

A WORLD-CLASS CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

DEVELOPER : Whitehorse City Council
MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY : Kane Constructions
ARCHITECT : BKK Architects and Kerstin Thompson Architects
CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANT: Rider Levett Bucknall
ENGINEERING CONSULTANT: WSP
CONSTRUCTION VALUE : \$56 million



The Whitehorse Performing Arts Centre Redevelopment – ‘The Round’ manifests the best practice for environmentally sustainable design initiatives. The development features a 626-seat proscenium theatre, a 203-seat studio theatre black box, two rehearsal studios and improved soundshell for outdoor events.

Multi-award-winning, privately owned commercial construction company Kane Constructions was awarded the redevelopment of the Whitehorse Performing Arts Centre, named The Round.

“We here at Kane are thrilled and privileged to lead this challenging yet highly rewarding project for the Whitehorse City Council and its community. The redevelopment of the Whitehorse Performing Arts Centre is designed to bring community benefits for future generations to come,” said Contract Manager for Kane Constructions, Art Dejmancee. “Once completed, the centre will serve as a contemporary state-of-the-art performance and events facility as well as a community-orientated hub for artists, performers and patrons and a diverse range of local business and community groups.”

The centre will also host a bespoke main foyer with a bar, sound shells suitable for outdoor concerts and community festivals, a multipurpose rehearsal/dance studio, a community meeting room, a multiuse function room and upgraded car parking. The carpark upgrade will

enable quick and convenient access to the Whitehorse performing arts centre, library, council offices, local parkland and nearby Walker Park sports precinct.

The redevelopment is projected to generate over 320 new jobs throughout the construction phase and beyond. Work began in November 2021 with 10 Kane staff and 80-130 contractors onsite throughout the project.

The staging of the building permits enabled Kane to begin work onsite while finalising the remainder of the design. Kane’s prior experience with theatres has helped the team with the knowledge to problem-solve complex project elements, such as the theatre rigging system in the fly tower.

“There are a lot of technical complexities that come with the design and creation of a bespoke theatre that sits at the heart of an architecturally complex building. A key feature of the build are the acoustic airlock

entries to the theatres specifically designed to minimise the level of sound that can escape from the space. These play a vital role in the acoustics of the space, which in a theatre setting is invaluable to the performance space quality and usability,” said Art.

“However, the most complex element of this project is the roof. The design of the roof is scallop shaped and presents a challenge structurally and architecturally and has a flow-on effect to the likes of the external façades and internal air tightness.”

Celebrating local designers and locally sourced products was a focus for Kane on this project, as was environmental sustainability. Environmentally sustainable design elements and products have been used, reused and recycled across the project and its stages.

This includes air tightness testing, efficient thermal systems, rainwater harvesting, energy-efficient plant and equipment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, use of low carbon and durable building materials, LED

lighting, landscape treatments, water-efficient fixtures and fittings and double-glazed windows.

“Despite the project being very complex structurally and architecturally, the real challenges came from industry-wide material and labour shortages. However, through careful planning and collaboration with key stakeholders, consultants, trades and subcontractors, the project is still set to complete on time,” said Art.

Kane Constructions is a two-time national master builder of the year commercial construction company active in all industry sectors. Kane Constructions commenced operations in Melbourne in 1973, and are celebrating 50 years in the construction industry this year. The company operates throughout the east coast of Australia from offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Canberra.

For more information contact Kane Constructions, phone 03 8420 1200, email viccontact@kane.com.au, website www.kane.com.au