

**OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE LIMITED submission for Arts and Culture 9 year strategy:**

1. Outstanding Performance Limited (OPL) was founded in Ōtepoti Dunedin in 2008, and remains a Dunedin based business.
2. We work closely with actors, employing them for educational roleplay across the motu.
3. We began this work in Ōtepoti Dunedin and Dunedin remains one of the largest centres in New Zealand in which we work, due in part to our relationship with the Otago Medical School.
4. We have over a hundred Dunedin actors on our books.
5. The tens of thousands of dollars we pay in wages in Dunedin every year help to provide some financial support to actor creatives who are trying to make their way in the profession.
6. Over the last few years, we have noticed an increase in the number of actors either leaving our city or getting fulltime work in other industries as career opportunities have dwindled. The actual figures are:
  - 2019 - 21
  - 2020 - 11 (Covid lockdowns in place)
  - 2021 - 25
  - 2022 - 38
  - 2023 - 32
  - 2024 - 43
  - 2025 - 12 (to date)
7. Our actors use their creative expertise to support tertiary health students; providing opportunities for practice and assessment; and making a big impact on the communication skills of our future doctors, nurses, and allied health professionals.
8. We have watched the eco system of theatre practitioners hollow out since the Fortune Theatre closed. The opportunities for graduating theatre students are now very thin and the flow of talent from Dunedin to Wellington seems to us to be happening sooner in their arts careers. It appears they have little to keep them in Dunedin.
9. In the 2015 Strategic Plan the DCC spoke of our city being a “Talent incubator - where creative people train, work, set up business and have fantastic careers”. The reality on the ground is that the “Incubator” is broken due to our creative ecosystem being left to deteriorate.
10. The loss of the Fortune was a loss of talent, infrastructure, support and network for the performing industry in Ōtepoti Dunedin. We see cities like Palmerston North and their vibrant professional theatre - offering local stories, incredible talent, education for schools, employment, support and accessibility for their city’s stories; and their community. How can we be a city with “arts and culture at its core” if we don’t even provide the spaces to enable that to happen?
11. We have been surprised and disappointed by the removal of the budget for the theatre infrastructure in Dunedin. Our current theatres are failing and not fit for task, and the exciting new theatre proposal seems to have been left behind.

12. We believe that further deterioration of our theatre infrastructure will continue to impact the decisions of artists who might want to live or study in Dunedin, and impact their decisions of whether to stay in this community.
13. We support the reinstatement of the theatre budget to begin to get us back to an arts ecosystem a city like Dunedin deserves.

We believe the arts economy in Ōtepoti has been badly damaged over the last decade, and it's not going to recover unless the City Council provides some leadership.

Ngā mihi nui,

Janine Knowles - Director OPL

Keith Collins - Director OPL