



Days of wonder

THE TEN DAYS ON THE ISLAND FESTIVAL IS AN ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL SHOWCASE NOT TO BE MISSED. WRITES GABI MOCATTA.

Tasmania has spawned a thriving arts and cultural scene, and it is this that is celebrated every two years in the Ten Days on the Island festival. An exaltation of all that is artistic and inventive in Tasmania, Ten Days on the Island is a cultural treat that should not be missed.

Festival artistic director Elizabeth Walsh is passionate about the 2007 event. "It's a showcase for Tasmania's creative spirit," she says. "It's about people who live here on our island, this very special place, and it's about connections of people living on islands elsewhere. Island living is a shared experience."

Over 10 days from March 23 to April 1, artists from Tasmania, as well as from a diverse collection of isles as far flung as Sardinia, Hawaii, Newfoundland, Taiwan, Cape Verde, New Zealand and Manhattan, will be let loose on Tasmania to create a wonderful range of cultural displays.

There will be theatre from Ireland, with the Corn Exchange's much lauded Dublin by Lamplight playing at Hobart's historic Theatre Royal. More theatre will come from Denmark, with that country's award-winning children's theatre company performing the classic Hans Christian Andersen tale *The Little Match Girl*.

New Yorker Benjamin Bagby's solo performance of the epic Norse tale *Beowulf* is also set to dazzle crowds, and from New Zealand, the fast-paced comedy *Wheeler's Luck* is sure to be a favourite.

Visiting musicians include Sardinian songstress Simona Salis, who will perform in three locations around the state, and Lura, whose Portuguese and Cape Verde rhythms will also electrify audiences around Tasmania.

Visitors to the state will be able to partake of the festival in many locations.

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Where?

Venues all over Tasmania, including Hobart, Launceston, Cygnet, Bridport, Longford, Port Arthur, Lillico.

When?

23 March - 1 April 2007

Find out more:

www.tendaysontheisland.org
Tel: (03) 6233 5700



"One of the great things about the festival," says Walsh, "is that we present work right across the island. This isn't just a Hobart-centric event."

Even small communities in far-flung corners of the state will participate. The picturesque small towns of Cygnet in the south, and Bridport in the north-east, for instance, will host a major new Ten Days commission, *Isle of Plenty*. Here, large-scale, site-specific works by top Tasmanian artists will be the centrepieces for celebrations of local identity, food and cultural traditions.

All over the state, guest international artists will be joined by Tasmanian performers doing what they do best. Against the haunting backdrop of the former penal settlement of Port Arthur, a new work by 25 leading Tasmanian sculptors, painters, sound and video artists, printmakers and performance artists will become part of an exciting new Ten Days event, the *Port Arthur Project*.

In Hobart, *Dream Masons*, a sound, song and light spectacular will be staged over four nights against the historic sandstone backdrop of Salamanca Arts Centre. *Strung Out*, in the northern Tasmanian town of Longford, will be the finale of the 2007 event, and will feature 15 classical string ensembles performing all over the town.

A runaway success of Ten Days 2005, the Pacific Crystal Palace will again be a focal point in 2007. Modelled on the 1800s German Spiegel tents, traditionally travelling cabaret venues often with richly decorated interiors, this ornate venue will

be located at Hobart's Princes Wharf, accommodating an audience of 300 for music and cabaret acts. The tent is a showcase for Pacific Islander design, featuring inlaid shell work and sandblasted glass rich with fern motives.

Next year's festival will introduce the *Palace Salon*, a cafe/bar and the grooviest of meeting places for audiences heading to Pacific Crystal Palace events.

For the 2007 festival's inspirer-in-chief, Walsh, Ten Days is more than just a celebration of the arts. "It's a showcase for our fabulous Tasmanian island environment, for our wilderness, and for our food and wine," she says. "It's about the artists, of course, but it's also an experience that's unique, because we're inviting people into our communities here. That's something real, with integrity and openness. That's something very special for visitors to take away with them. That's what sets Ten Days on the Island apart." 🍷

