



National Folk Festival

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National Folk Festival celebrating Indigenous music

Legendary singer/songwriter, musician and pioneer of contemporary Aboriginal music, **Joe Geia**, will perform with his band at the National Folk Festival in Canberra at Easter.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the release of his hit song, *Yil Lull* (meaning 'sing' in Kuku Yalanji language from North Queensland), which is widely recognised as the unofficial Aboriginal national anthem. Its message of hope, justice and belonging remains relevant and powerful to this day.

Joining Geia on the Festival's First Peoples program for 2018 are multi-award-winning WA songman, **John Bennett**. Establishing a name as the 'voice of the Kimberley', Bennett returns to the National with his new album *Country is Calling* and sidemen David Hyams and Lucky Oceans.

Twenty-year old singer/songwriter **Alice Skye** is an exciting emerging force on the Indigenous music scene. Her original songs sparkle with a sensitivity and maturity beyond her years, accompanied by gentle and hauntingly sparse melodies. Alice's voice is a combination of hopeful and haunting, naturally sweet, and slow and dreamlike.

Emerging North East Arnhem Land artist, **Dhapanbal Yunupinju**, will launch her stunning debut EP at the Festival. As one of Dr M Yunupinju's six daughters, Dhapanbal grew up surrounded by the lyrics and rhythms of Yothu Yindi, the band her father co-founded, as well as the 'Milkarri'—female grieving songlines to sing the spirits of the departed back to their ancestral homelands.

Indigenous artist and poet **Peter Swain** on didgeridoo will join Canberra poet **John Passant** to create an unforgettable tapestry of song, spoken word and Indigenous poetry.

Indigenous West Australian of the Year 2017 and Noongar singer-songwriter **Gina Williams** rejoins forces with **Guy Ghouse** and friends to bring her incandescent vocals, musical brilliance and a new album of songs in Noongar language to the festival.

Along with these and more Indigenous artists, the Festival today announced another slew of top-line international and local acts joining this year's program.

SON (Susan O'Neill, Ireland) has been compared to Adele and Florence and the Machine, and picked up many fans including U2's Bono. The amazing range of her vocals combined with her superb guitar technique, loop pedals and trumpet, make for a truly unforgettable musical experience.

Also from Ireland, **Andy Irvine** has been 'one of the towering talents on the international folk scene' (Sydney Morning Herald) for more than 40 years. For the National, he teams up with Tasmanian folk musician and multi-instrumentalist **Luke Plumb**, whose talents are highly recognised on the global folk music stage.

The National continues to build on its well-earned reputation for diversity and inclusion, with a stronger-than-ever line-up of female artists as well as artists from all corners of the world.

Aine Tyrrell's music is a contemporary folk collision between the Ireland of generations gone, and the hope of tomorrow. Her songs are as honest as an old friend, warm and inviting. With spine-tingling harmonies, charming storytelling and humour, **Co-cheòl** has a rare ability to evoke a gamut of emotions from laughter to tears. This audacious quartet performs traditional Scottish, Irish and original music, traversing both a cappella and accompanied songs with sublime musicianship. All-female folk super group, **The Drowsy Maggies** delight audiences around Australia with their stunning harmony-filled original songs, cracking original tune sets and swinging bass. **Monique Clare** (Folk Alliance Australia's Young Performer of the Year in 2017) is a cello-wielding songstress, hailing from the foothills of Mount Coot-tha. Between ongoing explorations into Scandinavian and American traditional folk, a classical cello degree and a Radiohead obsession, her beautifully quirky songs are a melting pot of eclectic influences.

Somewhere between an Italian wedding band and a French revolution, **Bella Donna Gorgonzola** knows how to start a party in eight languages. These playful paisanos perform a mix of youthful favourites and drinking hits that delight audiences of all ages. **Afro Moses** is a multi award-winning artist from Ghana, West Africa. His band delivers a vibrant, high-energy show, creating a fusion of styles from across the globe including African, reggae and funk. **Balkanski Bus** is a multi-ethnic group which plays traditional Balkan (Macedonian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Rumanian), Greek, Turkish and Romany music, both songs and dance tunes, in authentic style on a range of traditional and electric instruments. And the **Ukulele Republic of Canberra** returns to perform, and to host one of the most popular jam sessions of the Festival—the **National Uke Muster**. Each year this daily morning session has been growing in popularity and moving to bigger and bigger venues, as people discover the magic of playing this iconic little instrument together in a guided group.

Promising 'five days in a perfect world', Canberra's award-winning National Folk Festival is one of the country's longest-running, family-friendly and widely loved music festivals. The five-day celebration of music, song, dance, circus, spoken word and film features more than 200 international and national acts. Hundreds of volunteers transform Exhibition Park (EPIC) into a fantastical village, complete with roving entertainers, street circus, stages of all sizes, market stalls, food vans, shopping precincts, cafes, themed bars and arts and craft activities.

The 52nd National Folk Festival runs throughout Easter, 29 March—2 April 2018 at Exhibition Park, corner Flemington Road and Northbourne Avenue, Mitchell, ACT. Tickets on sale now: discounted Early Bird Tickets available to 31st January. Entry ticket provides access to all stages and areas. Season passes and day tickets available.

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