

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP

Assistant Treasurer

Minister for Regulatory Reform

Minister for Government Services

Minister for Creative Industries

Acting Minister for Police and Emergency Services



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VICTORIAN ARTISTS RISE TO THE OCCASION WITH FESTIVAL DEBUT

More than 750 Victorian artists are set to take over the city when Victoria's newest cultural event, RISING, makes its debut – boosting tourism right in the heart of Melbourne this winter.

Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson today joined RISING Artistic Directors Hannah Fox and Gideon Obarzanek and more than 80 local artists for the launch of the festival's first ever program kicking off 26 May.

Established by the Andrews Labor Government, RISING marks a resounding resurgence of Victoria's creative and cultural life with art, music, performance, food experiences and more taking over iconic city sites and spaces.

From dusk until late into the night over 12 days, RISING will showcase Melbourne in a new light. The ambitious program includes 133 events and projects including 36 world-premieres – from large-scale performances and awe-inspiring art installations to immersive experiences and late night yum cha.

Since July last year, RISING has supported Victorian artists to develop shows, exhibitions, artworks and events for the festival. The fruits of their labour during the coronavirus pandemic forms the heart of the festival program and will be presented everywhere from a city carpark to the legendary Flinders Street Station Ballroom.

The festival will span the city, creating distinct creative hotspots - the Birrarung, Chinatown, the Arts District, Midtown, as well as satellite sites. Victorian artists will be joined by, and collaborate with, creative contemporaries from across Australia and beyond. Highlights include:

- *The Rivers Sing*, a monumental sonic artwork featuring the voices of First Peoples' voices and local artists will ring out at dusk and dawn each day of the festival.
- *A Miracle Constantly Repeated*, an immersive multi-sensory experience that will take over the entire top floor of Flinders Street Station including its majestic ballroom and 15 adjacent and secret rooms.
- *Wandering Stars* which will see a spectacular 200-metre-long, glowing eel, constructed from community-made lanterns, wind its way up the Birrarung (river).
- *The Wilds* which will transform the entire Sidney Myer Music Bowl into a supernatural forest of ice, art, music and moonlight.
- A celebration of live music at the Comedy Theatre with special collaborations and one-off performances.
- A massive exhibition of video art, performance, installation and huge projections across Chinatown.

Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson

"Our very first RISING festival celebrates the strength and resilience of Victoria's creative community – with local artists taking over our streets to bring us a cultural and creative immersion like no other as our city reawakens."

Quote attributable to RISING Co-Artistic Director Hannah Fox

"We feel incredibly proud to be launching the inaugural RISING program, especially one that so strongly represents the collective creative energy of Melbourne and the culture and artists it's famous for."

Quote attributable to RISING Co-Artistic Director Gideon Obarzanek

"For RISING, we wanted to showcase work specific to Melbourne that captures, celebrates and responds unambiguously to this place."

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