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Multicultural program a winner for the Arts Centre, again

Programming aimed at attracting multicultural performers and communities to the Arts Centre was recognised at the annual Melbourne Awards.

MIX IT UP, which celebrates Victoria's cultural diversity, took out the award for Contribution to Community in the Corporate Division at the Awards which celebrate significant contributions that have helped shape the future of Melbourne and to inspire others.

Now in its second season at the Arts Centre, *MIX IT UP* has previously won two State Government awards – for Leadership in Public Programs, and Excellence in Multicultural Affairs.

Arts Centre Executive in charge of Programming, Milos Miladinovic said: “*MIX IT UP* has been a huge success in helping to bring a whole new group of artists and their creative endeavours to the Arts Centre. We share this award with Multiicultural Arts Victoria (MAV) who have worked closely with us to help make the vital connection we needed to the many diverse communities in Melbourne. The performances have attracted a considerable new audience to our venues and introduced many more people to the performing arts. The program is now firmly established in our annual calendar.”

The inaugural *MIX IT UP* season included presentations of major international performing arts companies featuring music, dance, contemporary ballet, physical theatre and circus. Over a six-month season, it featured a diverse range of local, national and international artists (800 in total) from 23 nationalities over 96 events. It attracted 160,000 visitors to the Arts Centre – 47,000 to major events, plus a further 113,000 to a free exhibition *Meeting Place Keeping Place*.

Working with MAV and other grassroots organisations the Arts Centre will continue to develop new connections with local artists and communities, government and Arts Centre stakeholders.

Speaking of the Award, Jill Morgan, Executive Officer from MAV said: “Receiving the Melbourne Award for *MIX IT UP* acknowledges the extraordinary contribution of our local artists and communities and the significant leadership role both organisations play in the cultural life of Melbourne. Acknowledgement of our partnership program with the Arts Centre will inspire other organisations to embrace multiculturalism.”

On September 16, *Our Backyard*, a free non-stop hip hop festival, concludes the 2008 *MIX IT UP* season at the Arts Centre. As well as thumping beats and raw rhymes, the event includes elimination-style breakin' and EMCEE freestyle battles. From 1pm-5pm.

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