

16 June 2015

RE: The Loons Theatre Trust

To whom it may concern,

I am writing in support of the The Loons Theatre Trust's plans for a new venue in Lyttelton. I strongly support the development of a new, unique venue for this adventurous Christchurch-based company.

The loss of the company's original Canterbury Street venue in July 2011 was yet another blow to the arts infrastructure of the city. Not only was a much-loved building lost, but the impact on the company members themselves was profound, many of whom left the city in the aftermath. This had a devastating flow-on effect to the whole circo-arts sector in the city.

With the current performing arts venue context it is essential that venues continue to be developed in Christchurch, particularly those that allow for the development and presentation of contemporary work. The reestablishment of a Loons venue will provide a unique contemporary performance space, which will be vital to the ongoing development of the city's emerging artists and new audiences.

It will also stimulate the return of talent to Christchurch. The power of physical spaces to attract artists and influence and enhance the creation of new work should not be underestimated. I have no doubt that the establishment of a new theatre space for the company will lead to a new era of the creation of highly physical, contemporary, genre-defying work for which The Loons is rightly famous. It will also support Christchurch's return as the leading centre for circo-arts in New Zealand, a position it held until the events of 2011.

In 2015 Christchurch Arts Festival is proud to be working alongside The Loons on another new production. I hope that this partnership will extend into subsequent festivals and that we may be fortunate enough to present to Christchurch audiences at this new venue.

I therefore encourage assessors to look favourably on this application.

Yours faithfully,



Craig Cooper
Festival Director Christchurch Arts Festival