

World premieres and Australian exclusive arrières* featured in The Noosa Longweekend Festival program

The 2010 Noosa Longweekend Festival program boasts **two, world exclusive, premiere** theatre performances and **two, Australian exclusive** ballet performances as part of the 10 day, 130 event festival to be staged at Noosa and Caloundra from **June 18-27**.

A preview to the world premiere of **David Williamson's** latest play, **Rhinestone Rex and Miss Monica**, will be staged at **The J Theatre**, Noosa before starting its world premiere season at Sydney's Ensemble Theatre in September. The play, starring **Georgie Parker** (as Monica) and **Glenn Hazeldine** (as Gary, aka Rhinestone Rex) celebrates Williamson's recurring themes of loyalty and family relationships in contemporary Australia.

Audiences will love to hate Monica, a classical musician who has hired Gary, a retired country and western singer to renovate her kitchen. She hates his taste in music, his attitudes to women and the plinths he wants to put on her kitchen cabinets. Gary can't find much about Monica to recommend to anyone but still finds her attractive in a cold, rigid and inflexible kind of way. The big question is will their differences keep them from making beautiful music together?

The festival will also stage the world premiere of a new children's play, **Hurry Up and Wait!**, a co-production between the **Queensland Theatre Company** and **deBASE Productions**. **Hurry Up and Wait!** is suitable for children five to 10 years of age and utilises clowning, mime and endearing comic characterisations to explore themes of identity, friendship and the acceptance of difference. It is the work of **Bridget Boyle** (playwright and director), **Liz Skitch** (playwright and performer) and **Clint Bolster** (performer and professional actor, stilt performer and clown).

Hurry Up and Wait! tells the story of two clowns who have been waiting a terribly long time. One clown is determined to follow the rules and sit still whilst the other tries to keep boredom at arm's length by playing games. The play explores how the two clowns have no choice but to pass the time by using their imaginations. Audiences will be keen to find out if they finally get what they are waiting for.

Two, Australian exclusive performances at Noosa and Caloundra by the **International Stars of Ballet** (seven principal dancers and members of the San Francisco Ballet) will captivate audiences as part of the festival.

The extraordinary ballet troupe, under the direction of Australian and internationally renowned dancer, **Damian Smith** will perform eight pieces to delight dance devotees. The works will include a collection of classical favourites including the **White Swan** pas de deux from **Swan Lake** and stirring, original, contemporary dance pieces.

The seven **International Stars of Ballet** dancers (together with ballet master, **Parrish Maynard**) are **Vanessa Zahorian, Davit Karapetyan, Sarah Van Patten, Pierre-Francois Vilanoba, Damian Smith, Frances Chung** and **Gennadi Nedvigin**. All have danced and performed in world renowned ballet companies such as the Kirov, Bolshoi, Zurich, Royal Danish and the Paris Opera before joining the San Francisco Ballet Company.

Festival Director, **Ian Mackellar** said that the kudos of having **Rhinestone Rex and Miss Monica, Hurry Up and Wait!** and the **International Stars of Ballet** as part of a festival only nine years young was something that he and his festival management committee were extremely proud of.

"As the festival looks toward its 10th year anniversary in 2011, it is incredible to think that the first Noosa Longweekend Festival was run from a kitchen table.

"This year we are working with multiple venues and staging world premieres and Australian exclusives as part of our 130 events.

"We are absolutely delighted to be showcasing international calibre events such as these for the first time in Noosa and Caloundra.

"Additionally, David Williamson's generosity in permitting us to present rehearsed performances of his new play ahead of its world premiere season is incredibly humbling".

Ian said that he expected events to sell out quickly and encouraged people to book their tickets early.



Other 2010 festival highlights include –

- a showcase of ‘award winning’ one-act plays; **Acrobatica’s** gravity-defying physical theatre; and, **Agatha Christie Radio Mysteries** performed on stage.
- musical performances including Australia’s own **Tom Burlinson** in **Frank a Life in Song**; cabaret and supper club performances with **Caroline O’Connor, Caroline Nin, Carita Farrer, Blossom Goodchild, Elizabeth Cousemaker, Tom Sharah** and Australian musical theatre legend **Toni Lamond**; the **Dame Joan Sutherland (opera) awards**; a return festival appearance by guitar maestros **Slava and Leonard Grigoryan** accompanied by **James and Joseph Tawadros** as **Band of Brothers**; the **So-la Voce Chamber Choir**; a Japanese piano recital; **Virginia Gay**, and local bands, **The Vitals** and **Dva**.
- a celebration of short films and a **Slow Food with Film** event with food prepared by leading local chefs; the now famous progressive food events hosted by top restaurants in Noosa and the Sunshine Coast hinterland including a **Seafood Saunter, Hinterland Gourmet Safari, Beachside Promenade** and the traditional festival favourite, the **Duck Waddle**.
- literary events featuring everyone’s favourite gardener **Don Burke, Ita Buttrose**, politician and pharmacist **Terry White**, social commentator **Karen Brooks**, high profile journalists and authors such as **Paul Kelly, Margaret Simons** and **Anne Summers** and sportswriter **Mike Colman**; the writers who inspired **Underbelly, John Silvester** and **Andrew Rule**; animal behavioural specialist **Dr Paul McGreevy**; author and former journalist **Iola Mathews**; former pop star and author **Michael White**; University lecturer and sci-fi buff, **Gregory Nash**; and, **Dr Karen Hitchcock** – medic and super mum.
- celebrity lunches featuring comedian and author **Tim Ferguson**, celebrity chef **Kylie Kwong, Ita Buttrose**, Australian cabaret sensation **Toni Lamond** and a celebrity breakfast with **Andrew Ettingshausen (ET)**.
- a full day children’s festival.
- engaging and insightful forums exploring topics such as: **China, Should we be worried?; America, in decline?; The changing media game and internet journalism**; **Barrie Cassidy** and the **Insider’s** take on politics, **Griffith REVIEW’s Food chain sustainability** and **30 years of State of Origin**. Forum participants include **Julianne Schultz, Mark Scott, Eric Beecher, Margaret Simons, Dr Don Russell, Dr Michael Fullilove, Paul Kelly, Peter Hartcher, Peter Thompson, Warwick Smith, Geremie Barme, Fran Kelly, Steve Renouf, Kerrod Walters, Mick Hancock** and **Martin Lang**.
- workshops featuring Bollywood dancing, African drumming and singing, Japanese puppet making, drama improvisation, Commedia dell Arte and a full day, comedy writing master course with **Tim Ferguson**

TICKET SALES AND FESTIVAL PROGRAMS

- Tickets for all festival events are on sale now. Visit www.noosalongweekend.com for details.
- The full festival program can be viewed on line at www.noosalongweekend.com. Printed versions are available by phoning the festival office on (07) 5474 9941.
- Tickets for Noosa events are on sale at The J Box office phone (07) 5455 4455 or online at www.thej.com.au
- Tickets for Caloundra events are on sale at The Events Centre, Caloundra phone (07) 5491 4240 or online www.etixdirect.com.au
- Ticket prices range from **FREE** admission to **\$185** (for a ‘Blue Ribbon dinner and cabaret event’)
- Interested parties are encouraged to register to receive festival news, updates and special offers on The Noosa Longweekend Festival website - www.noosalongweekend.com
- Special festival accommodation packages are available. Visit www.noosalongweekend.com for details.

-ENDS-

***Arrière, en:** [“backward”]. A direction for the execution of a step in ballet. This word is used to indicate that the step is executed moving away from the audience.

For information, interviews or images regarding Noosa Longweekend Festival artists please contact:

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The Noosa Longweekend Festival is proudly presented by **MACQUARIE**

NB: Whilst all events listed as part of media communication are accurate at the time of release, The Noosa Longweekend Festival program is subject to change without notice due to circumstances outside of the event organizer’s control.