News release

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Post-lockdown peak in 2022 for Australia's live arts and entertainment industry

- **Reopening of largest markets after lockdowns saw peak in attendance and revenue**
- **Contemporary music, musical theatre and contemporary music festivals top three categories for revenue and attendance**
- **Behind the numbers, industry grappling with 'long COVID' impacts in 2023 and into 2024, with particular pressures for small to medium companies and not for profit sector**

Australia's live performance industry experienced a post-lockdown peak in attendance and revenue in 2022 after two years of disruption and cancellations caused by COVID-19.

Live Performance Australia's 2022 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report shows total revenue for 2022 was $2 billion while ticketed attendance reached 24.2 million in 2022. This was the second highest recorded attendance and revenue since the report commenced in 2004.

After collectively spending more than 200 days under lockdowns in 2021, audiences in the largest markets of Victoria and New South Wales led the return to performances, concert tours and festivals in 2022.

Victoria and NSW combined accounted for 67.8 per cent of live performance revenue and 62.4% of attendance.

Contemporary music, musical theatre, festivals (contemporary music), comedy and theatre were the top categories for revenue and attendance in 2022.

All categories overall experienced year on year growth in 2022, but not all categories have returned to their pre-pandemic levels. Some categories showed declines in attendance and revenue in some states and territories.

Contemporary music experienced the largest growth in revenue and second largest growth in attendance amongst all categories in 2022, although this was compared to 2021 which saw the lowest attendance and revenue numbers in two decades due to COVID-19. It led market share for revenue (35.2%) and attendance (35.9%) in 2022.

Contemporary music festivals experienced the second highest growth in revenue and the highest growth in attendance in 2022, following the poorest results in the previous two years for more than a decade due to the pandemic.

Combined, contemporary music and festivals (contemporary music) recorded close to half of total revenue ($940m) and almost 42% in total attendance.

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In 2022, musical theatre recorded its highest ever revenue and attendance results and is the second largest contributor to overall revenue and attendance, at 25.9% and 17.6% respectively.

LPA Chief Executive Evelyn Richardson said: 'Australians love live performance, and more people attended a contemporary music performance than the AFL, more saw a musical theatre show than the NRL, and theatre attracted bigger audiences than the A-League.

'We saw many audiences come back to their favourite shows, venues and festivals in 2022 as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and borders reopened, especially in Victoria and New South Wales.

'There was also a lot of pent-up demand in 2022 for shows, tours and festivals that had been delayed or rescheduled from the previous couple of years due to COVID-19 restrictions and border closures.

'Despite the strong improvement in attendance and revenue in 2022, many parts of the industry are being impacted by 'long COVID' and grappling with critical workforce shortages, soaring production and touring costs, and shifts in audience behaviour alongside deepening cost of living pressures.

'We know these problems are particularly acute for some sectors of live performance, especially our small to medium and not for profit companies.

'It's pleasing to see governments recognising the economic, social and cultural importance of live arts and entertainment through arts and cultural policy frameworks at the federal and state levels.

'It will be absolutely critical moving forward that governments match their policy ambition with the level of strategic investment in our industry to achieve these goals over the longer term.'

Live Performance Industry in Australia: 2022 Ticket Attendance and Revenue Report - highlights

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A note on data sources:

Data has been compiled from ticketing companies, self-ticketing venues event promoters and National Performing Arts Partnership (NPAP) companies. A list of the data providers is provided in Appendix A of the Report. Data collected for this Report may exclude some events in regional venues. Small to medium companies and independent theatre are also under-represented as many of these companies either self-ticket or use ticketing providers and venues not currently involved in the Report. Festivals are under-reported in the report as some festivals maintain their own ticketing systems and many of these do not contribute data.