



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 7 October 2016

All tickets on sale by Friday 14 October

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE PRESENTS
BINGEFEST 2016
Saturday 17 December – Sunday 18 December 2016

JAD ABUMRAD (RADIOLAB) / THE AV CLUB / CELESTE BARBER / CHRISTOPHER BORELLI /
JAMES COLLEY / SPENCER CRITTENDEN / JEFF DAVIS /
DAN HARMON / LABEOUF, RÖNKKÖ & TURNER / DAN ILIC / CELIA PACQUOLA /
THEO SAIDDEN / JULIE SNYDER (SERIAL) / ROSIE WATERLAND /
CAT VIDEO FEST / BEYONCÉ VS RIHANNA DANCE CLASS WITH AMRITA HEPI /
PELVIS CAPSULE JERSEY / DE RUCCI WITH A VIEW /
REDFERN CONVENIENCE STORE POP-UP / 24HR STREET FIGHTER

The Sydney Opera House today launched its first new festival in five years, **BINGEFEST**: a 24-hour celebration of addictive storytelling, performance art, journalism, video games, pop culture icons, podcast trailblazers - and cats.

“The Opera House is about exploring and reflecting the culture around us as it morphs and evolves,” **BINGEFEST founder and curator, Danielle Harvey**, said of the inspiration for the new festival. “Television, podcasts, gaming and the internet at large create an artistic frame through which we view the world.

“Over the last few years, we have tried to push the boundaries of what audiences can expect to see at the Opera House – from Michael Cera to Ira Glass, Alan Ball, RJ Mitte, R.R Martin, Tavi Gevinson, Piper Kerman, Mallory Ortberg, Joss Whedon, and Gideon Raff. BINGEFEST is the culmination of all of these wonderful moments; we cannot wait to explore binge culture at the Sydney Opera House in the all-encompassing, immersive environment that only a festival can create.”

The inaugural BINGEFEST 2016 will take place over two action-packed days across the Opera House.

Highlights include artists **Shia LaBeouf, Nastja Säde Rönkkö** and **Luke Turner** in a new participatory performance artwork, which will take place over two successive nights, from midnight until 6am, and 10pm until 6am.

In February 2014, Shia LaBeouf appeared on the red carpet at the Berlin Film Festival wearing a paper bag over his head emblazoned with the words “I Am Not Famous Anymore.” This performative gesture signalled the beginning of an enduring collaboration with UK artist and author of *The Metamodernist Manifesto*, Luke Turner, and Finnish artist, Nastja Säde Rönkkö.

Since then, the trio have launched more than a dozen projects, using empathy, emotion and social interaction to foster new forms of communality across digital and physical networks. These artworks have included the artists fielding emotional phone calls from strangers at Liverpool’s FACT gallery ([#TOUCHMYSOUL](#)), transmitting their heartbeat online during SXSW ([#FOLLOWMYHEART](#)), live-streaming LaBeouf watching his complete back catalogue in a 3-day communal screening at a New York theatre ([#ALLMYMOVIES](#)), and most recently, journeying around North America by tweeting their coordinates and inviting the public to take them anywhere ([#TAKEMEANYWHERE](#)).

Further details about their project will be announced closer to the date, and the event will be free to attend.

Other BINGEFEST highlights include:

- **Jad Abumrad** is the co-creator and host of award-winning public radio program and podcast *Radiolab*, a show that celebrates curiosity, illuminates ideas, and blurs the boundaries between science, philosophy and human experience. At BingeFest, Abumrad – a composer and ‘certified genius’ according to the Macarthur Foundation – will discuss how the visceral, negative feeling of “Gut Churn” can help propel artists forward in their work.

#BINGEFEST



- Executive Producer of *Serial*, the spin-off of pioneering podcast *This American Life*, **Julie Snyder**, will discuss “Binge-worthy Journalism.” The first season of *Serial*, hosted by Sarah Koenig, followed the story of Adnan Syed – who was found guilty of his ex-girlfriend’s murder in 2000 – through the twists and turns of trials and mistrials. *Serial* not only revolutionised episodic audio narrative forms and earned itself a Peabody Award in 2015, it has led to a retrial of what is now an infamous case.
- The Writers’ Room” will be a rare behind-the-screen foray by some of the best brains creating great television around the world, featuring **Dan Harmon** (*Community*) and Australia’s own **Celia Pacquola** (*Utopia*, *The Beautiful Lie*) and **Luke McGregor** (*Utopia*, *It’s A Date*, *Rosehaven*).
- “Harmontown (Live)” with **Dan Harmon & Friends** will be a live recording of the weekly comedy podcast, *Harmontown*. The creator of cult-favourite sitcom *Community* and co-creator of animated TV series *Rick and Morty* will make his Sydney debut at BingeFest with a largely improvised mix of A-list guests, improv comedy and failed self-help sessions. *Harmontown* began as a quest to create utopia, and regularly ends with a segment dedicated to *Dungeons & Dragons*. Harmon will be joined by **Spencer Crittenden**, **Jeff Davis** and more guests to be announced.
- “All The TV You Should Have Watched By Now” will give audiences the chance to get up-to-date recommendations on the best of television, presented by American pop culture experts and obsessives, **The AV Club**. *The AV Club* will also host a binge-watching night celebrating the 20th anniversary of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* with “Welcome to the Hellmouth;” exploring how *Buffy* changed television for the better.
- Features reporter and columnist for the *Chicago Tribune*, **Christopher Borelli**, is the man who has written 1,000 earnest words on the mathematical formula behind suspense. At BingeFest, his talk “When TV Got High: How Low Culture Saved Society,” will explore what it is about TV that makes it so important... and why it always has the last laugh.
- “The Harambe Memorial Service” will feature Australian ‘investigative humourist’ **Dan Ilic** and a panel of local comedians and journalists **James Colley**, **Rosie Waterland**, **Theo Saidden** and **Celeste Barber**, celebrating the internet’s 47th birthday and taking a meta-tour through the viral hits of 2016.
- Local dance queen **Amrita Hepi** will run two intimate dance classes in the Sydney Opera House’s backstage rehearsal room pitting two divas vying for the title of 2016’s most exhilarating record release, Beyoncé and Rihanna.
- Taking place overnight in the Joan Sutherland Theatre Northern Foyer, **24HR Street Fighter** will give audiences the chance to play cult favourite arcade game *Street Fighter* for free. **HADOUKEN!!!**
- Insta-famous Sydney snack icon **Redfern Convenience Store**, with a once-only pop-up in the Sydney Opera House overnight from 11.30pm for fans to stay fueled;
- **Cat Video Fest** – founded by the Walker Art Centre, Minneapolis in 2012, the Internet Cat Video Festival began as a community celebration of crowdsourced content, and has since grown to a stadium-sized event for 13,000 fans of the Internet’s best cat videos. The curated reel of cat videos (thank you Will Braden, the filmmaker behind *Henri, Le Chat Noir!*) will play in the Joan Sutherland Theatre Northern Foyer as part of BINGEFEST’s free program.

BINGEFEST is the latest in a string of festivals that have helped map and shift our collective culture over the last decade, from Vivid LIVE, the Festival of Dangerous Ideas and GRAPHIC to All About Women.

Link to the full time and more information online: <http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/bingefest>

Download images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4fep6d0146d7pp9/AACxfvxZ3prpWx3Ng-GKGplSa?dl=0>



KEY INFORMATION:

What: BINGEFEST 2016
When: Saturday 17 December – Sunday 18 December 2016
Venue: Sydney Opera House
More info: <http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com/bingefest>

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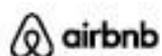
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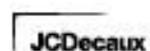
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