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## Chequebooks fly at arts buyfest

By TIM LLOYD

**A**USTRALIA'S Third Performing Arts Market, held in the week before the Adelaide Festival, is on track for unprecedented sales, according to its organisers.

This will help Adelaide in its campaign to win back the national event for future Adelaide Festivals.

The market is a chance for 100 delegates from around the world, and 100 more from around Australia, to sample and buy shows from Australian performing arts companies.

Rob Brookman, of the organisers of the market, Arts Projects Australia, said there had been an overwhelmingly positive feedback from delegates and artists at the event.

"In terms of value and volume it's too hard to call at this point," he said. "But the sheer volume of delegates and shows and the informal responses of delegates would indicate that the result will be significantly in advance of the previous (performing arts markets)."

The previous two biennial arts markets were held in Canberra and spun off at least \$2 million in sales in 1994 and an estimated \$6 million to \$8 million in sales in 1996.

Mr Brookman said the tie between the Festival and Fringe and the market had been very well received.

He said many delegates had stayed on at the Festival, including some who changed their plans at the last minute to see more while they were here.

"The feedback from delegates and artists alike was overwhelmingly positive in terms of Adelaide staging the market again."

Mr Brookman was referring to the fact that various States, including Adelaide, are bidding to host the next Performing Arts Market in 2000.

ArtSA chief executive officer Tim O'Loughlin said that the Performing Arts Market had the spin-off benefit of placing Adelaide as the arts capital of Australia in the minds of the large number of international delegates here.

"That's what we were hop-

synergies with the Festival, and it has reinforced Adelaide's pre-eminence in the minds of the people who make decisions about the arts in their own countries."

There were, however, some niggling criticisms of the arts market.

Reiner Eble, from the Balance festival in Marburg, Germany, has been to all three arts markets.

"As a result of the last performing Arts Market in Canberra we invited four Australian groups to our festival in 1997," he said.

"This year it was a little bit more difficult because for me, the margin between the very, very good performances and the so-so performances was a little bit too widespread," he said.

"I thought only 20 to at best 50 per cent of the performances were suitable for international festivals. The others seemed to be only of national or regional interest.

"So it was for us, for the international visitors, a matter of searching for a pearl in the oysters, but I found one pearl.

"I like very much Lucy Guerin from Melbourne, and I have invited her to two festivals in Germany next year."

**R**ENATE Klett, a freelance German festival director working on the Weimar 1999 Cultural Capital of Europe Festival, which runs all of next year, was even more circumspect.

The former director of Germany's biggest festival, Theatre de Welt, says she skipped the Arts Market altogether, staying instead for the whole of the Festival proper.

"I hate arts markets," she said.

"I have been to many of them and I don't like them. I find it degrading for the artists because they can only present a small part of the show.

"I am interested in shows; 20 minutes can never be a surrogate for seeing a show.