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The logo: the light blue menorah reaches up to the welcoming stars of the Southern Cross. The radiating arcs of the candelabra 'raised out like arms' embrace and represent cultural exchange. The menorah is known as the 'feast of lights' - the Southern Cross lights the Australian night sky. This logo expresses the longstanding warmth between Australian and Israel. In a circle, representing equality and unity, this logo highlights the benefits of sharing culture.

Rationale:

The Australia-Israel Cultural Exchange Limited (“AICE”) is an outward-focused, inclusive body, advancing the exchange of culture between Australia and Israel, as a means of encouraging art and artistic linkages. AICE fosters a spirit of greater tolerance and understanding of the unique cultures that these two ancient lands have to offer and facilitate artistic cooperation, innovation and exposition.

AICE defines culture as artistic pursuits – literature, film, music, art, visual culture, performing arts and architecture.

The objectives of AICE go beyond the existing activities of the Jewish community of Australia. AICE fosters cultural links between Australia and Israel: linking the full range of diverse Australian cultural groups and artistic movements to similarly innovative and excellent artistic and cultural activities in Israel.

The relationship between Australia and Israel has always been both warm and strong. Successive political leaders from both countries, across the political spectrum, have recognized this relationship as extremely important and have endeavoured to expand, develop and enrich the many links between Israel and Australia. The creation of AICE adds depth to this relationship for well into the future, as it increasingly draws the connecting artistic communities closer together.

Australia and Israel have many shared strengths and common goals and face many of the same challenges. Indeed, the rich tapestry of culture in both Israel and Australia is an integral part of what shapes their national identities, but is also potentially a very strong facet of the relationship between Australia and Israel.

AICE encourages, facilitates and creates cultural exchanges that benefit both countries. AICE forges connections, which touch, and will continue to touch, individuals, inspire communities and change lives – by harnessing the most precious resource of both countries – the creative expressions of their people.

Current Status:

Founder and Chairman of the Board, Mr. Albert Dadon, visited Israel in mid-2002 to brief key stakeholders in Israel’s artistic and cultural milieu as well as Israeli government leaders to garner support and interest in AICE.

The Israeli stakeholders were extremely supportive, and encouraged the establishment and aims of AICE, with several key individuals joining the Israel Board, including governmental representatives.

The Australian Ambassador to Israel, His Excellency Mr. Tim George, is also to serve on the Israel Board in an ‘ex-officio’ capacity. This is being reciprocated on the Australian Board, with the Israeli Ambassador to Australia, His Excellency Mr. Nati Tamir, agreeing to serve on the Australian Board - also in an “ex-officio” capacity.

AICE received Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status in May 2003. The process for incorporation in Israel under Israeli law is under way.

AICE was in close contact with the Department of Foreign Affairs throughout the establishment period, and was delighted that, on 2 December, 2002, at a unique official ceremony that took place in Parliament House, Canberra, and, simultaneously, at the Foreign Affairs Office in Jerusalem, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Alexander Downer MP, and the Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Bibi Natanyahou, released a Joint Declaration, announcing and supporting the establishment of AICE.

It is the first time that a Joint Declaration has been announced between Australia and Israel.

Friends of AICE (fAICE)

fAICE was officially launched in Sydney by the NSW Premier, Mr Bob Carr, at a reception at the Sherman Galleries in September 2003. The aim of the organisation is provide support for AICE, both financially as well as to help achieve its long term objectives in promoting cultural links between the two countries. There are currently two 'fAICES' – in Sydney and Melbourne – with plans to launch centres in other cities round the country.

The Boards:

Reflecting the organization's bilateral nature, AICE has both an Israeli and an Australian Board, each consisting of recognized experts in the fields of artistic excellence, promotion of national culture, arts administration and those committed to encouraging the arts in both Australian and Israel. The Boards also reflect the diversity of cultural life in each country.

The following prominent leading members of Israel's artistic community are Members of the Israel Board of AICE:

Mr. Peter Adler, Melbourne-born, has represented a number of Australian based non-for-profit organizations in Israel, including the Besen Family Foundation and The Pratt Foundation. He was involved in the logistics of formally establishing AICE and became the first Israeli Executive Director of the organization. On stepping down, he agreed to become a Board Member in September 2004.

Ms. Dina Aldor has, since 1984, been the Co-Director of the Multimedia Group, which has produced many Israeli festivals, such as the Israel Festival Jerusalem (1985-1986), The Israeli Fringe Theatre Festival (1985-1991), and,

most notably, the Red Sea Jazz Festival (since 1987). Dina Aldor is also an independent promoter of a wide variety of international artists touring Israel, including orchestras and ballets, jazz bands and soloists, theatre companies, circuses, contemporary dance groups and special events. Ms. Aldor has established the only professional service for marketing Israeli artists abroad, which represents artists such as the Batsheva Dance Company, the Itim Theatre Ensemble and various acclaimed musical ensembles.

Ms. Gila Almagor has been at the center of the Israeli cultural scene for the past 43 years, through her involvement in theatre, literature and cinema. She has had a hand in over 50 films, as an acclaimed actress, scriptwriter or producer. Two of her novels have been adapted for the screen, with Gila cast in the main role, and another, 'The Summer of Aviya', won the Silver Bear Award at the Berlin Film Festival in 1989. She has also been the recipient of the Jerusalem Wolg Award, The Critics' Award and The Lifetime Achievement Award from the Israeli Academy. In 1995, Gila received the President's Medal of Volunteers, the highest decoration given to volunteers, and in 1998, she won the Israeli 'Oscar' for Life Achievement during the Israeli Film Festival. Gila is the recipient of the prestigious 2004 Israel Prize.

Mr. Miron Izakson is an extensively published poet and author, who last year received Israel's most prestigious literature prize – the President of Israel Literature Prize for his contribution to Israeli literature. An accomplished journalist, editor and lecturer, Mr. Izakson is also the Head of the Literature Department in the Cultural and Art Council of the State of Israel. In addition, Mr. Izakson is the Honorary Counsel of Luxembourg in Israel.

Mr. Micah Lewensohn has been integrally involved in Israeli theatre for well over 20 years. Micah has held many prestigious positions, including as the longest serving Artistic Director in the history of the Israel Festival (1994-2001), Resident Director of the Beer Sheva Theatre (1982-1990) and Resident Director of the Haifa Theatre (1980-1982). Previously, Micah served as Assistant to the General Director of the renowned Pittsburg Public Theatre in the USA from 1978-1989. Micah has directed over 50 plays, including,

more recently, productions for the Cameri, Habimah, Bet Leisen Theatres as well as for the New Israeli Opera.

Mr. Gaby Levy is the recently departed Israeli Ambassador to Australia. An extensive career in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gaby proved to be an enormously popular and highly respected Ambassador. He was also instrumental in helping establish AICE from both a professional and personal basis.

Mr. Asi Rafaeli is a well known Israeli businessman, who has, since 1984, held the position of CEO of several major Israeli industrial, development and investment companies. Mr. Rafaeli has also held public positions, advising professional associations and public Israeli corporations. However, Mr. Rafaeli's abiding interest is in culture and the Arts, which saw him study Theatre and Arts at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, positioning him at the apex of business and artistic pursuits.

Mr Renen Schorr, renowned Director, Producer and Screenwriter and recipient of the Israeli Oscar for Best Film of the Year for 'Summer Blues' in 1987, is one of the key figures in the Israeli film scene. Mr. Schorr was one of the Founders of the Israeli Fund for Quality Films, initiator of the New Fund for Documentary Films and is currently the Founder and Director of Israel's leading film school, the Sam Spiegel Film and TV School. Mr. Schorr is also President of GEECT, the umbrella Association of 70 European film Schools.

Mr Katriel Schory, joined the Board of AICE in January 2005. He is currently the Chief Executive of the Israeli Film Fund, the government-funded organisation responsible for the development of the Israeli feature film industry. During his tenure at the Fund, he has been responsible not only for overseeing the production of more than 100 features, but also, through strategic development of scripts and marketing, seen the Israeli Box Office takings for home-produced films increase from less than 1% to, for 2004, 10%. Concurrently, the international status of Israeli film has been raised exponentially, with many films receiving awards at major festivals around the

globe. Mr Schory is, in addition, a renowned producer of documentaries, feature films and television programmes and is the co-founder of Belfilms, a leading documentary production company.

Ms Ilana Tzur is co-founder and Director of the annual Docaviv International Documentary Film Festival, held in Tel Aviv. In five years it has established itself as one of the leading film festivals of its genre in the world. Ms Tzur is also a film maker in her own right, having produced a number of documentary films, as well as being a leading radio presenter and personality.

The Australian Board of AICE comprises the following key individuals:

Mr Peter Ivany was Managing Director of Hoyts Theatres from 1988-1999, growing the business from 40 theatres with a revenue of AU\$50m, to a global business, operating in 12 countries, with over 2,000 theatres and an annual turnover in excess of AU\$600m. Hoyts was publicly floated in 1996. Mr. Ivany's experience in the media, entertainment, communications and leisure industries, taking three companies to IPO and raising in excess of AU\$500m. He now manages his own diversified investment company and is an active member of numerous artistic and charitable organizations, such as the Art Gallery of NSW, the Jewish Film Festival and the MacFarlane Burnett Medical Research Centre.

Ms Aura Levin Lipski is an accomplished concert performer, who has sung to audiences throughout Australia, South East Asia and the Soviet Union, composing, recording and performing songs in both English and Hebrew. Having supported international artists such as Ray Charles and Yehoram Ga'on, her passion for Jewish culture, especially Hebrew music and dance, led her to establish 'Jewish Australia.Com', the cultural gateway for the Australian Jewish internet community.

Ms Sue Maslin is an independent film and television producer with credits including the feature film Japanese Story (2003) winner of Best Film at the Australian Film Institute awards. Other producing credits include Road To

Nhill (1997), winner of Best Feature Film at the 1997 Thessaloniki International Film Festival. She has produced many award winning documentaries which have screened on ABC TV including A Mirror To The People, The Highest Court and The Edge of the Possible (1998), winner of the Gold Plaque for Best Television Documentary at the 1999 Chicago International Film Festival. She is currently in production on a broadband interactive documentary about William Bligh to be launched on ABC On-Line. She served as a board member of Film Victoria for four years to 2003, a director of the Australian Film Institute.(1990 – 94) and was instrumental in establishing Women in Film and Television (WIFT) Victoria in 1990 and served as inaugural president of WIFT Australia.

Dr. Gene Sherman, has PhD in art history, art and literary theory and French and English literature and spent 17 years teaching researching, and lecturing in art history and theory at tertiary institutions in Australia. Dr. Sherman is the Director and Proprietor of the prestigious Sherman Galleries, which has toured exhibitions around and Australia and engaged in groundbreaking international touring exhibitions, especially in the Asia-Pacific with the aim of increasing the exposure and profile of Australian contemporary art internationally. Dr. Sherman has also been very active in supporting artistic and cultural activities at a local level, sponsoring numerous awards, scholarships and artistic spaces.

Mr Yosi Tal, born in Israel, based in Sydney, is an experienced advocator for Israel, having been involved with a number of Jewish organizations here in Australia over the past decade or so. He established and runs his own company, Design Carpets, a successful marriage between business and contemporary design. He will be the Board Member responsible for the newly established Friends of AICE and is the Chair of the NSW Friends.

Patrons:

Other than the Australian and Israeli Boards, AICE has and is currently approaching Patrons who are nationally and internationally recognized for their commitment and love of art and culture.

The Patrons of AICE form a select group of key individuals who are able to form, promote, support financially and drive the aims and practical outcomes of AICE over a number of years. Patrons will assist in sponsoring and promoting the unique vision and programmes of AICE. These programmes are not only to provide incredible opportunities for individual artists and performers, enriching the artistic communities of both countries, exposing the people of both countries to the rich cultural tapestry of the other, and encouraging new and exciting artistic cooperation and collaboration, but are a valuable philanthropic and commercial sponsorship opportunities in their own right.

It is anticipated that other than being acknowledged in all material associated with of the organisation, Patrons will have individual programmes named in their honour in recognition of their support and commitment to AICE.

The first four Patrons of AICE are Mr. Marc Besen AO, Mr. Josh Liberman, Mr. Frank Lowy AC, and Mr. Richard Pratt AC.

Secretariat:

Mr Keith Lawrence completed 6 years as Deputy Director of the British Council in Israel, and took up the position as AICE's Australia Executive Director at the beginning of March, 2003. He has extensive experience and knowledge of the artistic and cultural landscape of Israel and, through his many successful years working with the British Council in Israel and the United Kingdom, has a profound understanding of the facilitation, management and marketing of bilateral cultural exchange.

Ms Niva Navon took on the responsibility of the Israel Executive Director in October 2004. Ms Navon's Media Studies Degree (New York) has stood her well in her development as an experienced free-lance Public Relations representative for the arts, as well as music promotion on a national and international stage.

Corporate Sponsors:

In addition to the contribution of the Patrons, AICE is offering opportunities for corporate sponsors to support one-off or ongoing initiatives that enrich and promote Australian and Israeli culture. This is to enable the outcomes of AICE to be as bold and far-reaching as possible.

Completed Projects:

The Perth International Arts Festival and the Melbourne International Jazz Festival – Israeli Jazz

Helen Matthews, Artistic Director of the Perth International Arts Festival, approached AICE to facilitate the incorporation of Israeli jazz group 'Nuvea' into the 2003 PIAF programme in January 2003. Ms. Matthews was delighted that Nuvea was able to add substantially to the international focus of PIAF.

Nuvea also performed at Bennett's Lane in January, as part of the very successful 2003 Melbourne International Jazz Festival.

The Tal & Tel Aviv Trios to the Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition (MICMC)

Held every four years, MICMC invited two Israeli piano trios to take part in this prestigious international festival. Only ten piano trios are invited to perform in the finals. The Tal Trio advanced to the second (semi-final) stage, the Tel Aviv Trio advancing to the final (where it came third). In addition, both trios undertook a 'private' performance in private homes for the sponsors: Tal Trio

was a Besen Family Foundation/AICE event, Tel Aviv Trio a Friends of IPO/AICE.

Following the performances in Melbourne, the Tel Aviv Trio went on to perform in Sydney and at the Bangalow Music Festival, New South Wales.

Myth & Reality: Contemporary Australian Aboriginal Desert Art from the Gabrielle Pizzi Collection

Gabrielle Pizzi owns the most prestigious and widely representative exhibition of indigenous Australian art. The exhibition of her collection, featuring some 79 pieces of work by 24 key artists, was presented in Jerusalem following its acclaimed tour of Europe.

The exhibition was presented at the Jerusalem Theatre Gallery by AICE in collaboration with the Israel Museum and with support from the Pratt Foundation and the Besen Family Foundation. The first of its kind in Israel, the exhibition was met with enormous critical and public acclaim.

The exhibition was opened on 21 October 2003 by Ehud Olmert, Deputy Prime Minister of Israel with contributions from Alexander Downer, Minister for Foreign Affairs: Tim George, Australian Ambassador to Israel: James Snyder, Director of the Israel Museum: Sam Lipski, Chief Executive of the Pratt Foundation: Gabrielle Pizzi herself and Founder and Chair of AICE, Albert Dadon. An estimated 150, 000 people attended the exhibition by the time of its closure on 19 December.

Australian Tour of 'The Best of Doc Aviv'

Doc Aviv, the international documentary film festival was presented for the first time outside Israel in Australia in November 2003. A season of six films was selected by Ilana Tsur, Festival Director, providing a balanced programme of recent award-winning Israeli documentaries. Ilana Tsur attended all the screenings at cinemas in Melbourne and Sydney as well as

meeting key individuals in related institutions to explore future potential collaborations. The opening film ('Number 17 Is Anonymous') was a gala opening in both cities, with Kevin Rudd, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs launching Melbourne, Senator Rod Kemp, Minister for the Arts & Sport launching Sydney. Post screening discussions included panels made up of politicians, journalists and key members of the Jewish community. Such was the interest and success that AICE is also proposing to make The Best of Docaviv an annual event in Australia.

As a direct result of The Best of Docaviv, the opening film 'Number 17 Is Anonymous' was purchased by SBS Television Channel and screened in Australia in April 2004: the film 'Raging Dove' was purchased by the ABC and screened in October 2004. For the 2004 edition of Docaviv in Israel, a mini-retrospective of the films of Australian Dennis O'Rourke was presented.

[Domains]: Contemporary Israeli Design

Domains, presented in conjunction with the Israel Embassy, Canberra and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was the first Israeli contemporary design exhibition in Australia. Curated by Nirith Nelson, the exhibition featured thirteen of the most celebrated designers working in Israel today. Commissioned specifically for the prestigious international design event, Tokyo Designers Block of 2002, the critical response was such that it traveled on to Nagoya, Beijing, Shanghai, Seoul and Taipei prior to Sydney and Melbourne. [Domains] opened at the UTS Gallery, Sydney in April 2004 before moving to the RMIT Gallery, Melbourne in May.

Australian Film Festival 2004

In collaboration with the Australian Embassy in Israel and the Australian Film Commission, AICE presented a season of Australian films under the banner 'Embassy Roadshow' at the cinematheques in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa in June 2004. Over a period of 10 days, some 12 feature, documentary, short and animation films were presented to an Israeli audience – the first such film

festival in Israel. The opening of the Festival in Tel Aviv was undertaken by Steve Bracks, Premier of Victoria. Some 5000 people attended the festival.

Ishmael Khaldi

Israeli Bedouin Ishmael Khaldi made a historic visit to Australia as a guest of AICE in August 2004. An intense, whirlwind visit to Melbourne and Sydney resulted in a broad range of people being exposed to experiences and views as a 'proud Muslim Arab Israeli'. Positive, lively debates and in-depth discussions about the cultural and political diversity of the State of Israel were the trademark of the visit. Meetings with university, school and college students, Tranby College for Indigenous and Aboriginal students, politicians and guests at JCCV, JNF and Interfaith events all heard of Khaldi being 'an Israeli first and foremost'. A meeting with Premier of NSW, Bob Carr, emphasised democracy, co-existence and tolerance were the under-pinning values promoted by Khaldi in the greater understanding of the culture of contemporary Israel.

AICE Israeli Film Festival 2004

Audiences in Sydney (August) and Melbourne (September) were treated to a film festival which celebrated the diversity of Israeli society and the Israeli film industry, a 'line-up [*that*] reflects not one Israel, but many' (The Age). Sell out audiences in Sydney and Melbourne reflected the growing interest in Israel's contemporary culture. Launched by Premier Bob Carr in Sydney and Premier Steve Bracks in Melbourne, the festival provided Australian audiences with the chance to see Israel beyond the headlines, to get an idea of the people, the landscape, the culture and the concerns of the Israeli people. A mix of features and documentary films were screened in a 5 day period in each city, attracting audiences of more than 5000, with several of the screenings selling-out. This landmark event is to become an annual event as a result of public demand.

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'Menachem Begin'

The documentary film 'Golda', screened at the AICE Israeli Film Festival 2004, was part of a series of films created by Bell Films for Israeli television. The screening created significant interest in other titles from the series, and, in collaboration with the State Zionist Council of Victoria, AICE presented 'Menachem Begin' at Beit Weisman in October 2004. Producer Neomi Schory attended the screening.

Yosl Bergner Project

Yosl Bergner, the artist who changed Australian art but whose influence has been overlooked, lives, at the age of 84, in Tel Aviv with his Australian born wife. In his time in Melbourne (1937-48), Bergner befriended many of the local artists who now epitomise modern Australian art – Nolan, Tucker, Boyd, Perceval. He encouraged them to go beyond their traditional (essentially landscape) style and introduce social commentary about the human condition, thus changing Australian art.

AICE is working in partnership with artist and producer Tom Fantl, The Age arts journalist and writer Ashley Crawford and cinematographer Patrick Troy in a project that will redress the situation. The three traveled to Israel in November 2004 to interview Bergner in his home environment, where they interviewed and filmed him and friends, contacts etc. From the raw footage, a television documentary on the Life and Influence of Yosl Bergner will be made. In addition, a book, DVD and exhibition at Heide will follow.

Kiripuranji: Contemporary Art from the Tiwi Islands

Kiripuranji is an exhibition of strikingly beautiful works by Tiwi Island artists of the Northern Territory which has been touring internationally since July 2002. The exhibition, bringing together some of the most exciting developments in contemporary art from Bathurst and Melville islands, traveled to Israel as part

of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program. Kiripuraji is the first opportunity for Israeli audiences to see a wide range of Tiwi art including canvasses, works on paper, ceremonial spears, bark baskets and vibrant textiles. It builds on the international reputation already enjoyed by the Tiwi Islands for their carved and painted ceremonial poles and is the ideal follow-up to the 'Myth & Reality' exhibition. AICE worked in collaboration with the Australian Embassy, Israel to present the exhibition in January 2005 at the Cultural Centre at Ganei Tikva.

Gila Almagor

Legendary star of Israeli theatre, film and television, recipient of the Israel Prize of 2004, Gila Almagor visited Australia in February 2005. In addition to the Gala Evening held at the Crown Casino as a celebration of her life and career (where she was presented with the first AICE Lifetime Achievement Award), Ms Almagor travelled as an 'Ambassador of Cultural Exchange' through her meetings with arts organisations, as well as talking with politicians, journalists and students about contemporary Israeli theatre and film.

Dr Charles Merewether, Sydney Biennale 2006

Dr Charles Merewether, Artistic Director of the Sydney Biennale 2006, made an historic visit to Israel in April, accompanied by Executive Director Keith Lawrence. His visit was the first by the Biennale in its 30 year history.

In a busy international schedule, Merewether spent four days in Israel as well as two days in the Palestinian Authority. In this flying visit, his schedule, facilitated by AICE, included the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Holon Digital Arts Lab and the Centre for Contemporary Art, commercial galleries in Tel Aviv (including Sommer, Noga, Dvir, Tal Esther and Chelouche Galleries), exhibitions and meetings with Israeli curators. Exploring the theme of 'zones of contact', focusing on how contemporary art practices continue to explore and articulate the complex relations between people, cultures and the spaces they inhabit, Merewether was exposed to the work of more than 100 Israeli

artists. Whilst awaiting his final decision, it is anticipated that there will be a significant presence by Israeli artists in the 2006 edition of the Biennale.

Lawrence also accompanied Merewether to the Palestinian Authority. In addition to attending meetings in Ramallah and Jifna where the Biennale was discussed, Lawrence used the opportunity to meet and discuss possibilities for future collaborative projects (in music and the visual arts) between Israelis and Palestinians taking place in Australia.

'Near Sanctuary' - John Young

Acclaimed Hong Kong born, Melbourne based artist John Young made his Israeli debut at the Noga Gallery, Tel Aviv in May with his exhibition 'Near Sanctuary'. Presented as a collaboration between Noga and Anna Schwartz Gallery, Melbourne, the exhibition was opened by the Ambassador of Australia, H.E. Tim George.

AICE Australian Film Festival 2005

Building on the success of the first Australian Film Festival in 2004, the second AICE Australian Film Festival 2005, curated by film-producer Sue Maslin, was presented in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa in June 2005.

The Festival introduced the very best in contemporary Australian films and provided a context for the filmmakers by showing their earlier work and unfolding of their creative voice. The most exciting development in Australian cinema in recent years has been the rise of indigenous filmmakers and their unique and powerful engagement with the screen. This work is at the heart of the 2005 AICE Australian Film Festival beginning with the Opening Night Film, *Beneath Clouds*, a poetic and raw evocation of the journey from isolated outback to city. Other films included *Somersault*, the feature debut from Cate Shortland, which premiered at the 2004 Cannes International Film Festival in *Un Certain Regard* and was an outstanding critical success at the Australian Film Institute Awards, 'Gettin' Square', 'The Finished People' and 'Walking On Water.' These films provided a prism of Australian stories, imagined and real,

that will provoke and entertain and ultimately provide a greater understanding of our country and its people.

Tony Krawitz & the Jerusalem International Film Festival

Following successful screenings at Cannes and Karlovy Vary International Film Festivals, Tony Krawitz, and his film 'Jewboy' were invited to the Jerusalem Film Festival in July. The film, 52 minutes in length, is the story of 23 year old Yuri Kovner, son of a Rabbi, who returns to the Chasidic community of Jewish Sydney at his father's death. Through his grief, Yuri struggles with his faith, his family and community, as he comes to understand who he is and where he is from. It is a film filled with longing, humour and hope about a young man finding his place in the world. The Festival presented two screenings of the film along with a Question and Answer session by Tony Krawitz following its Israeli premiere.

AICE Israeli Film Festival 2005

Two cities, three venues, four documentaries, eight feature films, thirty seven screenings, 7000 attendees. With a 40% increase on the 2004 attendance figures, the festival was an enormous success. Audiences and critics alike responded to the superb selection of films (reflecting the current strength of the Israeli film industry). Federal, state and local politicians came out in force in support of the festival and our objectives of cultural exchange.

'Diverse, complex, inspirational, turbulent. The AICE Israeli Film Festival 2005 mirrors Israeli society and highlights the current successes of the Israeli film industry' stated Artistic Director Katriel Schory, a view certainly borne out in the opening night speeches in both Melbourne and Sydney. Both Senator Rod Kemp, Minister for the Arts & Sport (Melbourne) and Kevin Rudd, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs (Sydney) welcomed the Festival, recognising its importance in contributing to an increased understanding of the 'life, lifestyles and challenges of today's Israelis' (Kevin Rudd).

Proposed Events:

Australian Political & Cultural Delegation to travel to Israel

Key representatives of Australian political, cultural and media life will travel to Israel in November, where they will be exposed to life in Israel today, to issues that concern Israelis on a social, political and cultural level. The visit will help in providing a greater understanding into the life, lifestyle and challenges of today's Israelis.

Aboriginal Artists' Mission

The Gabrielle Pizzi exhibition was the precursor to an Aboriginal Artists' Mission to Israel, which will focus on the relationship both Israelis and Australians have with the land and the way in which that relationship is expressed through art.

A delegation of Aboriginal Artists will be invited to travel to Israel and work in the Negev and Arava regions of the country (the latter is twinned with Australia) in August 2006. This visit will be undertaken in collaboration with the Gabrielle Pizzi Gallery in Melbourne in memory of the late Gabrielle Pizzi herself.

It is anticipated that by visiting Israel, the artists will be inspired to engage in works based on their experience of Israel and to add new experiences to their traditional artistic endeavours. A documentary of this unique project is also planned, a co-production between Israeli and Australian producers.

Israel Museum to host Festival Australia in 2007

Every year the Israel Museum holds a Festival, lasting 1-2 months, showcasing, in depth, the culture of a particular country – expressed through various media, including, dance, music, art and folklore. This year the festival celebrated Korean culture.

The Israel Museum has indicated an enthusiasm to focus on Australia for August 2006 and AICE and the Museum are currently exploring a potential exhibition and performance programme. The potential impact of such a focus is enormous. Curators from the Museum will be in Australia in September 2004 to explore initial ideas for the festival.

Ongoing Links:

AICE is focusing on creating and then strengthening links between Israeli and Australian Arts Festivals and actively encouraging participation by both Australian and Israeli artists through formal festival structures in Israel and Australia. AICE believes that given the many interests and concerns Australia and Israel share, and the longstanding friendship between the two nations; Israeli and Australian artists should be encouraged to represent their country at each other's important cultural events. Institution to Institution is also an important aspect of our work, facilitating collaboration and exchange between, for example, major museums and galleries.

The Potential:

With the involvement of both the Israeli and Australian Governments, committed Patrons, a Patron in Chief, a focused Board, fAICE, the "buy-in" of leaders of artistic communities in both countries, and exceptional projects of impeccable artistic and cultural merit, the potential for AICE is truly immense.

The formation of AICE not only enriches both countries but is, in itself, a strident symbol of solidarity at this particularly difficult time of global terrorism. It focuses on the future and the potential for creativity in the post-terror period. For Australia, it will also provide a much-needed fillip to indigenous artists in successfully globalizing appreciation of their art. The non-indigenous Australian artistic community will be exposed to a society where culture is a mainstream concern and artistic appreciation is literally for all.

The Future:

AICE was conceived with a vision of close and ongoing cultural exchange between Israel and Australia and a commitment to cultural exchange as 'world's best practice'.

Whether the full potential of this vision can be realized is in the hands of the individuals who make up the artistic and cultural leadership of Israel and Australia. If this vision is embraced and the key stakeholders bring their vast experience, energy, vision and commitment to AICE, the possibilities and potential for the future are truly enormous.