

# PERFORMANCE SPACE

Sydney, Australia: Monday 22 August 2016

**MEDIA RELEASE: Close Encounters of the Artistic Kind Make The 2016 Liveworks Festival Unmissable**



Is there an inseparable divide between humans and nature? Can you hand-wash your heart, your soul, your mind? Does collective action really buy freedom? These are some of the beguiling questions being posed by artists in Performance Space's exciting and uncompromising **2016 Liveworks Festival** program.

Intimate acts and awkward conversations between performers and audience members sit at one end of the spectrum that is [Liveworks 2016](#), with giant kinetic sculptures and large-scale performance spectacles at the other. From 27 October to 6 November, the **Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art** returns as Performance Space presents the newest and most intriguing developments in art from across Australia and the Asia Pacific, all housed at Carriageworks at Eveleigh, in the heart of Sydney's arts and cultural precinct.

According to artistic director [Jeff Khan](#), it's time to take audience experience to the next level. *"We are living in extreme times: from political upheaval to environmental disaster, and we're becoming increasingly numb to the daily barrage of mainstream media and advertising that crowds our airspace. That's where independent artists at the edge of contemporary practice are drawing us in to forge deeper connections. Experimental artists invite us, as audience members, to step beyond our comfort zones and see the world anew. Through their insight and innovation, these works—whether they are performances, exhibitions or something entirely different—become a mirror our own fears and desires. Liveworks celebrates the vision and energy of these artists and invites audiences to experience the most exciting new developments in contemporary art."* says Khan.



Taiwanese performance artist [River Lin](#)'s latest work *Cleansing Service* is a series of one-on-one encounters in which the artist asks each visitor to point out a part of their body that seems unclean, physically or emotionally, and offers to help 'cleanse' it for them. In *The Talk*, (you know, the one about where you/babies come from) [Mish Grigor](#) invites 100 people to share glasses of warm Moët and crackers while she recounts frank and often explicit conversations she has had with family members about sex and sexuality. If that's not uncomfortable enough, Grigor then asks audience members to stand in as her parents or siblings and act out the 'sex-talk' scenes together.

Environmental concerns ripple through the program. For *Thunderhead* Sydney-based artist [Tina Havelock Stevens](#) takes us on a hypnotic journey through environmental havoc and asks us to meditate on the state of our planet. Her imposing video installation of a storm, filmed on Highway 54 in Texas earlier this year, will be brought to life each night with a haunting, improvised musical performance evoking the changing space between humans and nature. In *A Faint Existence*, contemporary dancer [Kristina Chan](#) explores our complex connection to the environment; our desire to make a change; and the feelings of helplessness that derail our best intentions. Hers is a powerful physical meditation on impermanence, fragility and mortality in the context of climate change, co-presented by Performance Space and leading dance theatre company Force Majeure.

Other works resonate with rich, cultural contexts. Celebrated Aboriginal music duo [Stiff Gins](#) make their contemporary performance debut with *Spirit of Things*. This brave new work presented by Performance Space and Carriageworks sees music-based performance become an evocative vehicle that celebrates and breathes life into the Indigenous objects that are controversially held in museum collections, liberating them and re-connecting them with their communities and creators. Meanwhile, Singaporean artist [Choy Ka Fai](#)'s epic performance series *Soft Machine* fuses contemporary choreography and documentary film to explore the complexity and diversity of dance in Asia today, exploding stereotypes and questioning what we know about our region. For *Soft Machine*, mesmerising and captivating Indonesian dancer *Rianto* explores the transition between man and woman as he performs the traditional erotic dance Lenggèr in this solo performance alongside newer, contemporary styles. Meanwhile, Chinese artists *XiaoKe + Zihan* make collaborative works that explore the extremes of bodily movement to reflect on the social and political context of China. The price of freedom is at the heart of [Liesal Zink](#)'s *The Stance*, a site-specific performance work that uses the choreography of bodies in protest to explore political activism and collective action.

On the domestic front, *We the People* is an artist-in-residence program that pairs four leading contemporary artists with four diverse community organisations around Redfern – from Esperanto House to the Association for Good Government. Embedded in the culture of each organisation, the artists create unique artworks that invite audiences in to these community spaces, to experience them in new ways.

Taking visual art into a transcendental realm, [Ross Manning](#) transforms Carriageworks' public space into a constantly-moving, psychedelic landscape of light and colour with his large-scale installation *Melody Lines*. Co-commissioned by Performance Space and Carriageworks, *Melody Lines* uses lo-fi mechanics and industrial materials on a giant scale to awe-inspiring effect, altering our perception of the everyday spaces we inhabit.



Experimental music pioneer [Jon Rose](#) opens up his vast personal collection for *The Museum Goes Live*: an exhibition showcasing Rose's astonishing collection of hand-built instruments and violin-related iconography. Tracing the interplay between music and humanity through the triumphs and disasters of the last century, the exhibition will be brought to life each night of *Liveworks* as Rose and a host of Australia's finest experimental musicians activate the museum's eccentric collection of instruments.

The **2016 Liveworks Festival** will also feature a range of exclusive artist-in-conversation events and artist workshops that enable us to hear directly from the *Liveworks* artists and further explore the themes and ideas behind the works.

With these and more works to be announced, **Liveworks 2016** is a platform for performances and artworks that range from grand gestures to ethereal encounters that will etch their way onto the creative conscience of the city.

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## **MEDIA CONTACT**

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**Available for interview:** Jeff Khan, Artistic Director

## **CLIFF NOTES**

### **LIVEWORKS FESTIVAL OF EXPERIMENTAL ART**

**27 October – 6 November**

**Performance Space**

**Carriageworks**

**245 Wilson Street, Eveleigh NSW**

More information and the full program, go to [www.performancespace.com.au/events/liveworks-2016/](http://www.performancespace.com.au/events/liveworks-2016/)

Imagery available: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/0yuzah0gvt6jideu/AADKiK9R3hWfhgBnQAF020Lda?dl=0>

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Key Dates**

- 22 August 2016      VIP pre-release
- 29 August 2016      Early Bird on sale, website goes live
- 29 September 2016      Full release, event guide (program) available



**Liveworks 2016 covers the following themes:**

- Eco/Interest in Environment
- Indigenous art and culture
- Music – Experimental
- Dance - Experimental
- Political Affairs
- Gender and Sexuality
- Asia-Pacific – artists and artist development

**Media Announcement schedule:**

- 17 August Liveworks 2016 announcement
- 5 September Meet the Artist - Biographies and access to artists for interviews
- 29 September Full program announcement and Event Guide release

**Media Previews**

- W/c 24 October Meet the Artist and media previews at Carriageworks.  
Pre-register interest for media previews [here:](https://confirmsubscription.com/h/i/6E82947406BB2BAE)  
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**About Performance Space:** Performance Space is the crucible for risk-taking artists. Emerging over 30 years ago in response to artists' articulated desire to explore and investigate new forms of art, Performance Space has consistently identified, nurtured and presented new directions in contemporary practice. We champion risk, experimentation, and new modes of creative expression. Performance Space continues to evolve and renew to meet the needs of the independent sector and explore new models for developing and presenting the most critical and important new work.

Performance Space is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body; the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW; and the Visual Arts and Crafts Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments. Performance Space is a resident company and key programming partner at Carriageworks.

**About the Artistic Director – Jeff Khan:** Jeff Khan is a curator and writer working across performance, dance and the visual arts, with a particular interest in interdisciplinary projects and site-specific and socially-engaged practices. From 2006–2010 Jeff was Artistic Director of Melbourne's Next Wave Festival, overseeing the development and delivery of the 2008 Next Wave Festival: CLOSER TOGETHER and the 2010 Next Wave Festival: NO RISK TOO GREAT, as well as Next Wave's acclaimed Kickstart development program. Jeff was Guest Curator of NEW12 at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (2012) and of Primavera 09 at the Museum of Contemporary Art (2009). His recent curatorial projects for Performance Space include Sarah-Jane Norman's solo project Unsettling Suite (2013), the SEXES festival, co-curated with Bec Dean and Deborah Kelly (2012), and Local Positioning Systems at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, co-curated with Bec Dean (2012). Previously, Jeff has held roles at Gertrude Contemporary, Melbourne, Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts and John Curtin Gallery (Perth), and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York). As a writer, Jeff has contributed texts to numerous exhibition catalogues, magazines and artists' projects including essays for the Art Gallery of NSW, Art&Australia, the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, the Adelaide Biennale of Australian Art, and many others.