



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 27 June 2016

Tickets on sale to the general public Friday 1 July

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE PRESENTS

CULTURE CLUB

Conversations that explore the arts

The Opera House's arts talks series, *Culture Club*, returns from August this year in a new evening format that provides after-work inspiration and pre-theatre provocation.

Launched in 2015, *Culture Club* is a forum that allows arts lovers of all kinds to explore the big ideas and issues informing the Australian cultural landscape. Sessions are held monthly on Tuesday evenings from August to December and feature diverse perspectives from Australian artists, thinkers and cultural leaders.

The 2016 program is another bumper crop, from cultural crisis to technology in performance, Stravinsky to Shakespeare:

- **State of the Arts (Tuesday 2 August, The Studio)**
Are the Australian arts in crisis? What does the future hold for creative companies, large and small? An expert panel will discuss the changing landscape of arts funding and the impact of recent cuts on the industry, including **Michael Lynch, CBE, AM**, whose spectacular career has spanned London's Southbank Centre, Hong Kong's West Kowloon Cultural District, the Australia Council, Sydney Opera House and Sydney Theatre Company; Creative Producer of premier Indigenous theatre company Moogahlin Performing Arts Company, **Lily Shearer**; ArtsPeak Spokesperson and Executive Director of the National Association of the Visual Arts, **Tamara Winikoff OAM**; and performance maker and board member of PACT centre for emerging artists, **Nick Atkins**.
- **Shakespeare the Radical (Tuesday 30 August, The Studio)**
Author of *The Female Eunuch* **Germaine Greer** was awarded her PhD for her thesis *The Ethics of Love and Marriage in Shakespeare's Early Comedies* in 1968 and has spent her whole working life teaching Shakespeare, in Australia, in Britain and in the US. In 1986 Oxford University Press published her book *Shakespeare in the Past Masters* series, and it has been in print ever since. Her talk at *Culture Club* will take a close look at Shakespeare as a court employee, whose true loyalty was to his audiences, whom he invariably addressed with a respect verging on deference.
- **High-tech Stories (Tuesday 4 October, Utzon Room)**
Virtual reality, sensors, lasers, online content, digital real-time audience interaction and even text messages have spiced up special effects and storylines for decades. Founder of the genre-pushing contemporary dance company Chunky Move, **Gideon Obarzanek**, Google Creative Lab's Creative Director **TL Uglow**, and Griffin Theatre Company Artistic Director **Lee Lewis** take to the stage to talk about creative tech in the arts.
- **Nijinsky and Stravinsky: Creative Collaborators (Tuesday 1 November, Utzon Room)**
Russian composer Igor Stravinsky and dancer and choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky had an explosive creative relationship, most famously expressed in the infamous 1913 premiere of *The Rites of Spring* – the rites that caused a riot. The Australian Ballet's Artistic Director **David McAllister AM** and Music Director and Chief Conductor **Nicolette Fraillon** explore the lasting impact of this historic collaboration.
- **What Are Festivals For? (Tuesday 6 December, Utzon Room)**
Ahead of his first Sydney Festival, Director **Wesley Enoch** will be joined by Co-Artistic Director of Adelaide Festival **Rachel Healy** for a timely discussion about the evolving role of arts festivals. Festivals can transform a city, contribute to economic growth, explore and champion difficult art forms and spawn the taste-makers of a generation. What is unique about Australian festivals? Where are they headed? And will they ever go out of date?



Sydney Opera House Head of Talks & Ideas Ann Mossop says, “For more than 40 years, audiences have come to the Sydney Opera House to experience ballet, opera and classical music, contemporary music, talks, contemporary dance, experimental theatre and more. Culture Club gives audiences the opportunity to not only view the world’s best, but to engage with the artists, ideas and context from which the works emerge.”

Culture Club launched in late 2015 to take audiences behind the curtain, painting or performance, and into the mind of the artist. Highlights included **Sarah Goodes** in conversation with **Annamarie Jagose** about Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando*; a very special talk with visual artist **John Olsen** in front of his Opera House mural, *Salute to Five Bells*; “The Boys Club” at *All About Women* with **Fiona Winning, Van Badham, Lee Lewis, and Sarah Miller**; and **Rafael Bonachela, Lloyd Newson and Kate Champion** on the future of contemporary dance.

View highlights of John Olsen’s talk online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3z4b30kJuY>
 View “The Boys Club” online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2sOVYrB1Uo>

Sydney Opera House Talks & Ideas presents ideas, conversation and debate from leading thinkers and culture creators from around the world, extending the reach of live events with unique content online. As well as a year-round program of inspiring events, Sydney Opera House Talks & Ideas features annual festivals *All About Women* and the *Festival of Dangerous Ideas*, one-day talks event *For Thought*, and the arts talks series *Culture Club*.

INFORMATION:

What: Culture Club
When: 2 August, 30 August, 4 October, 1 November, 6 December
Time: 6pm
Where: Sydney Opera House, various venues
Tickets: \$15 each, 3 for \$36, 5 for \$50 (no booking fee)
More info: <http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/cultureclub>
Images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/fs7hn979kg11z8b/AAC7rMJrZSuHoJdprYw6S8n2a?dl=0>

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