PERTH FESTIVAL

Founding Partner UWA PERTH AUSTRALIA

Principal Partner lotterywest

5 – 28 Feb 2027

Thursday, 29 October: Embargoed until 10.00am AWST

The Avalanches, Ólafur Arnalds, a spectacular theatrical thriller inspired by an art-world scandal, a symphonic celebration of Dolly Parton and Irish dance visionary Michael Keegan-Dolan lead Perth Festival 2027, alongside major new commissions transforming Perth's river, coastline and public spaces



Perth Festival – the longest-running arts festival in the Southern Hemisphere and one of Australia's most significant cultural events – brings some of Europe's most compelling contemporary artists to Western Australia in 2027, alongside major international music acts, bold new commissions from local artists, and the voices of children imagining a world 100 years from now.

The 74th Festival opens with ***An Inheritance***, a gift for the children of the future, created by the children of today. Almost 500 primary school children from across Western Australia have gathered their knowledge, advice, jokes, memories and treasured objects into an interactive exhibition at PICA, sharing what they believe is worth passing on to the future. At the Festival's close, the collection will be entrusted to the WA Museum for safekeeping, sealed away for a century before being reopened in 2127 for a generation yet to be born.

Closing out the program is ***Kite Choir***, a free interactive installation that transforms a garden of soaring kites into a living chorus of young voices from around the world. Suspended against the vast Western Australian sky and located on the South Perth Foreshore/Gaboordjoolup, each kite carries songs, stories, whispered wishes and sounds inspired by nature, inviting audiences to slow down, look up and listen.

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Running from 5 to 28 February, Perth Festival 2027 presents 24 days of art in all its forms, featuring seven Festival commissions, two world premieres and eight Australian premieres or exclusives. Bringing together artists from Western Australia and around the world, the program moves between past and future. From ancient myths and medieval traditions to children imagining the world a century from now and artists pushing the possibilities of technology.

True to Artistic Director Anna Reece's vision of celebrating a city on the edge of the world with something to say, the Festival is full of nostalgia, mischief and possibility. From secret gigs to almost-lost dances, from a disused power station to an amphitheatre carved into a quarry, Perth Festival invites audiences to really treat themselves in 2027.

Perth Festival Artistic Director, Anna Reece said: "In February, our city will pulse with mischief, surprise and moments of euphoria. From a single voice in a room to thousands of us dancing together. We encounter beauty and intensity, but also joy, escape and the simple pleasure of being together.

"Truth and temptation run through the program, alongside questions about who we are and who we choose to believe. We look back to ancient myths and forward to artists using technology in breathtaking ways to make and tell stories. We remember when the internet arrived and promised to connect the world. And amongst all the noise, we return to the simplicity of the human voice, raised in song.

"This is a Festival that brings the world and Perth confidently into conversation. A reminder that extraordinary art belongs here, and that Perth has something to say to the world."

Western Australian Premier, the Hon Roger Cook says: "Perth Festival plays a critical role in bringing the community together to highlight the people and places that make WA such a wonderful place to live, work, visit and play. This festival is shaped by the landscape of Perth, as unique venues and spaces along the river, by the coast and across the city are transformed into places of creativity and connection.

"The State Government is proud to support Perth Festival through Lotterywest, and we value the vital contribution it makes to our economy, our wellbeing and our place in the global arts community."

Perth Festival Chief Executive Officer, Marah Braye says: "Perth Festival is a festival of partnerships. Its ambitious program is made possible through the commitment of passionate artists and event workers, our Principal Partner Lotterywest, the State Government, sponsors, corporate partners, donors and our Founding Partner, The University of Western Australia. We extend our gratitude to the venues we collaborate with, and the partners who support our venues created especially for the Festival, including the transformed East Perth Power Station.

"Alongside the main festival, Lotterywest Films at the beautiful Somerville Auditorium extends an invitation from November to March: a weekly opportunity to encounter something to shift your perception of the world."

Highlights of the 2027 Festival include:

Karla Bidi returns for another year, illuminating a pathway through the city and, for the first time, along the coast, looking out across the ocean. Meaning "Fire Trail" in Noongar, it is a gentle yet profound experience of light, sculpture and sound, created by First Nations artists Ilona McGuire, Jacob Nash, Chloe Ogilvie and Ian Moopa Wilkes, under the guidance of Noongar Elders including Vivienne Binyarn Hansen.

Performing Arts
Inspired by one of the art world's juiciest scandals, ***ROHTKO*** plunges into a world where the lines between real and fake begin to disappear. With a pumping soundtrack, live cameras, huge screens and a spectacular transforming set, this Latvian/Polish fusion of theatre and cinema plays out like a film being made before your eyes.

Part opera, part visual artwork, ***Operation:Orfeo*** from Denmark's legendary Hotel Pro Forma takes audiences on a descent into the underworld in this astonishing reimagining of the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice.

Joyful, cheeky, tender and irrepressibly infectious, Michael Keegan-Dolan's ***1975 | Naoi Déag Seachtó Cúig*** sees seven extraordinary dancers channel the soul-stirring contagion of the legendary album *1975* from Irish traditional music icons The Bothy Band.

Part theatre, part dream, ***Taverna Miseria*** is an intimate journey through family, loss and all that remains unsaid. Recently awarded the Silver Lion at the Venice Biennale, Greek theatre director Mario Banushi is one of European theatre's most exciting young artists.

From WA's revered The Last Great Hunt comes a genre-bending theatrical trip through the weird and lawless early internet in ***witches.exe***. Projected worlds collide with fantastical soft sculpture, puppetry, animation, live performance and an electrifying original score in this bold new world premiere.

Save The Last Dance from Italy's Alessandro Sciarroni – one of Europe's most daring contemporary artists – is a thrilling exploration of strength, tenderness and trust, and a celebration of intimacy between men, of endurance, of love.

The UK's multi-award-winning disability-led theatre company FlawBored's ***It's a Motherf**king Pleasure*** ensures no one is spared in this smart and scathing satire on identity politics, those who monetise it and those who get themselves into knots about it.

East Perth Power Station
Throughout the Festival, East Perth Power Station's vast spaces and dramatic industrial architecture provide the backdrop for an ambitious program of live music, late-night events and unexpected creative encounters. By day and long into the evening, audiences are invited to explore, connect and experience the site in new ways, transforming a place shaped by Western Australia's past into a meeting place for its future.

This year's highlights include a glittering love letter to one of popular music's most beloved icons, Dolly Parton with ***We Will Always Love Her***, Grammy Award–winning Icelandic composer **Ólafur Arnalds**, genre-defying sample pioneers **The Avalanches**, US icon **DJ Shadow**, Kaytetye producer and DJ from Mparntwe/Alice Springs **RONA** and Perth's own **Methyl Ethel** on the Main Stage; the vast façade will become a vibrant canvas with a major new commission by acclaimed Walmajarri artist **John Prince Siddon** for Boorloo Contemporary; and the free **Casa Musica** program returns as the sun goes down, to showcase renowned musicians from across the Indian Ocean Rim region and beyond.

The Embassy
Perth Town Hall gets a little more glamorous when The Embassy moves in for three weeks, bringing live music, old-school glamour and a healthy dose of mischief to one of the city's most iconic venues.

Across the season, the Town Hall will fill with jazz, folk, soul, cabaret, swing, big bands and performers from Australia and around the world, including Perth's celebrated chanteuse **Ali Bodycoat**, New York cabaret artist **Salty Brine**, The Waifs' **Vikki Thorn** with her *ThornBird* project, Fremantle singer-songwriter **Stella Donnelly**, actor and singer **Ursula Yovich** bringing the extraordinary music of Nina Simone to life, the formidable talent of

British Bengali **Tara Lilly**, Detroit-raised Grammy and Emmy award winning bassist, composer and bandleader **Endea Owens**, and New Delhi's **Peter Cat Recording Co**.

Sanctum Series
Sanctum Series returns in 2027, expanding from the soaring surrounds of St Mary's Cathedral to the elegance of Government House Ballroom. From the UK's **Idrîsî Ensemble** to India's **Dr. L. Subramaniam** and Canadian pianist **Ryan Wang**, it provides an opportunity to experience exquisite music in remarkable spaces.

Boorloo Contemporary
From a major new artwork by acclaimed Walmajarri artist **John Prince Siddon** illuminating the towering industrial façade of East Perth Power Station to **Molly Hunt**'s animations transforming Boorloo Bridge for ***Kwop Ben***, Boorloo Contemporary brings bold First Nations art into the heart of the city, alongside significant solo exhibitions by **Darryl Dempster**, **Doreen and May Chapman**, and **Dr Richard Walley AM**.

Local West Australian works
West Australian Ballet begin their 75th anniversary celebrations with ***Ballet at the Quarry: Kira***, a luminous evening celebrating Madame Kira Bousloff OAM, who founded the company in 1952. STRUT Dance's ***Perth Moves Battle*** returns to transform the State Theatre Centre Courtyard into a dancefloor showcasing skill, style and split-second invention. Breaking, krump, contemporary, freestyle – it promises to be an all-styles, all-ages showdown.

For 16 years, Barefaced Stories have been putting Perth's funniest, messiest and most gloriously human true stories on stage. Now, in ***OFF AIR***, a new collaboration with ABC Radio Perth, some of the voices listeners know best will step away from the microphone and onto the stage to tell the stories they don't usually get to share. Acclaimed Noongar singer-songwriter **Gina Williams-Ghouse AM** shares the stage with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra in ***Warangka (Sing)***, while the Symphony Orchestra also returns to Studio Underground with intimate orchestral music in ***Heroes and Hallucinations***.

Hidden away in Northbridge's Chinatown, ***Astral Weeks Sessions*** are Perth Festival's most intimate offering, with a hand-picked series of extraordinary artists performing one-off sets in close quarters – with each artist kept a secret until they step on stage. Disability-led station **Radio DADAA** will send their presenters out to meet Festival artists, audiences and guests in February, to explore art and culture through a disability lens. Expect candid chats about creativity, access, representation and the different ways we experience the world.

Lotterywest Films
Kicking off the summer in style, Perth's much-loved home of international cinema **Lotterywest Films** makes its return to UWA Somerville on Monday, 23 November with the Australian premiere of Jesse Eisenberg's third feature, **The Debut**, a delightful oddball comedy celebrating the misfits, miscasts and joyful tenacity of community theatre, starring two of the US's most phenomenal living actors, Julianne Moore and Paul Giamatti.

Across 17 weeks, audiences can expect everything from offbeat comedy and sweeping romance to intimate drama and powerful documentaries, alongside films that are heartbreaking, thrilling and simply unmissable.

Some of the most acclaimed actors will appear on screen with Penélope Cruz, Glenn Close, Juliette Binoche, Scarlett Johansson, Javier Bardem and Adam Driver among the familiar faces featured across the season. They'll also be joined by remarkable emerging talent and filmmakers whose work is making its mark on the international festival circuit.

ExhibitionsExploring identity, memory and cultural inheritance across generations and geographies, the Perth Festival 2027 Exhibitions Program brings together artists whose works illuminate the many ways we understand ourselves, our histories and our place in the world.

Presented across galleries throughout Boorloo, this year's program spans deeply personal narratives and broader social questions, showcasing artists from Australia, Taiwan and Greece whose practices draw on tradition, experimentation and contemporary experience.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- Perth Festival runs 5–28 February 2027
- Perth Festival Lotterywest Films runs 23 November 2026 – 21 March 2027
- The 2027 program is the third under the direction of Artistic Director Anna Reece
- Tickets for all shows on sale to the general public from 12.00pm AWDT Monday, 2 November 2026
- Tickets on sale for Festival Club members only from 12.00pm AWDT Thursday, 29 October 2026
- Visit perthfestival.com.au for more details

MEDIA CENTRE
Media Kit, Imagery and B-roll available here

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