

Sydney Fringe even bigger in 2017 with Massive New Festival Hub

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Media Release

Sydney, Australia: Sydney Fringe Festival, New South Wales' largest independent arts festival, today announced its most ambitious program yet including a proposed 7000m² new hub for the Festival adjacent to the spectacular Sydney Park in Alexandria. Presented from 1 until 30 September, for the first time in 2017 the Fringe is proposing to transform a large-scale warehouse, roughly the size of an airport hangar, at Sydney Park to create the dynamic HPG Festival Hub.

The result of a major new partnership with local property developer, HPG Australia, the proposed HPG Festival Hub will see the space enlivened by Fringe with monthly events starting this May and continuing through the month of September with multiple performance spaces, a circus hub, exhibitions, creative offices, installations and immersive art experiences.

Sydney Fringe CEO and Festival Director Kerri Glasscock believes the partnership is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the Fringe and the independent sector: *"We are thrilled for Sydney Fringe to have a new Principle Partner for 2017. With space at an absolute premium in Sydney, artists increasingly need to think outside the box for performance space with Fringe focusing on pop-ups in recent years. This is a game-changing opportunity for the Festival to form a collaborative partnership with the private sector to create a working model that utilises large-scale unused space in the city to create a buzzing festival hub."*

Highlighting the city's vibrant culture, Fringe will activate Sydney suburbs with a diverse program spanning theatre, music, comedy, visual art, film, musical theatre, dance, circus, literature and poetry. The 2017 program will again take over the streets, shop fronts and venues across the city this September inviting audiences to engage with 'what's new': new art, new activations, and new, young artists (60% under the age of 30). More than half of the productions in the 2017 program are world premieres, whilst 63% of productions will be Australian premieres and a further 83% Sydney premieres.

HPG's Managing Director, Dr Adrian Liu, said HPG was delighted to be onboard as a Principal Partner of the Sydney Fringe Festival for 2017 as it perfectly aligned with the ambitions and principles of HPG's new 'Sydney Park Life' project, set to revitalise Sydney Park and Alexandria.

"The new partnership will enable festival patrons to safely enjoy events both inside our massive warehouse, as well as outside, in the area directly adjacent to the stunning Sydney Park," Dr Liu said. *"By initiating this collaboration, we have established a unique, first of its kind, model of utilising otherwise defunct development sites for cultural activations during the lengthy development approval process. It will be fantastic seeing this space come alive with exciting artistic endeavours for the whole community to enjoy and experience."*

A highlight of the 2017 festival will be the 30-day Kensington Street Festival Village launching Saturday 2 September with FRINGE IGNITE, the Festival's official opening party to be held in the vibrant dining and lifestyle precinct, Kensington Street in Chippendale. The Village will host two pop-up performance spaces THE GLASSHOUSE for bite-sized treats of comedy and THE COTTAGE presenting fully immersive theatre. Festival-goers can also enjoy Spice Alley's food vendors, restaurants and bars of Kensington Street which will be open every night of the Festival.

An extended family program of events will be offered with FRINGE KIDS presented over the first week of the school holidays and last week of the Festival from 23 – 30 September, including circus show The Boy Who Was Born With A Moustache and an interactive and unpredictable music and storytelling performance Ghost Jam! that reimagines Japanese ghost stories.

Other highlights of the program include Cirque Africa, the biggest selling show at the 2017 Adelaide Fringe, featuring 38 performers from six African countries backed by a live African band, and the Digital Dinner offering an immersive digital dining experience with food, art, digital media, music and installations all coming together at Broadway Sydney. Film festivals will also feature at this year's Fringe with Cinewest presenting a series of mini film festivals in the historic Newington Armoury in Homebush and the entire Stockholm Fringe film program will be transported to Sydney and screened in a giant warehouse for the first Stockholm Sydney Artist Exchange.

The program concludes with a collaboration between Lah Lah's Big Live Band and the Australian Youth Orchestra performing in the Sydney Town Hall on Saturday 30 September. Other highlights include the world premiere of Silent Theatre, presented by Sydney Fringe Festival together with Urban Newtown. Created by four playwrights who will spend four nights at the Urban Newtown hotel writing four pieces of theatre spread across four rooms. Audiences will be invited to voyeuristically observe the happenings in the hotel watching from the streets below, catching glimpses through the hotel windows whilst listening to the story unfold through headphones.

"The Sydney Fringe Festival highlights the creative heart of our city offering an annual snapshot of how Sydney feels, where we are and where we are heading. 2016 was our most successful festival to date, and 2017 is shaping up to be bolder, braver and more ground breaking than ever before!" added Kerri Glasscock.

The full program for the 2017 Sydney Fringe Festival will be announced in August 2017. Please visit <https://www.sydneymfringe.com/> for further details and updates. The new Festival Hub is currently pending final approvals.

About Sydney Fringe Festival: The Sydney Fringe Festival is now the largest independent arts festival in NSW, representing thousands of artists across all art forms. It has built a reputation for nurturing and supporting emerging artists, presenting established artists in the development of new works, promoting small to medium sized venues and activating public spaces. In addition to the presentation of art, this festival engages the local community of residents and supports small business and night-time economy. This festival aims to give a voice to those who produce work all year round and compete with main stage events for publicity, and large corporations for custom. This festival represents the cultural heart of the city and celebrates all things Sydney from local community groups to well-known touring artists. <https://www.sydneymfringe.com/>

The Sydney Fringe Festival is proudly supported by the City of Sydney.