

Tuesday 12 June 2012

\$377 MILLION BOOST TO NSW ARTS AND CULTURE

The Liberals & Nationals Government has announced an investment of more than \$377 million to support the State's vibrant arts and cultural sector in the 2012-13 Budget.

Minister for the Arts, George Souris, said the 2012-13 Budget will provide \$310 million for the State's outstanding cultural institutions.

Mr Souris said the Government will also provide \$57 million for Arts NSW's 2013 Arts Funding Program (AFP) to support a wide range of arts and cultural activities, programs and projects across the State.

"The Government's annual Arts Funding Program plays a key role in ensuring NSW continues to be the cultural and creative capital of Australia," Mr Souris said.

"Every year the Arts Funding Program spreads artistic opportunity across metropolitan, regional and rural NSW by providing funding to hundreds of individuals and arts organisations for a diverse range of arts projects and programs.

"The State's leading performing arts companies, regional art galleries, museums and conservatoriums of music, major NSW arts festivals and community arts groups and schools all benefit from the Government's Arts Funding Program.

"Our arts and cultural sector helps define NSW as a vibrant and forward thinking society and this year's Budget aims to help grow a creative economy focused on innovative excellence."

Mr Souris said the Budget's \$185 million in operating grants and \$125 million in capital funding to the major cultural institutions will help develop NSW's cultural heritage and economy and enhance cultural, creative and recreational opportunities.

He said recurrent and capital Budget allocations to the major cultural institutions include:

- \$135.3 million for the Opera House with planned capital projects including continued work on its Vehicle and Pedestrian Access Project, stage management system and lifts;
- \$85.5 million for the State Library with planned capital work including general maintenance and repairs as well as digital scanning to preserve the library's vast collection items and provide broader access to regional areas via the internet;
- \$26.5 million to the Australian Museum with planned capital projects including improvements to science equipment, public programs, exhibition spaces, office, building and plant equipment;
- \$33 million to the Powerhouse Museum with planned capital work including maintenance at its three locations.

- A \$3.1 million allocation will go towards a new 9,000 square metre shared storage facility at Castle Hill to provide extra storage and public access to collections from the Powerhouse Museum, Australian Museum, and Historic Houses Trust; &
- \$29.3 million to the Art Gallery of NSW with planned capital projects including building upgrades to the Brett Whiteley Studio at Surry Hills, which attracts over 9,000 visitors each year and about 1,800 students in 2010/11.

“There is also support for our film and television industry via Screen NSW which will receive \$9.9 million in recurrent and capital funding, including funding to build a new location images database to support pitches for international and national film and television productions for our State.”