



SCOW SHED AND
QUEEN'S MAGAZINE
Me-Mel (Goat Island)

01

02

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GORDON
WOODEN
BOATS
Lavender Bay

AUSTRALIAN
NATIONAL
MARITIME
MUSEUM
Darling Harbour

START/
FINISH

SYDNEY
HERITAGE
FLEET
Rozelle Bay

04

ACOUSTIC LIFE of BOATSHEDS

Sydney Festival
2022



BIG HART ACKNOWLEDGES AND PAYS RESPECT TO THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND CONTINUING CUSTODIANS OF THIS LAND ON WHICH WE LIVE AND WORK, AND THEIR ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING. WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONTINUITY OF CULTURAL AND ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP PROVIDED BY ABORIGINAL PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND ACROSS BIG HART'S PROJECTS. ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE ABORIGINAL LAND.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Acoustic Life of Boatsheds takes more producing than directing. Once the musicians, artists and shipwrights enter these beautiful spaces and listen, the project directs itself.

Scott has a small and romantic connection to this project, having grown up in a boatshed in this part of the harbour. The visceral sounds and smells of a sea breeze changing to a southerly buster, on a fecund Sydney summer afternoon is familiar. The response to weather and tide and time of these iconic sheds is like home.

The glittering tourist delights of Sydney Harbour east of the Harbour Bridge lures us with its cheap carbs, but it is west of the bridge where something of the working harbour remains. In the centre of it is the pivot point of Me-Mel (Goat Island) the eye of the eel, vigilant.

Perhaps Sydney will continue to hand her foreshores over to casinos and party boat beats, or perhaps she'll choose to keep the culture of a working harbour to the west alive with skills and story. And just maybe, Me-Mel will be returned, and this will be another step towards harbour truth-telling and the journey to treaty. It is all of this story that is in the hands of our partners - the Australian National Maritime Museum, Noakes and their shipwrights, Sydney Heritage Fleet, Gordon Wooden Boats, National Parks and Wildlife, Tribal Warrior, Sydney Festival, and all our artists. Big hART thanks them all.

ENJOY.

Andrew, Lucy, Sam and Scott



ROSMAN CRUISES

*Noakes
Group*

THE ARTISTS

MICHAEL SIMIC (AS MIKELANGELO) AND TRENT ARKLEY-SMITH

Michael Simic has been performing in the guise of his acclaimed stage persona Mikelangelo for over 20 years. He has won Best Artist awards at the Brighton and Edinburgh Festivals, released 13 albums, and performed across 3 continents. Trent Arkley-Smith is a multi-instrumentalist whose talents led him to the European circus circuit. Together the duo bring their musical charm in a mix of folk, pop and nautical acoustic flavours.

THE VESSELS

Iconic to Sydney Harbour, the Rosman Cruises fleet of vintage ferries are meticulously maintained under the skilled care of the Noakes Group team, ensuring that these important pieces of Sydney's working harbour history endure. Dating back to 1939, the classic ferries including Royale and Regal are masterpieces of traditional boatbuilding techniques. Rosman vessels first carried passengers from Circular Quay to all parts of the harbour in the early 1900s.



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THE ARTISTS

CLAIRE EDWARDES

Claire Edwardes is an internationally renowned percussionist who has appeared in concerto performances with numerous European and Australian orchestras. She has featured in a broad spectrum of collaborations premiering hundreds of new works and becoming the only 3 time winner of the "APRA Art Music Award for Excellence by an Individual". As the Artistic Director of Ensemble Offspring Claire is a passionate advocate for gender equity in music and is recognised as a leading light in developing new audiences for art music.

THE SHED

The Scow Shed (c.1925-1928) was a work area for shipwrights, building and maintaining scows and the scavenger dog boats which towed them. Scows are flat-bottomed vessels which are not self-powered. They were used for the collection and transport of garbage around the harbour and were towed by steam tugs.

THE ARTISTS

PAUL CUTLAN AND GARY DALEY WITH JORDAN EAST

Paul Cutlan and Gary Daley are two of the country's most respected musicians and improvisors working across the spectrum of jazz, classical, folk and world music. Boatsheds is a new opportunity for audiences to marvel at the kaleidoscope world of tone colours they create together as the Bungaribee Duo.

New media designer and animator Jordan East adds an additional immersive layer to this performance.

THE SHED

Queen's Magazine (c.1839) designed for storage for 3,000 barrels of gunpowder. Built by convicts using sandstone quarried from the western side of the island. It was a requirement for merchant ships to unload their gunpowder at Goat Island while docked in Sydney Harbour, this was to ensure that there were no ships exploded in the harbour. It was in use until 1907, when the last explosives were removed.



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THE ARTISTS

**JIM ATKINS, SABINE
BESTER AND NATHAN COX
WITH LOCKY RANKIN**

Jim Atkins has designed and mixed audio for opera, symphonies, ballet, theatre, and site specific music events across Australia and internationally. Jim guides this collaboration with leading continuo and harpsichord player Nathan Cox, emerging Tasmanian vocalist and improviser Sabine Bester, and wooden boat shipwright Locky Rankin.

THE SHED

“Beneath the railway viaduct, the archways have hosted many mavericks. In my life there’s been Bill, servicing outboard engines and who could make a sailor blush, Pete, running a complete workshop and office for his tug and slipway company, squatters who fully furnished an archway, a lunchroom full of machinists in white overalls, my aunt who lived in her van beneath an archway and planted the enormous fig tree, and of course my father, Bob the boat builder. Bob built big vessels outside and had our archway for storage; and from 1998 reading, reciting poetry, barbecuing chops, gifting his wisdom to the unsuspecting, and building smaller yachts. The evocative world of wooden boat building, although antiquated, is what I love. I can’t think of a better thing to do.” *Rob Gordon*

THE ARTISTS

**JESS GREEN AND
BREE VAN REYK**

Jess Green is a guitarist, vocalist and composer who has toured nationally and in Europe and Asia. She has released four studio albums and performed and recorded for theatre, dance, television and visual art installations. Bree van Reyk is a drummer, percussionist, composer, and sound artist whose work is an intersection of contemporary classical, indie-rock and performance art. Jess and Bree have worked with many of Australia’s best known musicians and composed and performed across multiple genres; jazz, rock, new music and experimental.

THE SHED

A fleet of treasures. They span the years from 1874 to the 1960s – among them five more than 100 years old. These are the historic museum vessels of Sydney Heritage Fleet. Many are fully operational, others are still in restoration. Nowhere in the world can you see – and sail on – a collection of historic vessels of this age; saved, restored and kept operational by the Fleet’s 450 dedicated volunteers.

ABOUT

Acoustic Life of Sheds

Acoustic Life of Sheds is an award-winning event which has wowed audiences in Tasmania for 7 years. Since 2015 Acoustic Life of Sheds has engaged 88 composers, musicians, visual artists, audio artists and filmmakers and produced 22 new works.

Sheds are often sentinel shapes on the horizon or the high-water mark, watching as life changes around them. This is especially true in Sydney's declining working harbour. Bastions of time, space and purpose, sheds can reveal the invisible stories of place – shipwrights, apprentices, farmers, labourers, and artisans, who carry on their working lives in these unassuming spaces, leaving a patina from their toils. Acoustic Life of Boatsheds invites leading composers, musicians and artists to celebrate these architectural embodiments of maritime, industrial or rural culture as memory sound-shells by reimagining them for audiences in the landscape or on the foreshore.

Big hART

Acoustic Life of Boatsheds is created and produced by Big hART - Australia's leading arts and social change company - supporting communities to overcome disadvantage.

2022 is Big hART's 30th year, after working in 55 communities and garnering 45 awards from theatre, music, screen, digital and hybrid works.

WE MAKE ART, FILM, THEATRE, MUSIC, EVENTS

Compelling, authentic, high quality content telling inspiring stories.

WE BUILD COMMUNITY

Positive, non-welfare initiatives for communities.

WE DRIVE CHANGE

Generational change through local action and changing attitudes, leaving a legacy.

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