

Waikato Regional Theatre





Rotorua Boys High School Kapa Haka group show, 2015.
Credit: Rob Tucker

WITH ADVERSITY COMES OPPORTUNITY - A ONCE IN A GENERATION OPPORTUNITY IS BEFORE US.

We have a rich history of embracing culture.

Back in 1962, many visionary families believed it was time for Hamilton to grow culturally. Funded by their generosity and in partnership with Hamilton City Council, the Founders Theatre was built for our region. It was more than just a place to hold plays and musicals, it was a special place; a place for our community. Founders Theatre was a sign that Hamilton was growing up.

When we lost Founders Theatre it was clear a new venue had to meet several challenges in order to satisfy the needs of stakeholders, audiences, community and users.

The Waikato community came together to decide what was needed. We heard the terms "community place", "gathering place" and "education" being repeated. We felt the excitement growing in our community as we all envisioned the possibilities - and opportunities - a new venue could provide for the arts in our region.

We believe, as a community, we should have a flourishing arts and culture precinct we can all be proud of. Together we have envisioned a place where we can bring our communities together, to connect, collaborate and create.



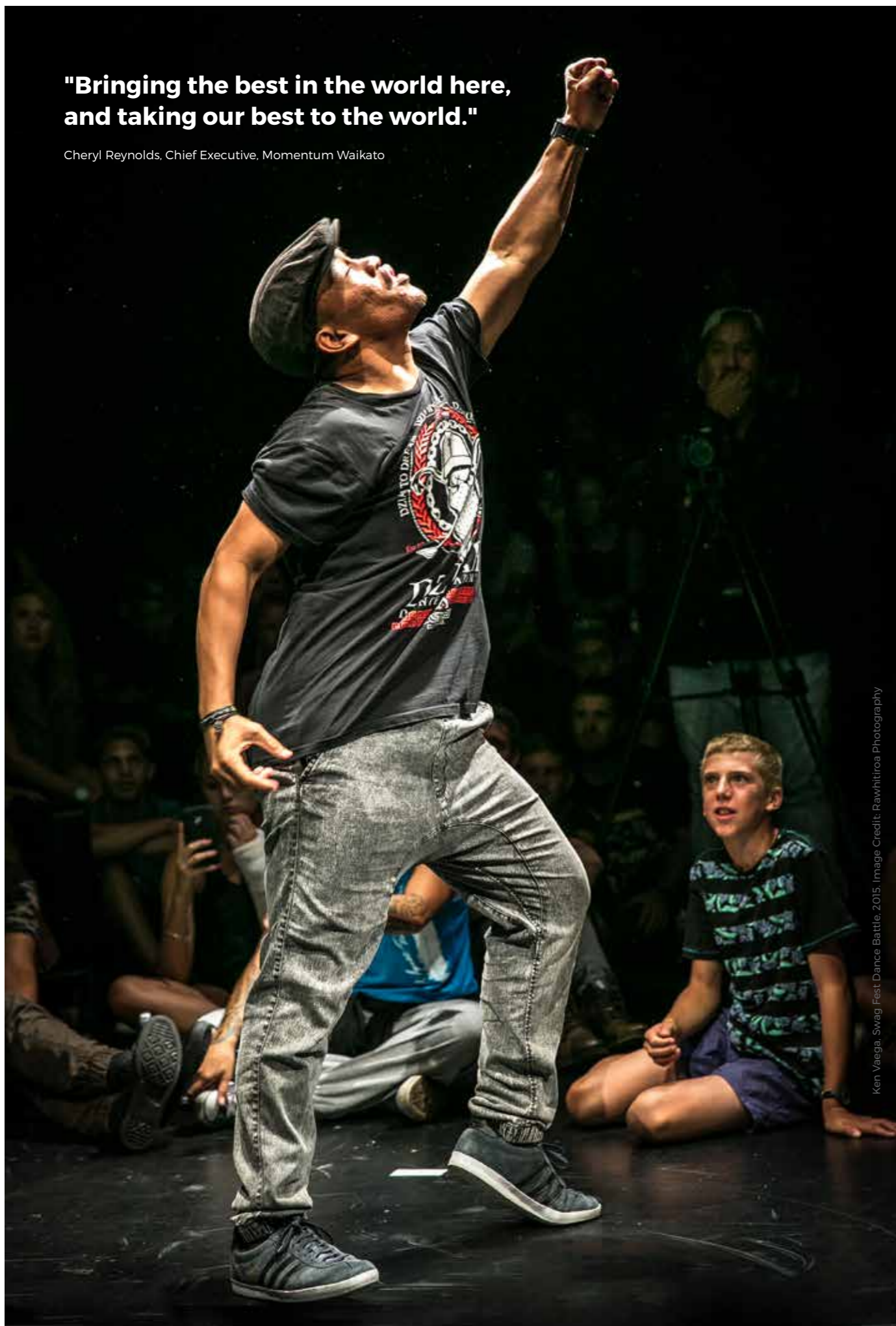
Samara Mockford, St Peter's School Inspire Performance, 2015. Image Credit: Mark Hamilton

"Creating a precinct where people feel inspired to create, experience and tell the stories of the Waikato - its land, its people and its culture."

Neil Richardson, Deputy Chair, Momentum Waikato

**"Bringing the best in the world here,
and taking our best to the world."**

Cheryl Reynolds, Chief Executive, Momentum Waikato



Ken Vaega, Swag, Fest Dance Battle, 2015. Image Credit: Rawhitiroa Photography

A TRANSFORMATIONAL VISION

The birth of a creative precinct in the Waikato, fueling the passion of our communities.

The community's conversations created a vision - we want more than just an iconic arts centre; we want a catalyst for significant contributions to the culture and economy of our region.

We aspire to have a flourishing creative precinct to be proud of, which will bring our communities together. We see contemporary venues all over the world being successfully used as all day spaces for people to meet, interact and be inspired as well as to attend performance. We want our theatre to be our community's gathering place and a destination. We want to bring the best in the world here and take our best to the world.

We want to rethink Hamilton and the Waikato as the home of creative innovation.

Economic development hinges on bringing and retaining young, entrepreneurial, creative workers into the community. In turn, they attract employers.

The best way to draw and keep bright workers is to offer them the kind of artistic and cultural outlets they crave. As the cultural quality of life improves, the economic fortunes of the region follow.

As a community, we want to take pride in harnessing our collective strength and diversity. We are breaking down territorial boundaries and embracing the greater Waikato region. The partnership with local councils, regional stakeholders and the community will deliver a world-class precinct in which we can all stand tall.

A once in a generation opportunity now exists for the people of the Waikato to influence and facilitate the creation of our own creative precinct.



MUCH MORE THAN JUST A THEATRE

We have an exciting opportunity to define and transform the Waikato's creative identity.

The Waikato Regional Theatre will be the anchor tenant in a creative precinct that will make a significant contribution to the cultural life and reputation of our region.

The theatre will be the catalyst to bring to life the creative precinct, with the theatre and associated activities bringing cultural and economic benefits, while supporting the Waikato to become a world-class destination.

The Waikato Regional Theatre will be of a world-class standard but will be a community asset. The success of the theatre will not only be in the quality of the performances held but also in the community it creates.

Co-location of creative industries will activate properties and spark development around the theatre, creating a new cultural hub in the city. A proposed public art gallery and local creative organisations joining this hub of innovation and creative excellence, will inspire - and impact - the local and wider community.

There are opportunities for educational institutions in the Waikato to utilise space, skills and expertise as part of their programme deliveries.

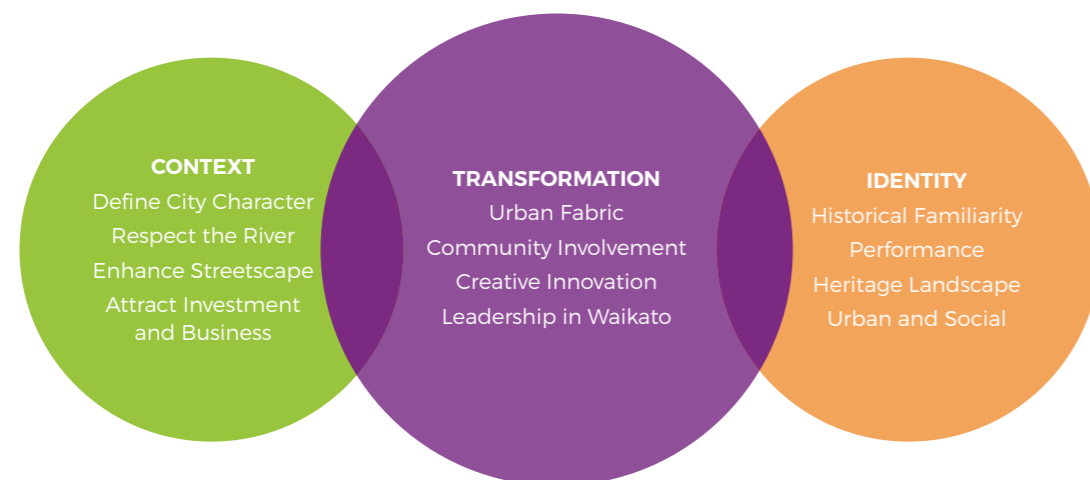
We want every child in the Waikato to have a chance to stand on the stage as part of their curriculum. There will be opportunities for educational outreach programmes through national organisations.

Integration of open courtyards and public performance spaces, with linkages between the city and river, will create a sense of place where people will come to gather. There will be hospitality to encourage activation during the day, and not just when performances are being held.

The Waikato Regional Theatre will positively impact the urban fabric of Hamilton and the already established cultural precinct. Community connectivity with the Waikato River will be encouraged with links between the river and the theatre. This aligns with the vision of the Hamilton City Council Central City Transformational Plan and River Plan.

By working together on this project, we have created the opportunity for a creative precinct we can be proud of - something that brings our communities together and celebrates our vibrancy and cultural diversity.

THEATRE



"We are supporting this project at an early stage as the benefits will be so wide-ranging and positive for our communities. The new theatre will add to the cultural, economic and creative opportunities across the region for many years to come."

Niwa Nuri, Chair, Trust Waikato

Joana Carneiro, Guest Conductor for New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Image Credit: Dave Weiland





"Kapunipuni. As a verb, it means 'to come together.' As a noun, it is 'the place where we gather.' Every city needs both a tangible sense of place and a purpose, where we gather to celebrate, tell our stories and find a sense of identity and community."

Leonard Gardner, Chair, Momentum Waikato

Concept Drawing | Jasmx

OUR PLACE

The Waikato Regional Theatre will be a catalyst for inspiration, becoming a pathway to the creative sector that will be:

- A place where we gather to learn and be inspired
- A hub where young people learn creative skills and participate in theatre workshops as part of their school curriculum
- A stage where talent grows, and where producers, technicians, actors, musicians and dancers are discovered by the world
- A flexible and adaptable lyric theatre of world class standard designed for unamplified acoustics
- A community venue where choirs, hip-hop groups, theatre companies, musicians, poets, Kapa Haka, Toi Maaori and other cultural groups are encouraged to use the shared spaces
- A public art gallery, showing collections from New Zealand and around the world
- A proposed boutique hotel, encouraging 24/7 activation
- A precinct that builds on the city's vibrant restaurant and café culture
- An opportunity for outreach programmes that will enhance community engagement
- A destination in its own right, with courtyards, open spaces and cafés that create a sense of place where people will come and gather

A CAREFULLY CONSIDERED DESIGN CONCEPT

Internationally renowned and award-winning theatre design consultancy Charcoalblue, has produced a feasibility study that presents a flexible lyric theatre, with adaptable spaces designed for crystal clear, unamplified, acoustics. The seating can be configured to make every show you attend feel like the theatre was designed for that one purpose.

The stage depth and orchestra pit can change to meet the requirements of the groups who will use it. The Royal New Zealand Ballet, The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra or youth Kapa Haka will all fit a full contingent on stage, and the one-woman play will feel equally at home with the adjustable proscenium changing the stage size to suit.

The design concept reflects the heritage, patterns of settlement and archaeology of the site, while retaining and enhancing the historic character and revitalising the old Hamilton Hotel. Opportunities will be taken for the incorporation of Maaori urban design principles and both natural and culturally important landscape elements.

The selected site provides an opportunity to have a new look at familiar history, a history based around performance, art and hospitality traditions of our city. It will integrate public art and design, nurturing our local identity while reflecting and interpreting characteristics such as natural heritage and Mana Whenua cultural narratives. The history, art and traits of the site and the local community will be incorporated.

The design relies on the successful integration of public open spaces, the landscape, the streetscape, and new and existing buildings.

The theatre design explores seven key concept drivers:

1. CITY AND RIVER

Strengthen connectivity and celebrate the difference between the city and the river.

2. HERITAGE

Engage with the built, natural and cultural heritage of the site through conservation, interpretation and integration.

3. COMMUNITY

Foster a sense of community by providing high quality communal spaces for community use and engagement 24/7.

4. GARDEN AND PARKLAND

Provide transitional spaces from outside to inside while protecting notable trees, reinforcing the history and characters of the site's garden and parkland.

5. SCREENS

A distinctive and dramatic crafted feature, that hovers over the landscape, unifying the theatre with the street and river. Enclosing, withholding and protecting the sites heritage features.

6. TOWERS

Urban markers with a visual association to the tall trees on the site, backlit to reflect the dappled light of the trees.

7. SPATIAL ORGANISATION

A dramatic arrival and entry sequence that progresses through a series of performance spaces; plazas, courtyards, foyers and the formal auditorium.

"You have the possibility of providing the best venue in the country... build something special."

Andrew Lee, Technical Director, Royal New Zealand Ballet





Mama Mia. 2015 Hamilton Operatic Society Inc. Image Credit: Mark Hamilton

A PLACE WHERE FUTURES ARE CREATED, TOGETHER

Momentum Waikato's role is to convene, connect and align generous people in the Waikato to create a better Waikato for everyone, forever. We were asked by generous donors to ensure their generosity and vision makes the greatest positive impact on the community we all love.

We have taken a leadership role on behalf of our community, by committing to build a regional theatre which will transform our city and meet the cultural needs of our region for generations to come.

The Momentum Waikato board is committed to creating intergenerational change in the region. This project will deliver on the transformation the board wishes to see across the Waikato. The board members are dedicated to working with the community to realise this transformational opportunity for our region.

Momentum Waikato Trustees

- LEONARD GARDNER (Chair)
- NEIL RICHARDSON (Deputy Chair)
- KEN STEPHENS (Treasurer)
- KEN WILLIAMSON
- PAREKAWHIA MCLEAN
- PAM ROA
- JON TANNER
- SIMON RICKMAN

The process of developing this project was managed by the independently appointed Governance Panel, and the Feasibility Report was compiled by international theatre consultants Charcoalblue.

Charcoalblue have worked on a vast array of theatres worldwide, including the UK's Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal National Theatre and Royal Opera House, among many others.

The Waikato Regional Theatre Governance Panel members include:

DR JULIAN ELDER (Chair)
Chief Executive, Scion

MARGI MOORE
Chairperson, Creative Waikato

GRAEME WARD
Director, Infrastructure and Assets,
Wintec

SEAN MURRAY
Venues, Major Events and Tourism,
Hamilton City Council

GLENN HOLMES
Legacy Project Leader, Hamilton
Gardens Development Trust

Momentum Waikato has a strong fundraising team in place - known as our Campaign Cabinet. This team is comprised of a mix of Momentum Waikato trustees and passionate leaders from our region. This team is very experienced and has strong connections and networks across the region.

LEONARD GARDNER
JON TANNER
KEN WILLIAMSON

JANICE LAPWOOD
JOHN GALLAGHER
MICHAEL CRAWFORD

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NANCY CAIGER
LINDA RADEMAKER

NOW IS THE TIME TO STEP UP. WE CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN.

In 1962, people of the Waikato sensed that the time was right for Hamilton to grow, not just physically, but culturally. With a shared vision and the strength of their convictions, local families from around the region worked with Hamilton City Council to fund the building of Founders Theatre.

Founders Theatre served its purpose, allowing thousands to showcase their gifts. Now the Waikato needs another gateway to the world, a new world-class home for the performing arts.

The Waikato Regional Theatre will be a community-owned asset at the heart of a creative precinct. The success of the theatre will be in the passion of the community it creates.

Our community is already encouraged by a number of generous people who have expressed an interest in helping make this project a success.

The Waikato Regional Theatre is a once in a generation opportunity. It must be done well and it must be done together. Will you join us?

Our continuing partnerships with Hamilton City Council and Trust Waikato signal a strong commitment to the project, the city and the region. The leadership gift of \$15 million from Trust Waikato recognises the project will be transformational for the Waikato region by producing cultural, economic and creative opportunities for many years to come.

Completing a successful transformational project is about achieving a great outcome anchored by a robust and trusted process to engage the whole community in a positive way. Together we have created an opportunity which will benefit the people of the Waikato today and into the future. We have worked as a community to create the vision. Now we need the community to get behind this project.



**"One day I'm going
to perform there."**

Consultation Participant

MOMENTUM

WAIKATO

A BETTER WAIKATO FOR
EVERYONE, FOREVER



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