



Media release



The Festival of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games

Embargo on release of schedule of events in its entirety before 23 February 2006.

January 2006

Festival Melbourne2006

Special events

Festival Melbourne2006, the cultural festival of the Commonwealth Games brings together a series of special events from around the globe.

From the UK, Angus Watt will create an installation of flags in the Alexandra Gardens, Architects of Air will bring The Luminarium – Levity II, an 800 square metre inflatable ‘luminarium’ of labyrinthine tunnels, soaring domes and cavernous atriums reminiscent of the bazaars of Iran. And at Artplay children can decorate a 6 metre dingo and make kites. Legs on the Wall will perform high on the wall of the National Gallery of Victoria, with their new work On the Case and Urban Dream. Capsule return to Melbourne and take up residence in the Myer Window in the Bourke Street Mall, plus CAE walking tours and lectures.

Angus Watt, (England)

“His work crosses traditional boundaries, using colour, scale and movement to transform and enhance the theatricality of a space. Responding to the elements, the flags become proud signifiers, gatherings of texture and colour, animated by wind and light.” **World Music Central**

A self-proclaimed specialist in “pig’s ear to silk purse transformations”, visual artist Angus Watt will unfurl an overhead spectacle of beauty and grace when he transforms the Alexandra Gardens into a stunning ‘flagscape’ of shimmering colour and movement especially for the Commonwealth Games. The subtle yet spectacular impact of his flags, gorgeously arranged in large-scale installations, has made him one of the most sought after artists in the UK and Europe. His many major commissions for festivals and venues all over the world have enthralled hundreds of thousands of people with their elegance, beauty and simplicity.

At the Alexandra Gardens from 16 – 26 March.

The Luminarium - Levity II, Architects of Air (England)

“ . . . an immersive art experience, in which light, sound and architectural form combine” **The Sunday Times, London**

Relinquish your shoes and your grasp on reality when you immerse yourself in the strange and sensual world of *Levity II*, a surreal and all-encompassing kaleidoscope of liquid light, gentle surround-sound and living psychedelic colour. *Levity II* is an 800 square metre inflatable ‘luminarium’ of labyrinthine tunnels, soaring domes and cavernous atriums reminiscent of the bazaars of Iran. A walk-through sculpture inspired by Islamic architecture and the beauty of natural geometry, this ephemeral architectural marvel is a chill-out zone of the most unusual kind. So come on in, recline, and lose yourself in primary coloured bliss. Suitable for all ages. Admission by gold coin donation to Plan, the Commonwealth Games’ Goodwill Partner.

A luminarium is a monumental installation that people enter to be immersed in the beauty of colour and light. *Architects of Air* build and tour the luminaria designed by Alan Parkinson, and since 1992 their strange and wondrous creations have attracted over 1.5 million visitors in more than 32 countries.

**The Luminarium - Levity II, at the South Beach Reserve - St Kilda, from 16 – 26 March
11am to 7pm.**

Artplay, Australia

Let your imagination out to play during the Commonwealth Games!

The Big Dingo

In a tribute to Australia's love of big icons, the City of Melbourne's ArtPlay is taking over a corner of the Gardens with its Big Dingo project, a collaborative arts program for kids created especially for the Commonwealth Games. Sculptors Suzanne Davis and Amanda King are creating a massive frame for a 6-metre high dingo, and they need your help to decorate it. So come on down - the ArtPlay team will help you make beautiful native Australian flowers like wattle, waratah, heath and banksia from recycled materials. Once the flowers are finished, they'll be stuck on the Dingo until it's completely covered and turned into a beautiful floral sculpture. The workshops are free and all materials are supplied. So look out for the ArtPlay starshade in the Alexandra Gardens. Suitable for children of all ages.

Kite Creatures

Kids and their families can also drop into the ArtPlay starshade and spend up to half an hour assembling a colourful hand-held platypus kite. Supervised by the ArtPlay team, this hands-on experience is suitable for children aged 5 years and above. The kite-making workshops are free and all materials are supplied.

At the Alexandra Gardens from 16 – 18 March at 1:00pm – 6pm; 19 March at 2:00pm – 6pm; and 20 - 25 March at 1:00pm – 6pm.

Legs on the Wall, *On the Case*, Australia

World Premiere

Welcome to On the Case – a game for four players. A woman falls through the sky. Did she jump? Was she pushed? Should she PLAY or QUIT? The chase is on to snatch back what is rightfully hers - her stolen heart. Her objective? Find the case, retrieve the heart and win the game.

Performed high on the wall of the National Gallery of Victoria, this aerial thriller could only be the work of Legs on the Wall, Australia's premier physical theatre company. Famous for stunning choreography at dizzying heights, the artists of Legs on the Wall transform the Gallery into a vertical stage as they fly, cartwheel and spin through the air, bouncing against dazzling animated cartoon projections. With breath-taking imagery and daring, acrobatic movement, this brilliantly innovative show is a game of chance with altitude.

Legs on the Wall at the NGV Wall, from 20 – 25 March at 8.00pm and 9.30pm.

Urban Dream Capsule, (Australia)

See what's in-store at Myer when the four extraordinary performance artists of the Urban Dream Capsule take up residence inside the Bourke Street windows for the duration of the Games, living their day-to-day lives in full view. With their bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom visible to the world 24 hours a day, their simplest tasks – sleeping, washing, grooming, cooking – will become endurance events during this fourteen day performance marathon. Watch as our intrepid heroes turn everyday living into the most entertaining of artforms, and form relationships with their audience that break the pane-barrier.

Who can forget the debut of this now world-famous troupe with its sensational two-week installation in the Myer windows in Bourke Street for the 1996 Melbourne International Festival of the Arts? Since then the Urban Dream Capsule has insinuated itself – to widespread critical acclaim – into major festivals in Ghent, Galway, Wellington, Chicago, Montreal, London, Perth, Sao Paulo, Singapore and Hong Kong. And now they return to their hometown for a special Commonwealth Games tenth anniversary performance.

Appearing in the Myer Windows, Bourke Street Mall from 12 – 26 March.

CAE/NGV Education and Community Involvement Program

The Centre for Adult Education (CAE) and the National Gallery of Victoria have devised an education and community involvement program especially for **Festival Melbourne2006**. There are more than 75 activities, which include:

Walking tours exploring architecture and public sculpture of Melbourne; Walking tours of Indigenous Art in Melbourne; Lectures on history of the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Artists Public forums on colonial and post colonial legacy and Commonwealth ideals; Conversations with artists visiting as part of the Federation Festival; Workshops at the NGV on print making, animation, drawing and textiles; and Floor talks exploring some of the exhibitions with Curators and Artists at the NGV.

Centre for Adult Education 253 Flinders Lane & the National Gallery of Victoria, 13 February - 26 March.

Festival Melbourne2006 – Wednesday 15 to Sunday 26 March, 2006.

Festival Melbourne2006 celebrates the breadth of culture and art from across the nations of the Commonwealth. The Festival is an integral part of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games, and it is proudly funded and supported by the Victorian and Australian Governments.

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Australian Government

