



# MUSIC THEATRE GUILD OF VICTORIA

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria Inc  
held via Google Meet, teleconference & Beaumaris Theatre Company 82 Wells Road, Beaumaris, 3193  
on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 12.30pm**

**Company  
Representation:**

CenterStage - David Greenwood  
CLOC Musical Theatre – Ric Burkitt  
MLOC - Leah Osburn  
OSMAD - Katherine McDonald  
PLOS Musical Productions - Fran Boyd  
Williamstown Theatre Company - Marcus Cassidy-Anderson  
Cactus Musicals Inc - Tim Semmens  
Bendigo Theatre Company - Seamus Allen  
Ringwood Secondary College - Karl McNamara

**Individual &  
Life member  
Proxies**

Nathan Firmin by proxy to Elly Foster  
Brad Fischer by proxy to Elly Foster

**Individual  
& Life Member  
Attendance**

Fran Boyd  
Mitchell Brusamarello  
Damien Calvert  
Ang Cuy  
Carole Cuthbertson  
Sandra Davies  
Elly Foster  
Grant Alley  
Sallyanne Mitchell  
Ian Nisbet  
Dot Parker  
Jon Sebastian  
Mark Spencer  
Peter Tapai  
Mary Ellen Wallace-Smith  
Ashley Weidner  
Brett Wingfield

**Members of  
a Member  
Company  
Attendance**

Cameron Osborne  
Daniel Heskett  
Tamara Finch  
Derek Ingles  
Jack Neill  
Bek McLaughlin

**Apologies:** Frank Simcox, Shaun Kingma, Allan Stone

Mary-ellen Wallace-Smith noted that she had sent in a proxy form from Frank Simcox appointing her as his proxy on the morning of the Annual General Meeting.

Mark Spencer confirmed that the process to submit proxies and the timeframe in which they were required to be received by the Secretary (24 hours in advance of the meeting) had not changed from that which was advised within the Notice of Annual General and which aligned to the Constitution of the organisation. He confirmed that this proxy could not be accepted.

Mary-ellen suggested that this was not in alignment with the model rules - noted.

**Welcome** Ang Cuy welcomed everyone and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, and paid respects to their elders past, present and emerging. Always was, always will be, aboriginal land.

Ang noted that while this form of gathering online is becoming more familiar to some in the interesting times we find ourselves in today, she acknowledged that this mode of delivery is new for the Guild and for many of its members attending today's AGM. She thanked all those involved in enabling it and those who agreed to participate.

**Confirmation of Minutes of 2019 Annual General Meeting:**

Members confirmed receipt of minutes - taken as read.

**Moved:** Elly Foster **Seconded:** Damien Calvert **Carried**

**Business Arising from Minutes:**

Nil

**Correspondence:**

Nil

**Treasurer's Report:**

The Treasurer, Carole Cuthbertson, presented MTGV Statement of Receipts & Payments and Balance Sheet as at 31st January 2020

Retained surplus as at 31 January 2019	\$52,691.26
Plus total income to 31 January 2020	\$53,467.40
Less total expenditure to 31 January 2020	\$51,735.90

**Retained surplus as at 31 January 2020 \$54,422.76**

Registered attendees received copies of these reports and Mark Spencer also presented these reports via the Webinar to all attendees.

Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith questioned the contents of items within the 'administration costs' noted. Carole Cuthbertson advised that these costs consisted of honorariums, printing, judging folders and print cartridges.

Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith questioned the contents of items within the 'web hosting' category. Carole Cuthbertson advised that these costs included new website hosting fees and online form license fees.

**Moved:** Karl McNamara **Seconded:** Daniel Heskett **Carried**

**President's Report:**

We find ourselves in interesting times, and whilst it feels strange to reflect on "the year that was" when the current state of the world is so overwhelming, it would be remiss of me not to recognise and celebrate the efforts of our incredible community.

2019 was an amazing year of theatre in Victoria. 99 productions were submitted for judging, with 54 in the Open Category and 55 in the Junior Category.

10 full-time panel judges and 8 relief judges travelled far and wide across the state, and were treated to productions which in many instances would rival their professional counterparts. The quality of non-professional theatre in Victoria continues to go from strength to strength, and our member companies should be proud of the art that they have created together, not to mention the communities that they have formed.

The awards night this year saw us back in Ballarat, in the beautifully refurbished Her Majesty's Theatre, followed by a reception at the historic Civic Hall. The feedback about the 2019 awards night has been outstanding, and my special thanks must go to our production team of Maxine and Gareth for putting together such an enjoyable evening. Thank you also to our amazing orchestra, and the team from BLOC for ensuring the night ran so smoothly. My thanks must also go to Brett Wingfield, our production manager, who has the unenviable task each year of wrangling the many companies involved in the lead up as well as on the night.

We saw just a snapshot of what is on offer from our community, with the up and coming talent in the Junior arena being a particular standout.

Congratulations to our newest Life Member Carole Cuthbertson, and recipient of our Special Award for Outstanding Contribution to Theatre, Beverley Meldrum in recognition of her many years as a committee member, judge and President for the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria.

Congratulations also to the 2019 Edith Harrhy Award recipient David Greenwood, and Graeme Patterson, recipient of the Musicians' Award. Congratulations to Adamson Theatre Company, recipients of Junior Production of the Year for Jesus Christ Superstar and Bendigo Theatre Company, the recipient of Open Production of the Year for Wicked.

Congratulations go to all nominees and recipients in 2019. I would also like to acknowledge the companies, individuals, corporate bodies and foundations that sponsor our Bruce Awards each year in support of the Awards Night.

We have heard and taken on board the feedback from our members who clearly want to see a collection of performances that are more indicative of the year in theatre and the nominees. For the 2020 judging year, companies will now be notified that they have been placed on the shortlist to perform, with the production team being able to collaborate with the judges in order to select appropriate performances for the night.

Speaking of the awards night, I'm now able to confirm that we have secured a venue and selected a production team for the 2020 ceremony.

I'm so pleased to announce that for the very first time, the Guild awards will take place at Camberwell Grammar School in Canterbury, Melbourne, in their state of the art theatre.

I'm also absolutely delighted to announce our production team for the awards, as we have appointed Tamara Finch as our Director, and Daniel Heskett as our Musical Director. With these two at the helm, I am already looking forward to an incredible night of entertainment.

We are saying farewell and thank you to a number of judges as we move from the 2019 to the 2020 judging season. Our thanks to Carole Cuthbertson, Tyler Hess, Nick Rees and Liz Zito, who have stepped down from the Junior Panel, and Beverley Meldrum who has stepped down from the Open Panel. Thank you all for your generous contribution to the work of the Guild, and your support of our member companies.

We welcome many new judges to both of the panels this year, and we will soon be posting biographies for each of them on the MTGV website, outlining the incredible skill and experience they each bring to the table.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our Judges Administrator Mitchell Brusamarello. Mitch has just completed his first year in the role, and has been integral to the development and review of the role itself. We're so happy that he's agreed to take on this often thankless position for a second year and assist us in continuing to evolve and develop both the administrative role and the judging process itself.

2019 saw us building a strategic plan for the Music Theatre Guild of Victoria, to guide and focus our efforts over the next three years. Key to this strategy is the Guild broadening its focus, and looking to how we can better facilitate collaboration and communication between our members. Whilst we are still in the early stages of implementation, there are already a number of achievements against this strategy that I'm extremely proud of our committee for making happen.

We have increased our communications with our members, distributing newsletters throughout the year with updates and opportunities.

We reviewed the judging criteria and process, publishing the updated criteria and thought process behind it, as part of our ongoing commitment to transparency.

In January this year we held the first ever Judges Induction and Training Day, which saw members from both panels as well as our relief pool coming together to discuss and agree on collective approach and expectations. My thanks to Karl McNamara, who delivered an amazing practical training session on adjudication, ensuring that our judges have a consistent understanding and approach to scoring throughout the year.

Although we had to postpone it due to current restrictions, I'm so excited for us to roll out the first planned Members' Forum on governance for theatre companies. As soon as we are able, we will be rescheduling this session in the second half of the year, and I encourage you all to attend.

And most recently, we were happy to act on recommendations from the Presidents' group, and advocated on behalf of the theatre community to have the major rights holding companies allow live streaming of productions in response to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Before I finish, it would be remiss of me today to not take a moment to pay my respects and acknowledge the recent passing of one of our own - Keith Stuble, a stalwart of our theatre community. To see people turning up in droves to the Palais Theatre to celebrate Keith's final curtain call is a testament to the impact that he had on us all. I do not believe it was coincidence that the timing meant he could get everyone together one last time before restrictions were put on large gatherings. The beautiful, heartfelt and irreverent words spoken by his nearest and dearest were a testament to his kindness, loyalty, talent, humour and filthy mouth. I will miss hearing his laugh ringing across the foyer, and my deepest condolences go to his family and friends. He has left an indelible mark on our community - we should all be so lucky.

To wrap up - my committee colleagues; thank you for your support and hard work throughout the last year. It has been a challenging year of change, and your patience with me as I have attempted to navigate this role for the first time, and your willingness to try so many new things are hugely appreciated.

Thank you in particular to Vice President Brett Wingfield and Treasurer Carole Cuthbertson for providing a steadying hand and sage advice. My unending thanks to Secretary Mark Spencer for being a technical and organisational wizard, helping us to build so many new platforms and processes.

To all our member companies and schools, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best with your productions in 2020. We are in incredibly trying times. The fortitude and resilience I have seen from you all when faced with postponing your productions and keeping your companies afloat in the face of the COVID-19 crisis has been nothing short of inspiring.

Thank you all so much for your continuing efforts to build strong communities and create beautiful theatre throughout the last year, it has been an absolute privilege to serve as your Guild President.

I can only hope that I have delivered on my commitment to community strengthening and innovation, whilst affording respect to the history of the Guild and those that built this community for us.

I look forward to our theatre community thriving once more. Until then my ghost light will continue to burn brightly and I cannot wait to see you all in a foyer again soon.

Thank you.

Ang Cuy

**Moved:** Ashley Weidner      **Seconded:** Carole Cuthbertson      **Carried**

#### **Election of Office Bearers and General Committee**

Ang advised that the number of nominations for both executive roles and general committee members did not exceed the number of positions available and as such, all nominations, as detailed below, are elected.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Nominated</b>	<b>Nominated by</b>	<b>Seconded by</b>
<b>President / General Committee</b>	Ang Cuy	Mark Spencer	Carole Cuthbertson
<b>Vice President</b>	Brett Wingfield	John Tacey	Colin Armstrong
<b>Secretary / General Committee</b>	Mark Spencer	Ang Cuy	Carole Cuthbertson
<b>General Committee</b>	Dot Parker	Elly Foster	Mark Spencer
<b>Treasurer / General Committee</b>	Carole Cuthbertson	Karl McNamara	Elly Foster
<b>General Committee</b>	Elly Foster	Mark Spencer	Marcus Cassidy-Anderson
<b>General Committee</b>	Karl McNamara	Carole Cuthbertson	Elly Foster
<b>General Committee</b>	Damien Calvert	Tristan Lawrence	Katherine McDonald
<b>General Committee</b>	Leah Osburn	Debbie Jenkins	Jane Court

## General Business

### Amendments to Constitution:

Ang detailed the proposed amendments to proxy voting - Section 19 of the constitution, which had been forwarded to members:

#### CURRENT CONSTITUTION

##### 19. PROXIES

- (1) Each member is entitled to appoint another member as a proxy by notice given to the SECRETARY no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting in respect of which the proxy is appointed.
- (2) The notice appointing the proxy must be -
  - (a) for a meeting of the Association convened under rule (7) in the form set out in Appendix 2; or
  - (b) in any other case, in the form set out in Appendix 3.

#### PROPOSED AMENDMENT

##### 19. PROXIES AND POSTAL VOTE

- (1) Each member is entitled to appoint another member as a proxy by notice given to the SECRETARY no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting in respect of which the proxy is appointed.
- (2) The notice appointing the proxy must be -
  - (a) for a meeting of the Association convened under rule (7) in the form set out in Appendix 2; or
  - (b) in any other case, in the form set out in Appendix 3.
- (3) Each member is entitled to complete a postal vote by notice given to the SECRETARY no later than 24 hours before the time of the meeting.
- (4) The notice required the postal vote must be -
  - (a) for a meeting of the Association convened under rule (7) in the form set out in Appendix 2; or
  - (b) in any other case, in the form set out in Appendix 4.

Much discussion ensued regarding the proposed changes, including the absence of Appendix 4, the repealing of the 2012 Act, postal voting and the opportunity for a directed proxy.

It was resolved that the matter would be taken offline and that a working party comprising Ric Burkitt, Jack Neill, Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith and relevant committee members, would be set up to take all feedback on board, revisit the changes and refer the entire constitution back to the committee to call an extraordinary meeting to present to the membership for ratification.

**Moved: Elly Foster Seconded: Carole Cuthbertson Carried**

The proposal to increase company and school membership to \$110 and individual membership to \$20, commencing in 2021, was tabled.

#### 4. MEMBERSHIP, ENTRY FEES AND SUBSCRIPTION

- (11) The annual subscription is the relevant amount as may be agreed at an Annual General Meeting of members and is payable in advance on or before 1 January in each year.

#### CURRENT FEES

Individual Membership - \$15.00  
Company / School Membership - \$100.00

#### PROPOSED FEES EFFECTIVE 2021 Membership Year

Individual Membership - \$20  
Company / School Membership - \$110.00

The company and school membership includes the judging of one show and there is to be no increase to \$60 charge for subsequent shows.

Discussion took place on the benefits to MTGV members and the increasing engagement with members.

It was resolved that the increase would take effect 1 February 2021.

**Moved:** Ian Nisbet **Seconded:** Ashley Weidner **Carried**

#### **Awards Night 2020**

Confirmed on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm at Camberwell Grammar School. The earlier time is due to the strict midnight curfew in place at the school due to its proximity within a residential area.

Given the unprecedented situation we find ourselves in regarding the cancellation / postponement of so many shows, there were a number of suggestions made, including suspending the judging for 2020 and holding a celebratory concert.

The committee will discuss all options regarding the format of the night, in partnership with the production team of Tamara Finch and Dan Heskett.

#### **Venue Closures:**

David Greenwood advised that Geelong Performing Arts Centre has closed for three years, which severely impacts Geelong companies.

Mary-Ellen Wallace-Smith advised that Whitehorse Centre has also closed.

#### **Governance Workshop:**

Ian Nisbet asked if the postponed governance workshop could be held on line? Ang advised that the facilitator recommended presenting face to face, hence the cancellation today, however the committee will look at alternative workshops which would be suitable for online delivery.

#### **Musicians Group:**

Dan Heskett raised the possibility of conducting an event for musicians to come together and virtually 'audition' to enable theatre companies / musical directors to be introduced to new faces and new talent. This could provide an opportunity for greater engagement with potential musicians in an effort to 'increase the pool'. It was acknowledged that there is often difficulty in locking in an orchestra for the entire run of the show. Various options were discussed, and overall it was agreed that this would be a positive initiative - committee to discuss further.

**Ang Cuy** thanked everyone for their input and interest. She also thanked Mark Spencer and Damien Calvert for their technological assistance.

**There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1.58pm**