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Ulrike Klein's Ukaria Cultural Centre in Mount Barker to undergo \$500K expansion

Not a penny was spared when Ukaria Cultural Centre in Mount Barker was built. The same is true for its impending upgrade.

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Pianist Konstantin Shamray and Ukaria founder Ulrike Klein AO at the new rehearsal studio at Twin Peaks. Picture: Tricia Watkinson

Five years after opening her \$7 million Mount Barker private concert hall, Ulrike Klein is ready to expand her empire.

The Ukaria Cultural Centre has been approved for a \$500,000 expansion of its alfresco area to create more dining space and enhance visitor experience. The reconfiguration will include weather proofing the outdoor space, to ensure functions can be held not only in summer but also in winter.

Chief Executive Officer Alison Beare said construction would commence after the Adelaide Festival in March next year.

“After five years of operation, at a higher level of usage than originally imagined, the alfresco area will be reconfigured and extended so it can be left open in summer and properly enclosed and heated in winter,” she said.

“This will reduce congestion around the bar, create more dining space and greatly enhance the visitor experience.

“A retractable glass partition will also give us the possibility to create a separate area for small functions, private dining and preconcert talks.”

Ms Beare said the expansion was complemented by the recent refurbishment of Twin Peaks - a second property along Williams Road, purchased by Ms Klein to accommodate visiting musicians.

“Before the renovation we could only accommodate one group of artists at a time as there were no proper kitchen facilities in the cottage and it only had one bathroom,” Ms Beare said. “With the upgrade we can host simultaneous activity with separate groups of artists.”

A highlight of the redevelopment is a new rehearsal studio, created by the same design team who created UKARIA.

“This space will be used by artists to create new work through our residency program with the Australia Council and we also have plans to develop a masterclass program and from time to time we will host intimate private performances,” Ms Beare said.

“Our residency program is already well established and many artists from around Australia have created great work including Archie Roach and Paul Grabowsky who spent time at Twin Peaks writing Archie’s Aria award-winning album Tell Me Why.”



Ukaria Cultural Centre. Chamber Landscapes, 2017 Adelaide Festival.

A list of artist to perform at Ukaria in 2021 is expected to be revealed this Friday with the release of the Summer/Autumn program.

But first, Russian-born pianist Konstantin Shamray will perform the final concert of the season.

We hope to have a final concert on Sunday, December 13, however this is dependent on government easing restrictions to allow 50 per cent capacity in the hall," Ms Beare said.

"Our 2021 season will then be released quarterly in order to give us greater flexibility to respond to ever-changing border restrictions and seating arrangements.

"We have secured outstanding artists from across Australia and a special highlight will be *This is Us* - a new work by guitarists Slava and Leonard Grigoryan commissioned by the National Museum of Australia to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

"The Grigoryan brothers have drawn inspiration from eighteen significant objects which they selected from the collection in Canberra and their deeply personal responses will take us through histories of early indigenous Australians.

"A number of the objects will be coming from Canberra and exhibited at UKARIA in conjunction with the performance."

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