



6 – 8 April 2018

Brisbane Powerhouse

Celebrating the Women
of the Commonwealth

Festival
2018

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release, Thursday 1 February 2018

WOW at Festival 2018 to close with powerful and joyous concert of Commonwealth stars

Australian stars, including Clare Bowditch, [Deborah Conway](#), [Emily Wurramara](#) and Hannah Macklin, will join with some of the greatest voices from across the Commonwealth of Nations to celebrate women in music when [WOW at Festival 2018](#) and [Queensland Performing Arts Centre](#) (QPAC) present *Songs That Made Me* on Sunday 8 April.

Special guests will include Fiji's "Queen of Pop" Laisa Lualala Vulakoro, ShoShona Kish from Juno award-winning Canadian duo [Digging Roots](#) and Brisbane multicultural vocal ensemble [The Verandah ChiX](#), backed by a sizzling all-women house band.

WOW (Women of the World) Festival was founded by the Artistic Director of London's Southbank Centre Jude Kelly to celebrate women and girls and look at the obstacles that stop them from achieving their potential. It has become a global phenomenon with events taking place in more than 23 cities across six continents.

WOW Executive Producer in Australia Cathy Hunt said WOW at Festival 2018 is a very special celebration of the lives of women and girls across the Commonwealth of Nations created as part of the GC2018 Commonwealth Games arts and cultural program.

"The energetic WOW program will be full of fun and laughter with serious reflection for women and girls, men and boys from all walks of life, ages and nationalities, with *Songs That Made Me* as a glittering and inspiring finale in the Concert Hall at QPAC," Ms Hunt said.

QPAC will partner with WOW to present *Songs That Made Me*. Chief Executive of QPAC John Kotzas said that the organisation was proud to once again work with WOW Festival.

"QPAC first collaborated with WOW in 2015 and is pleased the festival returns to Brisbane this year. *Songs That Made Me* will be a fitting finale concert bringing together a diverse range of artists from Australia and beyond to perform the songs and music that guided them as they started out in their careers," Mr Kotzas said.

"Music is a deeply personal experience, but the themes and feeling it elicits are universal. Hearing from musicians about what music has moved them will not just be interesting, but uplifting and inspiring."

Staged as part of [Queensland Music Festival](#) (QMF) 2017, *Songs That Made Me* asks each performer to also share stories of their personal influences, artistic journeys and landmark songs that have soundtracked their lives.

The format is the brainchild of QMF Artistic Director Katie Noonan, who said *Songs That Made Me* at [WOW at Festival 2018](#) would celebrate the wealth of amazing women in music across the Commonwealth, in an industry still struggling to achieve gender equality.

“After unearthing so many beautiful artists during last year’s program, I’m thrilled to provide the *Songs That Made Me* platform to showcase the many musical cultures of the Commonwealth, including songwriters from Canada, the Pacific Islands and our very own backyard,” Ms Noonan said.

“There has never been a better time to discuss equal rights and the structural forces that hold women and girls back from reaching their potential. With global momentum behind #metoo and #timesup, women and men are finding their voices and speaking out against the abuse of power in the workplace. It’s an exciting time and this promises to be a thrilling concert.”

The evening will also feature the special announcement of the 2018 [Carol Lloyd Award](#) winner. The \$15,000 annual grant was established by QMF in honour of Australia’s original rock chick to support Queensland’s emerging female singer-songwriters.

Tickets are on sale now. For more information and to book visit gpac.com.au.

HRH Duchess of Cornwall is the president of WOW globally, Quentin Bryce is the patron of WOW in Australia. The Principal Partner for the event is the Queensland Government and Major Partners are the Australian Government, Brisbane City Council, QSuper, McCullough Robertson Lawyers, Griffith University and the Tim Fairfax Family Foundation.

-ENDS-

What: *Songs That Made Me* - WOW at Festival 2018

When: Sunday 8 April 2018, 7pm

Where: QPAC, Concert Hall

Tickets: All tickets are \$69 plus a \$7.20 transaction fee

Media contact

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Content

Please click [here](#) for artist images and bios

Social media

Facebook: [@WomenOftheWorldAustralia](#)

Twitter: [@WOWTweetAus](#)

Instagram: [@womenoftheworldaustralia](#)

Hashtag: #WOWFest2018

Notes to editors

Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK’s largest arts centre, occupying a 17 acre site that sits in the midst of London’s most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as The Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk.

WOW – Women of the World

Southbank Centre’s WOW – Women of the World festival is a global festival movement launched by Jude Kelly CBE in London in 2010 (with the first festival in March 2011) that celebrates women and girls, and looks at the obstacles that stop them from achieving their potential. To date, WOW has been in over 20

locations on five continents, including New York and Baltimore in the USA; Ake in Nigeria; Hargeisa in Somaliland; Alexandria in Egypt, Tampere in Finland, Beijing in China; Karachi in Pakistan, Kathmandu in Nepal, Dhaka in Bangladesh; Colombo in Sri Lanka; more than 10 locations in the UK including Bradford, Perth in Scotland and Cardiff; and across Australia in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and in Katherine. It has reached more than 1.5 million people worldwide and this number is growing year on year.

Each festival across the world – made up of talks, debates, music, activism, mentoring, pop-ups and performance – celebrates women and girls, takes a frank look at what prevents them from achieving their potential, and raises awareness globally of the issues they face and possible solutions. It reaches girls and women, boys and men from a broad range of social backgrounds and supplies a completely different sense of action and energy than a conventional conference approach. Speakers have included Malala Yousafzai, Christine Lagarde, Angela Davis, Salma Hayek, Annie Lennox, Gordon Brown, Julie Walters, Patrick Stewart and many more including hundreds of women and men who don't have public profiles but are working everyday to achieve gender equality. More than 25,000 people came to WOW London in 2017, thousands more have come to WOWs across the world and festival organisers have collaborated on cross-continental projects. For further information please visit wow.southbankcentre.co.uk

WOW Australia

WOW was first staged in the Sydney Writers' Festival in 2013. It has since taken place in Katherine in the Northern Territory in 2013, 2014 and 2016, in Brisbane in 2015 and in Melbourne in 2017.

Brisbane-based non-profit company Of One Mind works in partnership with the Southbank Centre in London to facilitate the delivery of WOW festivals in Australia, either alone or through other Australian venues and arts organisations. Of One Mind's mission is to develop and support cultural activities that address or communicate pressing social issues. Of One Mind creates and delivers events, builds networks and partnerships to support its goals, and assists the development of individual artists and arts organisations. For further information please visit www.wowaustralia.com.au

WOW at Festival 2018

One hundred incredible speakers and artists from countries of the Commonwealth of Nations including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO, the first Sri Lankan to climb Mount Everest Jayanthi Kuru-Utumpala, founding chair of Our Watch and former leader of the Australian Democrats Natasha Stott Despoja AM, and Canadian First Nations folk duo ShoShona Kish and Raven Kanetakta of Digging Roots, will join forces for the very first Women of the World (WOW) festival as part of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games (GC2018).

WOW at Festival 2018 will take place at Brisbane Powerhouse from 6 to 8 April 2018, and will run alongside GC2018.

WOW at Festival 2018 will be an energetic three days of panels, talks, workshops, performances and more welcoming women and girls, men and boys, and bringing together fun and laughter with serious reflection on what it means to be a girl or woman in today's world. While hard-hitting issues such as economic security, gender-based violence, leadership and health and wellbeing will be explored, the festival also offers opportunities for celebration and inspiration.

Please click [here](#) for more information about the program.