

NEXT WAVE FESTIVAL 2012

19–27 MAY 2012

Next Wave Festival 2012 is a nine day explosion of new art experiences. Investigating twin concepts of urgency and generosity, the 2012 program offers whole-day journeys into a culture of new ideas created by the next wave of emerging artists.

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Across the festival, young artists are learning—deciding how to define their careers, practices and the world they want to live in. Through these works, they have all demonstrated a deep connection to and interest in this world—sometimes angry, sometimes joyous; excited to be sharing. RealTime Magazine

Attracting nearly 250,000 people, Next Wave Festival 2012 (19 – 27 May) saw a 43% rise in attendance and 22% increase in ticket sales from the 2010 Festival.

In their first festival as co-CEOs, Artistic Director Emily Sexton and Executive Director Paul Gurney presented a festival that was resolute in its social and political inquiry, showcasing young artists and challenging our understanding of what art can be, and its role in contemporary society. Next Wave continued to grow its reputation for presenting high profile new work in public spaces and unearthing unusual spaces.

With 38 new commissions involving over 600 local, national and international emerging artists, the 2012 Next Wave Festival was a significant success. Innovative programming concepts delivered outstanding audience development in scale and diversity. The introduction of Day Passes, which took audiences through curated whole-day journeys into the program, resulted in 44% of Day Pass holders attending Next Wave for the first time. Our hugely popular Breakfast Club, hosted by the Wheeler Centre, brought together festival artists, international curators and guest speakers to discuss provocative ideas that resonated in the Festival's program. From climate change to feminism, urban development to poverty, this new format provided a new entry point for an older audience into Next Wave, significantly diversifying our historical connections with 18-35 year olds. Major events such as our Opening House Party, and closing night art party 'FRESH PRODUCE' at the iconic Queen Victoria Markets, attracted crowds of over 3,000.

"We always felt that our 2012 Festival was about planting the seeds for the next Next Wave: experimenting with new approaches, seeing how we could work a bit differently and asking new people to come in and play with us. What we didn't know is just how incredibly well we would pull off that experimentation. A 43% increase in attendance is just outstanding, and a great credit to the quality of the work our artists created. That work could not have been realised without the amazing efforts and great expertise of our team. On behalf of all the Board I am so proud to congratulate our co-CEOs, Emily and Paul, on their first Festival together, and thank everyone involved in the 2012 Next Wave Festival." Janenne Willis, Next Wave Chair

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“Our 2012 Festival was explicitly concerned with new conversations about art and our contemporary world. There was a real generosity in the way our artists built relationships with nail salon workers, seafarers, bird watchers, priests; in so many ways, Next Wave is about challenging our understanding of what art can be, who is allowed to do it, and where it takes place. I am thrilled that our artists made work that spilled into the train stations and laneways of our city; work that Victorians – and Australians – really did want to see, as evidenced by the huge increases we’ve seen in audience attendance, and the quality of that relationship. Next Wave takes art to new places. Thanks for coming along for the ride!” Emily Sexton, Next Wave Artistic Director

41% of our audiences experienced Next Wave for the first time in 2012
80% attended more than one Next Wave event
26% took time off work to attend Next Wave events
24% travelled from interstate to attend Next Wave (7% increase from 2010)
75% used environmentally friendly transportation to get to NW events

OUR AUDIENCES SAID

“The [day] passes were an excellent idea as we then went to things we might not have seen. The morning discussions at the Wheeler Centre were a great way to start the day. This year's Director is to be commended for an excellent job. As a mature person (65) it was stimulating to be amongst so many vibrant, enthusiastic young people with their own ideas.” Anonymous audience member, New Zealand

“Great job! I haven't engaged with this festival for some years now. But this year's program was so compelling it was hard to ignore. I wish I had been able to see more.” Anonymous audience member, Melbourne

OUR ARTISTS SAID

I have had the most inspiring, formative experiences of my artistic and personal life working on this project - so thank you! It has opened my perception of what is possible in my practice as well as affirmed my reasons for making art. – Artist Justin Shoulder, NSW

It was a fantastic experience for us and a great opportunity to take our collective overseas. – Artist Ahi Rands, D.A.N.C.E Art Club (NZ)

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