



**Australian Theatre of the Deaf
MEDIA RELEASE**

28th June 2010

FRESH FIELD FOR AUSTRALIAN THEATRE OF THE DEAF

Australian Theatre of the Deaf is delighted to announce a new partnership with Arts Access Victoria that will secure the future of this unique Australian performing company. Arts Access Victoria is a disability arts organisation providing access, participation, engagement and professional development in the arts and cultural life for people with a disability. It is the ideal partner for Australia's only professional deaf theatre company.

ATOD's agreement with AAV will see it come under the auspices of the Deaf Art Network, an innovative Victorian project that is encouraging participation in the arts for both deaf artists and deaf audiences. In the longer term, it will also see the company permanently housed in its own rehearsal and performance space.

"ATOD's agreement with AAV is founded on a mutual desire to reinvigorate deaf theatre in Australia," said Andrew Wiltshire, Chairman of ATOD. *"After thirty years of performances it is time for ATOD to take a new direction. Working with AAV and the Deaf Arts Network, we can further broaden the opportunities for deaf expression and deaf participation in the arts."*

Veronica Pardo, Arts Access Victoria's Executive Director, said, *"Arts Access Victoria focuses on enabling people with a disability to create art, experience art and work in the arts. For some time we have recognised the need for a professional deaf theatre company in Victoria, and this partnership with ATOD allows us to build on its strong reputation for innovative performance. ATOD will continue to provide a vibrant avenue of expression for Australia's AUSLAN community, as well as offering mainstream audiences the opportunity to engage with deaf stories and deaf experiences."*

From 2011, ATOD will enter into a period of regeneration, focussing on the professional development of a number of talented deaf actors. This will include collaborations with a variety of arts companies. These residencies and mentorships are designed to further equip ATOD's actors to take their stories to mainstream arts audiences.

An Auslan translation of this media release is available on YouTube: <http://tiny.cc/3viwr>

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