

PRESS RELEASE

28 AUGUST 2024

## SYDNEY FESTIVAL WELCOMES THREE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Sydney Festival is thrilled to announce three new non-executive members to its Board of Directors. Abs Osseiran, Yeesum Lo, and Dr Sunil Badami bring a wealth of experience and expertise that will play a vital role in guiding the Festival's growth and strategic direction, ensuring it continues to be a leading force in the arts both nationally and internationally.

**Abs Osseiran** is a Corporate Tax Partner and Consumer Sector Lead for Deloitte Tax & Legal in Australia. He has a proven track record with major multinational companies and deep expertise in tax governance. He holds Board roles with Queer Screen Limited and the Can Too Foundation, a not-for-profit organisation focused on raising money for cancer prevention and research. He has also previously served on the boards of the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras and Sydney World Pride. A qualified lawyer and accountant, Mr. Osseiran's strong governance credentials and commitment to the arts, make him a valuable addition to the Sydney Festival team. As well as being a Board Director with the Festival, Mr Osseiran will chair the Board's Audit and Risk Committee going forward.

**Yeesum Lo** brings to the Sydney Festival Board a unique blend of creative strategy, business acumen, and a deep commitment to the arts. As Head of Development at Paramount Australia & New Zealand and formerly Director of Digital at Endemol Shine Australia, her expertise spans content commissioning, audience insights, digital rights, and corporate strategy. A distinguished global media executive born in Hong Kong and educated in the US, Miss Lo is also a classically trained clarinettist, pianist and chorister. Her experience in content development and audience analytics will significantly support Sydney Festival's goals of delivering innovative and exciting experiences to diverse audiences across Sydney.

**Dr. Sunil Badami** is a writer, broadcaster, academic, digital educator and journalist. He has over twenty years' experience in the arts and media sectors and has worked with a variety of organisations such as the ABC, Kaldor Public Art Projects, Diversity Arts Australia and Creative Australia. Dr Badami currently serves on the Board of the Canberra Writers Festival and is a member of the UTS School of Communications Industry Advisory Board. Growing up in Western Sydney and the NSW Central Coast, his passion for diversity and representation aligns with Sydney Festival's mission to celebrate and reflect the communities and interests which make up our city.

Commenting on the new appointments, Kate Dundas, who took up the position of Chair of Sydney Festival earlier this year said, "I am thrilled to welcome Abs, Yeesum, and Sunil to our Board. Each will contribute their vision, technical expertise, lived experience, and professional insights to the growth and future success of Sydney Festival. They join a board dedicated to supporting the

# MEDIA RELEASE

Festival team in its extraordinary task of delivering a rich and inclusive festival in January, where the arts and artists shine brightly across the city.”

She continued, “I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Board members – former Chair David Kirk, Paddy Carney and Angela Clark - for their exceptional service, knowledge, and passion, which contributed to the strong foundation we have to build on.”

The announcement comes as the Festival begins its journey towards its 50th anniversary edition in 2026. The 2025 Festival will be the last one curated by the current Festival Director, Olivia Ansell. The search for a new Festival Director is in progress, with the announcement expected later this year.

Abs Osseiran, Yeesum Lo and Sunil Badami will formally take up their new positions on 27 August 2024.

## ENDS

For further information or media opportunities please contact Nia Jones, Media Advisor at Sydney Festival [nia.jones@sydneyfestival.org.au](mailto:nia.jones@sydneyfestival.org.au) / 0436 100 201.

### NOTES TO EDITORS:

**About Sydney Festival:** Sydney Festival is one of Australia’s largest international arts festivals, with a stellar reputation for bold, inventive and intelligent programming. Its vibrancy reflects the confidence, creativity and vigour of one of the world’s most beautiful cities.

Under the curation of Festival Director Olivia Ansell, the Festival’s mission is to deliver an exhilarating summer of art, drawing stories from Sydney’s 65,000-year history through to its contemporary zeitgeist. Sydney Festival stages the world’s best artists whilst nurturing its homegrown talent; many of Australia’s most memorable theatrical productions have stemmed from its premieres and commissions. The buzz of summer wouldn’t be the same without the Festival’s spectacular installations, immersive experiences and live events splashed across Sydney each January. In 2026 Sydney Festival will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

### Sydney Festival Board of Directors:

- **Kate Dundas – Chair**

Kate Dundas has forged a career in public policy, media and cultural leadership. Senior roles include Executive Director of Performing Arts at the Sydney Opera House where she led programming, event management, production and venue hire divisions. During her extensive career with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Kate held senior executive roles including Director of ABC Radio, Head of Music Networks and Director People and Culture. She has worked in public policy areas in both state and federal government. Her NSW Government experience includes Deputy Secretary Arts and Culture and two executive roles in the NSW Premier’s Department.



**Sydney  
Festival**

# MEDIA RELEASE

Kate is a Board Director of the Sydney Festival, Deputy Chair of Australia for UNHCR and Deputy Chair of the Sydney Writers' Festival. She also works as an Executive Mentor with private clients and as part of McCarthy Mentoring. Additionally, Kate works on a project basis as a subject matter expert on cultural projects in Australia and overseas. Kate has a Bachelor of Communications, is a Vincent Fairfax Fellow and graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

- **Darren Dale – Deputy Chair**
- **Andrew Cameron AM**
- **Dr Robert Lang**
- **Karen Mundine**