



MEDIA KIT

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Creative Australians, world premieres and international artists

The biennial **Castlemaine State Festival** launch its full program to the public on **9 February 2011** in **Castlemaine** (Victoria). The program will be announced by **Festival Director Martin Paten** along with short performance highlights. The 2011 program includes **over 800 artists** from the Central Victorian Goldfields region, Melbourne and around the world, presenting work in a vast range of visual arts, literature, theatre, dance, film and music events, including children's and youth programs and free events.

"I am proud to say the Castlemaine State Festival is dedicated to profiling world-class artists, and collaborations between the local community and the international arena, through a jam-packed 10 days of theatre, dance, music, literary talks, mentorships, exhibitions and open studios." **Martin Paten – Festival Director**

One of the major highlights is the **Castlemaine Visual Arts Biennial** – inaugurated in 2009 – which has a program of 5 distinct exhibitions curated by **Jason Smith (Heide Museum of Modern Art)**, **Martin King (Australian Print Workshop)** and **Samantha Comte (Michael Buxton Collection)**. Highlights include political work by **Indonesian artist Heri Dono**, who will be coming out for the festival; Artist Rooms with contemporary work by **Aleks Danko, Jill Orr, Emily Floyd, Melissa and Steven Proposch** and **William Kentridge**; a showcase of **Indigenous prints from the Australian Print Workshop**; and new sculptural work by **Judy Holding**. On top of this, another 95 associated exhibitions and open studios have responded to the **Castlemaine Visual Arts Biennial** theme '**Pressing Issues**'.

After the success of sold out concerts in 2009, Paten has programmed **30 music events** to delight all tastes. With many international acts including **Beyond the Pale** (Canada), **Massimo Scattolin** (Italy), **Youssoupha Sibie and the Mystic Rhythm Band** (Senegal), **Batucada Sound Machine** (New Zealand) as well as a huge selection of Australian groups – **Speak Percussion, The Bamboos, Cosmo Cosmolino, ACO2** and many other world, jazz, classical, opera, rhythm and blues acts, plus a separate program of live music that will get everyone up dancing in the iconic and extraordinary venue the **Theatre Royal**.

Guest writer and poet **Cate Kennedy** has curated the **Literary program**, which features 34 writers, historians and extraordinary storytellers, all delving into their own stories and stories connected to the region. These include **Carmel Bird, Mark Dapin, Shane Maloney, Hannie Rayson, Bronwyn Lea** and many many more.

As part of the theatre program there will be 2 **world premieres**, including award winning script **Precipice**, a play performed in the tough landscape of the **Wattle Gully Mine**, written by AWGIE Award winning playwright **Catherine Ryan**; **Kage's** new work **Sundowner** which features moving stories of Alzheimers featuring **Helen Morse** and including music by **Paul Kelly** and **Megan Washington**; and the launch of a new producer arm of the Festival – **Castlemaine Created**.

Indigenous events have a critical role in the 2011 program, and include **45 Indigenous artists** from the local Jaara Jaara people, as well as remote, tribal and urban artists from across the country.

A testament to the Castlemaine State Festival is the commitment shown across Central Victoria and in the local community. **Over 50% of participating artists come from the Central Victorian region**. On top of this is a significant contribution of over 1500 children from regional schools participating in the festival, as well as four mentoring programs with inspiring arts leaders from Australia and the international arts community.

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www.castlemainefestival.com.au

