



Q&A

VICKI VAN HOUT

We chat to Vicki Van Hout about the premiere of her dance theatre work, Long Grass, at Sydney Festival.

What does the term Long Grass mean? 'Long grass' refers to Aboriginal people living outdoors in and around Darwin.

What is the dance piece about? This is probably the most representational work I've made. It's also a poetic work. Darwin is a tropical paradise, and when you're up there, the contrasts are so big. We don't just look at how people are living Long Grass — it's about the mythology and underlying images of how Aboriginal people communicate with each other. We're working with a big screen that gets woven. I tried to have live weaving to explore this idea of craft and story-telling through making the set onstage. It's an interdisciplinary dance work. Gary Lang is collaborating on the project, and has this aptitude for storytelling. He provides a soundscape of words that are unintelligible, but sound like the words you would hear.

What kind of reaction do you want to provoke from the audience? I think more than anything, curiosity. I also don't think I've ever made a work that hasn't had an element of humour, because humour is a gateway into telling stories. It's a nice entry point, it's a way that people can enter more serious content, it's without judgement. I've really tried to set a little microcosmic world without judgement to just say that life is messy and complicated. *From 14–18 January; Seymour Centre, Chippendale; www.sydneyfestival.org.au.*

SYDNEY SUMMER

Check out the carefully curated festival program packed with music, theatre, dance and more at the 2015 Sydney Festival.

The cultural connoisseurs at Sydney Festival HQ have done it again — nabbing a line-up of mighty fine Australian and international acts. Our top picks include a re-imagining of William Onyeabor's music by Gotye and Money Mark (Beastie Boys) in *Atomic Bomb! The Music of William Onyeabor*, and artist-in-residence Maser's installation *Higher Ground* (pictured). *From 8–26 January; www.sydneyfestival.org.au.*

The Museum of Old and New Art's (MONA) Festival of Music and Art runs from 15–18 January; Hobart; www.mofo.net.au.

FESTIVALS

SPORT

STAGE

ART

BOOKS

MOVIES

APPS

AL FRESCO

Fall head-over-heels for the inaugural Summersalt outdoor arts festival. Melbourne's leading arts organisations (including Arts Centre Melbourne and the National Gallery of Victoria) have joined forces to bring the art world to the great outdoors with secret gigs, parties, film screenings and art installations such as *Exxopolis* (pictured). From 23 January to 21 February; Southbank; www.summersaltfestival.com.au.



FESTIVALS

FLIX FEST

Regional Australia's only film, music, comedy and arts festival, Flix in the Stix returns this year with a new short-film curator — actor Deborah Mailman. Spend a night under the stars with ARIA-winning band My Friend the Chocolate Cake, comedy threesome Tripod and local food and beverages. From 30 January to 28 February; various locations around NSW; www.flixinthestix.com.au.



YEEHAW

Put on your ten-gallon hat, pull on your cowboy boots and get ready for some line dancing at the annual Tamworth Country Music Festival. Australia's largest country music

celebration will see some of the genre's biggest stars gather for live performances, busking and some good old rural camaraderie. From 16–25 January; NSW; www.tamworthcountrymusic.com.au.



FESTIVAL OF THE MONTH



WAY COOL

Musicians from around the globe will congregate in laneways across the nation for St Jerome's Laneway Festival. Far from the typical Aussie festival experience of singlet-clad, fake-tanned punters, Laneway is all about fostering new and unique music. And with a line-up including FKA Twigs, Future Islands and Banks, it's doing a pretty great job. From 31 January to 8 February; Brisbane, Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Fremantle; www.lanewayfestival.com.

SHORT AND SWEET

Flickerfest, Australia's most respected short film competition, returns to Bondi Pavilion with a hand-picked selection of 100 short films including *Florence Has Left the Building* with Jacki Weaver (pictured). The festival will then tour more than 50 venues around Australia until May. From 9–18 January; Sydney; www.flickerfest.com.au.



SCENES AND SCENERY

Set against the Opera House, Harbour Bridge and city skyline, you may be forgiven for getting distracted by the scenery at St George OpenAir Cinema. The three-storey screen rising from the harbour will show a program of new releases and premieres, as well as the best films of 2014. From 7 January to 21 February; Mrs Macquaries Point, Sydney; www.stgeorgeopenair.com.au.

Use up your holiday leave at Southbound music festival; from 3–4 January; Busselton; www.southboundfestival.com.au.

WHAT'S ON JANUARY

FESTIVALS

SPORT

STAGE

ART

BOOKS

APPS

STRING ALONG

Croatian cellists Luka Sulic and Stjepan Hauser — otherwise known as 2CELLOS — will visit Australia this month, touring their unique cello-based arrangements of a variety of music, including Michael Jackson's *Smooth Criminal* and AC/DC's *Thunderstruck*, plus more traditional works by the likes of Bach and Vivaldi. *From 6–15 January; Perth, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne; www.2cellos.com.*



STAGE



ROARING FUN

We're not sure if lions and tigers like music as much as we do, but what we are sure of is the killer line-up at Melbourne Zoo's Twilight Series. James Reyne kicks it off, followed by acts including Sarah Blasko, Paul Kelly (pictured) and The Cat Empire. It takes place every weekend until March, plus you can visit the monkeys and zebras while you're at it. *From 30 January to 7 March; Melbourne; www.zoo.org.au.*



Q&A

PETER DAVISON

Peter Davison is best known as the fifth actor to take on the starring role in the BBC series Doctor Who, and will visit Australia for the Doctor Who Symphonic Spectacular.

How would you describe the Symphonic Spectacular? It's a concert covering some of the music Murray Gold has written for *Doctor Who* since its return. It's a wonderful way of demonstrating what symphonic music is like in a live venue. **Doctor Who fans are quite die-hard — is there new content for them?** Very much. This is largely but not exclusively the music from the latest series. So it centres around Peter Capaldi's Doctor, whereas the Symphonic concerts we did last year were, for the most part, the music of Matt Smith's Doctor. **Does it give you a new connection to the show, given you're a 'classic' series Doctor?** I've been very much involved, and obviously my son-in-law [David Tennant] was one of the new doctors. I'm a big fan of the series, and I still sit and watch it with my children. I've always been very happy to be involved. If you had asked me before I left if I'd still be doing things connected to *Doctor Who* in 2014–2015, I would have thought you were mad. But here I am, and I'm enjoying it. *Doctor Who Symphonic Spectacular, from 24 January to 7 February; Adelaide, Perth, Sydney; www.ticketek.com.au.*

• STAGE OF THE MONTH •

WILD BEATS

Celebrating its 20th year, Twilight at Taronga sees musicians such as Bernard Fanning, You Am I and Rufus Wainwright take to the zoo's harbourside stage on Friday and Saturday nights for a truly remarkable musical experience. *From 30 January to 21 March; Sydney; www.twilightattaronga.org.au.*



See American comedian Bill Burr from 27 January to 1 February; Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney; www.billburr.com.

WHAT'S ON JANUARY

FESTIVALS

SPORT

STAGE

ART

BOOKS

APPS

SPORT OF THE MONTH



FILLIES AND FROCKS

The Magic Millions carnival will light up the Gold Coast this month, with luncheons, cocktail parties and yearling sales — culminating in the pinnacle event, Magic Millions Race Day on 10 January. Named the richest race in Queensland, it offers punters the chance to take part in Fashions on the Field and the \$500,000 Racing Women initiative, aimed at encouraging women's involvement. *From 2–10 January; Gold Coast Turf Club; www.magicmillions.com.au.*



Q&A

KATIE PAGE-HARVEY

Katie Page-Harvey (pictured with husband Gerry Harvey), is the CEO of Harvey Norman, and owner of Magic Millions.

How did you first get involved in Magic Millions? We bought Magic Millions in 1997. Our family has been in the thoroughbred industry forever. We are horse people. What do you love about horses and racing? The ultimate adrenaline rush is the win. We love the industry and the sense of community that comes with it. You uncover horse people in every country and in every industry, get them talking about horses and immediately you are in the company of friends. How did the idea for the Racing Women initiative come about? There are so many astute, committed women who are passionate about thoroughbred horseracing, yet this isn't reflected in the ownership of horses. We wanted to expand the industry by giving women an incentive to own the horse. What are you hoping to achieve with this initiative? Greater participation among women, through owning, racing and breeding a horse. What equestrian sportswoman do you most admire? British Olympian Zara Phillips MBE and Australian show-jumper, Edwina Tops-Alexander. Both women are incredible athletes who have reached the pinnacle of their respective sports. *For more information about the Racing Women initiative and Magic Millions, visit www.magicmillions.com.au.*

SPORT



NEIGHBOURS

The AFC Asian Cup kicks off this month, with 16 countries competing in 32 matches over 23 days. Show your colours at what is set to be the soccer, er, football, event of 2015. *From 9–31 January; various cities across Australia; www.afcasiancup.com.*



TOUR DE ADELAIDE

Some of the world's top cyclists will compete in the 17th Santos Tour Down Under, the southern hemisphere's only UCI World Tour event. The race focuses on Adelaide and its surrounding regions, with plenty of stops along the way. *From 17–25 January; Adelaide; www.tourdownunder.com.au.*



DA BOMB

See Leonardo da Vinci's inventions, including *Codice of the Air Screw (Vite aerea)*, brought to life. *Until 28 February; Western Australian Museum, Albany; www.museum.wa.gov.au.*

ART

ART OF GOLD

The Sacred and the Profane: Challenges and Possibilities in Renaissance Art explores the cultural phenomenon via works such as Albrecht Dürer's *Adam and Eve* (1504, engraving). *Until 15 March; National Gallery of Victoria; www.ngv.vic.gov.au.*



The Australian Open will serve up courtside action from 19 January to 1 February; Melbourne; www.ausopen.com.

FESTIVALS

SPORT

APPS

STAGE

ART

BOOKS

MOVIES

BOOKS

Oddfellows

by **Nicholas Shakespeare**
(Random House, \$14.99)

Shakespeare adeptly explores the guerilla operation that took place in Broken Hill on 1 January 1915 — the only attack on Australian soil during WWI. The event left four people dead and a further seven injured, yet little is known about it.



The Thing About Prague

by **Rachael Weiss**
(Allen & Unwin, \$29.99)

When Rachael Weiss left Sydney to write in Prague, she couldn't have imagined the trials and tribulations she would experience, forcing her to return home after only three years. This book is full of her colourful, insightful and funny experiences.



Cubed

by **Nikil Saval**
(Random House, \$32.99)

Cubed explores the place where we spend most of our lives — the office. From television show *The Office* to an open-plan cubicle farm, Saval looks into the anatomy of the white-collar world, how it became the way it is, and where it may be heading.



Mateship

by **Nick Dyrenfurth**
(Penguin, \$29.99)

Dyrenfurth turns the history of mateship upside-down as he explores the origins of this Aussie ideal. The first Australians to call each other 'mate' were business partners, but it has since accrued many meanings ranging from friendship to conformity, racism and corruption.



MOVIES

FOXCATCHER

Channing Tatum, Steve Carell, Mark Ruffalo.

When Olympic wrestler Mark Schultz (Tatum) is sponsored by the wealthy John du Pont (Carell), he sees it as a way to step out of the shadow of his charismatic brother Dave (Ruffalo). As du Pont brings Dave into the fold and leads the two brothers down an ever-darker road, Mark's self-esteem slowly slips away, and it isn't too long before tragedy strikes. *In cinemas 29 January.*



THE IMITATION GAME

Benedict Cumberbatch, Keira Knightley, Matthew Goode.

British cryptologist Alan Turing (Cumberbatch) helps crack Germany's Enigma code during World War II, but is prosecuted for homosexual acts by the government he served. *In cinemas 1 January.*



MR TURNER

Timothy Spall, Dorothy Atkinson, Paul Jesson.

Explores the last 25 years of British artist JMW Turner's (Spall) life as he grew increasingly anti-establishment — indulging in brothels, affairs and spurning unrequited love — and his peers began ridiculing his work. *In cinemas 22 January.*



BIRDMAN

Michael Keaton, Emma Stone, Edward Norton, Zach Galifianakis.

A washed-up actor (Keaton) famous for playing a superhero tries to reignite his stagnant career with a Broadway comeback. He finds his mind unravelling as he is forced to deal with rogue cast members, his ex-wife and his girlfriend. *In cinemas 15 January.*

APPS



VIRGIN AUSTRALIA VOYEUR TRAVEL GUIDES

(Free; Apple, Android)

The team at Virgin Australia *Voyeur* bring you the best places to stay, eat and see as you travel to locations such as Abu Dhabi and Perth. Two new destinations are released each month.



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