

MEDIA RELEASE: Monday 15 November 2021

## DIVE INTO PERTH FESTIVAL 2022

**Program announced, early-bird tickets on sale now**

Be swept along by currents of inspiration and waves of delight when **Perth Festival 2022** celebrates the theme of **Wardan (Ocean)** this summer.



*Patch's Lighthouse is a magical experience. Image: Matt Byrne*

From dockside escapades in Fremantle and dancing on the sand at City Beach, to oceanic orchestral concerts and surfing the swell of contemporary music, to heart-pumping theatre and a magical lighthouse set to captivate the young-at-heart, there is an open invitation to dive into the extensive 2022 Festival program.

After the success of the all-Western Australian program themed around Bilya (River) 2021, we venture further in 2022 with world-premieres, new local commissions and works coming to Perth for the first time. Check out our [Festival 2022 video](#) here.

The Festival opens on 11-12 February with the anarchic joyride of **Escape**. This massive, free multi-site family adventure is inspired by the legendary Catalpa convict escape and is created by the team behind the blockbuster 2017 and 2019 opening event **Boorna Waanginy**.

**Escape** celebrates the diverse stories, voyages, cultures and experiences of life on the west coast. Over two unforgettable nights Fremantle's wharves, warehouses, beachfront and streets will be transformed into a vast arena of stunning light installations, music, dance, mass community events, feasts and a madcap Catalpa re-enactment – by a troupe of outlandish cyclists.

To close the Festival on the March long weekend, **Perry Lakes** will light up with the immersive, multisensory futurism of **Noongar Wonderland**. This dynamic expression of Noongar culture unfolds in circles of technicolour lighting, dance and song between the two lakes and is co-created by many of the artists behind recent Festival hits *Hecate* and *Fist of Fury Noongar Daa*.

From the beginning to the end of the three-week Festival, artists will summon up new worlds and new moods across music, dance, theatre, visual arts, film and writing events.

Other Indigenous-led works include **Yirra Yaakin's** joyous world premiere of **David Milroy's** rollicking 1960s-inspired musical ***Panawathi Girl*** at His Majesty's Theatre, the **Black Swan State Theatre Company-Sydney Theatre Company** co-production of **Meyne Wyatt's** acclaimed play ***City of Gold*** and the sugar-coated thrill-pill of ***Daddy***, from dancer **Joel Bray**.



Caroline Brazier, Kate Walsh. Cr. Stephen Busken

The landmark theatrical event ***Mary Stuart*** will bring to magnificent life one of history's great rivalries – Elizabeth I's battle royale with Mary, Queen of Scots. Acclaimed WA playwright **Kate Mulvany** has adapted Schiller's epic tale into a sumptuous costume drama with an outstanding WA cast led by colossal acting talents **Kate Walsh** (Elizabeth, right) and **Caroline Brazier** (Mary, left) at Heath Ledger Theatre.

Theatre-lovers also will be swept along by charismatic Rwandan-born comedian **Oliver Twist's** captivating survival tale ***JALI***. The world-premiere of **Kim Crotty's *The Smallest Stage*** beautifully reveals how a jailed father uses stories as a bridge to connect to his kids – and invites parents to share the stage with their own 9-to-12-year-olds. Participation also beckons audiences in ***Body of Knowledge***, an intimate cross-generational look at the body, age and change by **Samara Hersch** with the **WA Youth Theatre Company**.

The sensational family show ***Patch's Lighthouse*** will delight audiences of all ages as they take a thrilling journey of discovery through a series of connected rooms and theatres in the heart of the UWA campus, each full of performances and hands-on experiences of light and its magical effects.

Emerging from the darkness of the theatre and an expanse of undulating black silk, dancers and musicians will reveal the stunning beauty of **Rachel Arianne Ogle's** deeply ritualised ***And The Earth Will Swallow Them Whole***. Other dance highlights include ***The Ninth Wave*** (right), an apocalyptic dance party at the edge of the world, with **The Farm** and **Co3 Contemporary Dance** kicking up the



*Ninth Wave* cr. Daniel Carson

City Beach sand to an original score by **Ben Ely** of **Regurgitator**. And **WA Ballet** celebrates its 70<sup>th</sup> birthday nearby at Quarry Amphitheatre, bringing together life, love, lust and loss for another glorious year of **Ballet at the Quarry**.



*Ta-ku at the Karrakatta Club cr. Ashlee Tough / Cardin Farnham*

A strong contemporary music program makes a welcome return for 2022 to reveal exciting new possibilities in unusual spaces across the city. These include WA-based international beatmaker **Ta-Ku's *Songs to Experience*** (below), a room-by-room journey through his new album inside the old **Karrakatta Club** women's club, a takeover of the **European Foods** warehouse in Northbridge, the return of **RTRFM's *WA Mixtape*** and much-anticipated gigs by **Pond**, **Methyl Ethyl** and **Stella Donnelly**. Even more treats will be revealed in January.

Contemporary and classical music go cheek to cheek when **Katie Noonan** joins string musicians for an evening of chamber music and song at the **Art Gallery of WA**. Fine music lovers also will be energised by powerful oceanic motifs in ***Sea Pictures***, when Australia's most acclaimed soprano **Emma Matthews** shares the stage with WA's finest chamber musicians beneath the museum's famous blue whale. At Perth Concert Hall, **West Australian Symphony Orchestra** and **Western Australian Youth Orchestra** present the Australian premiere of **John Luther Adams'** monumental ***Become Ocean*** with a new commission from local composer **Olivia Davies**. In Rockingham and Yanchep, **Perth Symphony Orchestra** performs free concerts in coastal parks, presented by the cities of Rockingham and Wanneroo. On an even grander scale, the contemporary coliseum of the **WACA Ground** will be transformed into southern Spain as Perth nights set the scene for Bizet's magnificent ***Carmen*** to be brought to life by more than 150 singers and musicians from West Australian Opera and WASO.

We also embrace our outdoor lifestyle as the ever-popular **Lotterywest Films** returns under the stars and pines of **UWA Somerville** to showcase the world's finest films from November 22. Highlights include Cannes Film Festival award-winners ***Memoria***, ***Murina*** and opening night romantic comedy ***The Worst Person in the World***, plus the world-premiere of **Renée Webster's** WA-made ***How to Please a Woman***.

Our **Literature & Ideas** program returns to inspire, entertain, and challenge over two weekends. **Sisonke Msimang** curates a mix of conversations, panels and storytelling in ***A Day of Ideas: At Sea*** at **Subiaco Arts Centre** on 19 February. Over the following **Writers Weekend** of 26-27 February, programmer **Gillian O'Shaughnessy** brings back **Family Day** for youngsters to experience the magic of literature at **Fremantle Arts Centre**. In this tranquil setting, we navigate the turbulence of the human heart with such esteemed storytellers as **Lisa Taddeo**, **Michael Robotham**, **Helen Garner**, **Gina Williams & Guy Ghouse**, **Hannah Kent** and many more to be announced on 20 January.

Wardan, the ocean, also engulfs visual artists' imaginations as a reservoir for metaphor and dreams in galleries across the city. Major exhibitions include acclaimed British film and installation artist **Isaac Julien** at **John Curtin Gallery**, the dynamic group show **Undertow** at **Fremantle Arts Centre**, the epic majesty of Kimberley artist **Sonia Kurarra** at **Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery**, the undersea dreamscapes of **Tarryn Gill**, **Benjamin Barretto** and **Nemo Gandossini-Poirier** in **The Sunset Lounge** inside the **Alex Hotel** and **Shadow Wine Bar**, and **Amrita Hepi's** dance-video installation **Monumental** at **Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts**. The whole family can enjoy a day of workshops, food, dance and storytelling as part of AGWA's **Ever Present: First People's Art of Australia**.

As ever, our **Connect** program goes from strength to strength, playing its role as a vital bridge between Festival artists, the local arts sector and the broader community. This year, the Festival will reach out from the city and around this vast state with our new **Touring WA** program putting on shows and workshops in Bunbury, Albany and Karratha.

'This is a Festival to immerse yourself in,' **Artistic Director Iain Grandage** says. 'We are thrilled that it includes many new commissions that promise to reach across horizons and go on to travel the world.'

'In our city between the desert and the sea, we are transfixed by the ocean and the worlds of wonder out there in the west. Join us to celebrate the ocean's many faces within Perth Festival 2022. The program is designed to be as expansive as that broad western horizon and as cleansing as the sea.'

**Perth Festival runs 11 February – 6 March 2022. Lotterywest Films runs from 22 November 2021 – 3 April 2022.**

Tickets go on sale to Friends of the Festival at 12pm noon WST on Monday 15 November and to the general public at 9am WST on Monday 22 November.

**BOOKINGS AND FESTIVAL INFO:** [perthfestival.com.au](http://perthfestival.com.au)

Click [here](#) for media kits and 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.*



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**Festival 2022 theme - Wardan**

*The ocean. We saw them first. They came along the sea, beyond the horizon. Moving upon the water, closer and closer. Big white sails and strange white men. We saw them, thinking the spirits of our ancestors are returning. Our lives changed forever. Now we are here. Today. Together still. Wardan is where it all began for us. It is dangerous and powerful, a mysterious and spiritual place.*

– Assoc Prof Ted Wilkes AO and Ian Moopa Wilkes

**ABOUT 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 almost 70 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 Artistic Director 2020-24*