

QPAC's
OUT OF THE BOX
FESTIVAL OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

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MEDIA RELEASE

QPAC's **Out of the Box Festival of Early Childhood (OOTB)** is the only festival of its kind, not just in Australia but also in the world. Three to eight-year-olds are the primary focus and they are offered unique opportunities to engage in arts experiences unlike anything else they would see in their daily lives.

The 2004 **Out of the Box Festival** will run **7 – 12 June** and once again QPAC's theatrical and non-theatrical spaces traditionally inhabited by adults will be overrun with children!

The festival, since its inception in 1992, is fortunate to have had a great many supporters and stakeholders, the largest of which is the Queensland Government.

Minister for the Arts Anna Bligh, who officially launched the festival program, says *"The arts play a vital role in children's learning and innovative arts experiences are important for children's development. During the festival, up to 60,000 children, their friends, parents, teachers and carers will literally take over the Queensland Performing Arts Centre at South Bank to participate in a rich and diverse program of arts activities."*

OOTB believes children are current not just future artists and audiences and it seeks to celebrate the cultural contributions of children and their participation in public life.

The 2004 festival program once again provides large and small-scale performances, hands-on workshops and a host of free activities, both indoors and outdoors, designed to cater for the different tastes, interests, cultures and learning needs of young children. These events are created and facilitated by an extraordinary range of artists who appreciate that children deserve high quality, imaginative and original creative work.

Artistic Director Susan Richer says, *"By presenting an arts driven festival that celebrates the cultural interests of the very young, QPAC acknowledges that children are an important part of our society. This year we will present a range of works that explore hope, invention and creativity in fun and unexpected ways. The visibility of children is decreasing in our communities - Out of the Box seeks to encourage children to be seen and heard. I believe the festival program will provide rich learning opportunities and fun memories for children, and most importantly help to promote a sense of hope in uncertain times."*

The full festival program, complete with interactive pages for children, teachers, carers and parents is available at www.ootb.qpac.com.au.

Look to your Quest local newspapers for further information as the Festival draws closer, or for bookings contact Qtix on 136 246.

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