

VICTORIA


Major fan convention featuring Mel Gibson and William Shatner could still go ahead

Hollywood star Mel Gibson was due to be in Melbourne in July for a huge fan convention, but the pandemic stopped that. Now there's hope he'll make it down later.

John Masanauskas, Herald Sun

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 Hollywood stars Mel Gibson and William Shatner might still come to Melbourne for a major fan event that's been postponed due to the pandemic.

Hollywood stars [Mel Gibson](#) and William Shatner might still come to Melbourne for a major fan event that's been postponed due to the pandemic.

The duo was booked to attend the Cospendum Cosplay and Gaming Convention originally to have been held at the Royal Exhibition Buildings last July.

Event organiser Liliana Sanelli, from Perfect Events, said the convention had been postponed several times due to COVID restrictions.

"It's been a really hard decision for my client and us because these events involve months and months of planning," she said.

"They (Gibson and Shatner) were confirmed...and we were actually going to do a night with Mel Gibson at the Palais Theatre as well."

"He and his team have been fantastic, saying that when the world returns to a new normal we can go back to them."



 Liliana Sanelli from Perfect Events with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Ms Sanelli said the \$8 billion [Victorian events industry](#) had been devastated by shutdowns.

“Everyone’s talking about these large events like the tennis, the Grand Prix, but 80 per cent of events are business events like corporates, AGMs, conferences, charity dinners and fun runs,” she said.

“None of our clients can say when they can plan an event of what even does that look like.”

Ms Sanelli said her company was doing online events during the pandemic, but the industry was in survival mode and needed clarity and confidence from the state government.

“Give us a clear road map of how we can create a safe event, and talk to the experts, not just the big players,” she said.

“Talk to us, the small businesses, the cogs in the wheel.”

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the situation was sad.

“We’ll continue advocating to the Premier and the Victorian government to say ‘can we please seek some flexibility to open sooner, can we have some consistency,’” she told a webinar hosted by Perfect Events.

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