



Image by Rory Gardiner

# ON WITH THE SHOW

**DEVELOPER :** Geelong Arts Centre, Development Victoria, Regional Development Victoria, Creative Victoria

**MAIN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY :** Kane Constructions

**ARCHITECT :** Hassell

**STRUCTURAL ENGINEER :** AECOM

**CONSTRUCTION VALUE :** \$25 million

The Geelong Arts Centre Ryrie Street Redevelopment involved the demolition of existing buildings and the delivery of a new building on Ryrie Street. The construction of this spectacular 7-storey building, designed by Hassell, cantilevers over the newly revealed façade of the former church. The new building has a double height foyer on Ryrie Street and includes improved access to the Playhouse Theatre, new studio and rehearsal spaces and a dedicated co-working floor named Creative Engine, designed to foster entrepreneurship and incubate ideas within the contemporary arts space.

**Geelong Arts Centre owns the city site that includes the stone church, built in 1856.** A masterplan was formulated in 2009 which included the refurbishment of the entire site and the renovation of the Playhouse Theatre (Stage 1), completed by Kane Constructions in 2010.

Kane has significant experience constructing performing arts centres nationally. Projects include the Horsham Performing Arts Centre & Regional Arts Gallery, Presbyterian Ladies' College Performing Arts Centre, the award-winning Drum Theatre Performing Arts Centre and Eternity Playhouse, and Casula Powerhouse Regional Arts Centre, a 300-seat theatre housed within a heritage listed former power station.

Onsite work started at Geelong Arts Centre in August 2017 with the demolition the existing Band of Hope and Mechanics Institute to reveal the façade of the old 'steeple church' facing Ryrie Street. The excavation uncovered archaeological artefacts, including ticket stubs and an elephant bone, delaying the build for three months.

"We spent up to 12 weeks detailing the façade design, changing some elements from steel framing to aluminium to make it lighter and quicker to build," said Project Manager, Patrick Clements.

"The staircase was documented to be a monolithic finish out of concrete which made for some difficult formwork. We had 5.6m long double-glazed windows with U channels made in Germany and we visited the factory for a Q&A check. The glass is low iron for clarity with low emission coating for thermal insulation, the 'stick built' glass façade is the first of this scale in Australia," said Patrick.

"Disruption to Geelong Arts Centre's business was minimised by keeping the Playhouse Theatre operational. A temporary tunnel was constructed for patrons to link the theatre to the existing lobby spaces. It's a small congested site of only 800m<sup>2</sup>. There was a school on one side and offices on the other, we had a lot of traffic management and community engagement tasks."

"It was a collaborative approach with positive feedback from all stakeholders. We are thrilled with the outcome," said Patrick.

Kane Constructions has a history of delivering unique and award-winning buildings. In 2019, they won National Construction Master Builder of the Year for their outstanding RACV Cape Schanck Resort. In 2016, Kane Constructions won the National Commercial Master Builder of the Year award for their iconic Geelong Library & Heritage Centre.

Kane Constructions is a privately owned commercial construction company active in all sectors of the industry. With a turnover in excess of \$1 billion and over 450 full time employees, Kane operates throughout the east coast of Australia and overseas from offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Sunshine Coast and Canberra.

Kane Constructions was awarded the 2016 and 2019 National Construction Master Builder of the Year by Master Builders Australia and was also awarded Master Builder of the Year in Victoria for 2016, 2017, and 2019 by the Master Builders Association of Victoria.

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