



# BRISBANE POWERHOUSE 10th BIRTHDAY MEDIA KIT

Brisbane Powerhouse is owned and supported by Brisbane City Council

Media Release  
Friday 26 March, 2010

## TEN CANDLES FOR TEN FANTASTIC YEARS

Brisbane Powerhouse presents  
*Brisbane Powerhouse is Ten.*

They say time flies when you are having fun but it is still hard to believe **Brisbane Powerhouse** will be **TEN** years old on **Monday 10 May 2010**. Since being opened as an arts centre on 10 May, 2000 by Lord Mayor Jim Soorley, Brisbane Powerhouse has been committed to providing the people of Brisbane with access to world class art forms – theatre, dance, music, comedy, kids programs, visual arts, film and beyond – presenting a consistently diverse program and bravely taking chances on new work.

During the past decade, Brisbane Powerhouse has produced such landmark productions as *lawn* and *Roadkill* with Splintergroup, Ridiculusmus's *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Nick Earls' *The True Story of Butterfish* as well as presenting the annual *World Press Photo* exhibition and the *Brisbane Jazz Festival*, *Powerkidz*, *Brisbane Comedy Festival* and *Brisbane Queer Film Festival*.

There have been many other highlights and milestones across the ten years, almost too many to mention, with such notable events and artists visiting as Miriam Makeba, The Brodsky Quartet, Tim Page, The Mighty Sparrow, a 2007 refurbishment and subsequent re-opening by Lord Mayor Campbell Newman, the addition of Bar Alto, *Sacred Monsters* with Akram Khan & Sylvie Guillem, *Being Harold Pinter* by Belarus Free Theatre and of course last year's masterful marathon, *GATZ* and much, much more.

Attendance grew from a modest number in 2000/2001 to 643,918 patrons in 2008/2009, with tickets sales skyrocketing from less than \$100,000 in 00/01 to more than \$3 million in 08/09. Record numbers were seen in 2009 for *World Press Photo*, with more than 28,000 people viewing the exhibition and the inaugural *Brisbane Comedy Festival* exceeded expectations with over 24,000 paid attendees across sixteen events.

2010 is shaping up to be an exciting and dynamic year with Brisbane Powerhouse playing host again to the *World Press Photo 10* exhibition, cult filmmaker, John Waters, The Brodsky Quartet, Eddie Perfect and more. The year has also already seen the inaugural *World Theatre Festival*, the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Brisbane Comedy Festival*, which was even more huge than last year, and of course yet to come are our other regular programs, *Powerkidz*, *Brisbane Queer Film Festival* and *Brisbane Jazz Festival* which just keep getting bigger and better each and every year.

Brisbane Powerhouse is also proud to welcome on board as a Celebration Partner, **Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC)**. BAC is committed to highlighting Brisbane as a city that values excellence and culture and recognises the significant role Brisbane Powerhouse plays in strengthening Brisbane's reputation as a vibrant, contemporary and creative city.

To celebrate its tenth birthday, Brisbane Powerhouse will open its doors wide on **Sunday 16 May** to invite kids and adults alike for the **Brisbane Powerhouse is Ten Birthday Party**, filled with kids' activities, bands, music and comedy as well as a visit from Lord Mayor Campbell Newman and more.

More information online at [brisbanepowerhouse.org](http://brisbanepowerhouse.org)

-ENDS-

For more information, images and interviews please contact  
**Brisbane Powerhouse Publicist, Rachael Morgan**  
p 07 3358 8670 m 0404 775 377 f 07 3358 8649  
e [rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org)

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Media Release  
Friday 26 March, 2010

## CAKE, CANDLES AND CULTURE

Brisbane Powerhouse presents  
*Brisbane Powerhouse is Ten Birthday Party*

On Monday 10 May, **Brisbane Powerhouse** will be exactly ten years old and to celebrate this milestone birthday the whole of Brisbane is invited to a day of FREE fun, music, art and culture at the ***Brisbane Powerhouse is Ten Birthday Party*** on **Sunday 16 May**. Starting at **10am** and running throughout the day until **8.30pm** there will be stuff to see and do for kids and adults alike with interactive art installations, circus performers, musical acts of all kinds, top notch comedy and even some footy and a visit from the Lord Mayor of Brisbane.

The day kicks off with **Vulcana Women's Circus** performing daring aerials and acro-balance on the front wall of the building, **Chrissie Foreman** creating a public art installation where anyone and everyone can leave Brisbane Powerhouse a Happy Birthday message and **Brisbane Lions** running footy clinics for kids on the performance lawn. On the Riverbend Terrace, several artists will create a brand new **Stencil Graf Public Art Work**, which will be the first new public art work added to the building since the commissioning of TRACK in 2003. The original Brisbane Powerhouse graffiti was recognised for its importance as social commentary and was therefore preserved; now ten years later that commentary will be added to and streamed live by video to the Turbine Hall where you can watch it take shape before your eyes across the day.

An awesome treat for the young kids (and grown-ups too if giant dancing fruit is your thing) is the ***Bananas in Pyjamas*** performance at midday, yes that's right, **B1** and **B2** will be live on stage ready to rock your little one's world. Then at 12.30 (and we're not sure how he's going to follow the fabulous, famous bananas) we have a very special visit from **Lord Mayor Campbell Newman** himself.

The afternoon is chock full of music and no matter what your taste there will be something you'll love. The Livespark line-up is rocking with much loved Brisbane band, **Regurgitator**, returning to Brisbane Powerhouse for their first gig in the venue in seven years. It will be huge. **Last Dinosaurs**, Triple J's newest Brisbane discovery and **Spacifix**, who hit the Brisbane scene at *Pasifika Festival 2008* and have become festival favourites, will play support, getting the crowd warmed up for the main event throughout the afternoon. For those that like their music a little less raucous, the day would not be complete without Artists-in-Residence, **Topology**, who will perform their only free concert in Powerhouse Theatre at 6pm. **DJ Claire Marshall** will keep the crowd hot, happy and in high spirits and there will be roving performances by dance theatre company **Polytoxic**.

The day will end on a hysterically funny high note with a truck load of free comedy coming your way in the form of **Charlie Pickering**, who is currently gracing our TV screens on *The 7pm Project*, and the ever popular musical comedy trio, **Tripod**. Both are guaranteed to tickle your funny bone.

What a day! What a party! And what a place! Brisbane Powerhouse can't wait to see you here, celebrating with us on Sunday 16 May. Full program details can be accessed at [brisbanepowerhouse.org](http://brisbanepowerhouse.org)

-ENDS-

Date	Sun 16 May 2010
Time	10am to 8.30pm
Venue	Brisbane Powerhouse
Tickets	All Events FREE
Bookings	07 3358 8600 or <a href="http://brisbanepowerhouse.org">brisbanepowerhouse.org</a>

For more information, images and interviews please contact  
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p 07 3358 8670 m 0404 775 377 f 07 3358 8649  
e [rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org](mailto:rachaelm@brisbanepowerhouse.org)

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Media Alert  
Friday 26 March 2010

## **BRISBANE POWERHOUSE GOES WIRELESS**

### **Power Up Your Laptop then Get Online at Brisbane Powerhouse On The House!**

It can now be said that Brisbane Powerhouse really does have it all... you can see a show here - dance, theatre, comedy and more - you can see a band, you can have a drink, a great meal...you can bring your kids, you can just come for the coffee and the view...well now you can even get out of the dreary surrounds of your office, bring your laptop and get online here with **FREE wireless internet access** being offered in our public spaces from **Thursday 6 May**.

Brisbane Powerhouse has long wanted to make this facility available to patrons and visitors and recently finalised a new partnership with **Cisco Systems** and **CBO**, who are wireless networking experts, and **Optus**, enabling us to do just that.

Whether you want to check emails, surf the net, research a uni assignment, work remotely or even just hang out on Facebook or Tweet about how great the coffee is, you can do it all here.

Our public spaces include the Turbine Hall, Bar Alto, the Mosquito Wall and the Visy Foyer and function spaces.

**FREE wireless internet access from Thursday 6 May 2010.**

**More information available soon at [brisbanepowerhouse.org](http://brisbanepowerhouse.org)**

**-ENDS-**

## BRISBANE POWERHOUSE FACT SHEET

### HISTORY

*“There is something really special about performing in a reclaimed space such as this. For years this building has been serving the community by providing the city with power and it now continues to do so – once workers were shovelling coal here, and now it’s a place to shovel words and generate thought.” John Kani (playwright, actor, director)*

The Brisbane City Council New Farm Powerhouse was designed by Brisbane City Council Tramway architect, Roy Rusden Ogg and constructed in stages between 1928 and 1940. Built on the eastern riverside point of what is now New Farm Park, the water from the river provided cooling and the rail link supplied coal.

At its peak in the post-war years it supplied electricity for the largest tram network in the southern hemisphere as well as servicing many of Brisbane’s suburbs. As trams were steadily replaced by buses, the Brisbane City Council sold the building to the state. It was officially decommissioned in 1971.

While commercially barren, the apparently derelict building provided shelter for the homeless, was a site for target practice for the army and a location for filmmakers and, as a precursor of its future a canvas for graffiti artists and a stage for underground art happenings.

Surviving two decades of neglect and an incomplete demolition project, the building was reacquired by Brisbane City Council in 1989. A significant example of industrial design of the art deco period, the power station was identified as culturally significant and the concept of a new incarnation as a centre for the arts was born.

The redeveloped Brisbane Powerhouse was designed by Brisbane City Council architect Peter Roy and was opened on 10 May, 2000 by Lord Mayor Jim Soorley. Seven years later the building underwent a further stage of development and was re-opened on 6 June 2007 by Lord Mayor Campbell Newman with increased audience capacities, restaurant and bar facilities as well as functions and conference spaces.

Brisbane Powerhouse now boasts a flexible 400 – 700 seat ‘end on’ stage theatre, an intimate 200 seat apron stage theatre, an 800 viewer open platform, two restaurants, conference and rehearsal rooms and offices.

Entering its tenth year, Brisbane Powerhouse is still evolving and has already cemented its role in the cultural life of the city and in the artistic life of the nation as well as its place among the most innovative and lively arts centres in the world.

## MAIN PERFORMANCE SPACES

### Powerhouse Theatre

The Powerhouse Theatre is a contemporary studio-style 'black box' theatre that provides a flexible performance space suitable for theatre, dance, comedy and music productions, public lectures, seminars and conferences. Originally seating 400 people, since the 2007 refurbishment, the Powerhouse Theatre can now seat 536 people in standard mode and up to 740 people in extended seating mode. Seating arrangements can be a combination of stalls, flat floor areas with seating rows or tables, a balcony and upper and lower galleries.

### Visy Theatre

The Visy Theatre is an intimate thrust-stage theatre suitable for smaller theatre productions, cabaret, forums and readings. Dramatically framed by columns from the original building it seats up to 200 people with 112 fixed bank seats a seating pit of 34 seats and removable seating banks of 27 on each side.

### Turbine Platform

The Turbine Platform is a large cathedral-like space adjacent to Bar Alto and the main foyer in the Turbine Hall. Suited to large scale music events, exhibitions and product launches, the Turbine Platform can be configured in various ways for free events, ticketed events and private functions with various configurations from casual with sofas, café tables and soft furnishings to theatre style, cabaret mode and standing room only.

## OTHER SPACES

### Rooftop Terrace

With the most stunning river views in New Farm, this indoor room with outdoor undercover deck is located on level 3 overlooking the river. It suitable for wedding receptions, cocktail parties, conferences, meetings and training sessions as well as small intimate performances. Recently been used for the Van Dyke Parks event and various DJ/Multimedia driven events such as Liquid Architecture..

### Turbine Rehearsal Room

Located on the river level opposite the Visy Theatre, the 156m<sup>2</sup> space features sprung timber floors, a mirror, air conditioning and a kitchenette. It is suited to break-out sessions, workshops and training sessions.

### Graffiti Room

A small meeting room with a view of the river located on level 1 adjacent to Bar Alto

### The Plaza

Linking the precinct with New Farm Park, Devine Plaza is a versatile performance and concert space, an intersection between the performance areas, public artworks, parks and meeting places. An open arena, Devine Plaza was the dynamic setting for the Brisbane Powerhouse Opening Ritual displaying the talents of Rock 'n' Roll Circus and The Arterial Group, and many other performances in the ten years since.

## The Stores Building

The vocational soul of Brisbane Powerhouse, the Stores Building is a hub for public workshops and classes. As well as rehearsal and workshop spaces, the building also houses office space for cultural tenants Vulcana Womens Circus, Access Arts and InSite Arts as well as offices for artist-in-residence, Topology. Vulcana Womens Circus and Flipside Children's Circus run workshops in the Stores Studio which has a 12 metre ceiling to accommodate circus, movement and physical theatre.

## Performance Lawn

Harnessing the landscapes of the Brisbane River and set against the historic façade of Brisbane Powerhouse, the performance lawn area was once used for storing coal. Now a lush plaza used as a performance and function space, the area can accommodate a diversity of arrangements, including a large marquee or performance tent; for that special event that captures the delights of Brisbane's climate and the beauty of the Hawthorne reach of the river.

## The Labyrinth

Located close to the Stores Building, the outdoor Labyrinth is an archetype, a divine imprint, found in many religious traditions around the world. As a non-denominational multi-tradition spiritual tool, the Labyrinth will be the mystical heart of the precinct, bringing together the energies of the parks, the river, and the theatres and collecting the contemplative energy of those who walk it.

## PUBLIC ARTWORKS

After an extensive curatorial process, six artists were originally commissioned by Brisbane Powerhouse to produce works that communicated its unique heritage and diverse cultural influences. Of those six artists, two permanent installations remain (*Watermark* by Richard Tipping and *Optogemel* by Sheridan Kennedy) and are operational in 2010 and several more have been added over the past ten years.

*Watermark* (fondly known to many as simply 'The Flood Sign') is situated by the river outside WATT Modern Dining. *Watermark* is a free standing sculpture made of powder-coated plated steel. The word 'flood' appears in thick red letters, with only the top third showing, evoking memories of the massive river floodings in 1893 and 1974. Artists Richard Tipping is also responsible for the series of playful signs around the precinct called 'Signed Signs', displaying such statements as 'Private Poetry', 'No Understanding Anytime' and near the dog park, '3 Hour Barking'.

*Optogemel*, which holds pride of place in entry way of the Turbine Building, is a 'multi-eye' screen approximately two metres in length, suspended from the ceiling and consisting of 61 beautiful glass lenses. This mechanical structure, that patrons are able to interact with, explores performance constructs of an industrial environment and ignites a kaleidoscopic pattern of light that sweeps across the entrance.

Other permanent artworks include *Winks* by Lisa Anderson, situated in the stairwell leading down to the Visy Theatre Foyer, a display of two painted car bonnets by Kellie O'Dempsey which were an original part of the set for acclaimed dance work '*Roadkill*', *Lucent* by Justin Cocker, *Track* by Therese Nolan-Brown and *Long Player*. Also on permanent display are photographs by Leah King-Smith, Marion Drew and Tim Page, a painting by Shaun Edwards Kalk and *Man Seated*, a large scale framed drawing by Kellie O'Dempsey.

## BRISBANE POWERHOUSE TEN YEAR TIMELINE

### 2000

On 10 May 2000, Brisbane Powerhouse Centre for the Live Arts opened its doors to patrons for the very first time with Centre Director, Zane Trow at the helm. 11 May saw La Boite Theatre's *The Popular Mechanicals* become the first show ever to be presented in the Powerhouse Theatre and on 31 May Nikki Heywood's *Burn Sonata* was the first show put on in the Visy Theatre. One of the stars of the world music scene, George Telek, performed here in June. Having returned several times since then, George is performing here again in 2010. July was the scene of the very first Brisbane Queer Film Festival (BQFF), simply called Queer Film & Video Weekend. BQFF is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year. The Visy Theatre was host to Michael Fitcher and Helen Howard's *A Beautiful Life* in August and in November, one of Australia's most respected artists and photographers, William Yang presented his powerful show, *Blood Links*.

### 2001

The first Topology concert at Brisbane Powerhouse took place in February. Topology has gone on to become our ensemble-in-residence, performing several shows a year and collaborating with a wide range of musicians and artists. February also played host to veteran jazz trio, The Necks, bringing their yearly tour to Brisbane Powerhouse for the first time. The Necks have been back a number of years since and are also returning in 2010. WATT Modern Dining opened its doors in April and has gone on to win a multitude of hospitality industry awards. Australia's only professional taiko drumming ensemble TaikOz presented here in August and Queensland Theatre Company presented their production of *Richard II* through September and October. At the end of the 2000/2001 financial year, attendance was 125,535 patrons 10,569 tickets had been sold with \$99,340 in ticket sales.

(\*Figures are an approximation based on archival information available)

### 2002

Queensland Orchestra presented their Powerhouse series - *Defying Gravity*, *Dakar* and *Mr BBQ* - throughout the year, performing in April, June and October. Award-winning UK choreographer and dancer, Akram Khan, performed in the Visy Theatre in September. This was a selection of short dance works entitled *Loose in Flight*, *Fix* and *Rush*. Akram returned to Brisbane Powerhouse in 2008 alongside prima ballerina Sylvie Guillem in the acclaimed work, *Sacred Monsters*. Acclaimed physical theatre troupe, Legs on the Wall, performed *Runners Up* in November, *Runners Up* took an intimate peek inside the family trophy cabinet all the while reflecting on our aspirations, obsessions and the much-loved 'sporting-chance'.

## Brisbane Powerhouse Ten Year Timeline cont'd

### 2003

The current Brisbane Powerhouse Artistic Director, Andrew Ross, was appointed in 2003; coming to us from Perth's Black Swan Theatre. Highlights of 2003 include the very first *Fabrique* event featuring German artist Burnt Friedman, held in the original Spark Bar (now Bar Alto). The establishment of *Fabrique* heralded the start of a long and productive relationship with Brisbane sound artist Lawrence English, who would go on to curate *Liquid Architecture*, another ongoing event, in 2004 and on. October saw the outstanding event of the year, *Weeleni; the Call* by Company Salia ni Seydou. From the small landlocked West African nation of Burkina Faso, the company leads the way in the development of African contemporary dance. They returned in 2007 with *Un Pas De Cote*. It was also during 2003 that Andrew Ross found himself sitting in the Spark Bar with jazz musician Mark Isaacs while a severe storm raged outside. That very conversation sowed the seed that would grow into the *Brisbane Jazz Festival*.

### 2004

2004 was the year Brisbane Powerhouse first embarked on producing and commissioning brand new works including the highly acclaimed *Lawn* which was previewed, as a work in progress, in this particular year. UK duo, Ridiculusmus, brought their production of *Ideas Men* to the Powerhouse Theatre in May and would return to the venue several times over the ensuing years with other productions, including *The Importance of Being Earnest*, produced in conjunction with Brisbane Powerhouse. Our school holiday kids program, *Powerkidz*, kicked off in the June/July holidays and was a great success, backing up with a second program in the September school holidays. This program has also grown every year, adding more workshops and more fun and is still running in 2010. July also saw the first *Liquid Architecture*, which would go on to become Australia's premiere sound art festival. Doch Gypsy Orchestra first performed here in October, introducing Brisbane to their own unique take on Balkan Swing. Doch performed at Brisbane Powerhouse every year, to sell out audiences until their final show in 2009.

### 2005

In 2005 Brisbane Powerhouse began to develop a strong relationship with South Africa with John Kani's post-apartheid masterpiece, *Nothing But the Truth* in April. This relationship continued and strengthened later the next year with two more shows from South Africa, *Tshepang* and *White Men with Weapons*, in 2006. One of Topology's many collaborations took place in July, with popular Brisbane songstress, Kate Miller-Heidke. They played together again in 2006 and Topology have since collaborated with such artists as Tyrone Noonan, The Kransky Sisters, Grant Collins and TaikOz and have a number of

## Brisbane Powerhouse Ten Year Timeline cont'd

shows scheduled at Brisbane Powerhouse in 2010. The official showing of *Lawn*, by Splintergroup, produced by Dancenorth and Brisbane Powerhouse and previewed in 2004, took place this year. It continued on to tour nationally and internationally and came back in 2009. Internationally renowned photojournalist, Tim Page, showed his exhibition *From War to Peace; Revolutions Revelation Resolutions*. A major highlight of 2005 was another Ridiculusmus production, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, produced and premiering at Brisbane Powerhouse with The Barbican London's *Bite Festival*. At the end of the 2004/2005 financial year, attendance was recorded as 363,454 patrons, 86,481 tickets were sold and \$1,649,317 was raised in ticket sales.

## 2006

January saw the highly acclaimed Brodsky Quartet bring their love and mastery of the traditional and contemporary string quartet repertoire to Brisbane Powerhouse with *Intimate Reflections of the Night*. Legendary South African singer, Miriam Makeba, otherwise known as Mama Afrika, performed here as part of the first *Afrika Pasifika* festival in March, which returned as *Pasifika* in 2008. *Afrika Pasifika* also saw the full-length premiere of Polytoxic's *Teuila Postcards*, which had been in development since 2003 when it was shown as a work in progress. *Teuila Postcards* returned to Brisbane Powerhouse by demand in 2007 and played to sell out audiences. The South African theme continued through the year with *Tshepang & White Men with Weapons*. Eddie Perfect's *Drink Pepsi Bitch*, in May, was a new and acclaimed, satirical offering from the now well known Australian comedian, musician and actor who played the Brisbane Powerhouse Spark Bar early on in his career. Those early shows incorporated a then little known Tim Minchin who also brought his break-out solo show, *The Dark Side* to Brisbane Powerhouse in May of 2006 and returned to sell out the Powerhouse Theatre with *Ready For This?* in 2009. Also starting in the Spark Bar was *Live Spark* and *Livewired*, our free Sunday music and comedy program. These eventually moved to the Turbine Platform after refurbishment where they remain one of the best free things to see and do in Brisbane at the weekend. In September 2006 Brisbane Powerhouse witnessed the coming together of two incredible dance companies, Splintergroup (Aus) and Batik (Japan) with *Underneath*. This work was born out of an exploratory workshop between the two groups, at Brisbane Powerhouse in 2005. Also in September, Calypso King, the Mighty Sparrow brought his colourful brand of Calypso music to the Powerhouse Theatre stage. The Brodsky Quartet and Eddie Perfect return to Brisbane Powerhouse, together, in 2010. Brisbane Powerhouse closed in December for refurbishment.

## Brisbane Powerhouse Ten Year Timeline cont'd

### 2007

The newly refurbished Brisbane Powerhouse opened in June of 2007 with additional capacity in the Powerhouse Theatre, an informal performance space on the Turbine Platform, a new bar and café, Bar Alto and a river balcony, which allows patrons to enjoy one of Brisbane's most beautiful landscapes – the Brisbane River. The venue re-opened with *Pauhaus*, a huge all of venue, all ages pop / rock gig featuring The Grates, Operator Please, The Panics and Yves Klein Blue and attracting more than 1400 attendees. The *World Press Photo* exhibition made its Queensland debut from the end of June and through July after having only been shown before in Sydney. It remains an annual event at Brisbane Powerhouse. The five day *Festival Nusantara* brought together almost 60 artists from Indonesia for a celebration of Indonesian culture, heritage, music, art, food and dance in August. It was the biggest festival of its kind ever held in Australia and included a dance work by the acclaimed dance company, Nan Jombang Group, who will be returning to Brisbane Powerhouse in 2010. Cabaret kitten, Meow Meow performed to sell out crowds in October when she brought her 'voix inhumaine' to Brisbane with *Beyond Glamour: the Absinthe Tour* as part of the 2007 Brisbane Cabaret Festival. Curated by the ARIA Award winning Mark Isaacs, the very first *Brisbane Jazz Festival* was presented in November, featuring The Dave Holland Quintet, Nils Wogram and Paul Grabowsky among others. This festival is now in its fourth year and continues to grow steadily. *Roadkill*, the highly acclaimed dance work produced by Brisbane Powerhouse and Dancenorth and choreographed by Splintergroup, opened to glowing reviews in December and went on to tour both nationally and internationally, including to The Barbican in London.

### 2008

Presented by Brisbane Powerhouse and The National Theatre of Scotland, *Aa/ist*, in February was a dark and powerful drama based on real, chilling events. This was followed, also in February, by the inimitable Camille O'Sullivan with her sold-out show *La Fille du Cirque*. Such was the demand for Camille, she returned in October of the same year with another show, *The Dark Angel*. March was a flurry of activity with the *Restrung – Chamber Music Festival*, held over four days and featuring some of the world's finest music ensembles such as *The Brodsky Quartet*, *Fourplay* and the *David Chesworth Ensemble*. Tommy Murphy's award winning adaptation of Tim Conigrave's iconic memoir, *Holding the Man*, by Griffin Theatre Company, also held Brisbane audiences spellbound in March, playing a sell out season following four sell out seasons in Sydney. The sold out shows continued in March when prima ballerina, Sylvie Guillem and kathak master, Akram Khan performed the stunningly brilliant *Sacred Monsters* in the Powerhouse Theatre for two shows only. Then, continuing the long standing connection between Brisbane Powerhouse and

## Brisbane Powerhouse Ten Year Timeline cont'd

South Africa, *Woyzeck on the Highveld*, by William Kentridge and the Handspring Puppet Company, used stunning life-sized puppets to bring to life Buchner's famous play in April. Perfectly demonstrating the diversity of the Brisbane Powerhouse program, the next sold out shows were *The Hard Sell Tour* by masters of hip-hop and Turntablism, DJ Shadow and Cut Chemist, also in April. In August, Paolo Pellegrin, one of the world's most outstanding and award-winning photographers brought his remarkable exhibition, *As I Was Dying* to the venue, showcasing his unique ability to capture humanity amidst the despair and suffering of war. The year ended with an unplugged performance by ultra-chic French group Nouvelle Vague, fronted by chanteuses Melanie Pain and Nadeah, who brought their coquettish Bossa Nova covers of songs by Joy Division, Depeche Mode, The Clash, and Echo and the Bunnymen to the Turbine Platform in December.

## 2009

2009 started with a stark look inside the reality of life in Europe's last dictatorship. *Being Harold Pinter* by Belarus Free Theatre, in January, was a harrowing account of artistic and political repression, brought to life by a company who risked violence and arrest to tell their stories. March heralded a huge milestone for Brisbane Powerhouse with the inaugural *Brisbane Comedy Festival* taking over the building for three entire weeks. The festival attracted 24,000 paid attendees across 16 events. In May audiences were treated to a true 'once in a lifetime' experience when New York theatre company, Elevator Repair Service, brought their six hour tour-de-force production of *Gatz* to Brisbane. In theory a word for word reading of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, it was so much more than that. Reviews called it "multi-layered", saying it "breathed strange new life into a familiar text." July saw the launch of an expanded program of free music, *Weekend Sessions*, in addition to our already popular *Livespark* and *Livewired* programs on a Sunday. Fridays now play host to *The Residents*, Saturdays are a rotating program including *Planet*, *Waxing Lyrical*, *Turbine Jazz* and *Popalicious*. Brisbane Powerhouse also launched a world music and dance series, *Planet* which would see artists such as Dheeraj Shrestha and Harry James Angus visit the venue. One of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century's most important and inventive musicians, songwriters and arrangers, Van Dyke Parks performed in the rooftop terrace as part of Brisbane Festival 2009, delivering his only Australian concert - an intimate and exclusive evening showcasing his solo work. October continued Brisbane Powerhouse's journey towards producing more and more brand new work with the world premier of Nick Earls' first full-length play, *The True Story of Butterfish*. Written concurrently with the book of the same name, *The True Story of Butterfish* was also directed by the Artistic Director of Brisbane Powerhouse, Andrew Ross. Tony Award-winning performer and Hollywood actor, Alan Cumming made his Brisbane debut in November when he brought his sold-out cabaret show, *I Bought a Blue Car Today* to the intimate surrounds of the Visy

Brisbane Powerhouse Ten Year Timeline cont'd

Theatre. Also in 2009, World Press Photo also broke attendance records with more than 28,000 patrons viewing the exhibition. At the end of the 2008/2009 financial year, attendance stood at 643,918, 131,427 tickets were sold and \$3,126,732 was made in ticket sales.

### **2010 and Looking Forward**

In February, the inaugural *World Theatre Festival* introduced Brisbane audiences to some of the most exciting and innovative new theatre being created locally and internationally across two weeks. Artists came from around Australia, from the UK and from Ireland. Brisbane Powerhouse plans to grow this festival over the coming years. This year, Brisbane Powerhouse continues to work towards its goal of becoming a greener and more sustainable organisation which began in 2008 with the appointment of CSIRO Social Scientist, Peta Ashworth, to our board, who is leading our sustainable practice. We made further steps forward in 2009 with the installation of three water tanks to capture rainwater run-off and currently have an audit of our waste, water and energy usage underway. Another milestone this year is that from 6 May 2010, Brisbane Powerhouse will be providing FREE Wireless Internet access to patrons in all public areas. This is an initiative developed by Brisbane Powerhouse and partners. On 10 May, Brisbane Powerhouse, in its current incarnation as an arts centre, will be reaching its tenth birthday. To celebrate, we will be holding the Brisbane Powerhouse is Ten Birthday Party on Sunday 16 May with activities and performances for all ages running across the entire day and into the evening. Artists include Regurgitator, Vulcana Women's Circus, Tripod, Topology and more. One of our tenth birthday signature events will be a series of concerts featuring the acclaimed Brodsky Quartet, Eddie Perfect and Topology. Across three nights, the Brodsky Quartet will play an individual standalone show as well as performing *Songs from the Middle* with Eddie Perfect and a concert with Topology in which they will perform a new chamber version, scored for the two groups, of Elvis Costello's critically acclaimed ballet suite // *Sogno*. More program highlights for 2010 and beyond will be announced as they come to hand.