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Vivid Sydney 2023 serves up biggest program yet

- Inspired by nature and expanded to include new pillar, Vivid Food
- Artist John Olsen to transform Sydney Opera House for Lighting of the Sails
- Renowned British author Jeanette Winterson to headline at Vivid Ideas
 - Largest drone show in the Southern Hemisphere
 - WWF Australia named as official charity partner

**2023 program announcement video content and images are available [here](#).
Tickets through vividssydney.com**

Vivid Sydney will deliver the biggest and most culturally relevant program in its event history when it returns in 2023 from Friday 26 May to Saturday 17 June.

Australia's largest event and the pioneer of light-based art and culture festivals in the Asia-Pacific region has assembled some of the world's most innovative artists, talented music makers and thought leaders as part of its 2023 line-up, which also recognises the significant contribution of First Nations peoples and cultures to the creative industries.

Inspired by the master of all creators, Mother Nature, this year's theme, 'Vivid Sydney, Naturally', is reflected across all of the 300+ activations and events that make up the 23-day program.

Vivid Sydney Light Walk's signature Sydney Opera House **Lighting of the Sails** will see the vibrant works of one of Australia's most famed artists, **John Olsen**, brought to life as a spectacular tribute to his illustrious artistic career of more than 60 years. **Life Enlivened (2023)** will include Olsen's evocative *Salute to Five bells (1971–73)* mural commissioned especially for the Northern Foyer of Sydney Opera House's Concert Hall, as well as other artworks spotlighting Olsen's fascination with Australian landscapes and nature.

The Vivid LIVE at Sydney Opera House line-up will feature more than 40 Australian and international artists. **José González, Yaeji, Ella Mai, Cat Power, Devonté Hynes** and many more will take to the stages of the world-famous building in a program curated by Sydney Opera House's Head of Contemporary Music **Ben Marshall**.

The Vivid Music program will spotlight First Nations and Australian voices this year. The late **Archie Roach AC** will be celebrated with an incredible night of performances with the late artist's long-time friends and collaborators and special appearances by members of Archie's family. There will also be 12 nights of free music at **Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour** featuring **Yothu Yindi, Dan Sultan**, cult Japanese artist **Cornelius** and many more.

British author and "master of her material" **Jeanette Winterson** features at Vivid Ideas and will reflect on questions of identity, sexuality, religion and more to unpack the idea of nature in **LIFE AND MARS: The Future of Human**.

And for the first time, Vivid Sydney's brand-new pillar – Vivid Food – will broaden the creative spotlight from Light, Music and Ideas to include culinary favourites and innovative food events. Work up an appetite for a fusion of street food; a barbecue of epic proportions with legendary pitmasters for **Vivid Fire Kitchen** at the Cutaway at Barangaroo; fine-dining experiences; and the return of 2022's sell-out **Vivid Sydney Dinner** at the Ivy Ballroom, a special feast by esteemed Sydney chefs **Ben Greeno** and **Danielle Alvarez**.

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Vivid Sydney Festival Director Gill Minervini said Vivid Sydney has come of age and has evolved into a progressive and inclusive event that celebrates the best of an expanded definition of the creative industries in 2023.

"Vivid Sydney is the original festival of light, art and culture. 2023 is the 13th time it has been staged and so it has naturally evolved over time to ensure that it stays relevant to the creative industries and what that means to people today," Ms Minervini said.

"We are truly proud of this year's program. We have raised the bar on the size and scale of the events and activated new parts of the city. Our line-up features more diverse talent across more industries.

"There are world-firsts and festival-firsts, and both free and ticketed events to make the festival accessible to everyone. Audiences should be prepared to be blown away by the calibre of talent and a program that has been inspired by the beauty and diversity of nature.

"Vivid Sydney's 2023 program is a celebration of authenticity, an invitation to connect, and a chance to create. You do not want to miss Vivid Sydney 2023."

Destination NSW CEO Steve Cox said Vivid Sydney was the biggest and most loved annual event in the NSW calendar, that in 2023 would once again support the entire ecosystem of the state's visitor economy.

"Each year visitors and Sydneysiders immerse themselves in the program and enjoy the activations of the talented creatives who make the festival so special. Last year we welcomed a record 2.58 million attendees across the festival footprint," Mr Cox said.

"Vivid Sydney 2022 injected \$119 million into the NSW visitor economy. It is our expectation that with its expanded program and more international travellers returning to our shores, Vivid Sydney 2023 will drive even greater visitor expenditure into the NSW economy."

Staged across Sydney's city centre, Vivid Sydney festival locations include Circular Quay, the Sydney Opera House, The Rocks, Walsh Bay, Barangaroo, King Street Wharf, Darling Harbour, Darling Quarter, Darling Square, The Goods Line, Central Station, the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, Carriageworks, Taronga Zoo and more.

VIVID FOOD

Vivid Sydney will premiere its first-ever Food program in 2023 with entry points for everyone, from wholesome street food to luxurious high-end dining experiences.

Vivid Food is all about celebrating those who make the Sydney food scene so special, with a line-up of events all nodding to the natural world.

Following the success of the inaugural **Vivid Sydney Dinner** in 2022, the popular event will return to The Ivy Ballroom, in partnership with hospitality group Merivale, for a fully immersive and unforgettable night fusing light, music, ideas and cuisine into a special feast for the senses featuring esteemed Sydney chefs **Ben Greeno** and **Danielle Alvarez**.

The Vivid Fire Kitchen at The Cutaway at Barangaroo brings together Sydney's hottest dining concepts, curated drinks and entertainment for three weeks of flame-fuelled festivities. Expect mouth-watering menus by legendary pitmasters, BBQ heroes and acclaimed local restaurants with something on offer for every taste. Meanwhile, **Vivid Residence** will be an unmissable new dining experience, bringing one of the world's most revered chefs to the culinary capital of Australia.

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House of Naturalia will take over all floors of Barangaroo House and feature a custom menu by head chef Tara Chua, while day-to-night party **HERE NOW** will take over basement bar Mary's Underground and Macquarie Place, mixing masterclasses in food and wine with music and art.

Vivid Sydney 2023 will see the return of the beloved **Carriageworks Night Market**, a one-night event showcasing more than 50 of Sydney's leading restaurants, bars and producers.

Enjoy a red wine paired with a cheese box from renowned chef **Luke Mangan** as you take in the majestic view of Vivid Sydney from the Sydney Harbour Bridge Pylon for **Light Up Your Senses at the Pylon**; while the **Vivid Chef Series** is an exciting new culinary experience pairing cutting-edge global chefs with iconic Sydney restaurants and renowned local chefs for a series of unique collaborative meals exploring their shared passions and creativity.

VIVID LIGHT

When the sun sets, Sydney will transform with more than 50 lustrous light installations, 3D projection artworks and ticketed events for visitors to lose themselves in the hypnotising wonderland of light and colour.

Gill Minervini, who curated Vivid Sydney's 2023 Light program, said: "I am incredibly proud to bring back Vivid Sydney's Light Walk. This year, all works featured are inspired by nature, driven by innovation and delivered with creativity; and will see works from a vast array of artists, from **John Olsen** to Yorta Yorta/Wamba Wamba/Mutti Mutti/Boon Wurrung woman **Maree Clarke** and Australia's only full-time female neon-glass-bender, **Emma-Kate Hart**.

"This year's line-up of artists is particularly exciting, and we can't wait for visitors to experience the incredible creativity and innovation on display."

After a beautiful and poignant debut at Vivid Sydney 2022, **First Light** will return for Vivid Sydney 2023. Curated by Vivid Sydney's First Nations Advisor **Rhoda Roberts AO**, First Light will open the festival on Friday 26 May with a Welcome to Country and performances including musical trailblazers **Yothu Yindi**, the Yolngu supergroup and ARIA Hall of Fame members behind the hit song *Treaty*.

Revealing the various artistic interpretations of the creative vision of 'natural brilliance', the spectacular Light Walk will host the works of 100+ light collaborators and 26 international light artists from 13 countries, with street installations re-shaping old sights, surprising projection sites and large-scale immersive experiences that will paint the urban landscape.

The Light Walk will expand its footprint in 2023, with a Vivid Sydney takeover of Barangaroo featuring more than 10 light installations and projections along with the **Vivid Fire Kitchen**. Following its debut in 2022, **Vivid House** returns – but this year bigger and better at the Cutaway in Barangaroo, activating every night of the festival with 360-degree immersive natural experiences bringing together art, light, sound and video from local and international artists. Vivid Sydney's largest installation, **The Last Ocean** by US artist **Jan Lewin**, will dazzle at Barangaroo Reserve's Stargazer Lawn, while at Barangaroo Headland visitors will be amazed by the Instagram-worthy installations **Dune** by **Juan Fuentes** and Sydney art collective **Night Whisper** by **Amigo & Amigo**.

At the Sydney Opera House, **Lighting of the Sails** will see the vibrant works of one of Australia's most famed artists, John Olsen, brought to life as a spectacular tribute to his illustrious artistic career of more than 60 years. Through images selected by curator Dr. Deborah Hart (Henry Dalrymple Head Curator, Australian Art, National Gallery of Australia) and animated by creative technologists **Curious, Life Enlivened (2023)** celebrates the propulsive power of Olsen's painterly brush to envision the natural world anew.

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Other mesmerising works on Sydney's world-famous landmarks include: **Eggpicnic's** striking, idiosyncratic illustrations of endangered native Australian birds high up on the Sydney Harbour Bridge Pylons in **Between You and Me**; in collaboration with the Australian Museum of Design, **Inside Out** will feature beautiful hand-drawn wallpaper and fabrics projected on the façade of Customs House, celebrating the artistry of nature-inspired Australian interior design and showcasing works by Florence Broadhurst, Carla Zampatti, Collette Dinnigan and more; and at the end of the Light Walk, **Eco** will feature a stunning projection detailing the history of Central Station from the Dreaming to now and beyond.

The Vivid Sydney 2023 drone show **Written in the Stars** will feature more than 1,000 drones over six shows for what will be the biggest drone show in the Southern Hemisphere to date. Conceptualised by Gill Minervini in collaboration with the Australian Traffic Network, **Written in the Stars** will be an awe-inspiring journey through the natural world as it explores our solar system, from the Sun to Neptune.

Following the success of the youngest ever Vivid Sydney artist at Vivid Sydney 2022, this year the festival introduces **Vivid Kids**. The new projection will see a group of young artists aged 7–14 working closely with content studio **Spinifex** to animate, bring to life and project their works onto one of Sydney's oldest buildings.

Other works celebrating Sydney's natural beauty will include **Dandelion** from **Amigo & Amigo**, showcasing a 4,000kg steel recreation of the flower's wispy petals at Circular Quay, and **Harbour Life** at the Australian National Maritime Museum, a moving story of the underwater world projected on the HMAS *Vampire*. In what is set to be an audience favourite, the waters at Cockle Bay in Darling Harbour will dance with the showstopping **Elemental**. This thrilling abstract interpretation of how our world began features spectacular 80 metre water shooters, flames, projections and pyrotechnics for the largest water show in Australian history.

VIVID IDEAS

The Vivid Ideas program gathers some of the world's brightest minds and fearless storytellers, with 60 intriguing talks and workshops, exploring community, authenticity, respect, love and lessons learnt from the natural world.

British author, "master of her material" and "the best living writer in this language" **Jeanette Winterson** features in the Vivid Ideas program. Renowned for her queer seminal debut *Oranges are Not The Only Fruit* and landmark novels such as *The Passion*, *Sexing the Cherry* and *Written on the Body*, **LIFE AND MARS: The Future of Human** will prod, provoke and challenge your ideas of nature, all while making you laugh as you fall in love with her unique and fascinating way of seeing the world.

The Vivid Ideas program features immersive and theatrical workshops, audio-visual guided tours and talk shows that capture Vivid Sydney's "natural brilliance". **NOCTURNE**, from Melbourne-based artists **one step at a time like this**, takes audiences on a one-of-a-kind-experience with an immersive, sonic journey through the hidden streets and laneways of The Rocks, while **Coming to our Senses** is a multi-sensory mindfulness workshop in the heart of the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney.

The **Up Late** program also returns in 2023 with free, interactive and immersive sessions at the **Powerhouse Museum** and **Australian Museum** at night during the festival.

The **Vivid Ideas Exchange** will feature more than 20 cutting-edge discussions and thought-provoking workshops at the world-leading technology precinct, Telstra Customer Insights Centre. A leading panel of experts come together for **Skin Deep** to discuss designer bodies, perfect skin, surgery-as-hacking and the shifting foundations of what is normal or natural. **Could the Ocean be the Solution?** features academic leaders detailing the cutting-edge technology and innovative programs helping to clean up our oceans.

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Vivid Ideas Curator Tory Loudon said: “Vivid Ideas 2023 challenges our ‘natural’ ways of thinking, whether by shining a spotlight on underrepresented communities, offering cultural counterpoints to the mainstream, or creating one-of-a-kind immersive experiences.

“Bringing together the world’s brightest minds and creative leaders, Vivid Ideas will ask difficult questions, feature talks from global storytellers and creative minds and allow audiences to challenge the status quo, explore human nature and ask: what can we learn from nature? Join us at Vivid Ideas and be part of the conversation.”

VIVID MUSIC

All of Sydney will become a stage for Vivid Sydney’s 2023 live music line-up, with a spotlight on First Nations artists.

A Bend in the River: A Celebration of the Life & Music of Archie Roach will celebrate the legacy of the late **Archie Roach AC**. With 10 studio albums, Archie cemented his legacy as one of Australia’s most potent and powerful truth-tellers, songmen and activists, before passing in 2022, at the age of 66. **A Bend in the River** will transform Sydney Town Hall in a night of tribute performances featuring long-time friends, collaborators and his contemporaries, including **Paul Kelly, Emma Donovan, Dan Sultan, Kutcha Edwards, Sally Dastey, Becca Hatch, Dobby, Deline Briscoe, Radical Son, Tenzin Choegyal** and **Tamala Shelton**, with appearances from members of Archie’s family.

On Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights of the festival, **Tumbalong Park** in Darling Harbour will become the Vivid Sydney go-to for free and eclectic contemporary music right in the heart of the Light Walk. The 12-night line-up features artists from Africa to Arnhem Land, including **Yothu Yindi, Ziggy Ramo, Dan Sultan, Esa’s Afro Synth Band with Kamazu and Mim Suleiman, Emma Donovan**, cult Japanese musician **Cornelius** and more, plus DJs and kids programming on Saturday nights all free of charge.

Tumbalong Park will also host **triple j celebrates 15 Years of Unearthed High**, bringing together previous winners and finalists, including **LASTLINGS, Teen Jesus and the Jean Teasers, JACOTÉNE, Arno Faraji**, plus some special guests for a giant celebration of the nationwide high-school music competition.

Vivid Sydney’s late-night lounge will also return in 2023, with drag extraordinaire and beloved star of stage and screen **Trevor Ashley** set to transform Mary’s Underground into an intimate cabaret lounge for the **Vivid Sydney Supper Club**. A vivacious line-up will see live performances from headliners **Christine Anu, Rhys Nicholson, David Campbell** and more each Friday and Saturday from 9pm to 1am during the festival.

The Vivid Music program will see musical performances sprinkled across Sydney’s CBD featuring roaming acts: nightly DJ programming at **The Goods Line; Vivid LIVE at the Sydney Opera House**; and diverse and multi-sensory experiences at **Carriageworks**, with an electrifying line-up including South African artist **Desire Marea, Flying Lotus, Floodlights, SOFT CENTRE** and many more.

Vivid Music Curator Joe Muller said: “Vivid Music 2023 showcases music as the thread that connects us to our natural and urban environments, our culture, our families, our stories and our sense of belonging.

“Featuring international heavy-hitters and domestic trailblazers, alongside some of Australia’s finest emerging talent, Vivid Music is a world-class program of artists and truth tellers, offering something for all audiences.”

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VIVID LIVE AT SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

As part of Vivid Music, the Vivid LIVE at Sydney Opera House line-up will feature more than 40 Australian and international artists. **José González**, **Yaeji**, **Ella Mai**, **Cat Power**, **Devonté Hynes** and many more will defy expectations and break new ground on the stages of the world-famous building in a program curated by Sydney Opera House's Head of Contemporary Music **Ben Marshall**.

Swedish folk-pop guitar master **José González** will celebrate the 20th anniversary of his Grammy Award-winning debut *Veneer*, and indie rock royalty **Cat Power** will play one special night in the Concert Hall for the Australian exclusive of **Cat Power Sings Dylan: The 1966 Royal Albert Hall Concert**, playing all 15 songs from Dylan's legendary electric performance with her unique phrasing and dusky voice.

Returning to Australia for the first time in more than a decade, Grammy-nominated singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist **Devonté Hynes** will perform a suite of classical works accompanied by the **Sydney Symphony Orchestra**.

Groundbreaking pianist and composer **Max Richter**, conductor **Matthew Lynch** and the **Sydney Symphony Orchestra** present his innovative new project, **Ambient Orchestra**, an odyssey through ambient sound featuring acclaimed British soprano **Grace Davidson**.

In an Australian exclusive, Korean-American producer and DJ **Yaeji** will bring her bilingual blend of house, sophisticated grooves and left-field beats – and the debut of a new immersive multimedia live show filled with choreographed moments in an Australian exclusive. And two of the most acclaimed singer-songwriters of the moment, Grammy-winning R&B torchbearer **Ella Mai** and folk-pop musician **Weyes Blood**, return to Australia to set the room aglow.

Vivid LIVE at Sydney Opera House **Studio Parties** also return in 2023 with **Future Classic**, **Mad Racket** and **Picnic**, along with special shows from local collectives including **House of Mince's** 12th birthday and **Low Life's** curation of Scandinavian post-punk over two evenings of **Posh Isolation**. There will also be performances in the Studio from Coodjinburra R&B sensation **Budjerah**, and **Jaguar Jonze** performing **The Art of Broken Pieces** in a NSW exclusive.

VIVID SYDNEY PARTNERS

Vivid Sydney thanks its Partners for their support of Vivid Sydney 2023.

Kia returns as major partner for a second year, presenting two visually immersive activations on the Vivid Sydney Light Walk. Designed to emulate the natural beauty of the Australian landscape, the installations will showcase the brand's new halo EV range.

Australian Traffic Network (ATN) will partner with Vivid Sydney for the first time to deliver the **Written in the Stars** drone shows, with six shows planned to light up the sky during the festival.

Sony Music presents **Lightscape** at the Royal Botanic Garden Sydney in collaboration with Culture Creative.

Supporting Partners include City of Sydney, Commonwealth Bank, Crown Sydney and Nova 96.9.

Collaborators include Cinewav, Event Engineering, Mandylights, Technical Direction Company, and Kennards Hire.

The Local Business Program Partner is Experience Oz Australia.

WWF Australia has been selected as Vivid Sydney 2023's official charity partner.

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For more information and to keep updated about the program, go to vivid Sydney.com.

MEDIA ASSETS

The full 2023 Vivid Sydney media kit, program announcement and high-res imagery, including 2023 Vivid Sydney light renders and broadcast-quality video footage of previous festival highlights, are available to download at www.vivid Sydney.com/news-room.

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ABOUT VIVID SYDNEY

Vivid Sydney is Australia's largest festival celebrating creativity, innovation and technology, and transforms Sydney into a kaleidoscope of colour and events for 23 nights. Staged for its 13th year in 2023, Vivid Sydney will bring together mesmerising displays from the world's brightest light artists, exhilarating live music performances, deep-dive discussions with thought leaders, and innovative experiences from food creatives. Vivid Sydney is owned, managed and produced by Destination NSW, the NSW Government's tourism and major events agency.

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