**Auckland Arts Festival 2023**

**ACCESS & INCLUSION PROGRAMME**

**Blind and Low Vision Events**

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**Blind & Low Vision**

**KA REWA**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/ka-rewa>

Music, free event

5:30pm Thursday 9 March

1 hour

Aotea Square, outdoors

Braille songsheets available.

**Description:**

Come together in Aotea Square to mark the return of live performances at the Festival and the start of three weeks of uplifting arts, culture, celebration and kotahitanga. Join us for karakia, ceremony and kapa haka led by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei. Sing along to Māori songs that have become part of New Zealand history – ‘Pōkarekare Ana’, ‘Tūtira Mai Ngā Iwi’, ‘E Pāpā Waiari’ – to name a few. Kupu for all waiata will be available on our website for downloading to your device, and you, your friends and whānau can learn in advance by visiting our YouTube channel. While you are there, grab a kai from the Hāngi Master and join in the celebration before heading to our opening night shows.

**BILL WITHERS SOCIAL CLUB**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/bill-withers>

Music

7:30pm, Thursday 9 March

1 hour 40 minutes, no interval

Great Hall, Auckland Town Hall

Suitable for blind & low vision audiences.

**Description:**

Travel with an all-star band of Aotearoa musicians on a journey through the timeless catalogue of a global music legend in this intimate yet epic homage. Bill Withers Social Club is a tribute to an iconic American singer-songwriter whose stories of love, hardship, friendship and whānau have shaped a generation of local musicians and touched the world. Vocalists Troy Kingi, Dallas Tamaira, Rio Hemopo and Lauren Barus honour the soul legend’s passing in March 2020 alongside band members Iraia Whakamoe and Ryan Prebble (The Nudge, Fly My Pretties); Adán Tijerina (The Yoots, AHoriBuzz); and Daniel Hayles (Lord Echo, Hollie Smith).

**EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/emil-and-the-detectives>

Family/Theatre

7pm, Friday 17 March (Audio Description)

1 hour 10 minutes, no interval

Rangatira, Q Theatre

Audio described performance.

**Description:**

A super-sleuth romp for the whole family! Join the adventures of young Emil and a gang of streetwise city kids as they team up to outsmart a dastardly thief. Emil’s caught the train to the big city and is on a mission to deliver her mum’s hard-earned savings to Grandma. But what to do when a man in a bowler hat swindles her and disappears with all the money? Adapting the classic children’s novel that redefined the whole kids-versus-adults genre, acclaimed family theatre experts Slingsby use the magic of lighting and shadows to spin a yarn rich with intrigue, quick wits and true grit. They say, “never underestimate the determination of a child”: Emil and the Detectives will have you cheering at every moment these youngsters triumph over tricksters – and then some.

**FORCE OF NATURE**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/force-of-nature>

Live music

6:30pm, Friday 17 March,

1 hour 30 minutes, including an interval

Concert Chamber, Auckland Town Hall

Suitable for blind & low vision audiences.

**Description:**

This gorgeous, rejuvenating evening of eight world premieres celebrates the vital conservation work of Forest & Bird, reminding us all of the precious beauty of our whenua, moana, flora and fauna. Founded in 1923 by war veteran Ernest ‘Val’ Sanderson after a campaign to restore Kāpiti Island and honour its status as a nature reserve, Forest & Bird has played a crucial role in preserving New Zealand’s wildlife and wild places. Collaborating in concert to salute the mahi of its members and supporters, composers and performers including NZTrio (Somi Kim, Ashley Brown, Amalia Hall), Peter Scholes, Kathryn Moorhead, Rob Thorne and Yoshiko Tsuruta bring their command of acoustic chamber instruments to the fore. Featuring atmospheric visual design capturing unique environments and native species, both on land and in the sea, this stirring one-off performance is inspired by – and aspires to the future of – the Aotearoa way of life.

**SANDSONG: STORIES FROM THE GREAT SANDY DESERT**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/sandsong>

Dance

12pm, Saturday 18 March (touch tour)

2pm Saturday 18 March (Audio Described performance)

1 hour 20 minutes, no interval

ASB Waterfront Theatre

Touch tour and audio described performance.

**Description:**

An Australian national treasure, Bangarra is one of the most respected First Nations companies on the planet. SandSong is a powerful, deeply moving story, drawing on stories, knowledge and memories of past to create a new narrative for Indigenous futures. Between the 1920s and 1960s, many Aboriginal people were removed from their Country onto pastoral stations where they were forced into hard labour, usually for no wages and only minimal rations. Despite this displacement and cultural disruption, the Traditional Peoples of the Western Desert have maintained unbroken connection to Country, keeping songs, stories, kinship and lore strong.

**THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/dorian-gray>

Live theatre

5pm Tuesday 21 March (Touch Tour)

7pm Tuesday 21 March (Audio Described performance)

Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre, Aotea Centre

Touch tour and audio described performance.

**Description:**

Sydney Theatre Company’s exhilarating “reinvention of theatre” (Time Out) arrives hot on the heels of sold-out Australian seasons. Don’t miss the international cine-theatre event of the year before it takes the world by storm. Immoral. Immortal. Immense. Hailed as a “dizzyingly beautiful tour de force” (The Guardian), The Picture of Dorian Gray is an odyssey of theatrical storytelling. Featuring a “brilliant, breathtaking, bravura performance” (ArtsHub) from Eryn Jean Norvill – who plays 26 characters in an audacious cascade of theatrical transformations – this justifiably lauded play continues to be met with widespread critical acclaim.

**THE UNRULY TOURISTS**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/unruly-tourists>

Opera

1pm, Saturday 25 March (Touch tour)

2.30pm, Saturday 25 March (Audio Described performance)

1 hour 30 minutes, no interval

Bruce Mason Centre

Touch tour and audio described performance.

**Description:**

In a tale from living memory, a flock of badly-behaved tourists spread a trail of rubbish, fuel a national obsession, make international headlines, and land themselves in local courtrooms. This genre-defying comedy is written by the award-winning duo of Livi Reihana and Amanda Kennedy (The Fan Brigade), composed by Luke Di Somma and directed by Thomas de Mallet Burgess. Presented by New Zealand Opera and Auckland Arts Festival in an immersive production at the Bruce Mason Centre, The Unruly Tourists takes you to Takapuna where it all started, and then smashes all the stereotypes you think you know about opera. A witty, irreverent, caustically observed work that will spark conversation and debate long after the curtain goes down.

**SAMULNORI! THE POWER OF K-RHYTHM**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/samulnori>

Music

10am, Sunday 26 March (Touch tour)

11:30am, Sunday 26 March (performance)

50 minutes, no interval

Rangatira, Q Theatre

Suitable for blind & low vision audiences.

**Description:**

A high energy music, dance and percussion spectacle from a young company of artists taking Korean folk arts in a vibrant new direction. Samulnori, a traditional music genre played with four Korean instruments, has been delighting audiences around the world. Bringing the sounds of kkwaenggwari, jing, janggu and buk to Aotearoa, along with the colourful, spinning sangmo (ribboned hat), this infectious theatrical concert is highlighted by powerful, rhythmic interpretations of the ancient Korean art form.

**EISHAN ENSEMBLE: PROJECT MASNAVI**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/eishan-ensemble>

Music

4pm, Sunday 26 March

1 hour 30 minutes, no interval

Magic Mirrors Spiegletent

Suitable for blind & low vision audiences.

**Description:**

Acclaimed Persian jazz band Eishan Ensemble presents their latest album of stunning layered soundscapes and sophisticated compositions, performed live for the first time in Aotearoa.Inspired by the lyrical poetry of Rumi’s epic masterpiece Masnavi, one of the most precious books in Persian literature, Eishan Ensemble blends Persian Classical with Western Jazz and improvisation in a rich fusion of styles Songlines magazine has called “a flawless combination.”

**HE KETE WAIATA**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/he-kete-waiata>

Music, sung in both English and Te Reo

7pm, Sunday 26 March

2 hours including an interval

Great Hall, Auckland Town Hall

Suitable for blind & low vision audiences.

**Description:**

Closing the Festival with class and soul, one of our country’s most exceptional singers graces Tāmaki Makaurau alongside a lineup of top vocalists and musicians for one night only. After a sold-out headline performance at the Wellington Jazz Festival in 2021, multi-award-winner Whirimako Black (MNZM) (Ngāi Tūhoe) brings her “spirit, passion, confidence” (Scoop) with dynamic performance energy and dulcet tones, performing original material as well as jazz standards in both te reo Māori and English. Joining this legend onstage are bilingual vocal stars Allana Goldsmith (Ngāti Porou, Ngāi Tai) and Leon Wharekura (Ngaati Mahuta, Ngaati Whaawhaakia, Waikato) with Dixon Nacey (Mangaia, Rarotonga), musical director extraordinaire. Rich and versatile sounds of soul and jazz, and more abound in this not-to-be-missed music spectacular.

**WĀHINE**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/wahine>

Visual Arts

7 – 26 March

Freyberg Place, outdoors

Recorded Audio described portraits, recorded stories and other resources also available.

**Description:**

Weaving together intimate audio stories and powerful portrait photography, Wāhine is an immersive exhibition that amplifies Māori women’s voices around Aotearoa. Offering our communities the opportunity to be enriched by their life stories while fostering mutual understanding, Wāhine is a touring exhibition that will expand at each new location around Aotearoa by inviting a wahine from a local iwi to join the kaupapa.

This is an outdoor exhibition. Audio stories are accessible via QR-codes. Smartphones and headphones are required to listen.

**WHO CAN THINK, WHAT CAN THINK**

<https://www.aaf.co.nz/event/who-can-think>

Visual Arts / Free event

18 February – 7 May

No time limit – exhibiton

Te Tuhi, Pakuranga

Audio description and braille descriptions of art works.

**Description:**

Who can think, what can think is a group exhibition that confronts understandings of human and non-human ‘intelligence’. Exhibited works address various global contexts from an octopus rescued from a fish market in France to definitions of disability in Mexico, and from neurodiversity advocates in Scotland to the transnational weaponisation of AI. The exhibition includes interpretation in audio, braille, easy read, NZSL and te reo Māori, and provides reading aids, accessibility and sensory maps, a quiet space, and relaxed events.

**Artist Talks**

**REQUIEM – PRE SHOW TALK**

Live music.

6:15pm, Saturday 11 March

30 minutes approx.

Great Hall, Auckland Town Hall

**THE SAVAGE COLONISER SHOW – POST SHOW TALK**

Live theatre.

5:30pm, Sunday 12 March

30 minutes approx.

Rangatira, Q Theatre

**EMIL AND THE DETECTIVES – POST SHOW TALK**

Live theatre, family.

12:15pm, Friday 17 March

30 minutes approx.

Rangatira, Q Theatre

**SKYDUCK – POST SHOW TALK**

Live theatre.

12:15pm, Friday 17 March

30 minutes approx.

Herald Theatre, Aotea Centre

**FORCE OF NATURE – PRE SHOW TALK**

Live music.

5:30pm, Friday 17 March

30 minutes approx.

Concert Chamber, Auckland Town Hall

**SANDSONG – PRE SHOW TALK**

Dance.

6:30pm, Friday 17 March

30 minutes approx.

ASB Waterfront Theatre

**THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY – PRE SHOW TALK**

Live theatre.

6pm, Tuesday 21 March

30 minutes approx.

Kiri Te Kanawa Theatre, Aotea Centre

**THE CHOSEN HARAM – POST SHOW TALK**

Live theatre.

9:20pm, Saturday 25 March

30 minutes approx.

Rangitira, Q Theatre