

MEDIA RELEASE: 6 MARCH 2025

## PERTH FESTIVAL WRAPS FOR 2025

### Igniting the city with record-breaking free program and unforgettable performances



The 72nd annual Perth Festival has concluded on a soaring high, delivering the largest free program in the festival's history and transforming Perth into a thriving cultural playground. Over 24 days, the city came alive with boundary-pushing performances, world-class music, and an unprecedented celebration of place and community.

The Festival attracted more new audiences in 2025 than ever before, with a staggering 48% of tickets buyers not having purchased a ticket in the past five years, driven by Perth's growing appetite for diverse, accessible and bold cultural experiences.

From the electrifying finale featuring **PJ Harvey** at Kings Park to **Maribou State's** sold-out dancefloor under the stars at **East Perth Power Station**, music proved to be a festival-defining drawcard, pulling in thousands across multiple venues.

This year's Festival breathed new life into iconic Perth landmarks, reshaping the cultural landscape in a way that will be felt for years to come. The newly revitalised **East Perth Power Station** emerged as the heart of Perth Festival 2025, drawing an estimated 80,000 attendees to its free and ticketed programs. In a historic move, this long-dormant industrial landmark opened to the public for the first time in 44 years, reinvented as a pulsating hub of culture and live performance.

The stunning animated visual art projections at East Perth Power Station – created by Noongar artists Allan Yarran, Ilona McGuire, and Daniel Hansen and commissioned as part of **Boorloo Contemporary – Contemporary**, captured imaginations and flooded social media feeds.



The historic Perth Town Hall was reimagined as **The Embassy**, a dynamic late-night venue hosting a mix of romantic, nostalgic and thought-provoking events. From country-soul star **Tami Neilson**, to mesmerising songstress **Camille O'Sullivan**, Ethiopian jazz maestro **Hailu Mergia**, and a jubilant and celebratory ode to The Coolbaroo Club and its infamous ball in **A Night Out West**, it was an intoxicating mix of music, ideas and people.

On stage, the Festival delivered unforgettable cultural experiences spanning the traditional to the avant-garde. Audiences were awed by the epic **Mahabharata**, presented by Canada's Why Not Theatre in a marathon, day-long retelling of the ancient Sanskrit saga. In a rousing celebration of First Nations rock history, **Big Name, No Blankets** – a musical homage to the Warumpi Band – had crowds cheering for its soulful storytelling and legendary anthems. Bold contemporary works pushed artistic boundaries: Portuguese choreographer Marco da Silva Ferreira's **CARCAÇA** electrified the stage with percussive, high-energy dance, and the one-of-a-kind performance installation **12 Last Songs** invited festival-goers to witness 12 hours of real-life stories told by everyday Perth locals.

Audiences were also treated to a one-night-only performance of the captivating **Samsara**, an innovative Indonesian cinematic concert experience that left audiences breathless, the Portuguese community came out in their hundreds to a sold-out performance by beloved fado singer **Mariza**.

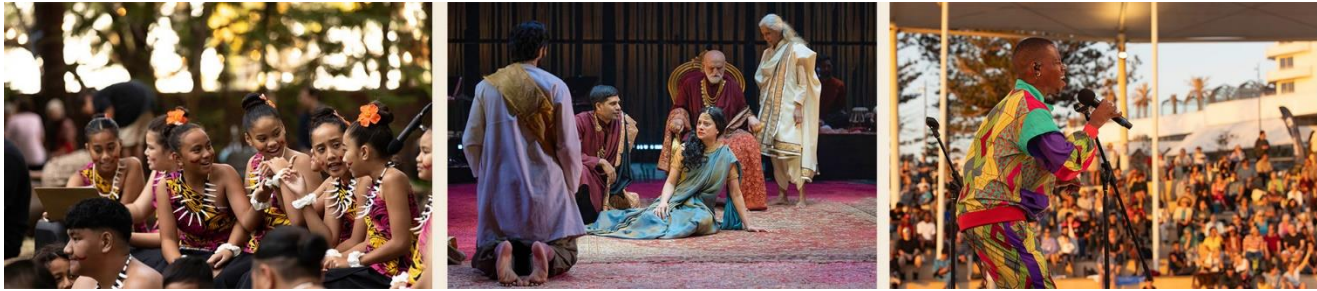
Rounding out the highlights were world premiere **Night Night** by WA theatre sensations The Last Great Hunt and Black Swan State Theatre Company's **August Osage County** – both enjoying packed houses and standing ovations.

From large-scale international productions to intimate local tales, each production left an indelible mark, underlining Perth Festival's reputation for world-class arts and diverse storytelling.

In the heart of the Perth CBD, the team from **STRUT Dance** once again brought the feel-good magic of **Perth Moves** to the city, with Forrest Place becoming the ultimate public dancefloor and performance site. The Rechabite transformed into a lush dining room for **Killa: Pindan to Plate**, where 100 diners shared in cultural narratives and life experiences from the west Kimberley coast.

Meanwhile, **Crip Rave Theory** hosted some of the hottest local and international disabled, Bla(c)k, POC, queer and trans DJs, musicians and performers at Perth City Farm. These transformed spaces, coupled with the festival's groundbreaking artistic vision, created a city-changing festival that was as much about place as it was about performance.

Music took centre stage in 2025, capturing the hearts of audiences and reaffirming Perth's appetite for diverse and electrifying live experiences. East Perth Power Station's **Main Stage** pulsed with energy as music icons **Röyksopp**, **Nils Frahm**, **Electric Fields**, and Egyptian-Australian DJ **Moktar** delivered genre-defying performances in an industrial setting unlike any other.



The free **Casa Musica** precinct became a global melting pot, where international and local acts turned the riverside precinct into a high-energy celebration treating the crowd to free music in a family friendly atmosphere. And in one of the most unforgettable moments, 5,500 people packed Red Hill Amphitheatre for Irish indie-rock sensations **Fontaines D.C.**, cementing music as the heart and soul of this year's Festival.

At the same time, Perth Festival 2025 was more inclusive than ever, with a record-breaking number of free events ensuring the entire community could participate. Over 100 events – 64 of them free – invited people from all walks of life to experience the joy of world-class art.

One of the Festival's centrepieces, and a Lotterywest community experience alongside East Perth Power Station, was **Karla Bidi** (Noongar for "fire trail"), a breathtaking light-and-sound installation that nightly transformed the Derbarl Yerrigan / Swan River into a glowing pathway of welcome. Towering beacons of light stretched from the hills to the Indian Ocean along the river's course, echoing the Noongar tradition of lighting fires to guide and greet visitors on country. Accompanied by an evocative soundscape, Karla Bidi's gentle glow connected communities on both sides of the river – from Fremantle to Guildford – engaging with thousands of people and inviting them to reflect on cultural history and the natural beauty of the Swan. An unprecedented city-wide artwork, perfectly encapsulating the festival's ethos of inclusivity and awe-inspiring spectacle.

This Festival has set a new benchmark for cultural accessibility, audience engagement, and city-wide celebration. Artistic performances spread widely across Perth's neighbourhoods, and the Festival celebrated our shared sense of home, with a program deeply connected to the stories, traditions, and artistic voices of the Indian Ocean Rim region.

In Scarborough, as the sun set and waves lapped the shore, locals were treated to the joyful melodies and rhythms of **The Joy** and **Lindigo** in **Indian Ocean Sounds**. In Morley, an audience of over 3,000 people packed Pat O'Hara Reserve to hear from 30 local singers in the debut of **Orchestra-oke** – a fun, singalong extravaganza accompanied by the **Perth Symphony Orchestra**.

After welcoming 143 international and 173 local West Australian artists to Festival stages, presenting seven specially commissioned shows, plus five world premieres and six Australian exclusives, Artistic Director Anna Reece is thrilled with the reception from Perth locals following her debut program.

Artistic Director Anna Reece reflected on the festival's impact, saying:

*"Perth Festival 2025 was about more than just performances – it was about bringing the city to life. The way audiences embraced our biggest-ever free program and filled every corner of the city with energy, movement, and creativity has been incredible to witness. We set out to make a festival that belonged to everyone, and Perth showed up in a way that exceeded all expectations."*

# PERTH FESTIVAL

7 Feb – 2 Mar

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*“In 2025 we welcomed our most diverse and youthful audience yet, who engaged with an electrifying mix of music, art and community driven experiences that resonated across generations and cultures, ensuring more people than ever felt seen, heard and included in our Festival’s celebrations. This Festival has changed the way we experience our city – and it’s only the beginning.”*

Perth Festival 2025 has left an indelible mark on the city, proving that culture, music, and community can redefine spaces, ignite imaginations, and bring people together in ways that resonate long after the final curtain falls.

We thank Principal Partner Lotterywest whose grant of \$9.5 Million has supported Perth Festival 2025, Founding Partner The University of Western Australia, and all those who have made such a positive impact on our community through the Festival.

**Lotterywest Films** continues under the stars at **UWA Somerville** until 6 April.

Images are available at [perthfestival.com.au/for-media](https://perthfestival.com.au/for-media)

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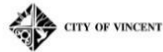
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