

Media Release

Martin Foley MP

Minister for Housing, Disability & Ageing

Minister for Mental Health

Minister for Creative Industries

Minister for Equality



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BELLS OF PEACE TO RING OUT AT BIRRARUNG MARR

A moving, original piece of music developed by children from the Dandenong and Yarra Ranges will ring out in the heart of Melbourne thanks to a \$45,000 grant from the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley today joined Minister for Education and Member for Monbulk James Merlino to announce the Dandenong Ranges Music Council has been funded to further develop its 2015 song *Bells of Peace* and bring it to a wider audience.

Commissioned by the Dandenong Ranges Music Council for the ANZAC centenary in 2015, *Bells of Peace* was developed through workshops with children from the Dandenong and Yarra Ranges Primary Schools and professional artist John Shortis.

It was inspired by the story of Dame Nellie Melba ringing the Lilydale CFA bells to announce that the world was at peace in 1918 at the end of World War 1.

The funding will help transform *Bells of Peace*, originally composed for handbells, for performance on the Federation Bells at Birrarung Marr, one of the city's most iconic public artworks.

The work will make its premiere with a special performance at Birrarung Marr in 2018 to mark the centenary of the end of World War 1. It will involve over 600 children and community members.

Mr Merlino also used the visit to announce that Victoria will be the first jurisdiction to set an excellence target for student achievement in the arts.

It is one of the targets designed to lift student performance as part of the Labor Government's plan to make Victoria the Education State.

Achievement in the arts will be measured by a proportion of students achieving the highest standard in the arts across five areas: music, visual art, dance, drama, and media arts. The exact target figure of students achieving the highest level of achievement in the arts by 2025 will be announced next year.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Martin Foley

"From professional artists to school children and everyone in between, music has the power to inspire and connect us. This project is a great example of what Dandenong Ranges Music Council does so well."

"The original song was a simple and strong expression of hope for peace and through this grant we are proud to support this next stage of its creative development."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education James Merlino

"We know that exposure in school to an arts education can help lift student engagement and attendance and boost results."

"Victoria is proud to be Australia's cultural capital and this target will see more Victorian students thrive in music, the arts and drama."

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