



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 – FREE EVENTS

Youth Program Plays Empire Games

For the Youth Program of Festival Melbourne2006, the Next Wave Festival – Australia's leading curated festival for young emerging artists – have put together a series of major exhibitions, performances and events featuring young artists and aimed at young audiences responding to the festival theme of *Empire Games*.

Next Wave Artistic Director Marcus Westbury has visited every region of the Commonwealth to uncover the best undiscovered artistic talent.

Among the major highlights:

Shed 14 in Melbourne's docklands will play host to ***The Containers Village*** – featuring 35 artist groups from Commonwealth countries exhibiting in twenty foot shipping containers. The containers will be packed and stacked – filling a huge warehouse and creating a series of trails and laneways and a maze of creativity for audience exploration;

A Hundred Points of Light will be turning on Melbourne's alleys and laneways, street corners and shopwindows, creating a dazzling and discrete web of installations, projections and glowing icons that will lead locals and visitors alike on a walking tour through the more unusual nooks of Melbourne;

Next Wave's ***Exhibition Program*** will feature shows at the **Linden Centre for Contemporary Art** in St Kilda, **Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces** in Fitzroy, **The Meat Market** in North Melbourne, the **Old Melbourne Watch House** in Russell Street, and **West Space Gallery** in the CBD featuring artists from across Australia and the Commonwealth; and,

The young people of Morwell and Kyneton (Vic) and Wagga Wagga (NSW) exploring their own stories and communities in video, photography and digital media through ***Bitscape***. With a strong focus on indigenous participants and themes, Bitscape will feature large-scale projection events in local communities and an exhibition at Experimedia at the State Library of Victoria during the games.

The Youth Program of Festival Melbourne2006 is presented by Next Wave.

ARTISTS WITH INITIATIVE SHIP IN TO MELBOURNE

As part of the Youth Program of Festival Melbourne2006, Next Wave has invited artist's groups from around the world to set up shop in shipping containers in Shed 14 in the Docklands. Next Wave's *Containers Village* will bring together artist groups from across Australia and the Commonwealth in a multi-levelled maze of shipping containers from 15 - 26 March 2006.

From Cape Town collectives, to Glasgow galleries and Kiwi cooperatives, Next Wave Artistic Director Marcus Westbury has visited every continent in an exhaustive search for young artists and their unique activities. They will be brought together in Shed 14 in 35 twenty-foot shipping containers, acting as a mini art embassies from Commonwealth countries.

"What the countries of the Commonwealth have in common is a shared sea-faring history. Shipping containers allow us to bring together an international community in a space that is both familiar and unique while allowing each group to preserve its own identity in a massive shared space," Mr Westbury said.

In the **Containers Village** each collective of artists will be given a container in which to exhibit or create artwork responding to the Next Wave's theme of *Empire Games*. The containers will be configured within the shed in different arrangements, stacked high – creating a series of trails, laneways and a maze to explore.

In the 2004 Next Wave Festival, over 3,000 people visited the exhibition of Australian Artist-Run-Initiative's works in the car park at Federation Square. As in 2004, the **Containers Village** will allow young artists to meet each other and extend their networks both nationally and internationally. The **Containers Village** will encourage artists to learn from each other, to compare notes, and to engage in debate about contemporary art, inspiring opportunities to participate in each other's projects and galleries.

The **Containers Village** will be open from 12-8pm daily at Shed 14, Docklands, Melbourne during the Commonwealth Games.

EMPIRE GAMES LIGHT UP CITY LANES

Illuminating young art stars from Melbourne, Australia and across the Commonwealth will cast a creative glow over the more secret, hidden and unexpected places in our city. While the Commonwealth Games will be lighting up our city on the International sporting stage, *A Hundred Points of Light* will be drawing attention to the unlit backstage of the city.

As part the Youth Program of Festival Melbourne2006 presented by Next Wave, *A Hundred Points of Light* will be turning on Melbourne's alleys and laneways, street corners and shopwindows. Responding to Next Wave's theme of *Empire Games*, scores of young artists are creating a dazzling and discrete web of light installations, projections and glowing icons that lead you on a walking tour through the more unusual nooks of Melbourne.

"For the Festival Melbourne2006 Youth Program, *A Hundred Points of Light* will showcase the spaces where many young people engage with our city – with it's laneway cafes and bars, street front galleries and stencil dialogues," Next Wave Artistic Director Marcus Westbury said, "A Hundred Points of Light will encourage visitors and locals alike to explore the city and its unusual spaces."

With tight budgets, an emphasis on creativity over currency, and a stipulation that projects must use light in some way, artists have responded with ideas such as illuminated garbage bins, projections in which the sun always sets, neon birds, and fluorescent funghi.

Artists in *A Hundred Points of Light* are drawn from a wide range of Commonwealth Countries and across Australia. *A Hundred Points of Light* will take place from the 16 – 26 March at locations around the Melbourne CBD.

YOUNG PEOPLE PIXELATE THEIR WORLDS...

Bitscape and is a digital art project involving young people from Morwell, the Macedon Ranges and Wagga Wagga. The project kicked off in July 2005 with 40 participants working with professional artist Pip Shea to establish blogs, make animations and create images for large-scale projections onto iconic sites in their local communities.

The local components of Bitscape will come together at the prestigious Experimedia exhibition space at the State Library. The combination of public projections in the local communities with an exhibition in Melbourne ties the regional focus of this project with the metropolitan nature of the Next Wave Festival.

For Pip Shea, Bitscape was born after the success of the 2004 Next Wave Festival's Colliding Worlds project where art changed the lives of young people from Knox, "It's amazing to see young people build confidence through learning digital techniques and applying them to art-making."

Bitscape at Experimedia will form part of the Youth Program of Festival Melbourne2006 presented by Next Wave. Bitscape and the participants' work will also be showcased and promoted online by the national media-based youth arts festival NOISE, managed by the Australia Council.

For more information about Morwell, Wagga Wagga or the Macedon Ranges outcomes call Pip Shea on 0422 976 163 or go to <http://www.nextwave.org.au/bitscape>

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

