

MEDIA RELEASE

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Spotlight on WA's rich Indigenous arts and culture at Mandurah Summit

Indigenous cultural experiences, performances and visual arts will be a significant focus of the 2017 WA Regional Arts Summit when it comes to Mandurah in October.

A full program of Indigenous culture and arts events is currently being finalised for the four-day forum, which is being hosted by Country Arts WA in partnership with the City of Mandurah and the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre.

The Indigenous program is being sponsored by the Peel Development Commission and will include a Welcome to Country ceremony and a performance of 'Bindjareb Pinjarra' by the Pinjarra Project, a highly acclaimed theatre piece about WA's Pinjarra Massacre.

The Summit, which is supported by Royalties for Regions Creative Regions program, will bring together 300 arts workers, artists and performers from across WA and beyond, and be held at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre from 12 to 15 October 2017.

Country Arts WA Executive Director Paul MacPhail said Western Australia's Indigenous artists and work would be a key component of the Summit, which is the State's biggest and highest profile regional arts and cultural exchange.

"We will provide local Peel Indigenous cultural experiences to delegates as well as to showcase and highlight the wealth of talent emerging from Indigenous arts and arts organisations across the regions," Mr MacPhail said.

"There is a wealth of musical, dance, theatrical and visual arts talent across the state from Indigenous artists of all ages and we're very excited to be showcasing this as part of this year's program," Mr MacPhail said.

Peel Development Commission chairman Paul Fitzpatrick said local Indigenous heritage and culture were fundamental to the historical and social fabric of the Peel Region.

"We are delighted to sponsor this unique element of the Summit and this special program of culture, tours and events that will add to the richness of the experience for delegates as well as the Peel community. The experience of being engaged in the Summit will add immensely to the capacity of local Peel Indigenous talent and provide a fresh avenue and audience to showcase their capabilities," Mr Fitzpatrick said.

Mandurah Mayor Marina Vergone said it is important to share the local history with the community and visitors, and encouraged them to share in the celebration of the region's diverse culture and heritage.

"I'm proud to see our heritage being showcased... it helps people to learn about, experience and celebrate the history, culture and achievements of local Indigenous people," she said.

“The City of Mandurah is proud of its long history of working with our Indigenous community through the City’s Reconciliation Action Plan and the Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategy. It’s important to share our experiences with delegates as they seek to create an inclusive community with strong relationships across cultures.”

Special activities for delegates will include off-site visits to significant cultural locations within Peel, including the Pinjarra Massacre Site and the Murray Districts Aboriginal Cultural Centre as well as the opportunity to experience and enjoy a bush tucker tea, including delights such as damper with bush honey and roasted wattleseed, all assisted by WA Food Ambassador Don Hancey.

Key events for the 2017 WA Regional Arts Summit include a night of free community activities at the opening ‘Kaya, Party in the Square’. This family-friendly event will be held on Thursday 12 October from 6.30pm to 9pm at Mandjar Square and feature music, food trucks, dancing and outstanding regional arts performances from across the state including: Pulse WA, outdoor cinema screens showing short films; and the *Hydrodome* projection art installation.

Early bird registrations closes 31 August and prices starts from \$425.00 and are available at www.countryartswa.asn.au.

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