



George Souris MP

Minister for Tourism, Major Events,
Hospitality and Racing
Minister for the Arts

Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and
Communities
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

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SYDNEY TO HOST AUSTRALIA'S LARGEST EVER INDIGENOUS FESTIVAL

NSW Governor, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir joined Minister for Tourism, Major Events and the Arts, George Souris and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Victor Dominello, today to announce that Sydney will host the largest, annual, national Indigenous arts and cultural festival in Australia's history.

Called *Corroboree*, the new annual festival will find a home in Sydney for at least the next three years. It will be held over 11 days, from 14 November to 24 November, 2013 and is being put together by nine of Sydney's major arts and cultural institutions which have strong Indigenous programs. It has unprecedented support from the Indigenous community.

"I am delighted to announce the inaugural national Indigenous arts and cultural festival – *Corroboree* and the NSW Government's support for this important event," Governor Bashir said.

"*Corroboree* will give us all a chance to begin to understand and celebrate the true culture of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – the original inhabitants of this great land".

Mr Souris said: "*Corroboree* is aimed at bringing together Indigenous art and culture from around the nation and will become one of Australia's major cultural events.

"The NSW Government is very pleased to be supporting a festival of such national importance not only for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, but for all communities across Australia. Interest and participation in Indigenous culture continues to grow and with NSW having the largest population of Indigenous people in Australia, our State is the right place to host this significant event.

"*Corroboree* will bring together a number of Sydney's premier cultural organisations. It will deliver on the recommendation contained in the Visitor Economy Taskforce Report to establish a major Indigenous cultural festival in Sydney, to raise the profile of NSW's Aboriginal heritage and contemporary culture.

"It will also provide the State with a direct economic impact of approximately \$21 million over the three years, with an expected 55,000 interstate, intrastate and international visitors to attend," Mr Souris said.

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Victor Dominello, said: "This is an important event that will demonstrate and celebrate the diversity and strength of Indigenous art and culture to the people of Sydney, NSW and beyond.

“Art and culture is a crucial part of the social fabric of Aboriginal people and communities throughout Australia.

“This event will help provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their important and vibrant cultures with all Australians as well as visitors from overseas.”

A Working Group has been formed to develop and execute the program and includes predominately Indigenous staff from; Bangarra Dance Theatre; Blackfella Films; Australian Museum; Gadigal Information Service; the Art Gallery of NSW; Museum of Contemporary Art Australia; State Library of NSW; Sydney Opera House and The Royal Botanic Gardens.

Her Excellency, the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO is Patron of the *Corroboree* festival.

Bangarra Dance Theatre Deputy Chair and Corroboree Working Group Chair, Michael McDaniel said: “Not only will *Corroboree* become a beacon for focusing attention on Indigenous culture, but it will provide visitors and residents the chance to experience existing collections and activities in the city and provide opportunities for cultural expression and pride within the community.”

Destination NSW Chief Executive Officer, Sandra Chipchase said: “Hosting and supporting the largest national Indigenous arts and cultural festival is a chance to showcase our amazing arts in Australia’s global city to Australians and visitors from around the world and to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture.”

Additional Information about *Corroboree*:

The Working Group is led by Professor Michael McDaniel, Director, Jumbunna Indigenous House of Learning at University of Technology Sydney and Hetti Perkins, Artist-in-Residence at Bangarra Dance Theatre and the *Corroboree*’s Creative Director (previously Senior Curator, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art, Art Gallery NSW).

A Council of Aboriginal Elders has also been established.

“*Corroboree*” is a word recorded by Europeans (derived from the Sydney language word “*Carriberie*”) to describe a ceremony involving singing, telling stories and dancing. The *Corroboree* was first seen by Europeans at a site that now includes Sydney’s Royal Botanic Garden.

Festival elements will include:

- Opening of *Corroboree* with a Kids’ Parade and Aboriginal Elders Firelight Ceremony
- Workshops, tours, exhibitions and performances by Sydney’s diverse cultural, arts and heritage institutions
- Educational Culture Camps for secondary students across NSW
- Film, Music and Dance at Cockatoo Island
- Youth Career Day for Indigenous young people
- Arts and Crafts Market at Walsh Bay
- Fashion and Design Showcase bringing together the best of Indigenous Design from across Australia
- First Nation’s Conference