PALAIS THEATRE HISTORY

There have been several theatres named "Palais" in St Kilda, the first of which opened in 1914. At the end of World War I, the Palais de Danse, already on the current site, became Palais Pictures. In 1919, a steel-framed and arched truss structure was built over the old dance-hall which was relocated next door. The current Palais was built in 1927 and was part of a turn-of-the-century entertainment district.





The theatre was originally owned by the Phillips brothers (Leon, Herman and Harold), three American showmen from Spokane, Washington. In 1922, the brothers brought in the architect Walter Burley Griffin to design a remodeled Palais Pictures. Construction of Griffin's plans began in 1925, but a fire engulfed the stage in February of the following year, just before completion, bringing work to a halt. When Griffin moved on to Sydney, the developers commissioned a new architect, Henry E. White, to build a larger, more grand theatre.

Palais Pictures opened on 11 November 1927 as 'Australia's Wonder Theatre' with the silent movie Seventh Heaven starring Janet Gaynor. For the next 30 or so years a night at Palais Pictures featured an Australian News Reel, Short Film, International News Reel, Variety Performance, Harry Jacobs Orchestra, Feature Film and a pass out as you left for entry to the Palais de Dance next door for a night of dancing. Plus kids movies featured on Saturday afternoons.



When the last of the Phillips died in 1957, the Palais, the Palais de Danse and Luna Park were sold to local entrepreneurs in Melbourne. A brass plaque, still in place on the second level of the Palais, bears a tribute to Leon Phillips from members of the American community of Victoria. The theatre, which had operated primarily as a cinema until the 1950s, became increasingly popular as a live performance venue for top overseas stars such as Johnnie Ray, Bob Hope, The Rolling Stones, Tom Jones, Shirley Bassey and many others.



In the 1960s and 1970s, the theatre regularly presented ballet, including The Bolshoi, The Kirov, Stars of World Ballet, The Australian Ballet, Helpmann, Nureyev, Baryshnikov and Fonteyn and opera including Joan Sutherland in The Merry Widow. Even the Queen and Princess Margaret attended performances at the Palais Theatre. After years of neglect, from 2007-2016 the venue was reinvigorated by Palais Theatre Management Pty Ltd increasing the number and range of live music events and bringing the theatre back to life.

As of April 2017 Live Nation Australia Venues has taken on the Palais Theatre's operations and restoration works. Over the next 30 years the Palais Theatre will be renovated, revitalized and refreshed. The Palais Theatre team is passionate about the Australian live music industry, the creative arts and like the Venue's patrons, the Palais Theatre.

DESIGN

Constructed in an art deco era, the Palais Theatre's design reflects a style of cinema architecture known as 'Atmospheric'. Taking its inspiration from a range of styles and combining them, this style of architecture was created to make the audience gasp with wonder at the beauty and opulence of their local picture theatre. In the Palais Theatre foyer influences include French Louis IX (sun God motifs on the stair balustrade and front doors), Moroccon (the glowing gold walls to reflect a Moroccan sunrise), Roman (columns) and Chinese (reflected in the original chinoiserie carpet design.) The Palais Theatre's auditorium features Juliet balconies on either side of the stage designed in the style of the mirror room at the Palace of Versailles and a barley sugar twirl design on the proscenium arch. Every second row of seating features original metal plates which are the Venue's reticulated water heating system featuring "PP" for Palais Pictures. The Palais Theatre is known for its beautiful acoustics partly due to the horsehair and plaster dome which has been restored to its original beauty.



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

Bob Hope | The Rolling Stones Bob Dylan | Leonard Cohen | Australian Ballet | Australian Opera | Roy Orbison | Shirley Bassey | Joan Sutherland | Rudolph Nureyev | Mikhail Baryshnikov | Margot Fonteyn | Robert Helpmann | John Farnham | Tim Minchin | Jesus Christ Superstar | Ed Sheeran | Florence & The Machine | Sting | Kylie Minogue | Ross Noble | Melbourne Symphony Orchestra



PALAIS THEATRE

PALAIS THEATRE UPCOMING EVENTS

GO!! $HOW GOLD	SAT 4 MAY
DYLAN REVI$ITED	FRI 10 MAY
A BOWIE CELEBRATION: THE DAVID BOWIE ALUMNI TOUR	SAT 11 MAY
KACEY MU$GRAVE$	TUES 14 MAY
ANDRE REYE$ FORMERLY OF GIP$Y KING$	THU 16 MAY
APIA GOOD TIME$ TOUR	SAT 25 MAY
IN CONVER$ATION WITH THE $OPRANO$	SAT 1 JUNE
NICK OFFERMAN	SAT 8 JUNE
BILLY OCEAN	WED 19 JUNE
THE MONKEE$—MIKE & MICKEY	SAT 15 JUNE
BILLY OCEAN	WED 19 JUNE
CO$ENTINO	SAT 29 JUNE—2 SHOWS
THE WIGGLE$	THU 11 JULY **$OLD OUT**
THE PINK FLOYD EXPERIENCE	SAT 3 AUGUST
THE BEATLE$ ABBEY ROAD LIVE **Kram ($piderbait), Mark Wil$on (Jet), Davey Lane (You Am I), Darren Middleton (Powderfinger)**	THU 15 AUGUST
ULTIMATE QUEEN CELEBRATION	SAT 24 AUGUST
BILL BRY$ON	THU 5 SEPTEMBER
$WAN LAKE—IMPERIAL RU$$IAN BALLET	SAT 21 SEPTEMBER
PO$TMODERN JUKEBOX	SUN 22 SEPTEMBER
GINO D'ACAMPO$ AU$$IE E$CAPE	SAT 12 OCTOBER
80$ MANIA **Go West | P$eudo Echo | A Flock of $eagulls | The Cutting Crew | Wang Chung**	FRI 15 NOVEMBER
LEA $ALONGA IN CONCERT	THU 21 & FRI 22 NOVEMBER
THE KING$ OF COUNTRY ROCK TOUR	SAT 23 NOVEMBER
ADAM THOMPON' BOHEMIAN RHAP$ODY	FRI 29 NOVEMBER
HANNAH GAD$BY—DOUGLA$	SAT 7 DECEMBER
RU$$ELL HOWARD	MON 20 JULY **2020**

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