

Media Release

The Hon Colin Brooks MP
Minister for Development Victoria
Minister for Precincts
Minister for Creative Industries



Friday, 24 November 2023

VICTORIA'S BIGGEST CELEBRATION OF LIVE MUSIC KICKS OFF

Global pop icon Christina Aguilera and other international and home-grown artists will take to the stage as part of the Allan Labor Government's ALWAYS LIVE program that is set to pack out venues and attract thousands of visitors across our city, suburbs and regions.

Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks today joined ALWAYS LIVE CEO Steve Smith and Board Member and much-loved Melbourne artist, Clare Bowditch, to mark the beginning of Victoria's biggest celebration of live music featuring more than 400 artists playing across the state from 24 November to 10 December.

The Australian-exclusive performance by Grammy Award winning Aguilera is expected to draw thousands of fans to Flemington Racecourse tomorrow night, attracting visitors from across the country.

This year's program backs Victoria as the live music capital with more than 63 events including stadium shows, exclusive gigs, and intimate performances from more than 400 artists, 299 from Victoria – boosting jobs, local businesses and our buzzing hospitality and hotel sector.

Tones and I, Angie McMahon, Budjerah, Illy, Amy Shark and the Temper Trap will also feature among a celebration of local Victorian and Australian acts. See international superstars Zach Bryan (USA), Jai Paul (UK) and Eric Prydz (SWE) in exclusive Melbourne shows and Jessie Ware (UK) and Caroline Polachek (USA) in intimate performances.

From Brunswick to Ballarat, Werribee to Wangaratta, the program will take over local halls, parks, pubs and community centres. Last year's inaugural ALWAYS LIVE program delivered more than \$80 million in economic benefit to Victoria, attracting thousands of visitors to the nation's home of live music.

Ticketed, free, family friendly and low-cost events are included in 10 days of jam-packed programming at ALWAYS LIVE SOUNDBOX on the Arts Centre Melbourne forecourt, End of the Line in Sandringham and Williamstown and the Jamaican Music and Food Festival.

ALWAYS LIVE delivers on the promises the Labor Government made to Victorians at the 2018 and 2022 elections – and is backed by \$20 million in the *Victorian Budget 2023/24* to continue to secure the biggest international and local acts across the state.

Quote attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Colin Brooks

"We're proud to support ALWAYS LIVE and it's celebration of our great local talent alongside international superstars– creating more opportunities for artists and fans to celebrate live music in communities across Victoria."

Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"This outstanding program is bringing unforgettable events and unique experiences to Victoria – supporting jobs, attracting visitors and boosting tourism, events and hospitality industries in every corner of our state."

Quotes attributable to ALWAYS LIVE CEO Steve Smith

"ALWAYS LIVE is a testament to the vibrant spirit of Melbourne and Victoria, where music transcends boundaries and brings people together. From international icons to local talents, the diverse lineup promises an unforgettable experience. ALWAYS LIVE is not just a festival; it's a celebration of our shared love for music."

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“As the first notes resonate, let's embrace the magic, the moments, and the melodies that will echo through the heart of Victoria over the next 17 days.”