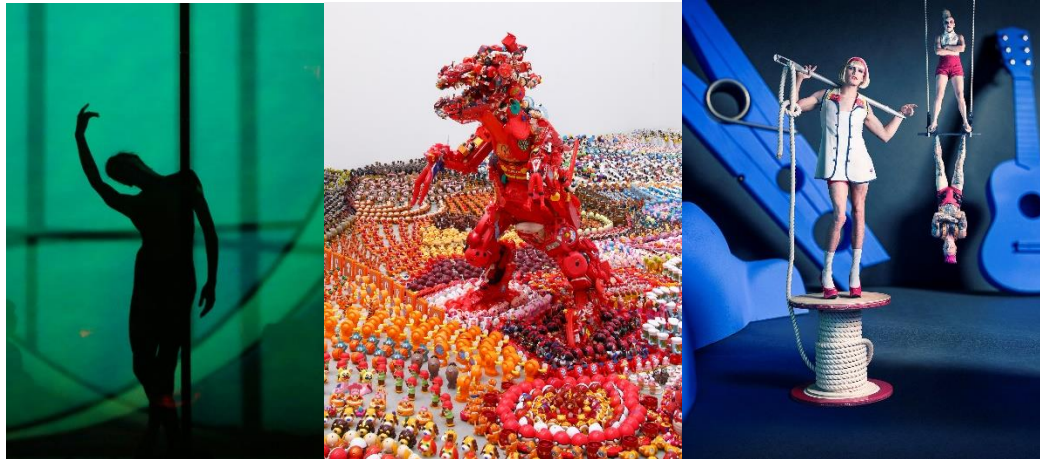


MEDIA RELEASE

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**SYDNEY
FESTIVAL**
6-28 JAN 2018

Full Program Announced for Sydney Festival 2018



Tree of Codes, Photo: Ravi Deepres; *Jurassic Plastic*, Photo: Keizo Kioku; *Model Citizens*, Photo: Rob Blackburn

The annual cultural celebration **Sydney Festival** returns to transform the city from **6-28 January 2018**, delivering the highest quality art and big ideas. Festival Director Wesley Enoch follows his inaugural year with a continued strong commitment to Australian and Indigenous work in a program spanning theatre, dance, circus, visual art and music, reaching from Sydney's CBD to Parramatta.

Highlights include:

- Contemporary ballet ***Tree of Codes***, a unique collaboration between choreographer **Wayne McGregor**, artist **Olafur Eliasson** and musician **Jamie xx** (6-10 January)
- The critically acclaimed ***Barber Shop Chronicles***, direct from London's National Theatre, exploring the role of the barber shop in the lives of African men (18-28 January)
- Circus Oz' latest show ***Model Citizens***, featuring an all-new ensemble and new artistic director Rob Tannion (2-28 January)
- ***Aquasonic***, an ethereal underwater concert performed by five Danish musicians on custom-made instruments whilst submerged in aquariums (6-9 January)
- Hyde Park's Spiegeltent hosting the hottest stars of 'boylesque' with ***Briefs: Close Encounters***, a seductive mix of contortion, aerial acrobatics and raunchy comedy, and ***RIOT*** an all-Irish variety show starring famed drag queen Panti Bliss
- The Australian premiere of ***Town Hall Affair*** which reimagines a raucous 1971 feminist debate. Featuring Maura Tierney as Germaine Greer, the New York theatre company **Wooster Group** perform in Sydney for the first time (7-13 January)
- ***The Wider Earth*** bringing to life Charles Darwin's five-year journey across the planet exploring new species, featuring an award-winning cast by **Queensland Theatre** and masterfully-built puppets from **Dead Puppet Society** (17-27 January)

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- The new **Village Sideshow** presented by China Southern Airlines at Meriton Festival Village containing a virtual reality **Ghost Train**, double-decker **Karaoke Carousel**, a **Glitterbox**, **swimming pools** and more (6-28 January)
- An expansive plastic toy landscape with towering toy dinosaurs, **Jurassic Plastic** by Japanese artist Hiroshi Fuji (6-28 January)
- **Four Thousand Fish**, a large-scale art installation at Barangaroo featuring a giant 'nawi' (canoe) and thousands of fish made of ice, to be returned to the harbour (5-28 January)
- A music line-up including homegrown talent **Gotye**, New Zealand's gothic folk artist **Aldous Harding**, Argentina's latin hip-hop trio **Fémina**, English performance artist and musician **Genesis P-Orridge**, America's indie folk exponents **Mount Eerie** and **Julie Byrne** and protest anthems from Tunisia's **Emel Mathlouthi**
- A series of talks and concerts in buildings across Sydney designed by Australia's most famous modernist architect, Harry Seidler, for the **Seidler Salon Series** (9-28 January)
- Internet sensation and political parodist **Randy Rainbow** unveiling his live show exclusively at Sydney Festival in his Australian debut (18-20 January)

The festival programming focuses on three key themes this year: finding the intersection of science and art, with particular attention placed on the relationship between how the physical body interacts with the mind in the digital realm; a larger look at human consumption and the effects that can have on local communities and the planet; and how the feminist movement has evolved and its current state across the world.

The **Meriton Festival Village** returns to Hyde Park offering a Spiegeltent bursting with activity alongside Sydney Festival's freaky fun park, the Village Sideshow, presented by China Southern Airlines. A specially commissioned **Ghost Train** takes the brave through the inner workings of their mind in a Virtual Reality (VR) world whilst physically chugging down a real fairground ghost train track. The world's first **Karaoke Carousel** also arrives at Sydney Festival this year, spicing up a double-decker carousel with the vocal talents of Sydney's party public. **10 Minute Dance Parties By JOF** replicate the best 10 minutes of a dancefloor at its peak, the **Glitterbox by zin** continues the dancing revelry and swimming pools in shipping containers provide a much needed cooling off before exploring the further fun on offer.

The theatre and dance program has a healthy mix of blockbuster international theatre shows and Australian works that showcase homegrown talent. Amongst **Inua Ellams'** *Barber Shop Chronicles* from the National Theatre, Manchester International Festival's *Tree of Codes* performed by Company Wayne McGregor, and Queensland Theatre's *Wider Earth* for all ages, one finds smaller gems. These include Ronnie Burkett's totally improvised puppet show **The Daisy Theatre** for which he animates up to 40 puppets with political insight and impeccable comedic timing, or the one-on-one interactive crime noir experience **Monroe & Associates** starring one audience member as Frankie Monroe, a private detective with amnesia.

Both **Maria Alyokhina's** theatre piece *Pussy Riot Theatre: Riot Days* and Wooster Group's *Town Hall Affair* deliver a masterclass in activism and *Wild Bore*, featuring **Zoë Coombs Marr**, **Ursula Martinez** and **Adrienne Truscott** take a more comedic approach, baring all in a stinging rebuke to their detractors. The brainchild of **Phoebe Waller-Bridge**, *Fleabag* is a one-woman play that spawned the hit BBC series of the same name, the story of a hypersexual female dissatisfied with her life. **Germaine Greer** also addresses the state of feminism in the 21st Century in **An Evening with Germaine Greer** following *Town Hall Affair's* opening night, in which she sees herself portrayed on stage for the first time.

The Indigenous program is well represented in the Festival's theatre offering, as Belvoir hosts a world premiere of **Ghenoa Gela's** *My Urrwai* alongside a play showcasing four generations of one family from fellow Torres Strait Islander **Jimi Bani** in *My Name Is Jimi*. In addition, **Tribunal** asks the audience to play judge on Australia's colonial past and **Broken Glass** combines a powerful

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installation and performance as it illuminates the rituals of death and mourning of First Peoples' communities at St Bartholomew's Church and Cemetery in Blacktown. In Parramatta *Alice in Wonderland* offers an all-new Australian adaptation of the children's classic from the award-winning playwright **Mary Anne Butler** and stars the world's first Aboriginal Alice, **Dubs Yunupingu**.

Following overwhelming interest in 2017, **Bayala**, which translates to 'speak' in local language has doubled its program with an extended range of classes and talks to learn the Aboriginal language of Sydney. These are coupled with an opportunity to sing at a *WugulOra ceremony* on 26 January with Darug musician and teacher **Aunty Jacinta Tobin**.

Circus City returns to Parramatta, creating a central hub for Sydney Festival's circus activity. The Circus Oz show, *Model Citizens*, is front and centre – a hair-raising performance examining the Australian suburban dream, through live music, daredevil acrobatics and mind-bending physical feats. The specially commissioned **Backbone** from **Gravity & Other Myths** offers the audience a raw and exhilarating ride to the edges of human strength. **Legs on the Wall** also bounces into Prince Alfred Square with **Highly Sprung** a colourful, acrobatic, multi-level trampoline display which appears alongside workshops in aerial skills, juggling and flying trapeze for the whole family.

The music program plucks acts from 13 countries and almost every continent of the world. In addition to Denmark's *Aquasonic*, the world's first underwater band, and New Zealand's rising star Aldous Harding, Gotye presents a tribute to his 'spiritual grandfather', the synthesiser pioneer Jean-Jacques Perrey as he takes to the instrument's forerunner, the now near-extinct Ondiolone. **Rhys Chatham's** orchestral work for 100 guitars, **A Crimson Grail** offers both an opportunity for Sydney's guitarists to participate in a large-scale performance and for music fans to have the rare chance to experience one of the American composer's greatest works. Fellow Americans Mount Eerie and Julie Byrne also perform their heart-breaking yet sublimely lyrical folk at the City Recital Hall. Thirty years on from their most successful album *16 Lovers Lane*, members the Australian rock band **The Go-Betweens** revisit the album with special vocalists including Steve Kilbey (**The Church**) and Izzi Manfredi (**The Preatures**).

In their Australian debut and an exclusive to Sydney Festival, the **Guangdong National Orchestra of China** offers the opportunity for festival-goers to hear one of the country's most influential orchestras fuse a contemporary symphonic cycle with Chinese instruments in newly composed pieces that explore the silk road's impact on the city of Guangzhou.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra returns for its annual free concert entertaining Sydneysiders under the night sky with **Symphony Under The Stars** in Parramatta Park, before taking to the Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House with international siren and comedienne Meow Meow in **Meow Meow's Pandemonium**.

Art-lovers have the chance to immerse themselves in the masterpieces of the Dutch Golden Age at the Art Gallery of NSW with **Rembrandt Live** as members of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra provide a live soundtrack for a baroque theatrical performance directed by **John Bell**. For the complete experience, a baroque banquet in the gallery is also on offer for two nights only, with a menu inspired by 17th Century Holland and designed by star chef **Mat Moran**. In a more contemporary twist, **the bomb** crosses film with live scoring by electro-rock trio **The Acid** in an immersive experience looking at one of humanity's deadliest inventions. Plus the New York-based band **Morricone Youth** rewrite the soundtrack for cult classic films **Mad Max** and **Night of the Living Dead** performing them live in their Australian debut at Carriageworks.

In a sample of the analogue colliding with the digital world at Sydney Festival, a year-long commission **52 Artists 52 Actions** tackles urgent issues in communities worldwide as chosen artists take an 'action' on a local concern and document it on Instagram @52ARTISTS52ACTIONS. **WHIST** also crosses theatre, art and technology in a Freud-inspired 360-degree digital VR world, where one is taken on a journey into a fictional family's fears and dreams.

Sydney Festival 2018 comprises 136 events, 47 of which are free. 702 performances take place across 51 venues, featuring over 700 artists from 22 countries. With 12 world premieres, eight

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Australian premieres, 14 Australian exclusives and nine new Australian works, summer in Sydney is not to be missed.

Sydney Festival Director Wesley Enoch says:

“Sydney is a national leader. Things we do here start conversations across the nation and around the world.

“Sydney Festival is Australia’s Cultural New Year’s Resolution, starting the year with experiences that stimulate discussion and reward the curious, adventurous citizen.

“Recently, we have witnessed the global effect of people feeling disenfranchised or disengaged. As Australians we have been asked our opinion on Marriage Equality but not Climate Change, we have been asked to step up and engage in debates and discussions but only so far. Sydney Festival invites you to keep getting involved. The people who live in a country have a responsibility to build the future of that country, to engage in creative re-imaginings and ensure the next generations inherit something better. Artists are here creating more and more ways of celebrating our better angels and questioning the things that are holding us back.

“Get stuck into it.”

Lord Mayor Clover Moore says: *“It’s always a wonderful time when the Sydney Festival spills out of venues around the City and into our streets, parks and more unexpected locations. I’m looking forward to the Seidler Salon Series, where our community can experience one of our most famous architect’s buildings in new ways. Also exciting is our new look Festival Village in Hyde Park, revamped so it can be enjoyed by audiences of all ages – this time with swimming pools in shipping containers and attractions for families and young people.”*

Minister for the Arts Don Harwin says: *“Sydney Festival makes the whole city come alive from the CBD to Parramatta and beyond and I encourage everyone to go and see something out of their comfort zone.”*

NOTES TO EDITORS:

For a comprehensive look at the program see a digital copy of the festival brochure here <http://sydfe.st/digitalbrochure2018>

For further information on the individual shows, find the Media Information Sheets here <http://sydfe.st/2018mediainfosheets>

Images for the Sydney Festival shows can be found here: <http://sydfe.st/2018showimages>

General images for Sydney Festival can be found here: <http://sydfe.st/genpics2018>

Listings Information:

Sydney Festival

When: 6-28 January 2018

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About Sydney Festival

Every January, Sydney Festival enlivens and transforms Sydney with a city-wide multi-art form cultural celebration. Sydney Festival 2018 takes place 6-28 January and sees Festival Director, Wesley Enoch in his second year with program of over 130 events and performances across theatre, dance, music, circus and art. Inclusive programming, a broad range of free events and accessible pricing policies for the ticketed shows means that Sydney Festival is open to all, welcoming both Sydneysiders and visitors from wherever they live.

Since its launch in 1977, Sydney Festival has presented international artists such as Björk, Brian Wilson, Grace Jones, Manu Chao, Elvis Costello, AR Rahman, Cate Blanchett, Ralph Fiennes, Robert Lepage, The Flaming Lips, Peter Sellars, Sir Ian McKellen and David Byrne & St. Vincent alongside some of the world's great companies - Wayne McGregor's Random Dance, Cheek by Jowl, Gate Theatre and the Schaubühne Berlin to name only a few. Sydney Festival creates a meeting point for the best in national and international art, building a world class Festival in one of the world's greatest cities.