

MEDIA RELEASE: Wednesday, 18 November 2020

AN EPIC NIGHT OF SOARING MUSIC
Hymns for End Times
Rachael Dease with West Australian Symphony Orchestra
WORLD PREMIERE
Presented in association with Tura New Music



Image: Liz Looker

With soaring vocals that evoke PJ Harvey and intoxicating, sprawling soundscapes that can be compared to Sufjan Stevens, **Rachael Dease** is a musical force to be reckoned with.

Hymns For End Times is an epic **Perth Festival** concert event revealing an intensely personal series of musical vignettes that will resonate powerfully in the dramatic setting of His Majesty's Theatre.

This special event celebrates one of Western Australia's most distinctive talents and the release of her first solo album of the same name. Originally written during the Australian bushfires as lullabies when Dease was nursing a newborn and facing man-made disaster and helplessness, *Hymns For End Times* is both a powerful protest against an apocalyptic future and a poetic lullaby to help sooth our fears.

With the support of **West Australian Symphony Orchestra** and accompanied by the vocal ensemble **Voyces**, Dease's spellbinding voice and magnetic stage presence will take you through intimate lullabies to orchestral heights in this captivating one-off music event.

Dease wrote *Hymns for End Times* on the banks of the Derbarl Yerrigan (Swan River) as the 2020 composer in residence at Dalkeith's historic Gallop House through the Bundanon Trust and National Trust of Australia.

'Looking out from this house during lockdown was startling. The river became a lake – a mirror, perfectly still. No people, no sounds, no boats. The perfect vista for stories to emerge,' Dease said. 'I was dealing with fear and anxiety by dreaming up cinematography, and I was processing hope and love by writing the score.'

A prolific artist working across multiple disciplines, Dease's often haunting compositions and sound designs include The Last Great Hunt's *It's Dark Outside*, WA Youth Theatre Company's *Rest*, Barking Gecko Theatre's *Ghost in My Suitcase* and the STRUT Dance-Maxine Doyle dance-theatre work *Sunset* with Tura New Music. For the 2021 Festival, she also is creating original scores for Barking Gecko's **HOUSE** and WAYTCO's **BESIDE**.

Her creative practice also comprises art music (the multi-award winning song cycle *City of Shadows*), sound installations (including a commission for Dark Mofo's *Winterfeast* and Perth Festival's *Museum of Water*), and a stint as front person for alternative rock band Schvendes.

Hymns for End Times is a personal, unapologetic amalgamation of her talents. While Dease's songs and voice have been compared to Nick Cave, Chelsea Wolfe, PJ Harvey and Agnes Obel, *Hymns for End Times* is part-song, part symphony with shades of Max Richter, Jóhann Jóhannsson and Henri Gorecki.

Perth Festival Artistic Director Iain Grandage said *Hymns for End Times* was an intensely beautiful collection of music and it was a thrill to be able to represent an independent artist of such immense quality with a large-scale Festival presentation. 'This is an extraordinary opportunity to bring together the musical forces of WASO and Voyces to celebrate Rachael's absolute tenderness, heart and sense of theatricality as an artist,' he said. 'It will be a stunning night in the theatre at His Majesty's.'

Hymns for End Times is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body, the WA Government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, and the Minderoo Foundation.

WHAT: Hymns for End Times

WHERE: His Majesty's Theatre / Karboordup / Perth CBD

WHEN: 18 Feb, 8pm

HOW MUCH: \$39

BOOKINGS AND FESTIVAL INFO: perthfestival.com.au

The album, *Hymns For End Times* will be released on December 4 and be available on all good streaming platforms and on limited edition vinyl and CD. *The Mountain* single and video is [out now](#).

Click here for [images](#). For further information, interviews or images please contact:

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Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar. They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

Perth Festival

Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, Perth Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia's premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 67 years, the Festival has welcomed to Perth some of the world's greatest living artists and now connects with hundreds of thousands of people each year. Iain Grandage is the Artistic Director 2020 – 23.