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PERTH INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL CELEBRATES ITS BIGGEST YEAR EVER

As the curtain falls on the final performance of the 2014 Perth International Arts Festival, we are delighted to announce record box office, record ticketed attendance and a month's worth of extraordinary memories.

Events in this year's Festival took a gross box office income more than \$6 million with around 200,000 tickets sold and 500,000 attendances and the Festival is well on track to hit all targets and break even, as planned.

We have sold more tickets than ever before in Theatre, Circus, Dance, Contemporary Music, and the Perth Writers Festival, which was this year attended by 38,500 people.

While Lotterywest Festival Films and the visual arts program continue into April, our 23 days in the sun delivered so much more than just a warm glow.

Artistic Director Jonathan Holloway said:

"During this year's Festival so many big ideas and themes were experienced by audiences, from delving deep into the digital realm to playing with light and shadow, from repeated exploration of conflict and humanity to throwing ourselves into new and immersive transformational experiences. This will be the Festival people remember as the time that we:

*cheered circus in a blizzard of bubbles and made a snowman with Punchdrunk
broke fresh bread with our new deaf/blind friends from Nalaga'at
walked in the shoes of people involved in the arms industry
heard the roll-call of wars from Ancient Greece to today
enjoyed our favourite books read by their authors
laughed with cygnets and Russian puppets
danced under starlit city nights
listened to the sounds of our city
sat in a theatre praying for the rain to stop
watched our friends slow-dance with Batsheva
boggled at what people can do with their bodies
became an avatar before jumping on a sacred monument
were challenged by teenager's bedrooms and who owns this land
travelled to Japan, Korea, South Africa, Bali and 1970s Indigenous Australia*

And above all? I think that people will remember this Festival for the many many times during February that we all said 'Yes'."

While we have connected with audiences like never before, our community has extended well beyond Perth. Audience discussion was in the spaces between the shows, including the Chevron Festival Gardens and on social networks - here's what some of you have shared with us about this year's Festival:

Media:

"WA audiences should never be accused of passing up the chance to enjoy these cultural offerings. PIAF is an annual highlight of the Perth calendar for many of us... Festivals of this size are important for the WA economy, drawing visitors and generating substantial income for local venues and artists and spin-offs for a range of businesses... The infusion of creativity from all corners of the globe will leave a lasting impact on Perth and its people." – The West Australian



“Encompassing a writers festival, outdoor cinema and a strong program of theatre, dance, circus, music and visual art, Perth festival’s 2014 lineup is bordering on the irresistible. (And there’s fringe to see too!)” – Vicky Frost, *The Guardian*

“**Net-Work** is one of the standout pieces in an excellent visual arts program at this year’s Perth Festival. While most festivals seem to treat the visual arts as a supplement to the main attractions, Perth follows Adelaide in giving artists a glimpse of the limelight.” John McDonald, *Sydney Morning Herald/The Age*

“Perth Festival 2014 is the most ambitious ever, with more Australian exclusives than before and performances by some of the biggest names on the international festival circuit, among them Israel’s **Batsheva Dance**, the landmark South African realisation of Strindberg’s classic **Mies Julie** and **Robert Wilson**” – Michaela Boland, *The Australian*

“In the midst of what could be described as a loud week in Perth, the Perth International Arts Festival’s Chevron Festival Gardens stood firmly and intently, sticking to its guns, doing what it does best.” – Bob Gordon, *Xpress Magazine*, on **Booker T Jones** Opening Night

“Otherwise, beg, borrow or steal a ticket because from someone who’s job is to review events, this was one of the best experiences of my life.” Jillian McHugh, *WA Today*, on **You Once Said Yes**

“I watch dance, I teach dance, I practise dance, I write about dance. It’s easy to take its existence for granted but occasionally I see something that takes my breath away and reminds me why I have chosen to immerse myself in this particular art form. **Batsheva Dance Company’s** performance of **Deca Dance** on Sunday night was one of those magic hours.” – Nina Levy in *The West Australian*

“For invention, originality and a way of mixing Shakespearean populism with Chekhovian mood in a cocktail of comedy and clowning this is one hell of a night at the theatre.” Clive Paget, *Limelight Magazine*, on **A Midsummer Night’s Dream (As You Like It)**

“Seeing the delight on [my son’s] face as he stepped out of the cottage and into the falling snow is a memory that will stay with me for a long time.” Jay Hanna, *Perth Now*, on **The House Where Winter Lives**

“There are few better ways of watching a movie than in an outdoor cinema, on a balmy night while sitting in a deck chair that cradles your back to the perfect angle for looking up at a big screen.” – Michaela Boland, *The Australian*, on **Coast (Girt By Sea)** at Somerville

“Hats off to the Perth Festival for smart programming. Taking a big-name act — Gotye in this instance — and presenting it to punters in a format that’s unique or at least different to what they’re used to is what good festival programming is all about.” – Harvey Rae, *The West Australian*, on **The Basics**

“More to the point, there’s nothing like it happening in Perth theatre at the moment, so we are incredibly fortunate that PIAF has brought this astounding work to our city.” – Cicely Binford, *Aussie Theatre*, on **Mies Julie**

“In Perth, however, they do things differently. That famously relaxed, sun-drenched lifestyle extends to their approach to celebrating cinema.” – Myke Bartlett, *The Weekly Review*

“Having the Italian composer and pianist [**Ludovico Einaudi**] perform as part of the Perth International Arts Festival was a huge coup. It was an incredibly magical night that I’ll never forget.” Renee Bergere, *Great About Perth*



"Everyone was smiling at each other, amazed at the experience they'd just had and unable to mutter anything much more than "wow"." Jillian McHugh, WA Today, on **Situation Rooms**

Artists:

"I had a great time. Good company of other authors, and the events were well organized as well as extraordinarily well attended. I was really warmed by the reception of the opening address, and glad I accepted your generous invitation to deliver it. In all, I thought that was a damned good festival. Well done." – Lionel Shriver

"We are all back home by now and I find it hard to believe that Perth has become a memory. But what memory for all of us! A memory I feel deep inside that changed and will change our reality. Your hospitality and embrace was beyond all expectations what a wonderful festival you created bringing so much joy to so many people." Adina Tal, **Nalaga'at Deaf-Blind Theatre Ensemble**

"What a lovely time we had here, both enjoyable and meaningful." Ohad Naharin, **Batsheva Dance Company**

"It was a wonderful experience to participate in this Festival in a beautiful part of the world and with such passionate/skilled people." – Paul Davies, on **Playmakers** (Great Southern Festival)

"I was excited to see so much artistic experimentation in this year's Festival. Many of the performances exposed me to things I had never seen attempted before and I found it incredibly stimulating and inspiring in terms of my own creative practice." – Annabel Duckworth-Smith, Perth Festival Peer Reviewer

"I am extremely grateful for the local artist opportunity that the Perth Festival has running, it has put me in contact with industry professionals I otherwise would not have had the chance to meet. I hope to continue working for the festival in the future; it is an incredibly fun and well run gig!" – Chloe Flockart, Local Artist for I Think I Can

"All of the team have had an absolute ball at the festival and have been wonderfully looked after. Thank you. What a great opportunity for us to realise this work again and to develop the piece further. We're very grateful and would definitely do it all again." – Pete Higgin, **Punchdrunk** Enrichment Director

"The exciting thing about this is that for each city we go to, the artwork becomes a product of the people that are in that place" – Martyn Coutts, co-creator of I Think I Can

"What a highlight and super event! The variety and partnering with other instruments musical styles sounds was totally amazing for both us and audience! Viva la Albany!" – Janis Laurs, Adelaide International Cello Festival Director, on Great Southern Festival

"Midsummer's was an incredible experience. Working with some world class Russian actors and a visionary director was a truly once in a lifetime experience. It was also beautiful to see the wonderful talent Perth holds. I'm always grateful to Perth Festival for lighting up the city, but to be a part of it is even more special." – Tom Camp, Perth-based actor

"After speaking at Writers Festivals in Melbourne and Sydney, I'm convinced Perth's festival is best." – Maureen Helen, Author, on Perth Writers Festival

"The Festival once again created in me a sense of wonder and delight; always innovative and surprising, fresh and genre-defying, it remains an aspiration model for local artists to be



challenged and confounded, as its offerings across all the arts spectrum soar, bore, excite and also deeply move.” – Sally Richardson, Steamworks Arts Director

“The whole experience, on and off stage was indeed dreamlike. To sum up my experience in one word: surreal comes to mind. It was an honour to work alongside such talented international performers and I am sure I will never forget this magical experience.” – Sukhjit Khalsa, Perth-based actor on A Midsummer Night’s Dream (As You Like It)

“Appearing in a PIAF production was a ‘bucket list’ experience for me.” – Sharon Owens, Perth-based actor on A Midsummer Night’s Dream (As You Like It)

“All the members of our company who have been in Perth were delighted to perform there. As you know it was the first time we have been programmed in your country and it was the fifth continent we have performed. The team helping us was very professional and very helpful too. So, thanks to you for this huge opportunity.” – Flor Vaugeois, Xarxa Teatre Producer (Veles e Vents)

Supporters:

“We congratulate the Perth Festival on once again hosting such a vibrant and creative range of events. Lotterywest is proud to be the principal partner of this renowned international event which ultimately contributes to creating a richer and more inclusive WA.” – John Atkins, Lotterywest Chairman

“Bianco has definitely been the highlight. Some of the comments from clients today were that it was “better than Cirque de Soleil”.” – Channel 7

“Loved the Bianco performance, it was breathtaking. The writers festival has also been informative, interesting and entertaining” – Edith Cowan University

“I had a hard time getting guests downstairs for the show as they were having such a great time at the pre-show event...!” – Chevron

“An unforgettable evening of world class entertainment, premium drinks and food. The feedback from everyone that attended, was that we exceeded their expectations on every level I could not have hoped for a better night, we will be talking about it for a long time.” – Coopers

“This is the best time of year. It’s absolutely humming. We’ve got the Fringe Festival on, the Perth International Arts Festival, the gardens are filled, the shows are selling out: there is demand for the work.” – John Sheedy, Barking Gecko Theatre Company Artistic Director

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Perth International Arts Festival

Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, the Perth International Arts Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia’s premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 62 years the Festival has welcomed to Perth some of the world’s greatest living artists and now connects with over 500,000 people each year.

Jonathan Holloway is the Artistic Director 2012-2015.