



# National Folk Festival

29 MARCH - 2 APRIL, 2018  
EXHIBITION PARK, CANBERRA



November 2017

## 2018 National Folk Fellowship to uncover Italian-Australian musical gems of bygone days

Rare and long-forgotten Australian-Italian folk songs are set for a major revival, with the 2018 National Folk Fellowship being awarded to musician, ethnomusicologist and composer **Salvatore Rossano**.

Dr Rossano was announced as the recipient of the 2018 National Folk Fellowship at a function at the National Library of Australia in Canberra on Tuesday 21 November.

The National Folk Fellowship, jointly offered by the **National Folk Festival** and the **National Library of Australia**, gives Dr Rossano access to the most significant folklore and related collections in Australia, through the National Library collections. He will analyse existing sound recordings of early folk music as interpreted by Italian migrants, map the journey of Italian music in Australia, and create a showcase performance of selected songs and stories re-imagined in a contemporary style to be performed at the National Folk Festival in Canberra next Easter 29 March—2 April 2018.

Dr Rossano is from the region of Apulia, in Italy's south-east. As a musician (piano accordion, frame drums, guitar and saxophone), he tours extensively throughout Europe and Australia. As an ethnomusicologist, he has participated in research projects in Italy, Spain, Portugal and Argentina. He has a Masters Degree in Hispanic Music, a PhD in Ethnomusicology, and is an Adjunct Research Fellow at Monash University in Melbourne, where he has lived since 2014.

A delighted Dr Salvatore said that the award would enable him to deepen his research into these past songs, and share them with a new audience. "This is a big opportunity for me as a musician and researcher to show how Italian Australians contributed to folk music and to culture generally in this country and, that our Australian culture is not as Anglo as we think it is," he said.

"Music(ology) is, for me, something that goes beyond a peer-reviewed article or a great album. It is the possibility to share an embodied knowledge. It is the possibility of deepening our connection with others.

"My travels and the amazing musicians I've met along the way have shown me that passion is the most important thing in life. Passion is the reason I love playing and working to understand the power of music. Passion is what moves me to be involved in education, video documentary, journalism, event organisation, and community music-making. I can't imagine living without this multi-faceted passion for music."

Those who want to experience the results of Dr Rossano's research of early Italian-Australian music including some of his own compositions that capture the spirit of these early recording can hear performances at the **National Folk Festival** in Canberra next Easter, March 29<sup>th</sup> to April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018. See further details about the Festival here: <http://folkfestival.org.au>.

### *About the National Folk Fellowship*

The National Folk Fellowship is a significant award that brings together the research and performance components of folk music in Australia, providing a rich musical context to our cultural heritage, breathing new life into rarely-heard music from our past, and sharing songs with a whole new generation of Australian audiences.

Last year's Fellowship winner, Jessie Lloyd, researched and performed songs from Aboriginal missions during the 1900s. Her work, The Mission Songs Project, essentially defined an entire new Australian musical genre, provided a cultural link between traditional and contemporary

Indigenous music in this country, and created ongoing interest among major festivals around the country.

Awarded jointly by the National Library of Australia and the National Folk Festival, the Fellowship offers a unique opportunity for folk musicians, singers, dancers, poets, performance artists and collector-performers to discover and explore original collected material at the Library for use in their artistic work.

Further information:

[www.nla.gov.au/awards-and-grants/fellowships-and-scholarships/creative-fellowships/national-folk-fellowship](http://www.nla.gov.au/awards-and-grants/fellowships-and-scholarships/creative-fellowships/national-folk-fellowship)

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