

Solos at The Palais

Calisthenics Victoria is proud to announce that in 2018 we will be hosting 'Solos at The Palais'. Solos at The Palais is a new performance opportunity for our Senior Graceful and Calisthenics soloists to take part in and has been created in response to the Royal South Street Society issue we are faced with in 2018.

The Issue

Several clubs throughout Victoria were recently notified by Her Majesty's Theatre that there is significant works being undertaken on the theatre throughout 2018, to improve the safety and appearance of the theatre, thanks to a State Government Heritage works grant. This work is long overdue and much needed. Unfortunately, these works will affect events taking place at HMT in 2018 including the RSSS competitions.

Upon hearing this information, Calisthenics Victoria acted swiftly to gather information for our membership to determine how this would affect our clubs. As RSSS is the only competition and eisteddfod run in Victoria that is not affiliated with Calisthenics Victoria, we were unable to manage the communications around this issue and it was up to RSSS to make direct contact with our clubs, which we believe was done via email approximately two weeks ago. They have been working to find an alternative venue for their competitions, including calisthenics, which they have now secured at the Federation University's Founders Hall, approximately 10kms from the Ballarat city centre.

Understanding the unique staging requirements of the Senior Championship sections, we facilitated a meeting with the Championship Clubs to discuss the impact of an alternative venue on their competition (we offered this to the C/Reserve senior section who have the same unique staging requirements also but there was not enough interest so the meeting did not go ahead). The Championships Clubs discussed the issue, along with other ongoing issues, and made the decision for their club not to enter the RSSS team competitions in 2018. It is important to note, that as a group, 7 of the 8 clubs made this decision.

The Request

Calisthenics Victoria represented these clubs by advising Brett Macdonald, RSSS CEO, of this decision and made a formal request for the RSSS Board to consider to allow CV to host the solos in our program at The Palais this year, and/or to provide a dispensation to Victorian performers who are not entered into a team this year to be allowed to enter the Graceful and Calisthenics Solo competition in 2018.

This request, we had hoped, would have been upheld in good faith and acknowledgement of the value that RSSS places on the calisthenics element of their Eisteddfod, and our performers. The HMT issue is unavoidable, and no one's fault, and we felt that with clubs making the decision not to ask their members to travel to Ballarat in 2018 for a second-tier* theatre (*RSSS's reference), their performers would not be penalised individually in relation to the Graceful and Calisthenics Solo competitions, that CV provide auditions for.

The RSSS Decision

Unfortunately, and much to our disappointment which has been expressed to RSSS, the RSSS Board made the decision not to uphold the request, passing a motion at their Monday 26th February Board meeting as follows:

“The RSSS board moves that the two Calisthenics Solos (Graceful Girl and Cali Solo) will be held in Ballarat in 2018 and that the current rule concerning soloists having to compete in a Ballarat team event to be eligible stand”.

This was moved and seconded and then supported by all directors present.

The reasoning being that Founders Hall presents a perfectly acceptable alternate venue in 2018 for all disciplines affected by the closure of Her Majesty’s Theatre.

Solos at The Palais

Calisthenics Victoria is committed to supporting our members, and providing a professional, collaborative and transparent service. As such, we determined that we needed to do something to support the performers who will miss out on this opportunity in 2018.

In 2018, we will run an audition process alongside our CV State Championship Senior Graceful and Calisthenics solo competitions, similar to the process we usually run for the RSSS competition, to determine the 20 finalists in each section to perform in “Solos at The Palais.”

As this has all happened quickly, we need to finalise exactly where we fit these into our program and will share this information as soon as is available, but we want to reassure our members that we will work tirelessly to make this a fabulous experience and event that our performers, and audience, deserve.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Championship Clubs for their support and foresight with this issue. It has been an extremely difficult and disappointing experience for all involved, and the resolve they have shown to build a better environment for calisthenics as a whole, in the future, is to be commended.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Sarah Carthew and Sue Reeves for the additional work they have undertaken over the past couple of weeks to make this happen. This was extremely unexpected, and you have acted with a dedication and integrity that is appreciated by everyone.

Stay tuned for more information and as always, please contact the office should you have any concerns or questions. I can be contacted directly at ceo@calisthenics.asn.au.

Lisa Glassborow

Acting CEO