

DR SANDY EVANS OAM

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To Creative Australia's Industry Advisors,

SUPPORT FOR FOUR-YEAR INVESTMENT IN SIMA

SIMA is the leading organisation presenting and developing jazz and improvised music in Australia. In this essential artform, Australia is a unique and important contributor. I have seen generations of international musicians be surprised by the quality, diversity, depth and creativity we have here, and I have seen audiences connect with it in profound ways.

Our accent in this music is today recognisably Australian. It is ours! A meaningful expression of identity. There has been no more significant organisation in that development than SIMA.

My own career would not have been possible without SIMA's support. From my very first group, Women and Children First, it has given me opportunities to develop new ideas and connect with audiences over what is now four decades. It nurtured my ensembles, including some significant ones: the internationally recognised Clarion Fracture Zone; Sydney's iconic large ensemble Ten Part Invention; electro-acoustic intercultural octet GEST8; The Catholics, now in its fourth decade as a band; my trio; and big projects like *When The Sky Cries Rainbows*.

SIMA has also been the platform on which I have promoted gender and cultural diversity in Australian music. I founded the Young Women's Jazz Workshops in 2002. To see them still changing lives today around the country, and to see the musicians it nurtured infusing Australian music culture with ongoing change across many genres and places, to now being role models to the next generation themselves - that brings me great fulfillment and joy.

SIMA has also supported my collaborations with master Indian and Indian-Australian musicians like Sarangan Sriranganathan and Bobby Singh. For example, they premiered my major work *Ahimsa: Meditations on Gandhi*, a new type of electro-acoustic collaboration which set Sanskrit translations of writings on non-violence. Alon Ilisar's Airsticks triggered samples of Gandhi's speech and we created a rhythmic language in which the samples and tabla could speak in conversation. SIMA's livestream of the work during the pandemic led to opportunities to present nationally, at Canberra International Music Festival and in regional Tasmania and NSW, and plans to record the work. More than that, the project took my ideas of harmonious collaboration - in which disparate ideas create new language, but still allow people to connect - to a new level.

SIMA has also enabled me to collaborate with major international musicians. For example, I played with Terri Lynne Carrington, Grammy-winning drummer and the founder of Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice at the Sydney International Women's Jazz Festival. We are still in touch and it led to my composition featuring in her major publication that helps level the global repertoire: *New Standards: 101 Lead Sheets By Women Composers*.

Jazz and improvised music can change lives. There is a level of expressiveness in the moment that connects people profoundly. I have witnessed SIMA punching above its weight since the 1980s. It deserves a medal! But more than that, it deserves investment.

It would be transformative. It is time.


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