

# MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Premier Mike Rann

Firstly I would like to thank the outgoing Executive Director of Arts SA Kathie Massey who resigned late last year. Ms Massey has been a real asset to both the former and present Government and I wish her well in her future endeavours. She has been replaced by the very capable Greg Mackie OAM, and I congratulate him on his appointment. Greg has played an outstanding and innovative role in South Australia's arts scene for years. He chaired Writers' Week for many years as well as introducing a new festival to South Australia – the Festival of Ideas. Greg will bring a dynamic approach to the leadership of our State's arts sector along with his strong creativity. He is also renowned for his integrity, communication skills and admirable commitment to social justice and reconciliation.

Some remarkable arts experiences will be on offer in South Australia in 2004.

The Adelaide Bank 2004 Festival of Arts will transform Adelaide when Australian and international performers, artists, musicians, playwrights, authors, festival directors, producers, publishers and art-lovers descend here. Audiences have already demonstrated their enthusiasm for Stephen Page's program with advance ticket sales exceeding expectations.

Highlights include Canada's Canstage performance of *The Overcoat*, the world premiere of *Gulpilil* directed by Neil Armstrong, and from the Netherlands Emio Greco's *Conjunto di Nero*.

The Adelaide Fringe has over 400 artists registered, with people travelling from the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea and Uzbekistan. There'll also be return visits by artists from the UK and Canada.

**Thinkers in Residence** is about to bring to South Australia the *Blast Theory* project. *Blast Theory* is a group of multimedia artists from the UK who are coming to Adelaide to workshop a 'hide and seek' style game. The game involves players on the ground using a mobile phone, a personal digital assistant and a global positioning system to find their way to the target. People from all over the world can also play the game online at the same time as the real players.

And there is WOMADelaide which this year will bring the wonderful voice of Youssou N'Dour for the first time since the very first WOMADelaide in 1992. Brazil's Gilberio Gil, Chile's Inti illmani and from South Africa the Abdullah Ibrahim Trio.

During this period, up to 40 Australian performing arts companies will present to 400 of the world's leading performing arts presenters, producers and arts decision-makers at the sixth Australian Performing Arts Market, the largest performing arts market in the southern hemisphere. The Adelaide Bank 2004 Festival of Arts will again play a role in the development of quality Australian drama with the staging of the 31st Australian National Playwrights' Conference. The State Theatre Company will join forces with both Windmill Performing Arts and Brink Productions to present works never before seen on the Australian stage. They will join with the Festival and Playbox to stage the world premiere of *Night Letters* by Susan Rogers and Chris Drummond, inspired by Robert Dessaix's novel.

State Opera will mount the first ever full Australian production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* in November. This production requires massive stage sets – the largest and most complex ever built in Australia. More than 20 companies are involved in the build, while Adelaide University is researching the fire and water aspects.

South Australians in regional SA will once again have access to some of the best performing and visual arts on offer through the highly successful touring program managed by Country Arts SA – stunning and mesmerising physical displays, brilliant and hilarious cabaret and light-hearted drama.

The artists and art centres of Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands will continue important programs begun in 2003 through their regional development body, Anangu Arts & Culture Aboriginal Corporation. Anangu, with the continuing support of Arts SA, ATSI and the Australia Council, will be employing its first full-time Anangu project officer who will work with a new sales officer and current staff to ensure that the artists of this remote area not only develop their skills and fine art practice further, but find new markets for their unique and exciting work. Anangu takes a lead role in indigenous visual and performing arts development and in 2004 will be expanding that role to provide assistance to other communities of indigenous artists around the State.

There's certainly something for everyone in the arts and I look forward to seeing you enjoying the arts in 2004.