

Blaise and Sarah Barham

Dunedin,
9010

To Whom it May Concern:
DCC 9 year plan

We would like to make a submission regarding the provision of funding and infrastructure for the performing arts in Dunedin.

We would ask that the council reconsider its decision to withdraw funding for Te Whare O Rukutia

The Mayfair Theatre is becoming quite rundown and not fit for purpose. The Playhouse Theatre is looking at closing its doors within the next two years if the city doesn't step in with financial support for renovations and refurbishment. The Athenaeum Theatre is very basic and needs private-public partnership in order to develop its potential.

In order for small theatrical companies like our own, SBZ Productions and ETC, to be able to put on productions, we urgently need to be able to apply for the Professional Theatre Fund. In the absence of the Fortune Theatre, many small companies like ours have emerged and are struggling to survive without adequate support, and with the potential loss or lack of access to The Playhouse, Te Whare O Rukutia, and The Mayfair. We certainly do not have the resources to perform at the Regent, which is too big for the theatre companies still active in Dunedin.

The performing arts desperately need an Otepoti Theatre Action Plan like that for live music, and support. Otepoti schools and the University of Otago are producing very talented theatre makers, but there is very little support for them to stay on and survive, let alone thrive, here.

It is a terrible shame that Otepoti doesn't have a community performing arts centre to attract and retain artists, and their audience of inhabitants and visitors. A cursory amount of research shows how important the performing arts are for communities' health, and well-being, particularly mentally, emotionally and socially.

Thank you for your consideration of the above points.

Kind regards

Sarah & Blaise Barham