

# Supporting Canberra's Thriving Artistic and Cultural Life



ACT Government

Embargoed until 1 May

The 2001-2002 ACT Budget will strengthen support to Canberra's festivals and the arts sector, ACT Arts Minister Brendan Smyth said.

The Minister said the Budget provides additional funding for supporting ACT festivals, including **\$1 million over four years for a Festivals Development Fund** and for developing a **Festivals Strategy**.

"We are committed to a co-ordinated approach for all festivals in Canberra and to better understand the benefits these festivals provide to the community.

"The development of the Strategy will provide us with an opportunity to assess the status, role and needs of festivals in the ACT. The new festivals office will play a central role in taking a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the support and management of the increasing number of community festivals in the ACT," Mr Smyth said.

"We have a truly impressive program of festivals in Canberra, with Floriade, the National Multicultural Festival, the Folk Festival and the Heritage Festival among many others. We want to build on this program, and so we are providing a four year Festivals Development Fund to assist ACT festivals to become even more successful."

The arts sector will benefit from increased funding for arts grants and public art and for the next stage in the development of a Contemporary Glass Centre for Canberra.

"The Arts Program provides valuable opportunities for local artists and arts organisations, and profiles Canberra as a centre of artistic excellence. **Funding for the Arts Program will increase to \$3.426 million. This is an increase of \$85,000 on last year,**" Mr Smyth said.

"On top of this, an additional \$300,000 over three years will provide some of the organisations receiving multi-year funding with opportunities to explore and develop innovative projects that will attract new audiences and showcase locally and nationally Canberra's capacity to be innovative through the arts."

**The Public Art Program will receive \$64,000 in additional funding, bringing it to \$414,000.**

"The Public Art Program helps make public places and special events more vital and interesting by including artworks. The funding will provide for artworks at the Ainslie Arts Centre, Acton Peninsula and Tuggeranong Town Centre and will extend the Art and Soul City Walk sculpture program, which recently produced *Ainslie's Sheep* in City Walk and *Circuitry* in the Civic bus interchange," Mr Smyth said.

**ACT Budget 2001-02**

"We will also progress the work on a **contemporary glass centre** for Canberra's world-renowned glass artists to the next stage, with \$300,000 in 2001-2002 for detailed specifications, a scope of works and selection of a project director before construction starts in 2002-2003.

"This \$2.6 million construction project will establish a fully equipped workshop for the production and sale of innovative, high quality Canberra-branded glass to identified markets. Canberra glass artists' unique design skills will flourish through this centre, which will also allow Canberrans to experience the glass-making process and be of great interest to visitors to the ACT."

The 2001-2002 Capital Works program provides funding for a number of other arts initiatives:

- \$7.9 million will be provided for the redevelopment of the **Link Building** between the Canberra Theatre and the Playhouse. This will complete the Civic Square cultural precinct and accommodate the Canberra Theatre Centre's business activities, as well as the Civic Library and a display area for the ACT Heritage Library;
- \$203,000 for the relocation of **Leichhardt Street Studios and Megalo Print Workshops** to provide people with much valued access to a range of high quality print-making equipment;
- \$250,000 for constructing a **Centenary of Federation monument** as part of the ACT's Centenary celebrations; and
- \$51,000 will be provided for a package of works to conserve and restore three Territory-owned historic places. Works include structural restoration and repair work at **Lanyon**, reinforcement of the **Mugga Mugga** access road, and painting of external timber elements at **Calthorpes' House**.

"Our vision for Canberra in *Arts Capital*, the ACT's arts development strategy, is for a city rich in cultural and artistic life, a source of pride to residents and an attractive destination for visitors. The initiatives being funded in this budget are a significant step towards achieving this vision," Mr Smyth said.

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**Statement ends**

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