

Accessibility at Sydney Festival 2017



Photo of *Imagined Touch* by Bryony Jackson

Sydney Festival is committed to ensuring that our productions and events are accessible to every member of our audience, including people with disability. There is a broad and complex range of accessibility considerations that the Festival strives to meet, and we remain committed to providing dignified access to our program of events and communications.

In 2017, Sydney Festival is delighted to present a variety of accessible performance options, including Auslan interpreted, captioned, audio described and relaxed performances, unique sensory installations and performances, plus **two major works inspired and performed by artists with disabilities**.

From Jodee Mundy Collaborations, *Imagined Touch* is a Deafblind live art experience. Featuring Deafblind artists Heather Lawson and Michelle Stevens, *Imagined Touch* is a unique experience, providing insight into living in a world without sight or sound, through art, theatre and sensory performance. Touch is the main way that Deafblind people navigate, communicate and connect with others. In a society where touch is not encouraged, Deafblind people grapple with universal questions of isolation, access and human connection. Wearing goggles and headphones that alter and restrict light and sound, and through intensified touch and tactile communication, audiences can experience the artists' stories in a profoundly different sensory environment.

From Queensland contemporary circus performers, Company 2, comes *Kaleidoscope*. Ethan Hugh was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome at four years of age. He understands the world through touch and takes in his surroundings with the pads of his fingers and the tips of his toes. His mother described stepping into his world as "the joy of walking through shafts of colour and light; a dazzling kaleidoscope", and wrote a book detailing their experiences together, which inspired the creation of *Kaleidoscope*. On stage, Ethan is joined by five circus performers and together they explore the colour, chaos and incredible beauty of his world through acrobatics, slapstick, music, movement and vibrant video projections.

FULLY ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE:

Performances, workshops and talks that are accessible to people of all abilities. **Bookings are essential.** To ensure we are fully inclusive, please let us know of any specific access requirements before attending.

CIRCUS

Circus for Everyone: Hang Around with Aerialize Free circus skills workshops for all ages and abilities. Includes **Hands On Circus: Thisability!** – a session on 21 Jan specifically for children

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aged 4+ with disability. Courtyard, Riverside Theatre, Parramatta. 13 – 15 and 20 – 22 January. Free.

CIRCUS

Kaleidoscope Workshops Led by artists from Kaleidoscope, participants will discover their imaginative potential through structured and creative play. A hands-on art and performance experience for ages 10–16. Courtyard, Riverside Theatre, Parramatta. 14, 17, 18 January. The session on 17 Jan is identified as specifically for children on the Autism spectrum.

CIRCUS

Ockham's Razor Aerial Theatre Workshop for People with Disability This inclusive aerial theatre workshop offers the chance to experience the thrill of circus. It is open to all people who identify as disabled or deaf, and is tailored to the needs of the specific group. Using trapezes and counterweight to experience the height and movement of aerial circus, participants will play together as a group to create images, atmospheres and theatre. Spaces are limited. Free Spaghetti Circus Big Top, Prince Alfred Park, Parramatta. 22 January

To register, please email circus@sydneyfestival.org.au

TALK

Circus and Access Raffertys Theatre Riverside Theatres 19 January, 3.15pm
One of three panel discussions as part of the Circus City program exploring the circus arts and access for people with disability. Free.

THEATRE

Imagined Touch All performances are accessible to all people. Carriageworks. 9 – 14 January
Imagined Touch is also presented as a free tactile installation where you can get an insight into the Deafblind experience. Carriageworks. 10-15 January

RELAXED PERFORMANCES

Relaxed performances are designed to create a safe and welcoming environment for children on the autism spectrum and people with intellectual disabilities, along with their friends, carers and families. Performances are shown in a casual atmosphere, with a supportive and non-judgemental environment that features slight modifications to sound and lighting, a downloadable pre-visit social story and support aids with an open door policy and quiet area available.

CIRCUS

Kaleidoscope All performances of *Kaleidoscope* will be relaxed performances. Riverside Theatre. January 13 – 18

CIRCUS

Tipping Point Spaghetti Circus Big Top, Prince Alfred Park, Parramatta. Relaxed Performance 21 January, 2.30pm

UK based aerial company, Ockham's Razor presents five performers in the round pushing themselves to the limit on five metre-long metal poles that transform into a myriad of walkways, pillars and pendulums. Blending circus, acrobatics, playground games and trust exercises, **Tipping Point** is described by the *The Stage* as "spellbinding".

AUDIO DESCRIPTION AND TACTILE TOURS – for audiences who are blind or have low vision

Audio description is a service provided for patrons who are blind or have low vision. Trained audio describers give live, verbal descriptions of actions, costumes, scenery, and other visual elements of a

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performance. This is done during gaps in the dialogue via a small earpiece, provided to patrons pre-show. The audio description begins 10 minutes prior to the performance, and provides program details together with descriptions of costumes and stage settings. Patrons must book the service in advance and pick up a free FM headset on arrival.

Tactile tours allow patrons who are blind or have low vision to have a hands-on experience. Depending on the production/installation, patrons are given access to costumes, props and stage set in order to capture the atmosphere of the work. Tactile tours occur before the performance. Patrons must book in advance.

MUSICAL

Ladies in Black Sydney Lyric at The Star. Audio description on 19 January 8pm and 21 January 2pm (no tactile tour)

The swankiest new home-grown musical since *Priscilla* was queen, **Ladies in Black** is a whirling, toe-tapping trip back in time to Sydney in the late 1950s. Based on a Madeleine St John novel, with tunes by Tim Finn, book by Carolyn Burns and directed by Simon Phillips, *Ladies in Black* has already wowed audiences in Brisbane and Melbourne. Now it's Sydney's turn to get gussied up for the most alluring little number of the season.

THEATRE

Home Country Colo Lane Car Park, Blacktown. Audio Description 20 January 6.30pm (no tactile tour)

Urban Theatre Projects' site-specific works give audiences unforgettable experiences in unusual locations. For their latest venture, **Home Country**, three stories unfold in a multi-level car park in Blacktown in Sydney's West, exploring different perspectives on place, identity and what it means to be 'home'. Over the course of a communal feast hosted by Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Cheeky *Home Country* also introduces audiences to Ali from Algeria and neighbour Zaphora who clash over cultural values; sharp-witted Pita caught between the old and the new Greek culture; and the Blacktown Angel, restless in the afterlife.

THEATRE

The Season Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House. Audio Description 13 January, 7.30pm (no tactile tour)

Aboriginal playwright Nathan Maynard's hilarious portrait of the Duncans, a family bursting with love and always up for a laugh. They're back on Dog Island, a speck of land in Bass Strait, for the annual muttonbird harvest: hatchets are buried, secrets told, pranks pulled and birds plucked.

THEATRE

The Encounter Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House. 27 January 7.30pm. (Pre-show audio description and tactile tour at 6pm, the performance itself is not live described.)

Transmitted direct to the audience through headphones, the show's ground-breaking sound design plugs into the power of imagination as we're transported into the humid depths of the Amazon. Recreating the epic journey of National Geographic photographer Loren McIntyre in this solo-performance, Richard Katz invites audiences along for an unforgettable, immersive, theatrical ride. Although there is a visual element to this production, it can still be enjoyed by patrons who are blind or have low vision.

AUSLAN INTERPRETED THEATRE – for Deaf audiences

Auslan interpreted performances are for audiences who are Deaf and use Australian Sign Language (Auslan). Experienced Auslan theatre interpreters stand to the side of the stage and translate the text

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and dialogue into Auslan, signing live. Audiences requiring this service are seated in the section closest to the interpreter to ensure good sightlines.

In 2017, Sydney Festival will present Auslan interpreted performances of:

THEATRE

Home Country Colo Lane Car Park, Blacktown. Auslan Interpreted Performance 14 January, 6.30pm

CABARET

Briefs – The Second Coming Magic Mirrors Spiegel tent. Auslan Interpreted Performance 8 Jan, 9.30pm

Described as the love child of Ru Paul's Drag Race and Cirque du Soleil, this is an Aussie sharp-shooting cabaret of burlesque with balls. Fresh from sell-out seasons in Berlin and London, the beautiful and bearded ringmistress, Shivannah leads a cast of impressive male specimens, combining outrageous trash with serious talent.

COMEDY

Felicity Ward: 50% More Likely to Die Magic Mirrors Spiegel tent. Auslan Interpreted Performance 22 Jan, 7.30pm

A garishly colourful tapestry of pin-sharp observations around mental health by award-winning comedian Felicity Ward. Delight in a version of Rihanna's 'Work' performed as a chicken and tales of her crazy family, in a killer performance that took Edinburgh Fringe Festival by storm.

THEATRE

You and Me and the Space Between Everest Theatre, Seymour Centre. Auslan Interpreted Performance 20 January, 2pm

This is a magical tale of an adventurous girl that unfolds live in front of your eyes as cartoonist Cathy Wilcox (SMH, The Age) draws the pictures, while the story is narrated by Raelee Hill.

LIVE THEATRE CAPTIONING AND ASSISTED LISTENING SYSTEMS – for audiences who are Deaf or hard of hearing

Theatre captioning is an accurate live text display of a theatre performance in its entirety, including actors' dialogue, ad libs, asides, song lyrics, musical descriptions and other sound effects, displayed on either large screens at the side of the stage, or via GoTheatrical! mobile app.

DANCE

Blood On The Dance Floor Carriageworks. Captioned performance 24 January, 6pm

When choreographer, dancer and writer Jacob Boehme was diagnosed with HIV he reached out to his ancestors in search of answers. In an unapologetic physical monologue he explores the legacies and memories embedded in our bloodlines and each person's need for community and connection.

MUSICAL

Ladies in Black Sydney Lyric at The Star. Captioned performance 21 January, 8pm

THEATRE

Prize Fighter Upstairs Belvoir St Theatre. Captioned performance 14 January, 2pm

Get ringside for a rare theatrical combo: engrossing storytelling paired with the visceral thrill of live boxing in adrenaline pumping, full contact theatre. Captions via GoTheatrical! mobile app only.

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THEATRE

The Encounter Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House. Captioned performance 25 January 7.30pm.
Captions via GoTheatrical! mobile app only.

FESTIVAL INFORMATION IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

Sydney Festival makes every effort to ensure that the program is accessible to our whole audience. The 2017 Sydney Festival program is available in the following alternative formats via the website:

- MP3 (via the website)
- PDF (via the website)
- Interactive PDF (via the website)
- Word document in large print format (via the website)
- Braille (please contact Sydney Festival on 1300 856 876 or access@sydneyfestival.org.au)
- Audio CD (please contact Sydney Festival on 1300 856 876 or email access@sydneyfestival.org.au)

A synopsis in large print Word format of any production in the 2017 Sydney Festival is available on request.

The Festival also has strong relationships with Access Arts Australia, Companion Card, Deaf Society of NSW, Accessible Arts, Vision Australia and Auslan Stage Left.

MOBILITY

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

All of the venues in the 2017 program are wheelchair accessible. Designated wheelchair spaces (where available) are sold at the lowest price in the house for that performance (excluding *PJ Harvey* and *Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds*) For access information on specific venues visit sydneyfestival.org.au/venues

ACCESS IN THE DOMAIN

At *Symphony Under the Stars* and *Opera in The Domain*, an accessible viewing area for patrons with accessibility needs is located on the eastern side of The Domain between towers 6 and 7. Friends and family are also welcome in the designated viewing area. The Domain precinct is relatively flat but does have inclining and declining sealed pathways throughout. We provide accessible amenities, a drop-off and pick-up area and limited parking close to this viewing area for MPS permit holders. Registration is essential to access the viewing and parking area. Bookings can be made from Monday 7 November 2016 on 02 8006 5700.

ACCESS AT THE CRESCENT

At *Symphony Under the Stars* a viewing area for patrons with accessibility needs is located at the front on the right side as you look at the stage. Friends and family are also welcome in the designated viewing area. The precinct is relatively flat with a mix of grass and paved surfaces. Accessible amenities are available. Accessible parking (for MPS permit holders) and drop-off is at the O'Connell Street carpark. No booking required.

TO BOOK

Bookings are essential for all accessible services. Bookings for Auslan interpreted and live theatre captioned performances can be made online by entering the promotional code Access2017 during purchase.

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To discuss your access requirements and to book all other access services or performances, please call Sydney Festival's reception on 1300 856 876 or email access@sydneyfestival.org.au. Sydney Festival is happy to receive phone calls via the National Relay Service. TTY users, phone 133 677, then ask for 1300 856 876. Speak and Listen users, phone 1300 555 727 then ask for 1300 856 876. Internet relay users, visit relayservice.gov.au, then ask for 1300 856 876.

Please assist us by making bookings for accessible performances by Friday 16 December 2016.

COMPANION CARD PROGRAM

Sydney Festival supports the Companion Card program. For patrons who require the assistance of a companion or carer to attend events or venues, Sydney Festival will issue a second ticket at no cost to the carer of a Companion Card cardholder.

ACCESS BRIEFING

On Friday November 4 from 10.30am-12pm Sydney Festival will host a briefing on our 2017 Accessible performances and events. The briefing will be held in the Arts Exchange building, Ground floor, 10 Hickson Road, The Rocks. RSVP and enquiries: Fiona Jackson, Fiona.jackson@sydneyfestival.org.au

For further information on accessibility at Sydney Festival, visit sydneyfestival.org.au/access

All media releases are available for download at sydneyfestival.org.au/media

Multipacks are available for Sydney Festival events. Book 3 or more events and save up to 15%. Discounts apply to full price A Reserve or General Admission tickets.

For interviews and further information contact:

Jessica Keirle, Publicity Manager jessica.keirle@sydneyfestival.org.au

Julia Barnes, Publicist julia.barnes@sydneyfestival.org.au

Georgia McKay, Publicist georgia.mckay@sydneyfestival.org.au