



Barry O'Farrell MP

Premier of NSW

Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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BIGGER AND BRIGHTER PARRAMASALA

The third annual Parramasala - Australian Festival of South Asian Arts will transform Parramatta with contemporary music, dance, comedy, theatre, film, traditional cuisine and free outdoor entertainment from 8 – 11 November 2012.

NSW Premier and Minister for Western Sydney Barry O'Farrell today officially launched the four-day festival that opens with a spectacular Bollywood-style party and presents some of the world's best artists to Western Sydney.

"Parramatta is home to the biggest population of Indian and South Asian communities in Australia, so it's the perfect location to celebrate the diversity and influence of South Asian culture," said Mr O'Farrell, who was joined by Minister for the Arts George Souris, Parramatta MP Geoff Lee and Granville MP Tony Issa.

"The Parramasala program features more than 90 free and ticketed performances, screenings and events at venues across Parramatta including Riverside Theatres and Town Hall Square in Church Street," he said.

"Parramasala has become a highly anticipated fixture in Western Sydney's cultural calendar, as well as a boost to the local economy with around two-thirds of attendees coming from outside the Parramatta area."

Mr Souris said the 2012 Parramasala program was inspired by the cultural and artistic traditions of South Asia.

"It includes headline acts such as influential Indian artist Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia, who has performed with the Beatles; Pakistan's reigning prince of qawwali music, Asif Ali Khan; and one of the world's most exciting new music talents, young British/Indian composer Soumik Datta," Mr Souris said.

"Performers this year are coming from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, France, England, New Zealand, Australia, and more," he said.

Festival Director, Philip Rolfe, strongly encouraged both locals and visitors to Sydney to take a cultural trip to South Asia right in the heart of the city.

"For four festive days and nights, festivalgoers will be entertained by an incredible array of artists from around the world, all inspired by South Asia's rich artistic and cultural traditions.

"It's a wonderful event for family and friends as well as those interested in the arts."

In 2011 Parramasala was held over eight days, attracting around 50,000 attendees with two-thirds coming from outside the area.

Mr Souris said that Parramasala was a key arts and cultural event on the NSW Events Calendar.

“The NSW Government, through Destination NSW, is delighted to support an event that highlights Parramatta’s cultural diversity and that demonstrates our commitment to bringing major arts and cultural events to Sydney,” he said.

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