



MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY 12TH JULY 2005

For immediate release

Line-up announced for the largest festival in the NT *Darwin Festival 2005, 11 – 28 August*

The full program for the Darwin Festival 2005 was launched at the Darwin Entertainment Centre today by Minister for Arts and Museums Marion Scrymgour, Darwin Lord Mayor Peter Adamson and Festival Director Malcolm Blaylock.

Darwin Festival, the Northern Territory's largest festival, will this year feature **over 74 productions, over 190 events and performances, and over 1,100 performers** from South-East Asia, around Australia, and the local Darwin community.

Festival Director Malcolm Blaylock said the 2005 program will incorporate a vibrant, lively and colourful collection of performances that draw on Darwin's rich multicultural heritage, indigenous traditions and the stories of our culture.

"In 18 days, the Festival will tell stories that will not only entertain you but will also challenge and enhance your view of the world."

The 2005 program will premiere 9 new works by some of the Territory's most innovative contemporary artists and companies. A highlight includes **Takbing Siwaliya & the Gupapuyngu Dancers** – a historic reunion and collaboration between the Makassarese and the Yolgnu people of North-East Arnhem Land. This joint collaboration will be under workshop at the Garma Festival 2005.

Traditional Indigenous dancers embarking on a spiritual journey steeped in the Dreaming will once again be a highlight of the Darwin Festival and will have a significant presence at the Botanic Gardens. Artists including **Djilpin Arts Dancers, Red Flag Dancers, Larrakia Dancers** and the **Gupapuyngu Dancers**, will all perform at sunset over nine days in the Star Shell.

Interstate artists headlining this year's Festival are comedy trio and musicians, **Tripod**; The Australian Dance Theatre's electrifying production, **Birdbrain**; the extraordinary David Page autobiographical production, **Page 8**; one of Australia's fastest rising comedians, **Carl Barron**; singer-songwriter **Neil Murray**; and three of the hottest contemporary Australian female singers, **Christine Anu, Sophie Koh** and Triple J Hottest 100 sensation, **Sarah Blasko**.

Special guests of the Festival this year from the Big Screen program at the Deckchair Cinema will include the Australian Actor of the Year (2004) **Michael Caton**, who will introduce the much-loved Australian comedy *The Castle*, along with the Territory's award-winning actor and musician **Tom E. Lewis**, who will present a double feature, *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* and the short documentary *Yellow Fella* - the first Australian Indigenous documentary ever chosen for Official Selection at the Cannes Film Festival this year.

Other special guests include **Marina Prior**, who will be performing a **60th Anniversary Victory in the Pacific concert** with the Australian Army Band Darwin, and **Terry Hicks**, who will attend the NT Premiere of **Xray** – a play that represents a day in the life of 29 year old Australian David Hicks, currently being held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

The annual night of free live music, the **Santos Concert on the Esplanade** will take place on Saturday August 13, featuring some of the Territory's best Indigenous musicians including blues and roots band **Yilila**; reggae, rock, dub and funk band **Wild Water**; and the sensational **Saltwater Band**.



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Further program highlights include the **22nd Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards**, the **2nd NT Indigenous Music Awards**, and the **Music NT Festival Club**. It wouldn't be a festival without a Festival Club and this year the Darwin Festival and Music NT are collaborating to produce the best Festival Club Darwin has ever seen, featuring a late night dance club with local original live music from 9:30pm every night.

The all-in-one Festival hub, club and main stage, **The Star Shell**, will once again be the key location for music, dance, comedy and cabaret - transforming the Botanic Gardens into a thriving outdoor nightspot for artists and locals.

Running from August 11 until August 28, the Darwin Festival 2005 will present a diverse and colourful program over 18 days - encompassing an indigenous showcase, community events, theatre, workshops, music, dance, visual arts, film and comedy.

For full listing details, check out www.darwinfestival.org.au, or pick up a copy of the program at the Darwin Festival Information Centre in the Mitchell Centre. Programs are also available from other venues around Darwin. Call 8981 0083 for locations.

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- WHAT:** Darwin Festival 2005
- DATES:** Thursday 11 August – Sunday 28 August 2005
- VENUES:** The Star Shell and Amphitheatre at George Brown Darwin Botanic Gardens, Darwin Entertainment Centre, Bicentennial Park and various other venues throughout Darwin.
- TICKETS:** Tickets go on sale Tuesday 12th July from 2pm and can be purchased by phoning Darwin Entertainment Centre Booking Office on 08 8980 3333 and online at www.darwinfestival.org.au. Package deals and discounts on events are available with Star Shell Savers. Only Available at the Darwin Entertainment Centre Box Office.
- WEBSITE:** www.darwinfestival.org.au

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***Darwin Festival 2005 hits town between August 11-28,
providing a feast of theatre, dance, visual arts, film, comedy and music***

