

MEDIA RELEASE

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Sydney Festival 2017 Parramatta & Western Sydney



Photo: iD by Valerie Remise

Sydney Festival returns in 2017 with a fantastic line-up of artists and events across Parramatta and Western Sydney from Australia and around the world. Featuring a dedicated circus program in Parramatta, a major visual arts exhibition, five world premieres and two exclusive performances, Festival Director Wesley Enoch's inaugural program is bursting with free and ticketed events.

Sydney Festival is delighted to launch **Circus City** in Parramatta. Running for ten days from January 12 – 22, Circus City will feature 4 shows, 34 workshops and 55 free events including talks, films, an exhibition and a series of events for circus professionals.

Riverside Theatres and The Spaghetti Circus Big Top in Prince Alfred Square will play host to this celebration of circus, bringing together different practices from overseas and across the country. Featuring work by Canada's **Cirque Éloize**, UK's **Ockham's Razor**, and Brisbane's **Circa** and **Company 2**, the program will highlight the evolution and theatricality of contemporary circus practice.

An international sensation since 2009, Cirque Éloize's *iD* is a high-energy blend of circus arts and urban dance, featuring an inspiring soundtrack and innovative video projections. Coming to Sydney straight from a successful London season, fifteen acrobats, aerialists, hip hop and break dancers come together to present a thrilling show that's been seen by over one million people since its premiere.

In *Tipping Point*, the performers of UK based circus company Ockham's Razor push themselves to the limit on 5 metre-long metal poles that transform into a myriad of walkways, pillars and pendulums in a blend of circus, acrobatics and playground games. Set in the round with the audience drawn in close to the action, the five performers are enclosed within the circle of the stage.

A gigantic hit in 34 countries over 6 continents, Circa combine the stripped-back sensibility and aesthetic of contemporary dance and theatre with phenomenal acrobatic prowess in *HUMANS*. In their edgy and refreshing take on contemporary circus, the artists of Circa regularly push the limits of the human body and will dazzle you with a display of the seriously superhuman in this world premiere performance.

Company 2 returns to Sydney Festival with *Kaleidoscope*, an extraordinary interpretation of a child's unique vision of the world. Ethan Hugh was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome at four. Now thirteen, he's joined on stage by five circus performers and together they explore the colour, chaos

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and incredible beauty of his world through acrobatics, slapstick, music and movement.

Sydney Flying Trapeze bring their ten metre high outdoor trapeze rig to Prince Alfred Square to encourage students of all levels to take flight!

There will also be a series of talks exploring the circus arts, a film program, a display of costumes and posters from Australia's traditional circus roots, and workshops and masterclass events for everyone. The extensive program is family friendly and proudly accessible, with a range of free and ticketed events on offer.

In Western Sydney, Campbelltown Arts Centre and Sydney Festival present the first major exhibition by artist **Myuran Sukumaran** in *Another Day in Paradise*. Facilitated by close friend and mentor **Ben Quilty**, the exhibition presents a vast and sobering series of powerful portraits by Sukumaran, painted during his incarceration at Bali's Kerobokan jail and from his final incarceration on Nusa Kambangan Island. Alongside over 100 artworks by Sukumaran, Campbelltown Arts Centre has commissioned a series of artworks by seven diverse and vibrant artists.

With a script developed from 10 years of recorded personal conversations, *Ich Nibber Dibber* maps the lives and practices of three women coming of age in the 21st Century in a world premiere performance at Sydney Festival. By Australian collaborative performance ensemble **Post**, this comedic and political commentary looks at what it means to be a woman, an artist, and the way we make sense of the world in conversation with those nearest to us.

Inspired by the ancient Middle-Eastern traditions of story-telling and breaking bread, *Hakawati* celebrates food, music and the telling of tales during a series of balmy summer nights at El-Phoenician restaurant in Parramatta. Created by Australia's newest theatre company, the **National Theatre of Parramatta**, audiences will feast on tales of heroism, tragedy and comedy, derived from myth and told with a distinctly modern Western Sydney flavour.

In a celebration of the Indigenous heritage of Sydney and the growing movement to reawaken local language, Sydney Festival will present a range of free language classes as part of *Bayala*. Darug woman **Aunty Jacinta Tobin** and Gadigal man **Joel Davison** lead the classes, inviting Sydneysiders to learn greetings and introductions; landscape and placenames; body parts; simple grammar and sentences; and a song.

Presented in a multi-level car park in Blacktown, *Home Country* is an epic story which shares perspectives on place and identity. **Urban Theatre Projects** offers audiences unforgettable experiences in unusual locations. *Home Country*, their latest venture, makes its world premiere at Sydney Festival.

For the first time, *Symphony Under the Stars* will be presented as part of Sydney Festival in The Crescent, Parramatta Park. Bring a hamper, a blanket and your friends, and settle in for a free concert with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

"Sydney Festival has been working in Western Sydney for decades. Through partnerships with the fantastic arts centres and councils throughout the region we have been delivering some of the most exciting and artistically enriching programs sourced from around the world and around the corner.

In 2017, we partner up with the City of Parramatta to bring you Circus City which will bring together some of the best circus companies in the world in a celebration of one of the oldest artforms on the planet. Visit the big top in Prince Alfred Square, see shows or get involved in workshops where you can learn to fly the trapeze. Circus City will be for all ages. Run away to the circus." says **Festival Director Wesley Enoch**.

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City of Parramatta Administrator, Amanda Chadwick said *“The City is proud to be celebrating our partnership with Sydney Festival on a dedicated Parramatta program, filled with bold and innovative experiences. I look forward to welcoming visitors and locals to experience ground-breaking works from some of the world’s finest performers in the heart of our great City.”*

Celebrate summer with Sydney Festival and purchase a Festival Multipack - on sale 9am Thursday 27 October. Single tickets are on sale 9am Monday 31 October.

Where: Parramatta & Western Sydney, various venues

When: January 7 – 29

More information: sydneyfestival.org.au

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