Melbourne Art

Trams

Goddess: Up Late

Dine at Dusk

Moon Bites

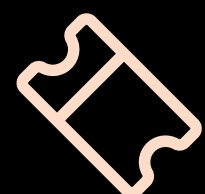


RISING: IN NUMBERS



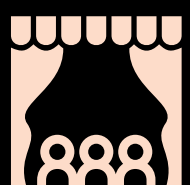
21

WORLD
PREMIERES



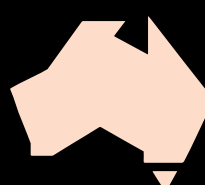
25

FREE
EVENTS



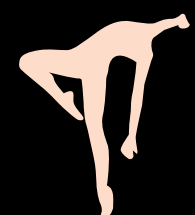
79

EVENTS



30

NEW AUSTRALIAN
WORKS



36

COMMISSIONED
WORKS

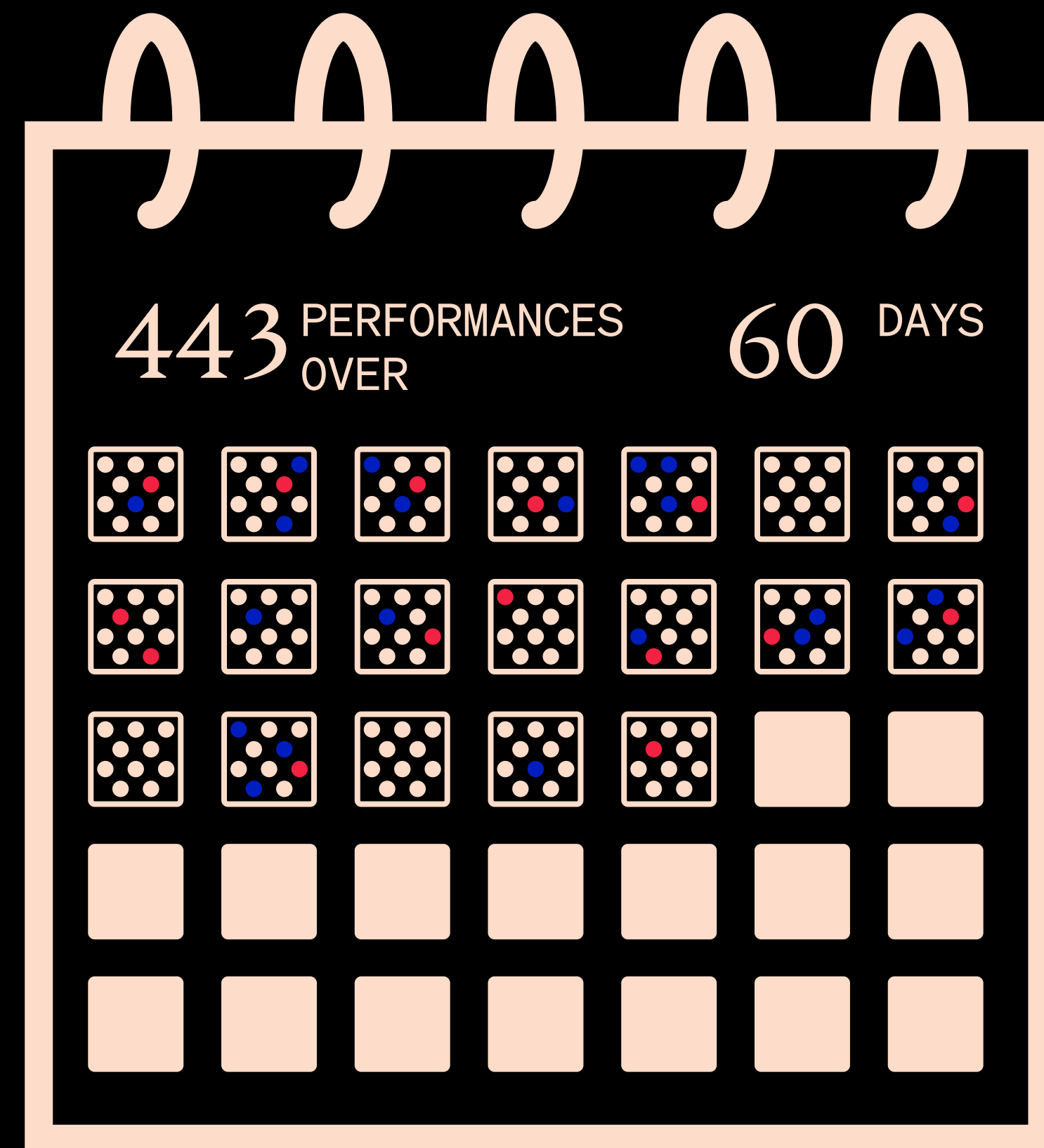
757,793

PEOPLE
ATTENDED



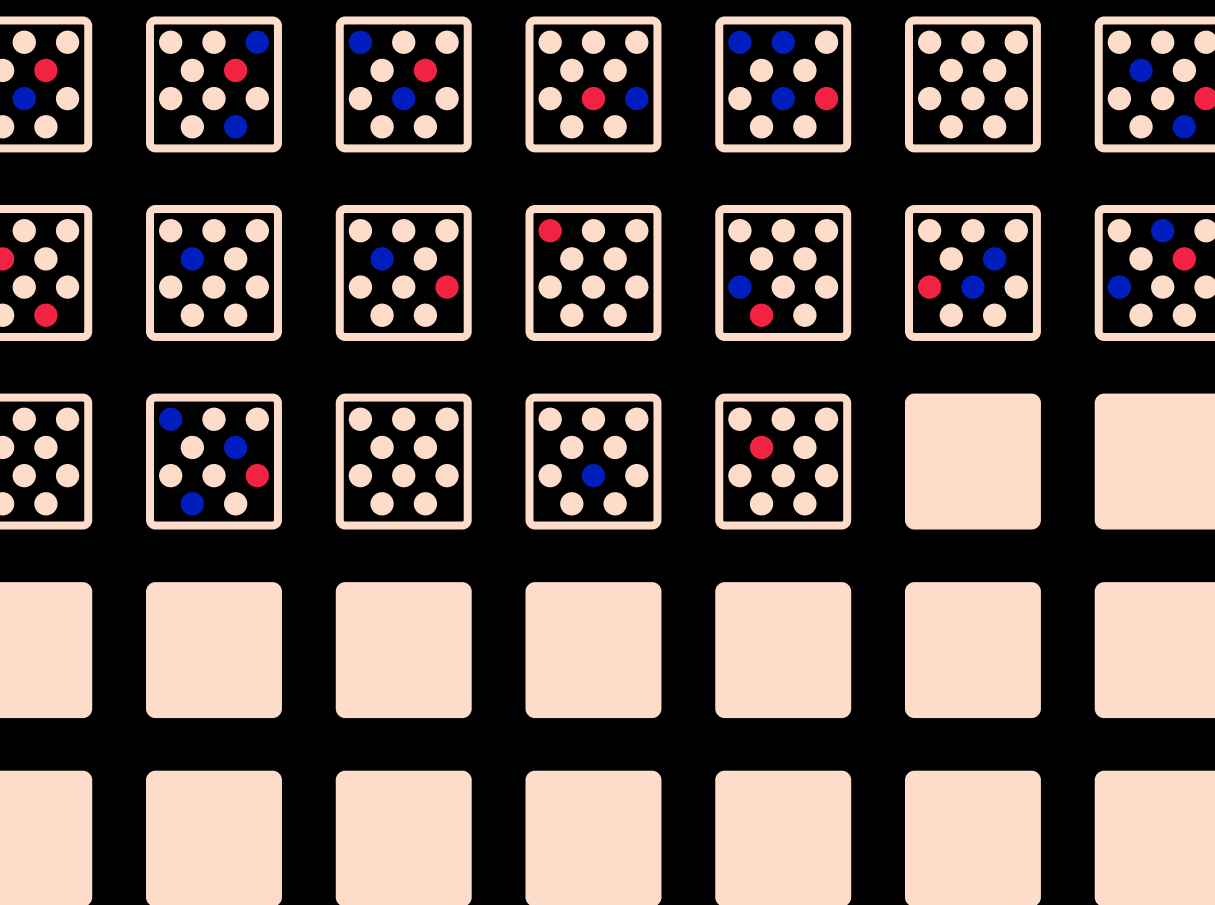
128,472

TICKETS
SOLD



443 PERFORMANCES
OVER

60 DAYS



760

VICTORIAN
SUPPLIERS ENGAGED

\$4.6m

INVESTED IN
VICTORIAN ARTISTS

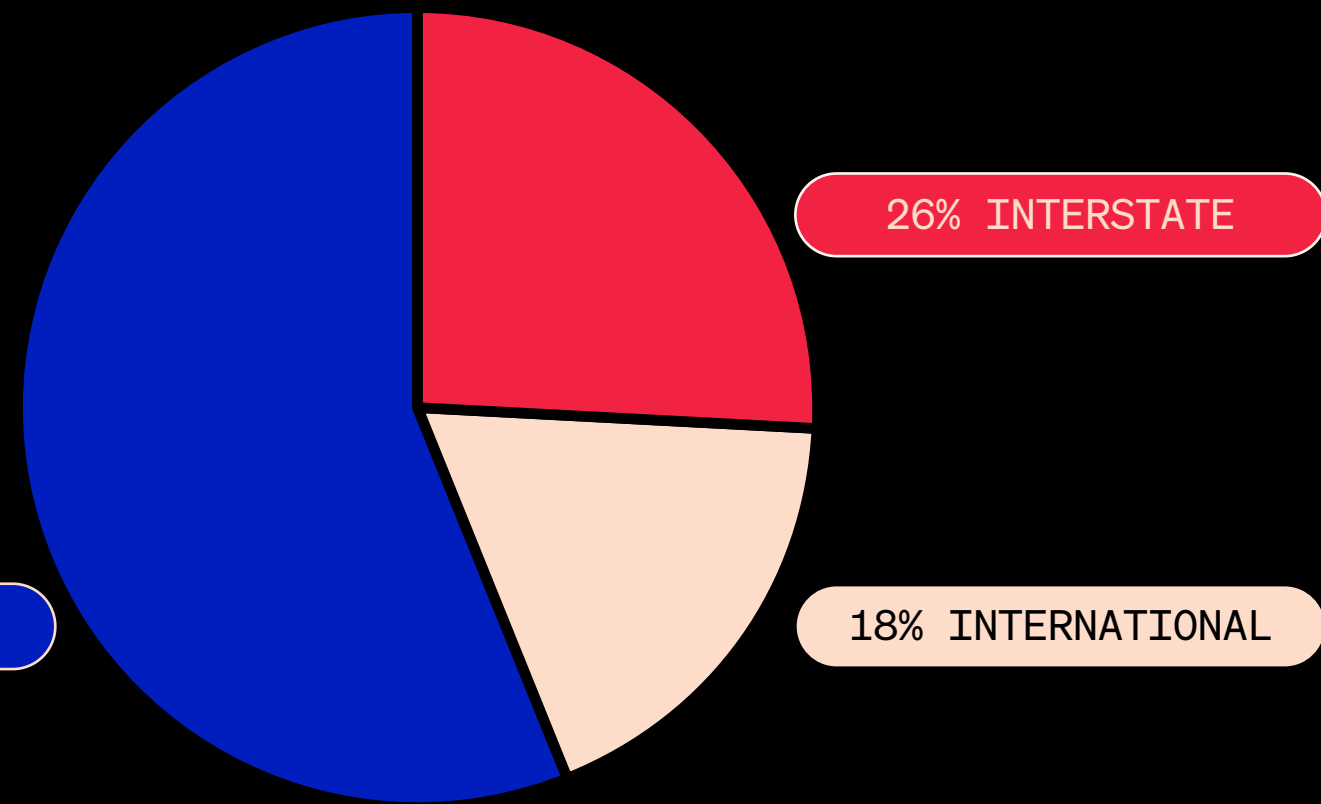
RISING: IN NUMBERS

941
ARTISTS INVOLVED

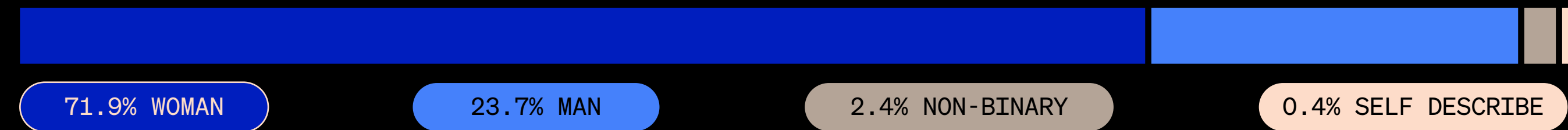
73%
NEW AUDIENCES
COMPARED 2022

14%
OF PROJECTS LED BY
FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS

AGE BREAKDOWN



IDENTIFYING AS

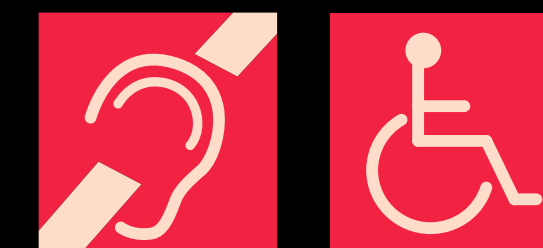


1,800
ARTISTS, ARTS WORKERS
AND CREW EMPLOYED

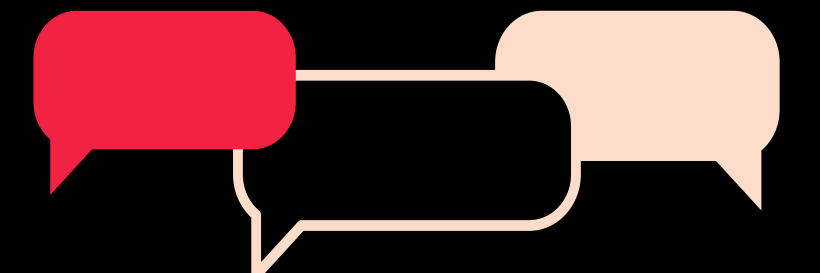
1%
FIRST
PEOPLES



5%
A PERSON WITH
A DISABILITY



11%
CULTURALLY &
LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE



MARKETING

Ethel Cain
PHOTO Ian Laidlaw

RISING's 2023 Marketing and Communications campaign reached new and broader audiences, reinforcing RISING as Melbourne's major cultural, destination event in winter. Interstate and intrastate visitation grew, while families, international students and tourists joined tens-of-thousands of locals to participate in the festival.

The festival marketing campaign ran over five months across social media, digital publishers, radio, video on demand, out of home, street and print. Our media partners Broadsheet, Triple R and Smooth FM extended our reach and engagement.

In a Melbourne first, RISING'S 9-metre-long RISING sign beamed above the clocks at Flinders Street Station. It was a crucial awareness tool for the festival's second full year that attracted prolific media coverage and user-generated content.

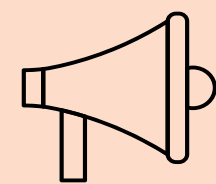
"MELBOURNE'S WINTER ARTS FESTIVAL RISING HAS ATTRACTED BIGGER VISITOR NUMBERS THAN THE 2022 AFL GRAND FINAL AND THE 2023 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX COMBINED."

— Nui Te Koha, Herald Sun



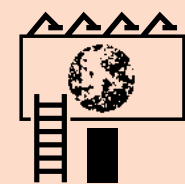
3.76m

WEBSITE VIEWS
300% INCREASE



44.3m+

IMPRESSIONS
DIGITAL ADVERTISING



44.3m+

IMPRESSIONS
OUTDOOR ADVERTISING



21.3m

IMPRESSIONS
ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

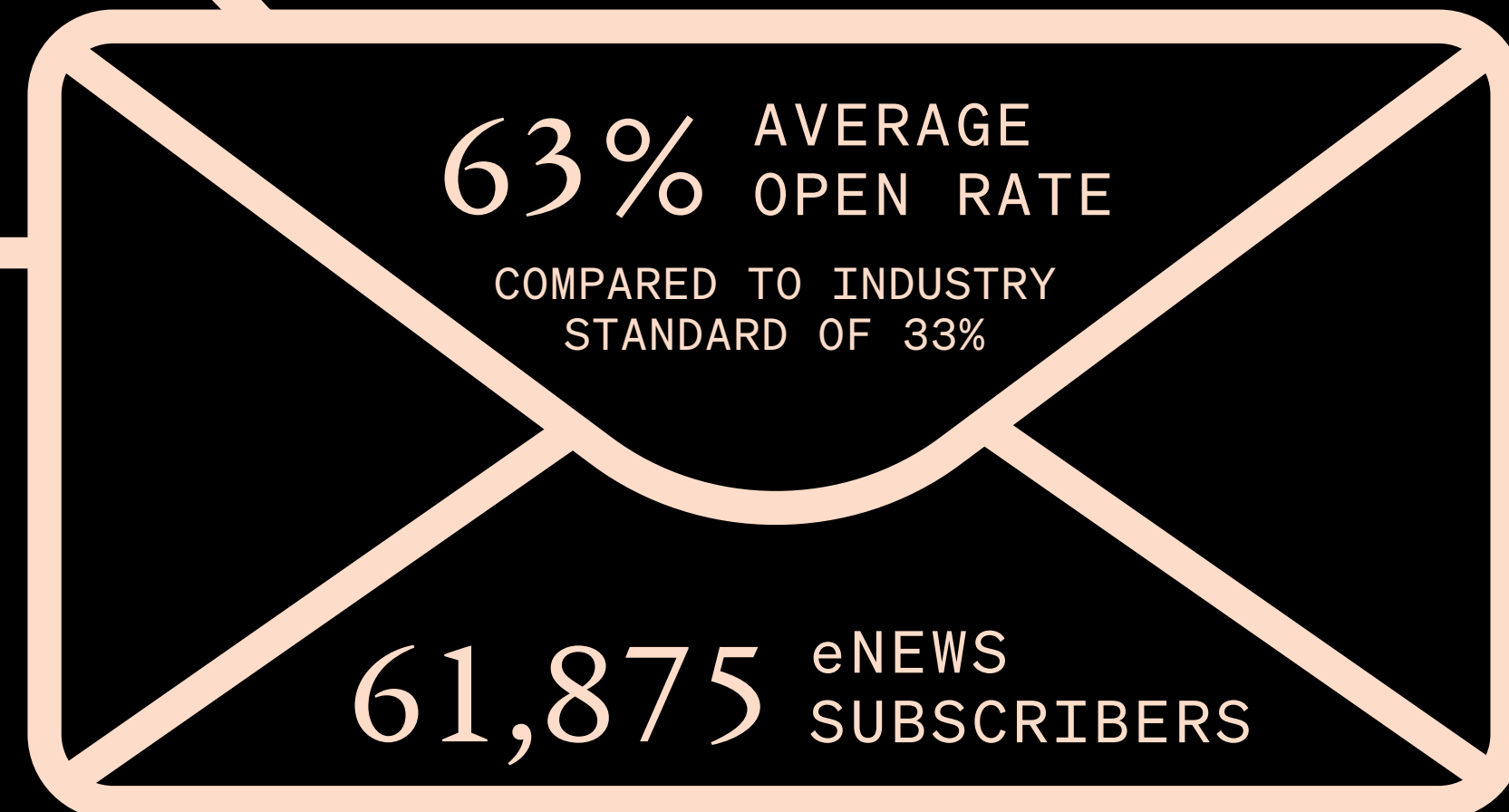
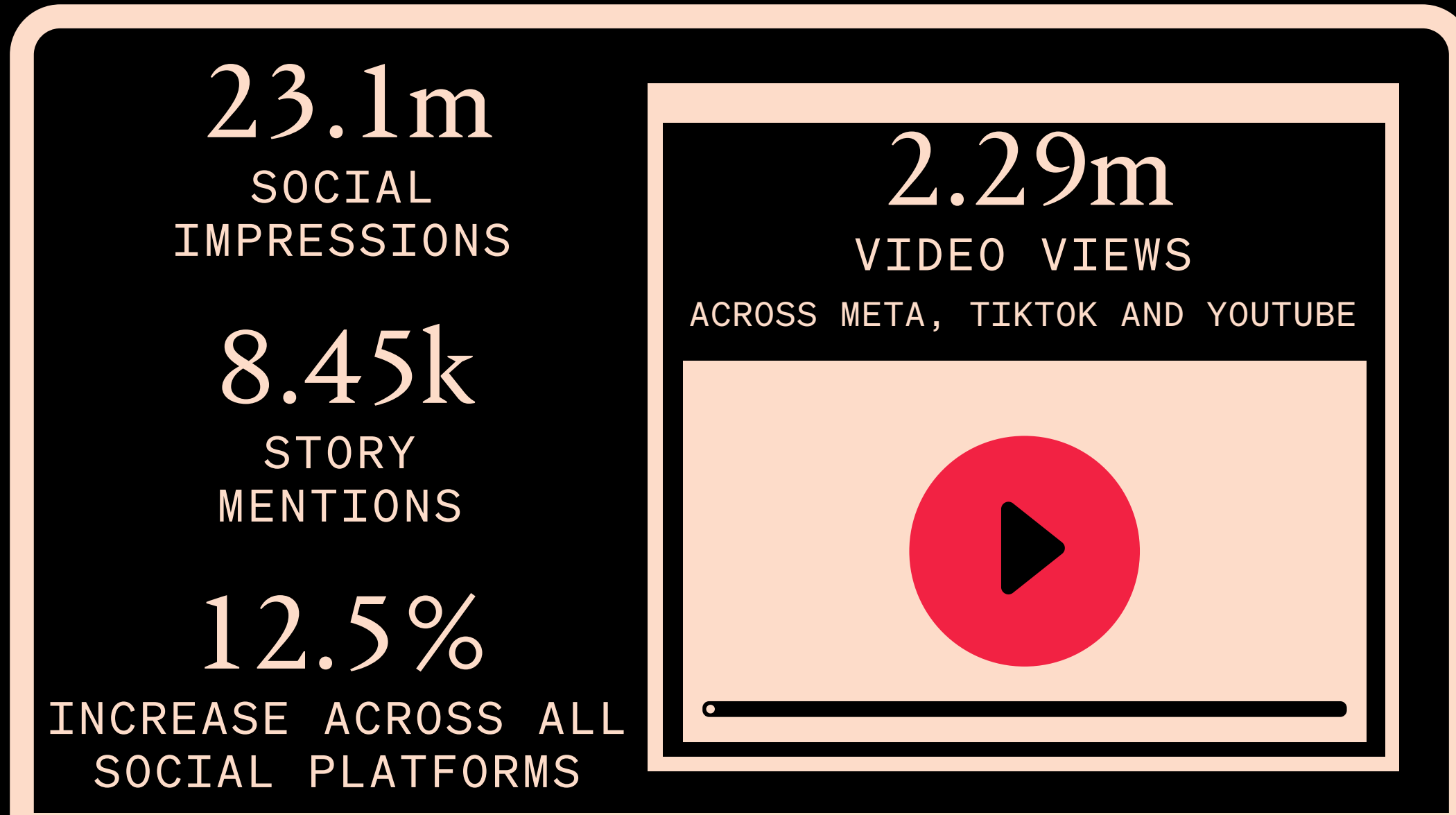
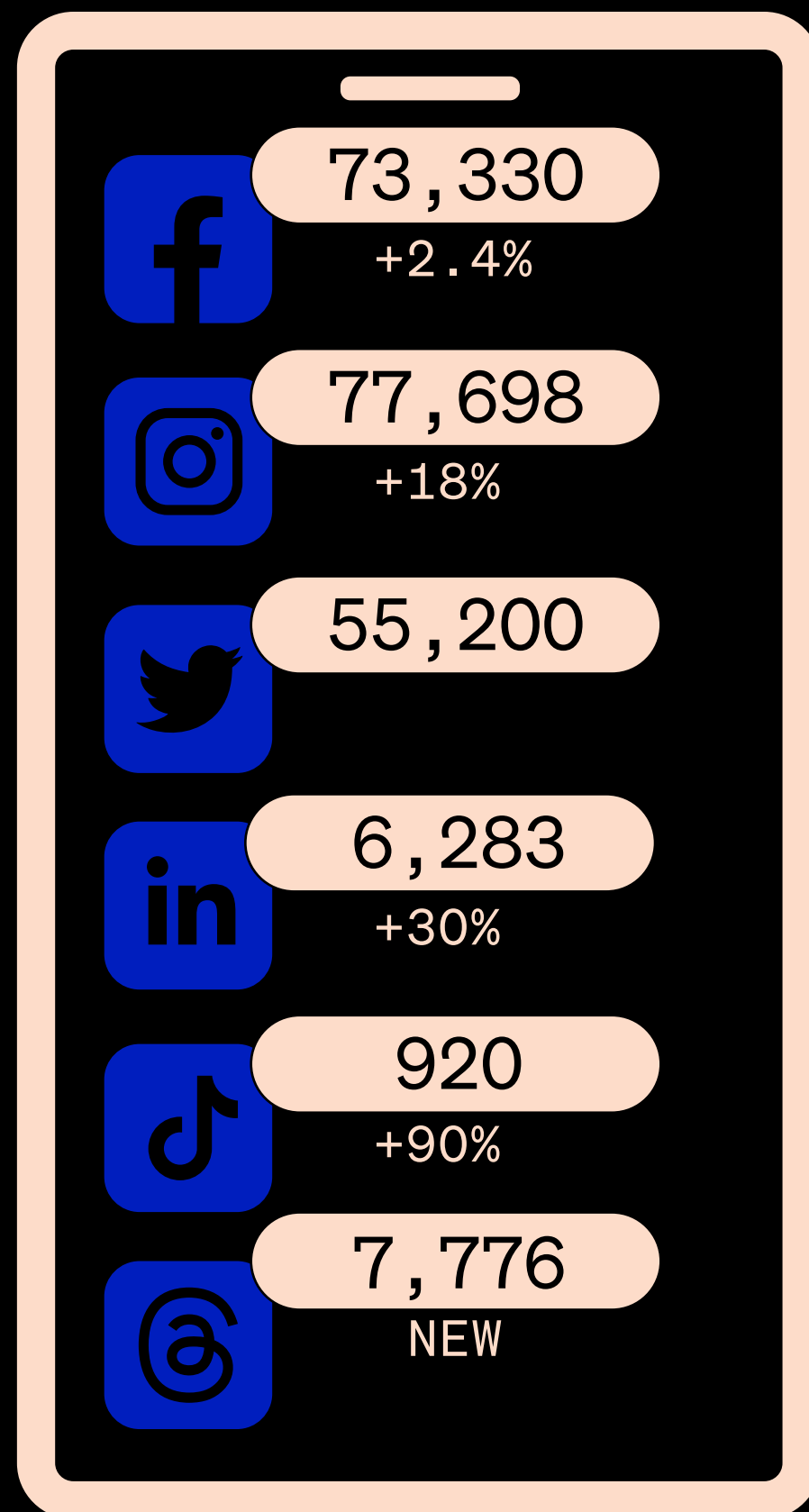


560

RADIO SPOTS



Top Google-searched event of its type in Melbourne





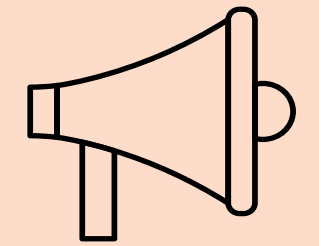
PUBLICITY

Media reception and audience sentiment for the second iteration of RISING in 2023 was largely positive, with enthusiastic coverage of the festival prevalent across a range of media outlets, both mainstream and niche, from launch through to post-season coverage.

Journalists spoke of how cohesive the festival felt. They talked about being particularly impressed with its reduced, easily walkable festival footprint, and the strong free and ticketed program offerings.



3.15 billion
CUMULATIVE MEDIA REACH



\$20,091,326
ADVERTISING VALUE EQUIVALENT



2,898
TOTAL MEDIA MENTIONS



782
RADIO



857
TV



123
PRINT



1,217
ONLINE

Coverage highlights of the campaign included:

- Two front page news features in *The Age* in the opening week of the festival
- 108 pieces online and in print across Nine/Fairfax mastheads
- 200 separate interviews with RISING artists or spokespeople
- International coverage: Reaching the UK, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, India, Japan and the Philippines

SHADOW SPIRIT

Zugubal: The Winds and Tides set the Pace by Brian Robinson. *Shadow Spirit*
PHOTO Eugene Hyland

At the beating heart of RISING 2023 was *Shadow Spirit*, a major exhibition amplifying Australia's most remarkable First Peoples artists sharing their stories, cultures and histories through extraordinary contemporary art.

Curated by Kimberley Moulton, 15 works, including 14 new commissions, transformed the iconic rooms of Flinders Street Station into an immersive exhibition. The commissions featured collaborations with more than 90 creative industries specialists and 30 First Peoples artists from across Australia.

More than 35,000 audience members immersed themselves in the largest collection of commissioned First Peoples contemporary art in Victoria's history.



90%

AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED

Shadow Spirit increased their understanding of First Peoples' knowledge systems and connection to Country

“IT IS A GIFT TO NAARM: A PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL CENTRE FOR REFLECTION AND COMMUNICATION AND GATHERING, A SHOWCASE OF EXCELLENCE OF OUR FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS AND A DEMONSTRATION OF ART ITSELF AS A POLITICAL WITNESS.”

– *The Conversation*

35,431

TICKETS SOLD

110,000+

AUDIO GUIDE PLAYS

8 in 10

SESSIONS SOLD OUT

10,000 Kazoos
PHOTO Laura May Grogan

10,000 KAZOOS

Over 11,000 frenzied kazoo players descended on Federation Square for a mass participation event that smashed world records and captivated the playful spirit of Victorians. The world premiere of 10,000 Kazoos at RISING 2023 made its mark on the cultural landscape of Australia, redefining what mass participation looks like for arts festivals globally.

Connecting Victorian artists with communities from across the state underpins RISING's vision to become an industry leader in accessible mass-participation events and we're so proud to have supported lead artist Ciaran Frame and his collaborators to deliver 10,000 Kazoos at this year's festival.

In collaboration with RISING's expert team of curators, producers and audience and participation specialists, Ciaran developed the work as an inclusive, accessible, mass-participation event that tapped into the hearts, minds and lungs of people from all walks of life. 22 workshops with schools, aged care residents and local community groups took place across Melbourne and regional Victoria, inviting people with no prior musical skill to make noise and have fun through engaging practice-based activities accessible to all.

11,000+

AUDIENCE

22

WORKSHOPS ACROSS
VICTORIA

1,700+

WORKSHOP
PARTICIPANTS

300+

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS
ENGAGED

846

MEDIA MENTIONS ACROSS TV,
RADIO, PRINT AND ONLINE

"THIS WAS THE DUMBEST THING I HAVE EVER DONE
AND YET I DON'T KNOW IF I'D EVER FELT SO
JOYFUL OR FREE."
— Giselle Au-Nhien Nguyen, *The Guardian*

EUPHORIA

Euphoria by Julian Rosefeldt
PHOTO Eugene Hyland

Euphoria showcased RISING's commitment to commissioning bold new works that amplify the urgent stories of our time.

Transforming Melbourne Town Hall into an arena swallowed by screens, Julian Rosefeldt's epic film-installation *Euphoria* invited more than 21,000 audience members to consider capitalism's inescapable mantra of endless, euphoric consumption. Designed as an immersive, surround sound spectacular of cinematic delight, *Euphoria* was unlike any film-based experience Melbourne has seen before.

RISING delivered a suite of accessible ticketing initiatives to ensure the event remained accessible to all. 'Free Fridays', 'Pay as you wish' pricing, and 'Free for students' tickets were available through RISING's network education partners and delivered in tandem with our Audience and Participation team's program of ancillary events.

A free talk series with filmmaker Julian Rosefeldt, education packs for secondary school students and artist-educator facilitated reading room sessions catapulted the impact of *Euphoria* beyond the walls of Melbourne Town Hall, bringing new perspectives from underrepresented voices to the fore.



“EUPHORIA IS, UNDENIABLY, A MOREISH FEAST FOR THE SENSES, A CONTEMPLATION OF FAIRNESS AND EQUITY.”
— J-Wire

21,106
ATTENDEES

4,810
FREE TICKETS DISTRIBUTED

326
MEDIA MENTIONS

181
INTERNATIONAL
PERFORMERS

4
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSIONING
PARTNERS

Night Trade presented by Up
PHOTO Damien Raggatt

NIGHT TRADE

Presented by Up

A free, fluid space of curated chaos at St Paul's Cathedral, *Night Trade presented by Up*, was a space for audiences and artists to gather, get fed and be immersed in spontaneous art and performance late into the night. Of the 80,000 people who came through the space, over 3,000 boarded a surrealist puppet bus – the cornerstone car park attraction, created by Puerto Rican twin artists Poncili Creación. Among massive public art installations, the festival hub had food stalls from Hoy Pinoy, Free to Feed and Pearl Diver, as well as a giant Archie Rose negroni tank and Up Bar, stocking Bodriggy beers, Glou sustainable wines and more.

A pop-up stage at the centre of Night Trade enabled audiences to experience free, live music and performance and engage with the festival. Music highlights included Esa's Afrosynth Band, Debby Friday, and Desire Marea, and for performance, Izzi Selfe, The Mind Searcher and Poncili Creación. In between, DJs curated by Wax'o Paradiso helmed the decks to keep the party vibe flowing late into the night.

80,000

ATTENDEES

3,200

BOARDED PONCILI CREACION'S
REALITY-BREAKING PUPPET BUS

9,300

PIES SOLD

20

TOTAL FREE
PERFORMANCES

ACCESS AND INCLUSION

RISING is committed to creating a festival where everyone has the opportunity to participate. By centring the lived experience of our staff, artists and audiences, RISING's curated program ensures access and inclusion are built into every element of the festival experience — from self-determined First Peoples programming to free and low-cost events, RISING is determined to make everyone feel welcomed and valued.

We continue to collaborate with organisations such as Deaf Aboriginal Services Victoria and Arts Access Victoria to deliver access services across our free and ticketed program and build reciprocal relationships with the communities who use these services. This year, new partnerships with community-led organisations enabled the festival to reach diverse audiences across the state. Audio described performances, tactile tours, Auslan interpreted events, and sensory sensitive sessions developed in consultation with access specialists were just some of the access services we committed to delivering at this year's festival.

“A WONDERFUL, WONDERFUL EVENT! RISING'S OFFERINGS ARE OUT OF THE ORDINARY, BUT EXTREMELY ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL PEOPLE REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY WOULD CONSIDER THEMSELVES ARTSY OR NOT. I'VE ATTENDED SEVERAL RISING EVENTS OVER THE YEAR, AND HAVE BEEN REALLY PLEASED WITH THE QUALITY, DIVERSITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF PROGRAMMING EVERY TIME!”
— 2023 Audience Member

The scale and breadth of RISING 2023 anchored on our free and low-cost events. Creating inclusive, barrier-free experiences for new audiences is at the core RISING's brand-building strategy, boosting awareness and consolidating recognition as a broad-based cultural event.

The Rink
PHOTO Shannyn Higgins



14%
OF EVENTS LED BY
FIRST NATIONS ARTISTS

600,000+
PEOPLE AT
25 FREE EVENTS

\$38
AVERAGE
TICKET PRICE

3,000+
TICKETS FOR
SCHOOL GROUPS

OUR SUPPORTERS

RISING thanks our supporters, whose generosity makes everything you see in our festival possible.

TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

Andrew and Geraldine Buxton Foundation

Bardas Foundation

Besen Family Foundation

Bowness Family Foundation

Canny Quine Foundation

The Dara Foundation

John Truscott Foundation

Playking Foundation

The Robert Salzer Foundation

DANCING ARCHITECTS

Ann Lau and Anna Fairbank

Bird de la Coeur Architects

BKK Architects

Carr

Eli Giannini and Chris Jones

Ian and Gill McDougall

Jackson Clements Burrows Architects

LAB Architecture Studio

Roger Wood

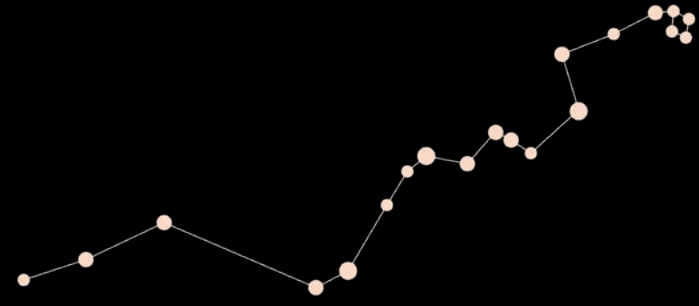
COMMISSIONING CIRCLE

Anna Foley and Dashiell Gantner

Rupert Myer AO and Annabel Myer

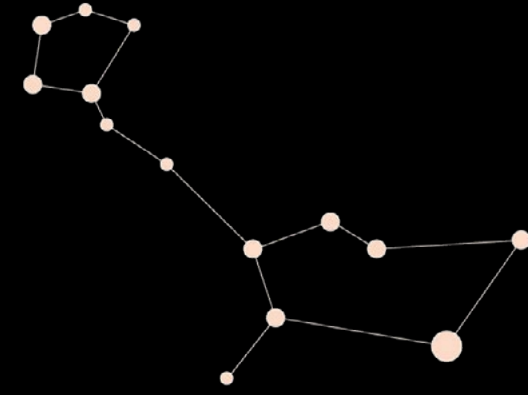
Vallejo Gantner

RISING CONSTELLATIONS



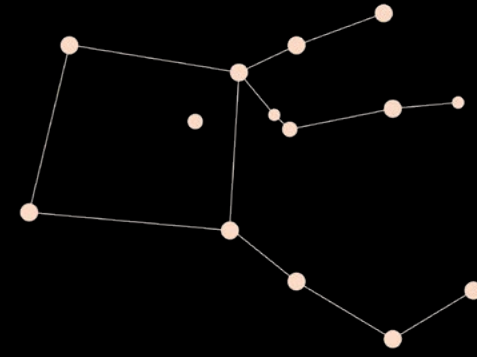
HYDRA: \$10,000+

Dennis Orton Foundation
The Myer Foundation
The Vine Foundation
Anonymous (1)



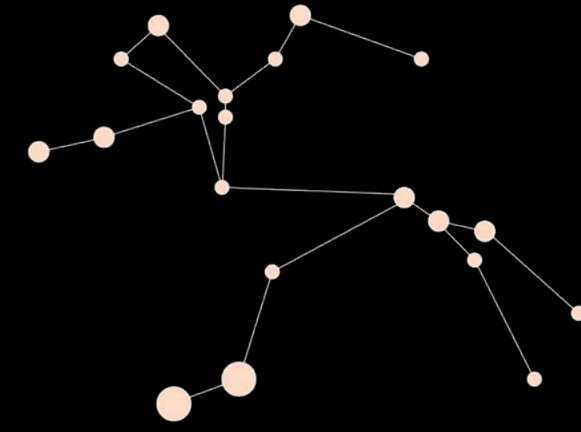
CETUS: \$5,000+

Christine Clough
Elizabeth Proust AO
Ruth Wilson



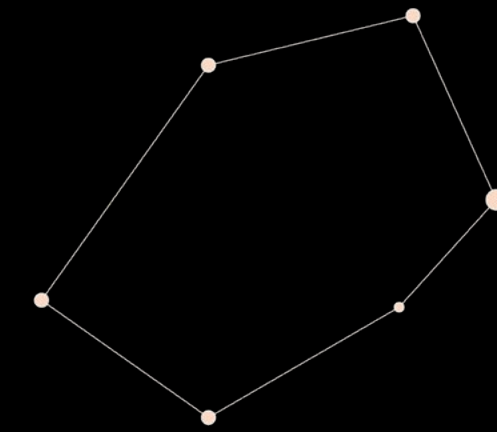
PEGASUS: \$2,500+

Craig Semple
Craig Tiley
Jennifer Darbyshire and
David Walker
Jeremy Blackshaw
Leonard Vary and Matt Collins AM QC
Marc Besen AC
Ricci Swart AM
Richard Leonard and
Gerlinde Scholz
Rob McGauran and
Alessandra Giannini
Sally and Rob Bruce
Sophie Gannon and Frazer East
Anonymous (1)



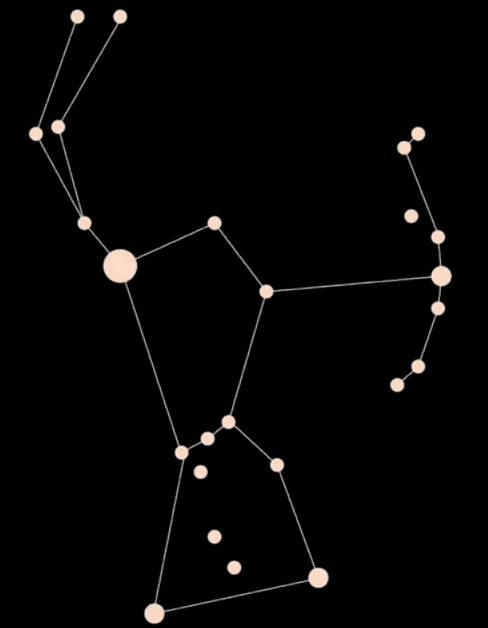
CENTAURUS: \$1,000+

Andrea Hull AO
Bridget Noonan
Fiona Sweet and Paul Newcombe
Gael Wilson
Gideon Obarzanek
Jane Evans
John So AO JP
Kevin and Liz Walsh
Lawrence McDonald &
Christian Klettner
Lynne Burgess
Lilian Hou JP
Maria and Martin Ryan
Min Li Chong
Pinky Watson
Rohitha Rupesinghe and Mi Fon Lew
Rosemary Forbes and Ian Hocking
Rosemary Walls
Sally Browne Fund, a sub-fund of the
Australian Communities Foundation
The Gill Family Foundation
Vic Zbar and Pamela Macklin
Yvonne and Sandy Constantine
Anonymous (3)



AURIGA: \$500+

Alana Kushnir
Christopher Reed
Diana Goldenfein and Julius Rath
Ian Watts OAM
Marie-Line Lussiana
Tim and Rachel Cecil
Anonymous (1)



ORION: \$250+

(11)

OUR PARTNERS

PRINCIPAL PUBLIC PARTNER



PUBLIC PARTNERS



MAJOR PARTNERS



ARCHIE ROSE
DISTILLING CO.

Panasonic
CONNECT

OFFICIAL PARTNERS

acmi



BODRIGGY



PUBLIC SUPPORTERS



Australian Government
Major Festivals Initiative



SUPPORTING PARTNERS

ALPHA60

CORRS
CHAMBERS
WESTGARTH

HEAPS
NORMAL

ST. ALi

bobby



O'BRIEN ICEHOUSE

SUPPLIER PARTNER



MEDIA PARTNERS



VENUE PARTNERS



NATIONAL GALLERY
OF VICTORIA NGV

NAOMI
MILGROM
FOUNDATION

MELBOURNE
RECITAL
CENTRE



THANK



YOU

RISING
PO BOX 10
FLINDERS LANE VIC 8009