

# MEDIA RELEASE

## SYDNEY FESTIVAL ADDS TO LATE NIGHT LINE-UP + PARTIES BY ASTRAL PEOPLE, WAVYLAND AND CONTROL

Monday 18 December



Mo Laudi

Sydney Festival has locked in programming for its full suite of late night sessions this January, with a series of curated club nights, a blistering double bill by two of Australia's 4/4 trailblazers and an epic closing night set from acclaimed South African DJ, Mo Laudi. Running 5-28 January, the festival's broader live music slate also includes a bevy of special one-off gigs from both local and international talent, plus the opportunity to catch some of the world's hottest music acts in a stunning harbourside venue normally reserved for classical concertos.

The festival's full-swing takeover of the **Walsh Bay Arts Precinct** – renamed *The Thirsty Mile* for January in a cheeky nod to the original Hungry Mile of Sydney's working wharves – will prove central to any good summer's night out. All month long, the harbourside precinct will be activated with eclectic live music, immersive installations and vibrant dance works. And from the bowels of Pier 2/3 arises a new late night festival pop-up: the **Moonshine Bar**. The heritage-listed warehouse space will be brought to life by the literal inhale and exhale of **Michael Shaw's Hi-Vis**, a 46-metre-long art installation which snakes its way around the building.

Expertly curated by an assembly of Sydney's top-tier promoters, the Moonshine Bar's multiple club nights are set to lure out the city's after hours revellers night after night. Underground dance music champions **WavyLand** kick things off with Manchester native **Ezekiel** in his Aussie debut, alongside prolific Sydney producer **Air Max '97**, multidisciplinary **DJ 14strk** and Athletica event runner **Isa**. Next, Sydney Festival regulars **Astral People & Kerfew**

deliver **Nabihah Iqbal's** (UK) arresting live show off the back of her critically acclaimed sophomore album, **DREAMER. Control** then present a queer avant-garden haven with **Euphoria**, featuring "techno pop princess" **Sam Quealy**, South African-born DJ and producer **Sophie Forrest** and house and techno from **Control** founder **Estée Louder**. Later, **Astral People** return to helm **Nu Dialects**, a super collective bursting with some of the country's most compelling neo-soul and alt hip hop talent brought together by Melbourne's **Silentjay** and Sydney's **Setwun**. And finally, **Finely Tuned** brings an evening of cutting-edge club sounds from two of Australia's finest exports – **Tornado Wallace** and **Fantastic Man** – who'll go back-to-back by the water.

Along the way, art meets music and dance in **Sculptured Riddims** from choreographer **Azzam Mohamed**. Dancers gather through disco house, street dance and afro fusion to share their creative responses to **Michael Shaw's Hi-Vis** across three nights at Moonshine Bar, with each event showcasing different communities, cultures, music genres and dance styles. And in a celebration of the power of the club culture, **SPIN** is an interactive guided dance party by Deaf dance artist **Anna Seymour** that playfully interrogates presumed ideas about who belongs in the rave realm while challenging assumptions that Deaf people cannot enjoy these spaces.

Moonshine Bar will then wrap up its riotous run with a huge Closing Night showcase by South Africa's **Mo Laudi** and guests. Laudi is a true multihyphenate – a DJ, MC, artist, composer and curator – renowned for his contributions to Afro-electronic music in London since the early 2000s and, since then, in Paris. Having toured over 50 countries, he's helped introduce Kwaito, Afrohouse, Amapiano, Gqom and Shangaan-electro to the global stage having played alongside the likes of Major Lazer, Jamie XX, Carl Craig and Miriam Makeba.

**Sydney Festival Director Olivia Ansell**, said: "Late nights at Sydney Festival are definitely a thing this summer. We're transforming Walsh Bay Arts Precinct into *The Thirsty Mile* – serving as the epicentre of curated club nights, immersive street and hip hop through to an electrifying double bill by two influential figures in Australia's music scene, and a spectacular closing night set by acclaimed South African DJ, Mo Laudi. Our local and international music program is epic – traversing jazz, funk, electronic, soul, indie pop and more, seamlessly fusing the realms of art, dance, and music."

Those more inclined towards live music need not be left wanting come January. Usually home to an opera sonata or chamber concert, the premium ACO Neilson auditorium will be transformed three times over with a trio of week-long genre immersions into the worlds of jazz, contemporary and classical explorations of Bach. Selects from the roster include Australian exclusive gigs from the likes of rising Afro-Brazilian jazz star **Amaro Freitas**, Icelandic-Norwegian musician **LILJA** and the effortlessly cool **SUO**.

Other international artists also playing at the ACO include Indian five-piece **Peter Cat Recording Co.** in their much-anticipated first visit to Australia; Cuban jazz maestro **Harold López-Nussa**; Irish songman with the soul of poet, **David Keenan**; Berlin's **Conic Rose** and their smooth mix of nu jazz, electronica and lo-fi improvisation; and American indie-folk singer-songwriter **Julie Byrne**, whose latest release just landed in *Pitchfork's* Best of 2023 list.

On the ACO's local line-up are cross-genre producer and singer-songwriter **Trophie**; classically trained innovator **Benjamin Skepper**; singer-songwriter, author and accessibility advocate **Eliza Hull** joined by adventure-chasing dancer and performer **Roya the Destroya**; Sydney's own instrumental powerhouse **Josh Meader Trio** and soulful First Nations vocalist **Kee'ahn**. And in an even more unusual gear change for the hallowed ACO Neilson, audiences at **Come Sweet Death** are encouraged to lie down under candlelight for a full musical immersion spanning three centuries by electrifying string quartet, **Ensemble Apex**.

Sydney Festival's live music sprawl continues across town, including Australia's own **Courtney Barnett** in a special two-part performance at City Recital Hall where Barnett will share songs from her instrumental album, *End of the Day* (music from the film *Anonymous Club*) and treasured selects from her incomparable back catalogue. And Irish singer-songwriter **Lisa O'Neill** appears at the same venue the evening earlier, armed with her striking folk originals and evocative voice for one night only.

Once a back-up singer to stars like Stevie Wonder, Elton John, Carole King and Michael Jackson, LA songstress **Judith Hill** has come to carve out a name, and a few Grammys, for herself. Performing with a stellar live band (which includes her parents, Michiko Hill and Robert 'Pee Wee' Hill), Judith be in full, funkadelic force for a show at the Sydney Theatre Company in cabaret mode. Also at STC is unmissable new jazz star, **Alma Zygiel**, and her repertoire of American songbook standards performed anew.

– ENDS –

### **NOTES TO EDITOR**

- Sydney Festival runs 5-28 January 2024
- Tickets on sale now
- The festival's pop-up Moonshine Bar is located at Pier 2/3, 15 Hickson Road, Walsh Bay Arts Precinct
- *The Thirsty Mile* is at Walsh Bay Arts Precinct. Events are spread across venues on Wharf 4/5, Pier 2/3, Hickson Road and leaving from Pier 1
- The festival's ACO Neilson program runs from 10-28 January
- For a complete summary of this year's program strands including all free events and venues visit [sydneyfestival.org.au](https://sydneyfestival.org.au)

### **MEDIA KIT**

Imagery, B-roll and media sheets available [here](#)

### **ABOUT SYDNEY FESTIVAL**

Sydney Festival is one of Australia's largest international arts festivals, with a stellar reputation for bold, inventive and intelligent programming. Its vibrancy reflects the confidence, creativity and vigour of one of the world's most beautiful cities. Under the curation of Festival Director Olivia Ansell, the Festival's mission is to deliver an exhilarating summer of art, drawing stories from Sydney's 65,000-year history through to its contemporary zeitgeist. Sydney Festival stages the world's best artists whilst nurturing its homegrown talent; many of Australia's most memorable theatrical productions have stemmed from its premieres and commissions. The buzz of summer wouldn't be the same without the Festival's spectacular installations, immersive experiences and live events splashed across Sydney each January.