

**Sydney  
Festival  
2025**

# WENDY WHITELEY'S

# SECRET GARDEN



Wendell Teodoro

# WENDY WHITELEY'S SECRET GARDEN

WORLD PREMIERE

Brett Whiteley Foundation & Art Gallery of New South Wales

Clark Park, Lavender Street

18 & 19 January

50 minutes

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## ABOUT THE SHOW

Brett Whiteley's record collection was as eclectic as the many stories and memories planted in Wendy Whiteley's bohemian garden – a place for joy, grief, reflection and hope. Wander through this open-air music experience in front of the Whiteley family Lavender Bay home, with performances by William Barton and Véronique Serret, NoSax NoClar, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs' VOX and Chamber Singers, Joseph and James Tawadros, and Maharshi Raval.

## PROGRAM

These musical pieces are subject to change, depending on improvisation from the artists on the day.

## WILLIAM BARTON & VÉRONIQUE SERRET

William and Véronique will perform excerpts from their original catalogue of works for violin, voice and yidaki/ didgeridoo, interwoven with improvisations inspired by the natural world. Expect glimpses from their ARIA-nominated albums *Heartland* and *Migrating Bird*.

## NOSAX NOCLAR

Most pieces are composed by NoSax NoClar. The duo will dip into the following setlist and there will also be improvisation: "Elie", "Sandman", "Mulino mio", "Bomi", "Maja yoka", "Ellis sisters", "66 de 36", "Red", "Kahmsin", "Wilson".

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## JOSEPH & JAMES TAWADROS

The brothers will perform a selection of pieces composed by Joseph Tawadros, alongside a piece inspired by "Summer" from *Vivaldi's Four Seasons*.

## SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS' VOX AND CHAMBER SINGERS

Experience the glorious voices of the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs as they sing music about connection, place and meaning. Voices a cappella blending with the natural beauty of Wendy's garden, with René Clausen's "Set Me as a Seal", Robert Lucas Pearsall's "Lay a Garland" and Paul Kelly's "Meet Me in the Middle of the Air".

## MAHARSHI RAVAL

Maharshi will perform both traditional and contemporary compositions, exploring diverse rhythmic cycles with improvisation at every turn. He will use a lehra app for rhythmic guidance and invite talented musicians and students to join him, creating a dynamic and collaborative atmosphere.

## A NOTE FROM SYDNEY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR OLIVIA ANSELL

Sydney is synonymous with the ultramarine blue of Brett Whiteley's painting *The Balcony 2* and Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden. Nestled beneath the Whiteley family home and alongside the former house of the late artist Peter Kingston, this exotic garden animates Lavender Bay in a spectacular yet hidden style.

Following the passing of her daughter Arkie, Wendy Whiteley created a sanctuary for Sydneysiders to grieve, celebrate, reflect and just be. Plants, artworks and objects from across the globe exist throughout, reflecting the breadth of international collaboration and the artistic influence of the Whiteleys.

Following the highly sought-after *Brett Whiteley Studio Sessions* presented by Sydney Festival in 2023 and 2024, we've invited a select group of artists (whose musical inspirations align to those heard in Brett Whiteley's record collection) to perform a repertoire that speaks directly to the seasons in our collective lives.

I would like to personally thank Wendy for her ongoing support and generosity of spirit, Senior Curator Beatrice Gralton AGNSW, the Brett Whiteley Foundation and Art Gallery of New South Wales.

Welcome to this distinctly Sydney experience.

– Olivia xo

## WILLIAM BARTON & VÉRONIQUE SERRET

William Barton is a composer, producer, multi-instrumentalist and vocalist, and is widely recognised as one of Australia's leading didgeridoo players and composers. Véronique Serret is a violinist, vocalist and composer effortlessly bridging the divide between classical and contemporary art forms.

## NOSAX NOCLAR

Born in 2020, NoSax NoClar brings together the freewheeling talents of saxophonist and clarinetist Bastien Weeger and beatboxer and bass clarinetist Julien Stella. Their style of contemporary jazz is agile and inventive, bringing in influences from folklore to Balkan, Celtic and Berber music.

## JOSEPH & JAMES TAWADROS

The Tawadros brothers take inspiration from the Arabic modal system (maqam) and blend them seamlessly with elements of Western classical, jazz, world, folk and even bluegrass. From furiously paced numbers to beautifully introspective tracks, their work is woven together by Joseph's trademark lyricism and the striking contemporary musicality of the oud and riqq.

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## SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS' VOX AND CHAMBER SINGERS

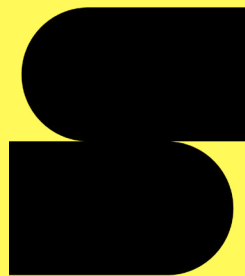
Since 1920, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs has presented choral singing at the highest standard, and has developed the talents of those with a passion for singing. Led by Artistic & Music Director Brett Weymark OAM and Associate Music Director Dr Elizabeth Scott, the Choirs perform choral classics from the Baroque period through to new Australian commissions.

## MAHARSHI RAVAL

Maharshi Raval is one of the most sought-after tabla players in Australia, who is dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of Indian classical music. His rhythmic brilliance blends tradition and innovation. After learning the tabla in Ahmedabad at age seven, he has since performed with artists from more than 50 countries.

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