



Sydney Opera House Strategy

2018–23





Homeground (2017)

Welcome

In the lead-up to the Opera House's 40th anniversary in 2013, we set out our ambitions for a decade of renewal, to ensure the Opera House continues to inspire generations of artists, audiences and visitors.

Five years on, approaching the halfway point in that decade, we refreshed those ambitions, having reflected on the significant changes and opportunities in the world around us, and what we have done. This document is the result. It outlines what we hope to have achieved by our 50th anniversary in 2023.

A defining project will be renewing the Concert Hall, which will close for up to two years from early 2020 while we undertake significant artistic, acoustic and accessibility improvements in our largest internal venue. The challenge is to ensure we make the most of this once-in-a-generation opportunity, drawing on our experience in successfully upgrading the Joan Sutherland Theatre in 2017.

At the same time, we will expand the spectrum of art and experiences we offer, fostering new and diverse art forms and audiences, and encourage creativity more broadly.

In short, we aim to live up to the promise of the building in everything we do.

We are grateful to our Trustees and staff for their input and vision in preparing this refreshed strategy and look forward to working together to implement it, for the benefit of the many people who love the Opera House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Herron'.

Louise Herron AM
Chief Executive Officer
October 2018

Strategic goals 2018–23

Executive summary

Over the next five years, we will continue to build on our successes, with a keen eye on the anticipated challenges and opportunities. This is a summary of our goals, which are set out in full on pages 10–15, along with our key achievements.

People

Living our values: Provide the leadership, environment and tools our diverse and inclusive workforce needs to thrive and plan for the long-term sustainability of the Opera House and its operations.

Safety and security: Safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and everyone on site through appropriate risk management, infrastructure, systems and resourcing. This includes injury- and incident-free delivery of our capital works.

Relationships: Further deepen and enrich our relationships with the community and our many stakeholders, including resident companies and artists, government, donors, partners and the architecture, design, heritage and engineering professions.

Experiences

Audiences and visitors: Broaden the Opera House's reach, across Australia and globally, through:

- **Art:** Aiming for excellence in everything we do – with artists, colleagues and audiences – to realise our mandate for creativity, engagement and entertainment;
- **Visitor experience:** Making it more appealing, on site and online, for everyone to explore the full range of Opera House experiences – its history, performances, events, bars and restaurants, tours and retail – and delivering a consistently excellent customer experience; and
- **Digital engagement:** Investing strategically in digital capability, technology and creative content to share and amplify what we offer, reaching new audiences and driving deeper engagement.

Building

Capital works: Complete all building renewal projects within the available budget, including the Concert Hall and entry upgrades, and the new function and creative learning centres. Our aim is to optimise artistic, audience and visitor amenity, accessibility, safety and security improvements, while minimising disruption.

Conservation and maintenance: Take responsibility for conserving the Opera House for current and future generations and delivering a best-practice asset maintenance program.

Sustainability: Continue to be a leader in sustainability, including by achieving and maintaining a six-star Green Star rating and developing a strategy to become carbon-positive.

Our vision

**To be as bold
and inspiring
as the Opera
House itself.**

Our mission

**To treasure and
renew the Opera
House for future
generations of
artists, audiences
and visitors; and**

**To inspire, and
strengthen the
community, in
everything we do.**

Our values

Safety:
Our greatest
responsibility.

Creativity:
Be bold and
innovative.

Excellence:
Strive for the best.

Collaboration:
One team.

Accountability:
Focus and own it.

The Opera House is Australia's premier cultural institution and tourism destination, and a celebrated community meeting place. It is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List as a masterpiece of human creative genius and a world-class performing arts centre.

The local Gadigal people knew the land on which the Opera House stands as Tubowgule. For thousands of years it has been a gathering place for storytelling, ceremony and celebration. We are committed to continuing that tradition and, in doing so, fostering a shared sense of belonging for everyone.

One of the world's busiest performing arts centres, the Opera House hosts about 2,000 performances a year across its six theatres and the Forecourt, including: the renowned work of seven flagship resident companies; a diverse Sydney Opera House Presents schedule that includes contemporary music and performance, First Nations artists, talks and ideas, classical music and children, families and creative learning programming; and a broad range of shows and community events presented by third parties.

Since embarking on a decade of renewal at our 40th anniversary, we have made tremendous progress on many of the goals in our 2013 Enterprise Strategy, as highlighted in the following pages. A December 2018 report by global professional services provider Deloitte estimated that over the same period the Opera House's iconic value increased from \$4.6 billion in 2013 to \$6.2 billion, and its annual economic contribution by 55%, from \$775 million in 2013 to \$1.2 billion.

In developing this refreshed strategy, we have taken into account significant changes in artistic taste, technology and the demographics of the community we serve, as well as increases in security concerns and building costs.

This document sets out updated strategic goals for the second half of our decade of renewal, divided into three streams: the many people, inside and outside the organisation, involved in bringing the Opera House to life; the experiences we offer; and the building.

Consistent with our practice to date, this strategy will inform the development of portfolio-based strategies and annual key performance indicators. This will ensure we are all aligned behind clear and consistent goals.

Context



People



Mardi Gras (2018)
Credit: Daniel Boud

What we have done

Clarity, consistency, commitment, capability: Established our mission, vision and values, set clear and consistent goals, strengthened the leadership and capability of our teams and, as a result, increased our employee engagement score to 78%.

Strategic plans: Prepared and implemented plans that encapsulate our commitment to work health and safety, conservation management, artistic excellence and diversity, visitor experience, reconciliation action, accessibility, sustainability and risk.

Relationships: Deepened and enriched our relationships with the community and many stakeholders, including resident companies and artists, government, donors, partners and the architecture, design, heritage and engineering professions. This has been critical to our success.

Next generation: Encouraged the development of next-generation talent through a range of initiatives, including MADE (Multidisciplinary Australian Danish Exchange), the Lloyd Martin Travelling Scholarship for emerging arts leaders and Crescendo for emerging classical artists, as well as an artist and sector development program that supports and engages the local arts community.

What we will do

Living our values: Provide the leadership, environment and tools our diverse and inclusive workforce needs to thrive and plan for the long-term sustainability of the Opera House and its operations.

Safety and security: Safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff and everyone on site through a strong safety culture, using appropriate risk management, infrastructure, systems and resourcing. This includes the injury- and incident-free delivery of our capital works.

Strategic plans: Implement and evolve our key strategies, including work health and safety, Conservation Management Plan Fourth Edition, artistic and visitor experience, as well as our reconciliation action, access and environmental sustainability plans.

Risk culture: Strengthen the Opera House's culture of effective risk ownership and mitigation, combined with robust reporting, so that risks and opportunities are appropriately identified and managed.

One voice: Present a unique and unified brand and narrative that communicates the multifaceted nature of the Opera House, what it stands for and everything it has to offer.

Partners and supporters: Build on the significant contribution made by donors and corporate partners, recognising the key role they play through their advocacy and financial support, including sustaining the excellence and ambition of our artistic offering and fostering the next generation of talent.

Experiences



Ice Cube at Vivid Live (2018)

What we have done

Invited people in: The Opera House is increasingly recognised as a place for everyone, with improved accessibility and more non-traditional, complex and challenging programming, including: Vivid Live and other contemporary music and performance; First Nations artists, including for Badu Gili (daily lighting of the Bennelong sails) and the Dance Rites competition; talks and ideas; and children's programming.

Artistic strategy: Launched the 2018–21 Artistic Strategy, which has as its artistic purpose 'to be unmissable' and sets out in detail what that means and how we will deliver it.

Presenters: Balanced our roles as a performance venue for our resident companies and commercial hirers and a presenting organisation through Sydney Opera House Presents.

Visitors: Expanded and improved the range of our facilities and offering, including tours and food and beverage, which now provide a very significant contribution to our business operations and sustainability.

Brand renewal: Created an award-winning new brand identity and campaigns to better communicate the full scope and diversity of the Opera House's activities.

Digital transformation: Implemented a new website, improving reliability and our customers' online experience.

What we will do

Artistic ambition: Aim for excellence in everything we do – with artists, colleagues and audiences – to realise our mandate for creativity, engagement and entertainment through:

- Balancing challenging artistic experiences with financial success;
- Deepening our engagement with more diverse audiences and programming for the next generation; and
- Valuing and respecting our partners' contributions – including resident companies, commercial hirers, co-presenters, artists and staff – and upholding our role as a leader in the broader arts community.

Visitor experience: Make it more appealing, on site and online, for everyone to explore the full range of Opera House experiences – its history, performances, events, bars and restaurants, tours and retail – and deliver a consistently excellent customer experience.

Digital engagement: Invest strategically in digital capability, technology and creative content to share and amplify what we offer, reaching new audiences and driving deeper engagement, across Australia and globally.

Building



Joan Sutherland Theatre stage

What we have done

Forecourt: Completed the Vehicle Access and Pedestrian Safety (VAPS) project, removing thousands of vehicles from the Forecourt, which is now an open, inviting, pedestrian-friendly space for 10.9 million visitors each year.

NSW Government Renewal funding: Secured funding to develop a capital works masterplan and deliver the Stage 1 Renewal projects.

Joan Sutherland Theatre (JST): Completed the JST project to renew equipment and systems, as well as creating a new rehearsal room and improving the orchestra pit, safety, accessibility and the experience for artists, audiences and visitors. Together with our resident companies, we have enjoyed exploring the resulting creative possibilities and identified strengths and lessons for current and future capital projects, including the Concert Hall upgrade.

Sustainability: Achieved a Green Building Council of Australia four-star Green Star performance rating and the Opera House was certified as being carbon neutral.

Conservation: Completed and rolled out the Conservation Management Plan Fourth Edition, which was awarded the 2018 National Trust Award for best heritage resource publication.

What we will do

Stage 1 Renewal projects: Complete all building renewal projects within the available budget, including the Concert Hall and entry upgrades, new function and creative learning centres. Our aim is to optimise artistic, audience and visitor amenity, accessibility, safety and security improvements, following extensive consultation.

Minimise disruption: Carry out all capital works in the most efficient, least disruptive way, being as considerate as possible of everyone affected and drawing on the lessons of completed projects.

Conservation: As custodians, take responsibility for conserving the Opera House's heritage for current and future generations. In doing so, we will appropriately engage all key stakeholders, including staff, resident companies, government and the architecture and heritage communities.

Maintenance: Deliver a best-practice program of asset maintenance and upgrade ageing infrastructure to manage evolving risks and benefit from new technologies.

Future major project: Scope at least one bold, future-facing project.

Sustainability: Continue to be a leader in sustainability, including by achieving and maintaining a six-star Green Star rating and developing a strategy to become carbon-positive.

Key achievements

2013 – 18

2013

40th anniversary celebrations
with Danish Crown Prince Couple
Idealist donor program established
Multidisciplinary Australian
Danish Exchange launched
Inaugural All About Women festival

2014

Secured \$13.7m in NSW Government
funding for Renewal planning
New stage management system and
Recording and Broadcast Studio
Getty Foundation grant to develop
concrete conservation strategy
Resident companies and Sydney
Opera House Presents presentations
win nine Helpmann Awards

2015

NSW Government reserves \$202
million for Stage 1 Renewal projects
Vehicle Access and Pedestrian
Safety project completed
Opera House achieves
four-star Green Star rating
Dance Rites competition launched
New Welcome Centre opens
Utzon – Le Corbusier
tapestry purchased

2016

Forecourt becomes
pedestrian-friendly plaza with
removal of non-essential vehicles
New brand launched and
wins Cannes Lion Awards
Bennelong wins Good Food Guide
new restaurant of the year award
The Lounge opens in the
Box Office foyer

2017

Stage 1 Renewal begins
Joan Sutherland Theatre closed
for renewal (May-December)
Theatre Machinery Project for Joan
Sutherland Theatre completed
Conservation Management
Plan Fourth Edition published
New website launched
Badu Gili daily sails
lighting launched

2018

Opera House's first Mardi Gras float
New three-year Artistic
Strategy commences
Vivid Live record 10th year
Biannual Unwrapped series launched
Opera House certified as carbon-neutral
45th anniversary celebrations
New staff uniforms designed by Dion Lee

Key targets 2019 – 23

2019

Yallamundi Rooms open
Under the Steps
refurbishment complete
Security systems and site entry
infrastructure upgrade complete

2020

Concert Hall closes
for Renewal works
New digital tours
experience launches

2021

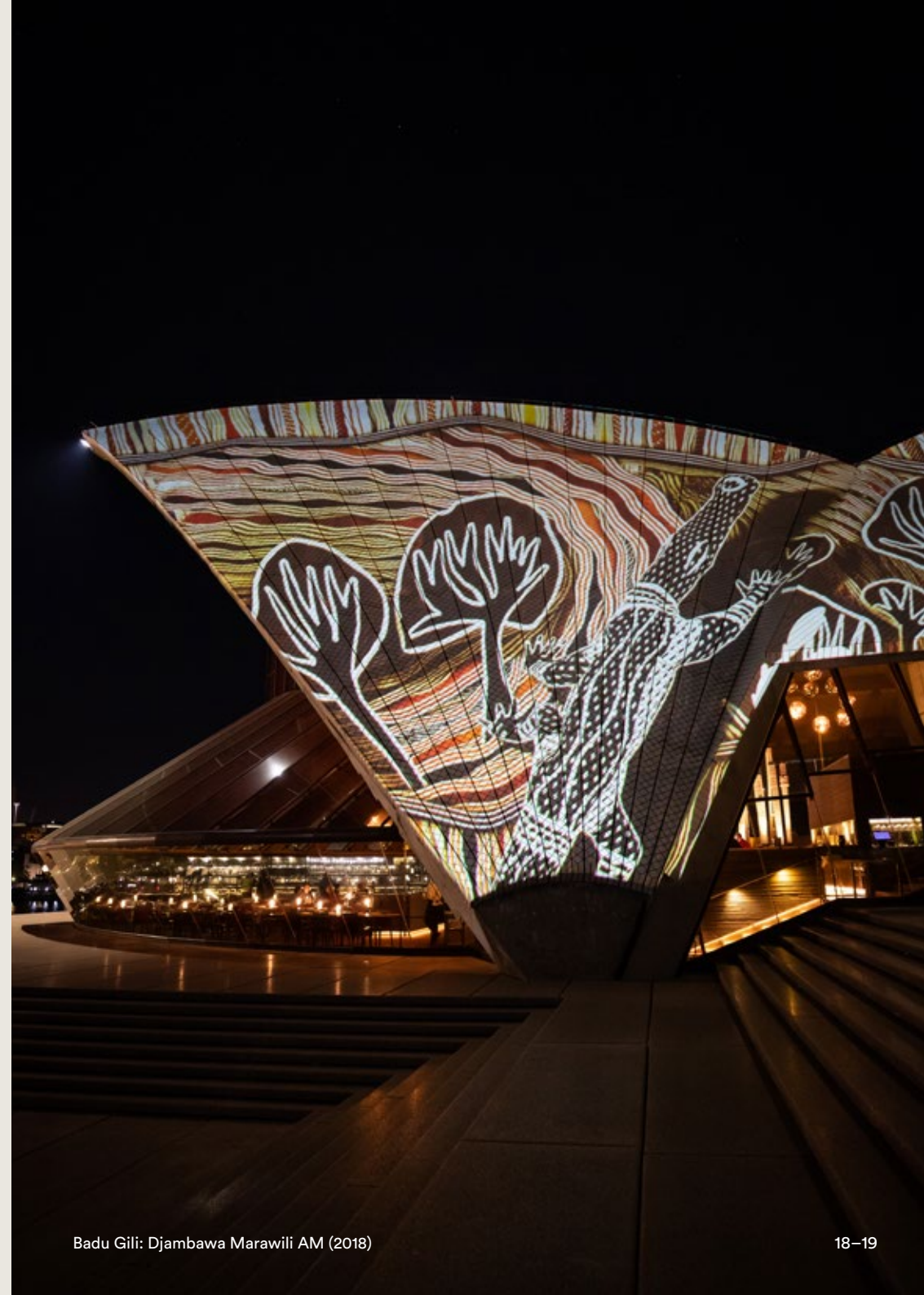
Concert Hall reopens
Opera House achieves six-star
Green Star rating

2022

New Creative Learning
Centre opens

2023

50th anniversary celebrations
attract significant and positive
local and global attention
Opera House is a recognised
leader in everything it does
Staff engagement score reaches 80%
Performance and tours
patrons total 2.25 million
Unique website visits reach 7 million
Annual precinct revenue
reaches \$400 million
\$100 million in private
funding raised since 2013
Opera House remains Australia's premier
attraction for international visitors
Annual economic contribution
reaches \$1.5 billion



The Sydney Opera House exists because
a few brave people dared to think differently
They made the impossible possible, and inspired a nation

And so we stand as a proud testament
to the power of dreaming in public
To the transformative potential of art and ideas

We expand horizons, shift perspectives and stir emotions
If you're ready for the extraordinary, we're ready for you

sydneyoperahouse.com

