

# MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL 2018

Music | Dance | Circus | Visual Arts | Theatre | Special Events



From soaring cathedrals of sound to the sweat of the circus and boxing rings, this year's Melbourne International Arts Festival will be an extraordinary adventure through global and local arts, filled with inspiring experiences for people of all ages.

Melbourne Festival Artistic Director, Jonathan Holloway, today announced the 2018 Melbourne Festival program, a spectacular line-up of dance, theatre, visual arts, architecture, contemporary and classical music, and free events taking place throughout the city from 3 – 21 October 2018.

From show-stopping world premieres to family friendly events, the 2018 program will see the Festival take over some of the city's most iconic spaces.

The Royal Botanic Gardens will become home to the UK's leading contemporary circus company **NoFit State** with the only Australian performance of **LEXICON**, an extraordinary production celebrating the rich 250-year history of the circus ring.

Visitors will be invited to enter the Royal Botanic Gardens after dark to experience **FIRE GARDENS**, a fire-burning spectacular which will see the Gardens illuminated over four special nights.

Following on from the popular House of Mirrors in last year's Festival, **Christian Wagstaff** and **Keith Courtney** will return to the Arts Centre forecourt with **1000 DOORS**, a physically absorbing work providing audiences with an opportunity to choose their own adventure as they go through door after door.

The Festival's contemporary music program will quench the city's thirst for ground-breaking live performance. Pioneering Japanese composer **RYUICHI SAKAMOTO** and experimental electronic artist **ALVA NOTO** will blend minimal piano with glitchy beats as they bring their ongoing collaborative performance to Melbourne.

Classical will meet contemporary when Berlin composer and pianist **NILS FRAHM** returns to Hamer Hall for his first Australian performance since his sold-out debut at Melbourne Festival in 2014.

Post-punk royalty, **Matt Johnson** and his band **THE THE** will perform in Melbourne for the first time in almost thirty years, playing reactionary repertoire from their ground-breaking albums such as *Soul Mining* (1989) and *Infected* (1986).

Closer to home, original members of **The Go-Betweens** will join musical forces with special guests **Paul and Dan Kelly**, **Romy Vager (RVG)**, **Laura Jean**, **Jen Cloher** and more for a 30th anniversary reimagining of one of Australia's most iconic albums **16 LOVERS LANE**, in a special one-night-only performance.

One of the world's leading figures of contemporary dance, choreographer William Forsythe, will push the language of ballet to its outer limits in **A QUIET EVENING OF DANCE** featuring a suite of new and existing work in an Australian premiere.

The dance-opera **LAYLA AND MAJNUN** will be the largest-scale production of the Middle Eastern classic ever seen in the West and is an unmissable Festival co-commission. Reimagined by three of the world's greatest artists – US choreographer **Mark Morris**, the legendary cellist **Yo-Yo Ma's Silkroad Ensemble** and the late **Howard Hodgkin** – it is a visually stunning modern-day interpretation of the tragic love story pre-dating Romeo and Juliet by more than one thousand years. Performing in Australia for the first time, the **Silkroad Ensemble** will also present a solo performance showcasing their most celebrated pieces.

With themes of self-discovery, adventure and place, this year's Festival delivers an immersive theatrical program offering ways of experiencing art through unexpected methods. The program features Scottish theatre company **Vox Motus' FLIGHT** based on the novel *Hinterland* by Caroline Brothers, **PRIZE FIGHTER** set in a boxing ring at Northcote Town Hall and **FROGMAN** which will involve the audience through a special use of virtual reality. Direct from Ireland comes Samuel Beckett's **WATT** with Barry **McGovern**, **Barking Gecko's A GHOST IN MY SUITCASE** and **TRUSTEES** from the **Belarus Free Theatre Company** (both co-commissioned by Melbourne International Arts Festival), and Jimi Bani's personal story in **MY NAME IS JIMI**.

New work by Australian artist **Polly Borland** and the idiosyncratic sculpture of New Zealand artist **Ronnie van Hout** will be on display as part of this year's visual arts programme, which also includes the first Australian exhibition of Irish artist **Eva Rothschild** ahead of her appearance at next year's Venice Biennale and a new exhibition of British artist **John Stezaker's** celebrated photo-collages.

Artistic Director Jonathan Holloway said: "This year's Melbourne International Arts Festival is a unique opportunity to open a series of doors into parallel worlds, to step through and discover a universe of real and imagined journeys; to become immersed in stories, adventures and experiences far beyond our everyday.

"During this year's Festival, we will enter the Royal Botanic Gardens and see it awash with flame. We will walk into a circus tent and discover a world of music and performance. We follow explorers as they travel the Silk Road, or journey back to where they came from, or push on to safety, or fall into star crossed love.

"The Melbourne Festival is about encouraging your curiosity. Cross the threshold with us," said Holloway.

Festival-goers are encouraged to board the Melbourne Art Trams, which tips its hat to its origins this year, recreating the raucous, bold and mischievous work produced by the late David Larwill for the Transporting Art Project in 1986. The tram was painted as part of the commemoration of the United Nations International Year of Peace but has been in storage for more than 20 years. The design has been photographed and designed to be wrapped on a modern tram.

The **MPavilion**, to be realised by award-winning Spanish architect **Carne Pinós**, will be home to a jam-packed program of talks, workshops and performances as well as a special Festival closing event, **OUR PLACE, OUR HOME**, which will celebrate the many cultures that make up Melbourne.

Other 2018 highlights will include music by Portuguese Fado singer **ANA MOURA**, **Tan Dun** conducting the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in **BUDDHA PASSION**, **Los Angeles Master Chorale's LAGRIME DI SAN PIETRO** and **Van Diemen's Band in CELLO NAPOLETANO**. As well as the first major solo exhibition of Taungurung visual artist **Steven Rhall**, and **100 KEYBOARDS**, a landmark aural installation by Japanese sound artist **ASUNA**.

The Melbourne Festival opens on Wednesday 3 October with **TANDERRUM** – part opening ceremony and part Welcome to Country – as we celebrate the ground we stand on and the people whose ancestors walked it before our time. Melbourne Festival takes place from 3 – 21 October 2018.

Tickets will be available from **midday Monday 30 July** at [festival.melbourne](http://festival.melbourne) #melbfest