
ACCESSIBILITY AT SYDNEY FESTIVAL 2015

In 2015, Sydney Festival is once more committed to making the program accessible to all through a variety of accessible performance options. This year we are very excited to be expanding our accessibility program to include our very first relaxed performance and bring back an Auslan interpreted performance, along with a number of other accessible viewing options.

To book your accessible performance tickets or if you have any access queries or suggestions, please call 02 8248 6500 or email access@sydneyfestival.org.au and we'll be happy to assist. Sydney Festival is happy to receive phone calls via the National Relay Service.

AUDIO DESCRIPTION AND TACTILE TOURS

Audio Description is a narration of the visual elements of a live theatre performance via a radio receiver and earpiece. Before the performance starts, the audio describers provide program details together with descriptions of costumes and stage settings. Throughout the work, concise descriptions of actions, expressions and gestures are transmitted during gaps between the dialogue of the on-stage actors.

For patrons who are blind or are vision impaired Sydney Festival will be providing a tactile tour and audio described performance of *Masquerade* – a new Australian play by award-winning playwright Kate Mulvany based on the iconic children's book by Kit Williams. The tactile tour will provide an exclusive insight into the work with participants being talked through the set, able to examine the costumes and having the opportunity to talk to the creative team, cast and crew involved in the work. The audio described performance of *Masquerade* provides an additional narration track, where a narrator describes what is happening on stage during natural pauses, allowing visual elements of the work to be shared.

In addition, there will be a tactile tour for the world premiere of the installation *Inside There Falls* at Carriageworks. This is a world premiere work and a multi-sensory art experience by British artist Mira Calix blending sound, live performance, technological innovation and organic materials. In this tactile tour participants will be guided through the installation by the creative team and crew – to create a richer experience of the work to be shared with the group.

Key Performance Dates:

Masquerade

Drama Theatre, Sydney Opera House

Audio described performance in collaboration with Vision Australia

17 January, 12.30pm

Tactile tour

17 January, 10.30am

Bookings essential. Pre-show notes are available via sydneyfestival.org.au/access prior to the performance

Inside There Falls

Carriageworks

Tactile tour

17 January, 11am

Bookings essential

MEDIA RELEASE

Level 5, 10 Hickson Road The Rocks
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia
Phone 61 2 8248 6500 Fax 61 2 8248 6599
sydneyfestival.org.au

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FESTIVAL
2015** 8-26 JAN

CAPTIONING

Theatre Captioning is an accurate text display of a theatre performance in its entirety, including actors' dialogue, ad libs, asides, song lyrics, musical descriptions and other sound effects, displayed on large screens at the side of the stage. This entails a trained captioner preparing the captions in advance so that they mirror the rhythm and flow of the actors' dialogue. The captioner works closely with the production team to ensure that any amendments or cuts to the script are incorporated. The whole process can take at least 80 hours, often more. The captioner then cues the captions live at the performance, where they are displayed on large screens at the side of the stage as the action unfolds.

The world premiere of Force Majeure's **Nothing to Lose** will be captioned. This uninhibited dance production makes use of real-life experiences and stories to challenge aesthetic norms and reclaim a performative space for people with large bodies. Bookings are essential.

Key Performance Dates

Nothing to Lose

Carriageworks

Captioned performance

January 25, 5pm. This is a General Admission performance. If you would like to be seated near the captioned screens, please advise when booking so we can do our best to accommodate your request.

AUSLAN INTERPRETED THEATRE

At Carriageworks in 2015, Sydney Festival will present an Auslan interpreted performance of **Kiss & Cry** – a moving love story intertwining film and dance in a unique way. *Kiss & Cry* is a sweeping cinematic romance with a twist. It stars are a duo of dexterous, dancing hands, which move with grace and precision through a series of miniature landscapes. Shot and projected simultaneously, a sensual small-scale ballet comes to life before your eyes.

An Auslan interpreted performance will make this work accessible to the Deaf community. As the action unfolds on stage, an interpreter stands to one side and signs the text and dialogue live. People who are Deaf or hearing impaired are seated in the section nearest to the onstage interpreter to ensure optimum sightlines.

Key Performance Dates:

Kiss & Cry

Carriageworks

Auslan interpreted performance

24 January, 2pm

Bookings essential

RELAXED PERFORMANCES

For the first time, a relaxed performance has been included in the Sydney Festival program. A relaxed performance is held for children on the autism spectrum and children with Down Syndrome or other disabilities that create sensory sensitivities. Although this relaxed performance will be available to all patrons, the performance specifically caters to the needs of these children. Children will be invited to enter the performance space early, with time to relax and get comfortable and even be introduced to the performers prior to the show. The lights will be kept on throughout the performance, doors will be kept open to the foyer and patrons will be welcome to come and go as needed.

This relaxed performance will be a part of the season for ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show***, a work based on the much-loved book by Eric Carle. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show* features four stories by Eric Carle, combining animation, dance, a marvellous menagerie of lovable puppets, and all the timeless charm of his original tales and illustrations.

Key Performance Dates

The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show
Lennox Theatre, Riverside Theatres
14 January, 3pm
Relaxed performance
Bookings essential (online booking available).

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Sydney Festival ensures that its venues are as physically accessible as possible. Designated wheelchair spaces (where available) will be sold at the lowest price in the house for that performance.

Sydney Festival's outdoor events in 2015 will be made accessible for wheelchair users. Parra Opening Party (POP) and the Domain concert series (Summer Sounds, Symphony in the Domain and Opera in the Domain) will have accessible viewing areas to cater for people with accessibility needs. Bookings for these areas do not need to be made in advance. Limited car parking spaces at The Domain will be available for Mobility Parking Scheme Permit Holders and must be booked before the event on 02 8006 5700.

In Darling Harbour the installation ***Waterfall Swing*** will have a wheelchair accessible swing available. 21st century technology meets the delight of a playground swing as it passes through openings in a waterfall, giving participants the thrill and experience of managing to escape obstacles. This interactive installation in Darling Harbour will be made accessible for wheelchair users and is free to all ages. Please make yourself known to the Audience Marshall onsite and staff will install the swing on request. Note that the swing does involve water and the rider and wheelchair will get wet.

In Hyde Park, 2015 will include the Sydney Festival installation ***Higher Ground*** from acclaimed artist Maser. Working as a street artist for 10 years Maser is no longer confined to the two dimensional plane of a building wall but instead has started creating large scale three dimensional sculptures that people can enter and explore. An access-friendly route is available on ground level. As the installation includes steps as part of the aesthetic, some areas are not accessible.

In Parramatta, wheelchair friendly tours are available for ***Disco Dome***. Shaking up the streets of Parramatta's CBD, *Disco Dome* invites you to explore the suburb's forgotten hot spots for dancing. In a world premiere work, combining contemporary art, community archives and memory, food, cocktails and architecture, the tour will rhythmically and visually connect participant communities and artists in the 're-telling' of cultural history and the creation of contemporary culture. Wheelchair tours are accessible on request. Please advise accessibility requirements when booking.

Key Performance Dates:

Higher Ground (FREE)

Hyde Park North
8–25 January, 9am–9pm (closed Mondays)

Partly accessible. An access-friendly route is available on ground level. As the installation includes steps as part of the aesthetic, some areas are not accessible. Sydney Festival staff are unable to provide mobility or other types of physical assistance – if patrons need assistance they need to bring a support person with them.

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Waterfall Swing (FREE)

Darling Harbour

8-24 January, 9am-9pm

One wheelchair accessible swing is available. Please make yourself known to the Audience Marshall onsite and staff will install the swing on request. Note that the swing does involve water and the rider and wheelchair will get wet. The wheelchair swing is 800mm wide x 950mm long. If your wheelchair is larger than this please contact Sydney Festival to see if specific arrangements can be made.

FESTIVAL INFORMATION IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

Sydney Festival makes every effort each year to ensure that the Deaf and hard of hearing community, the blind and vision impaired community - and others with accessible needs – are able to explore the festival program in their format of choice.

This is done through a variety of methods including producing the following:

- PDF brochure available for download
- Large print word doc available for download
- Interactive brochure ensuring screen-readable compatibility
- Captioning on all Festival TV YouTube videos
- Accessibility leaflet
- Targeted accessibility emails
- Ensuring that the Sydney Festival website and tablet/mobile site is compatible with screen reading software
- Braille brochure (please contact access@sydneyfestival.org.au or call us on 02 8248 6500)
- Audio brochure (please contact Vision Australia on 1300 847 466 or email printaccess@visionaustralia.org.au)
- MP3 files are also available for download

A synopsis in large print Word format of any production in Sydney Festival 2015 can be requested. Email access@sydneyfestival.org.au or call us at Sydney Festival on 02 8248 6500.

The Festival also has strong relationships with Access Arts Australia, Companion Card, Deaf Society of NSW, Accessible Arts, Vision Australia and Auslan Stage Left.

For further information on accessibility at Sydney Festival, visit sydneyfestival.org.au/access

All media releases are available for download at sydneyfestival.org.au/media

For interviews and further information contact:

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