



international arts festival
for bright young things
presented by barking gecko arts

2026



Flip over
for the
Subiaco
Hub

Perth Cultural Centre & Yagan Square:
Tuesday 29 September – Saturday 3 October

WELCOME

Acknowledgement of Country

Barking Gecko Arts and the AWESOME International Arts Festival for Bright Young Things acknowledge Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present. We are proud that this Festival takes place on Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar.



Welcome to the 2026 AWESOME International Arts Festival for Bright Young Things!

Every year, we create a festival that celebrates children's imagination, curiosity and creativity, and I'm excited to share this year's program with you.

Whether you're meeting our delightfully silly clown librarians in *Book Boogie*, becoming the star of *Experts Radio Lab*, discovering the childhood creations of Australia's favourite authors and illustrators in *Juvenilia*, or helping solve mysteries alongside some of the country's best storytellers, I hope you'll find unforgettable moments that surprise, inspire and delight.

This year we're thrilled to introduce our new Festival Hub at Subiaco Arts Centre, where families can relax in the gardens, enjoy the daily *Bean Bag Proms*, get hands-on with music-making, art and creative workshops, and experience free performances and activities. Alongside our much-loved venues in the Perth Cultural Centre, Yagan Square and beyond, the Festival invites children to play, create, laugh and see the world through fresh eyes.

Our stages and spaces will also welcome extraordinary artists from Western Australia, across Australia and around the world, sharing stories through theatre, music, literature, visual arts and interactive experiences. With many free activities and all ticketed performances just \$10, we hope every family can discover something special together.

To our artists, partners, volunteers and supporters, thank you for helping make this Festival possible. Most importantly, thank you to the children whose curiosity, wonder and boundless imaginations inspire everything we do.

I hope you have an AWESOME Festival, filled with laughter, creativity, and unforgettable memories. Thank you for joining us.

Jenny Simpson,
Festival Director



It's my pleasure to welcome you to the 2026 AWESOME International Arts Festival for Bright Young Things. For over 30 years, the Festival has inspired Western Australian children to explore creativity, imagination, and storytelling. As one of our state's most cherished cultural events, it brings together world-class artists, local talent, and thousands of families in a vibrant celebration of the arts.

Supported by the Western Australian Government's Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport, and Lotterywest, the Festival offers accessible, high-quality arts experiences for children statewide. This year, a new Festival Hub at Subiaco Arts Centre creates more opportunities for families to gather, play, and connect through creativity.

Alongside popular events at the Perth Cultural Centre and Yagan Square, this year's program features theatre, music, literature, visual arts, and interactive experiences from WA, Australia, and abroad. With many free activities and all ticketed shows at just \$10, the Festival remains committed to inclusive participation.

Through regional programs, children across WA can enjoy inspiring arts experiences closer to home. Thanks to artists, educators, volunteers, sponsors, and community partners for making this Festival possible. I hope it sparks imagination, curiosity, and joy. Enjoy the Festival!

Hon Roger Cook MLA
Premier of Western Australia



I am delighted to welcome you to the 2026 AWESOME International Arts Festival for Bright Young Things, presented by Barking Gecko Arts.

The AWESOME Festival is a treasured cultural event for children and families across Western Australia. Each year, it brings imagination to life through theatre, music, dance, literature, visual arts and creative play, inspiring young people to explore, create and connect with the world around them.

The Western Australian Government, through the Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport, is proud to support the Festival, helping ensure that children and young people have access to outstanding arts experiences, regardless of their background or where they live.

This year's Festival marks an exciting new chapter with the introduction of the Subiaco Hub, complementing the Festival's long-standing presence at the Perth Cultural Centre and Yagan Square. Designed with accessibility and inclusion at its heart, the new hub provides welcoming spaces for families to gather, create, play and experience the arts together. Combined with regional Festival Hubs across Western Australia, the AWESOME Festival continues to extend its reach, ensuring more children can experience the joy and inspiration of live arts close to home.

The 2026 program features an exceptional line-up of creative experiences, ranging from interactive theatre and storytelling to live music, exhibitions, and hands-on creative activities. With many free activities and all ticketed performances priced at just \$10, the Festival continues to remove barriers to participation, making arts experiences accessible to more families than ever.

My congratulations and thanks go to the artists, staff, volunteers, partners and supporters whose dedication makes the AWESOME Festival possible. Your work enriches children's lives and strengthens Western Australia's vibrant creative community.

I encourage families to embrace all that this wonderful Festival offers. I hope the 2026 AWESOME International Arts Festival fills your school holidays with creativity, discovery, laughter and unforgettable memories. I look forward to seeing you there.

Hon Simone McGurk MLA
Minister for Creative Industries



The City of Perth is proud to welcome families to the 2026 AWESOME International Arts Festival for Bright Young Things.

Each September, the Festival transforms the Perth Cultural Centre and Yagan Square into a vibrant destination featuring theatre, music, storytelling, exhibitions and hands-on creative experiences. From meeting favourite authors at the State Library of Western Australia to enjoying outstanding performances at the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia and exploring WA Museum Boola Bardip, there is something to inspire every young imagination.

The AWESOME Festival showcases the very best of our city's cultural precinct while creating opportunities for families to connect, play and make lasting memories together. With many free activities and affordable ticketed events, it is a celebration that welcomes everyone.

Congratulations to Barking Gecko Arts and the many artists, volunteers, partners and supporters who make this wonderful Festival possible.

On behalf of the City of Perth, I wish you a fantastic 2026 AWESOME International Arts Festival and a joyful school holiday break.

The Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Perth
Bruce Reynolds

AWESOME ACCESS GUIDE

The Festival supports the Social Model of Disability. We are proud to work with children, artists and audiences within the disability community. Our approach to access and inclusion is informed by the voices of the community.

If you have a child with access or additional needs, we have created a guide to help you and your child get the most out of your Festival experience. We understand that all children are different, so the guide is designed to help you make informed choices based on your child's specific needs. The guide is available at awesomearts.com. If you have a question about accessibility not covered in the guide, please contact us by calling (08) 6184 4905 or emailing gecko@barkinggecko.com.au, and we'd be happy to assist.

How to Book

Use the ticket link on the show or workshop page or visit awesomearts.com to book tickets online. You can also call us on (08) 6184 4905 during business hours. We're here to help!

Companion Cards

You can use your Companion Card at any Festival event. If you have a Companion Card, please call our office at (08) 6184 4905 during business hours, 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, or email gecko@barkinggecko.com.au

Getting Here

The Perth Cultural Centre precinct, which is home to the State Theatre Centre of WA, State Library of WA, and WA Museum Boola Bardip, is currently undergoing a rejuvenation project, so some walkways and entrances have changed. Visit cits.wa.gov.au/infrastructure/perth-cultural-centre-rejuvenation for the latest information, transport details and an access map before you visit.

Yagan Square sits within the arms of the Horseshoe Bridge, right next to Perth Train Station and Perth Busport. For train, bus and CAT bus routes and timetables, visit transperth.wa.gov.au or call the Transperth InfoLine at 13 62 13.

City of Perth Parking:

- State Library Car Park, Francis Street
- Cultural Centre Car Park, Roe Street

Connect with us

 facebook.com/awesomeartsau

 [@awesomeartsfestival](https://www.instagram.com/awesomeartsfestival)

#2026AWESOMEFestival
awesomearts.com



Thanks WA!

Over **\$380 million** went back
to the **community** through
Lotterywest grants.



Photo credit: Infinite Productions



STELLARPHANT BY JAMES FOLEY

Ages: 5+ • Theatre • Origin: WA

Based on the award-winning picture book by James Foley and adapted for the stage by Clare Testoni, Stella the elephant dreams of becoming an astronaut, but Space Command says elephants can't go to space. With courage, creativity and determination, she sets out to build her own spaceship and show that anyone can reach for the stars.

Adapted from STELLARPHANT © James Foley 2021, published by Fremantle Press



Enjoyed the performance?
Bring home the magic by purchasing a copy of *Stellarphant* or James's brand-new book, *Amazing Astro Animals*, at the Festival bookstore in the Heath Ledger Theatre foyer at the State Theatre Centre of WA. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm.

Heath Ledger Theatre,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept
10 am & 1 pm

Wed 30 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
11 am & 2 pm

Auslan
Thurs 1 Oct, 11 am

55 minutes

\$10 General Admission

Available here:
trybooking.com/DNVMO



Photo credit: Daniel J Grant

AMAZING ASTRO ANIMALS: BOOK LAUNCH

Ages: 5+ • Literature • Origin: WA

Join local author and illustrator James Foley to celebrate the release of his first-ever non-fiction book, *Amazing Astro Animals*!

From the creator of the award-winning, bestselling picture book *Stellarphant* comes a book about the truly amazing animals that have been rocketed into space.

Join us for a wacky, wonderful book launch, emceed by graphic novelist Aśka, and featuring world-famous astrozoologist Professor Vüpshe Dazchy.



Heath Ledger Theatre,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept, 2 pm

60 minutes

\$5 General Admission

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOEIS



AMAZING ASTRO ANIMALS: EXHIBITION

All ages • Exhibition • Origin: WA

James Foley's brand-new non-fiction book, *Amazing Astro Animals*, tells the incredible true stories of animals who have been to space.

Did you know the very first astronauts were fruit flies? Or that the first Earthlings to travel around the moon were tortoises and mealworms?

Or that the first fish in space was called a 'mummichog'?

Learn more about intrepid animal astronauts in this free exhibition.

Heath Ledger Theatre,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct,
10 am – 3 pm

Free



GALAXY POP

A festival-exclusive creation by Chicho Gelato

Reach for the stars with the Galaxy Pop, created exclusively for this year's AWESOME Festival by our wonderful friends at Chicho Gelato.

Inspired by *Stellarphant* and James Foley's *Amazing Astro Animals*, this cosmic creation features vibrant berry gelato, coated in white chocolate and sprinkled with colourful stars to resemble a sparkling galaxy.

Whether you're celebrating after a show or taking a break between festival adventures, the Galaxy Pop is the perfect companion for a day of imagination and discovery.

Don't miss this limited-edition, space-inspired treat!



HERMIT

BY SIMONE DE JONG COMPANY

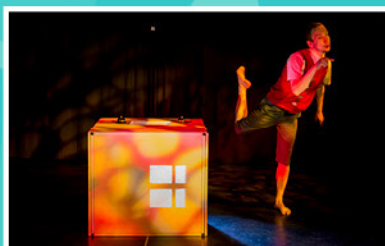
Ages: 2 - 6 • Theatre • Origin: The Netherlands

There is a square. Is it a house?
There is sound. What happens inside?
A lid opens. Is there something inside?
What is inside? Who is inside?

Hermit (Kluizelaar) is a visual, original performance about a mini house. The inhabitant is not at home, but we do hear him... A funny and moving performance about being alone and coming home.



Photo credit: Moon Saris



IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND

All ages • Walk-up Activity

Using giant *Imagination Playground* blocks, children can build a new world every day of the Festival. This interactive activity is comprised of a wide variety of loose parts including cubes, bricks, cylinders, cogs and curves for children to move and transform a play space including imaginary houses, skyscrapers, ships or even animals. *Imagination Playground* is child-centred and encourages self-expression through play.



Photo credit: Daniel J Grant



Photo credit: JE Mode Photography Studios

Studio Underground,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept
10:15 am & 11:45 am
Wed 30 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am & 11:30 am

35 minutes

\$10 General Admission

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOEIQ



SNUGGLEPLAY

BY SENSORIUM THEATRE

0 – 15 months • Sensory Theatre • Origin: WA



Snuggleplay is an intimate theatre experience designed for eight babies and their caregivers. Families are welcomed under the Story Tree and invited on a gentle sensory journey from land to sky to sea finishing amongst the stars. *Snuggleplay* features gorgeous live music and sensory activities specifically designed for babies and their carers to enjoy together. Babies are accepted just as they are and encouraged to listen, smell, touch and explore within this warm hug of a show.

TOUCH & GO

BY INSITE ARTS AND SALLY CHANCE DANCE

24 – 36 months • Dance • Origin: SA

Touch & Go is a dancing game devised especially for children aged two and three years. Featuring dance-theatre and minimal verbal language, *Touch & Go* entices, dares and entertains children in a playful environment shaped by two friendly dancers and a live guitarist, several rolls of masking tape, and lots of imagination. The children and their adults are invited to enter this cheerful world of pathways, stepping-stones and lines. The children become part of the performance themselves or observe from a safe distance, touching and going – just as they need to.



KOOKY FINDS HOME

– A SENSORY ADVENTURE WITH BRONTE FRANCES

Under 5 • Creative Play • Origin: WA

Can you help Kooky find home? Kooky, the Kookaburra needs help connecting to their senses so they can find their way home! This creative hub is a gentle drop-in sense adventure designed to invite creative perspectives into the little things we encounter in our day to day and how they might offer endless joy and delight.

Photo credit: Bronte Frances

Middar Room,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept
10:30 am & 1:30 pm
Wed 30 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am & 1 pm

45 minutes

\$10 per child (includes one accompanying adult) and \$5 for each additional adult

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOEIT

Photo credit: Edwin Sitt

Rehearsal Room 1,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept, 12:30 pm
Wed 30 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
9:45 am & 11:15 am

40 minutes

\$10 per child (includes one accompanying adult) and \$5 for each additional adult

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOEIU

Photo credit: Katje Ford

Studio Underground Foyer,
State Theatre Centre of WA

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



SKILLS & THRILLS CIRCUS PLAY

All ages · Yip Yip Circus · Circus · Origin: WA

Have you ever dreamed of dazzling a crowd as a circus superstar? The fantastic Yip Yip Circus is back at the Festival, ready to teach you jaw-dropping tricks and awesome circus skills that will wow your family and friends!

 Courtyard,
State Theatre Centre of WA

 Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct,
10 am – 3 pm

 Free

Photo credit: Catch Create



UPTOWN BROWN'S PINBALL PALACE

All ages · Uptown Brown ·
Walk-up activity · Origin: VIC

During the COVID lockdowns of 2020-21, Uptown Brown used his creative skills to build pinball machines to entertain his two young children. Although they look old-fashioned, they are not copies of antique machines but his own unique mix of Pinball and its older version, Bagatelle. The machines operate entirely by hand and are very hands-on and fun to play with. The steel balls roll through wooden twists, hitting brass bells and other obstacles, bringing joy to both children and adults.

 Courtyard,
State Theatre Centre of WA

 Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct,
10 am – 3 pm

 Free



Photo credit: Andy Williamson

AWESOME KIDS MARKET

The AWESOME Kids Market is back! The next generation of local young creatives and entrepreneurs have been busy creating a vast array of homemade creations which they'll have on sale throughout the Festival. Come along and check out all the glorious goods on offer.



 Courtyard,
State Theatre Centre of WA

 Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct,
10 am – 3 pm

Photo credit: Catch Create

LITTLE IMPRESSIONS

All ages · Exhibition

This year's theme, 'How can I make a difference?', invites students across Western Australia to explore recycled art and to consider how sometimes the littlest things can have the biggest impact. By using everyday materials in new ways, students are encouraged to think creatively about sustainability and their role in caring for the world around them.

 Foyer,
State Theatre Centre of WA

 Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct,
10 am – 3 pm

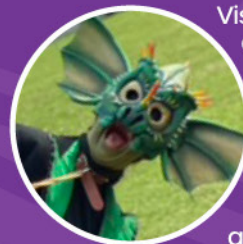
 Free



Artwork courtesy of
North Balga Primary School

The 2026 AWESOME Festival, DevelopmentWA and Yagan Square present MADAME PENELOPE & HER PET LIZARDS

All ages · Street performance · Born in A Taxi · Origin: VIC



Visually striking and highly interactive, the extraordinary Madame Penelope and her exotic pets add spice and humour wherever they go.

Dressed to kill and everybody's friend, the classy Madame Penelope loves to show off her well-trained pets. That is if she can catch them! Her ever curious and playful lizards are off to explore the territory. She has her work cut out for her trying to get them back off the adoring public.

 Yagan Square Mall

 Tues 29 Sept
12 pm, 1 pm & 2 pm

Thurs 1 Oct
10 am & 11 am

 30 minutes

 Free



The 2026 AWESOME Festival, DevelopmentWA and Yagan Square present

PLEASE WAIT HERE

All ages · Street performance · Born in A Taxi · Origin: VIC

High-status, restrained and ridiculous, three Security Guards turn queuing and crowd control into an art form! Subverting status, passers-by are seduced, corralled, and sorted, turning the collective act of waiting and queuing into a series of interactive games that get increasingly absurd.

Lines are drawn and crossed, rules are made and broken, audiences are invited, and coerced into a participatory performance, uniting an audience of strangers in the spirit of play.



 Yagan Square Mall

 Tues 29 Sept
10 am & 11:10 am

Thurs 1 Oct
12 pm, 1:10 pm & 2:20 pm

Fri 2 Oct
10 am & 11:10 am

 40 minutes

 Free



The 2026 AWESOME Festival, DevelopmentWA and Yagan Square present

BOAT OF FAITH

All ages · Street performance · Born in A Taxi · Origin: VIC

Take a dreamily absurd and comically surreal voyage in the Boat of Faith, with Mr Curry at the helm. Ask the "direction finding duck" for directions, get caught in Mr Curry's net of possibilities or be embraced by an angel. Inspired by the poetry and art of Michael Leunig.

Originally commissioned by Melbourne
Commonwealth Games Cultural Festival



 Yagan Square Mall

 Wed 30 Sept
10 am & 11:10 am

Fri 2 Oct
12 pm, 1:10 pm & 2:20 pm

Sat 3 Oct
10 am & 11:10 am

 40 minutes

 Free



THE ZEBRAS

All ages • Street performance • Born in A Taxi • Origin: VIC

Funky, fashionable and funny, The Zebras know how to get a party started. With their own groovy dance tracks, they create a sense of play and connection across age, culture and gender. Think bold stripes, wild dance moves and animals with serious style. They're bringing the disco back to the streets, one hoof at a time.

Originally commissioned by Werribee Open Range Zoo



Yagan Square Mall

Wed 30 Sept
12 pm, 1:10 pm & 2:20 pm
Sat 3 Oct
12 pm, 1:10 pm & 2:20 pm

40 minutes

Free



In partnership with the 2026 AWESOME Festival,
State Library of Western Australia, and ART ON THE MOVE present

JUVENILIA

All ages • Exhibition • Aimee Chan • Origin: NSW

This very special exhibition showcases the juvenilia (or early childhood works) of Australian children's authors and illustrators and their early attempts at storytelling. It features works by creators like Australian Children's Laureate Andy Griffiths, Graeme Base, Alison Lester, Ursula Dubosarsky and provides a fascinating insight into their early influences as the future creators of some of our favourite books for kids.

Supported by Andy Griffiths, Jill Griffiths, The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (East & NZ), Hyphen Wodonga Library Gallery, Juvenilia Press

The Story Place Gallery,
Mezzanine Level,
State Library of WA

Fri 25 Sept 2026
– Sun 31 Jan 2027

Free



Join us for the official launch of the Juvenilia exhibition with curator and internationally award-winning author Aimee Chan at the State Library of Western Australia.

At the launch you will have the opportunity to meet author Aimee Chan, who gathered all the pieces for this display, and hear her talk about what this collection represents about the importance of early childhood storytelling.

Date & Time: Friday 25 September, 10 am

Venue: The Story Place Gallery, Mezzanine Level, State Library of WA

Photo credit: Aimee Chan

BOOK BOOGIE - A STORYTIME EXPERIENCE

Ages: 4 - 8 • Interactive Theatre • Curly Fernandez • Origin: NSW



Photo credit: Jack Mounsey

Book Boogie is a creative play and story-time experience for young people, where storytelling takes centre stage. Through empty books with imaginative titles, it engages participants in narrative-driven activities that encourage them to create new stories using words, illustrations, and performance.

State Library of WA

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

20 minutes

Free



A FEAR LESS STORYTIME WITH KELLY CANBY

Ages: 3+ • Literature • Kelly Canby • Origin: WA

Join award-winning author and illustrator Kelly Canby for a warm, funny and interactive storytime celebrating courage, creativity and the joy of being exactly who you are. Through storytelling, live drawing and plenty of laughs, children and their grown-ups are invited to imagine, create and discover that bravery often begins with one very small step.



Story Place,
State Library of WA

Wed 30 Sept, 10 am

60 minutes

\$10 per child,
accompanying
adults free



Available here:
trybooking.com/DOIKX

BOOK LAUNCH - KEP BARNA: WATER CREATURES

Ages: 0 - 5 • Literature • Jayden Boundry & Tyrown Waigana • Origin: WA

Celebrate the launch of *Kep Barna: Water Creatures*, created by Noongar language teacher and storyteller Jayden Boundry and acclaimed illustrator Tyrown Waigana. Enjoy a special story time as Jayden shares this beautiful new picture book, introducing children to a range of water creatures in both Noongar and English.

This engaging session celebrates Noongar language, culture and connection to Country, inspiring families to continue their language journey together.



Story Place,
State Library of WA

Tues 29 Sept, 10:30 am

50 minutes

\$5 per child,
accompanying adults free

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOGWG



SPONTANEOUS STORIES WITH JAMES FOLEY

Ages: 8+ • Literature • Origin: WA

Join James Foley for a laugh-out-loud session where the kids are in charge. Bring your weirdest and wackiest ideas for stories, because we'll be mashing them up into the funniest Franken-tale you've ever heard – which James will illustrate, live.

Photo credit: Catch Create



- Education Room, State Library of WA
- Thurs 1 Oct, 10 am & 12 pm
Fri 2 Oct, 10 am & 12 pm
- 60 minutes
- \$10 per child, accompanying adults free

Available here:
trybooking.com/DNUUX

THE STORY HUB WITH STORYTELLER-IN-RESIDENCE GLENN SWIFT

All ages • Literature • Origin: WA

Storyteller and host extraordinaire Glenn Swift invites you to The Story Hub: a warm, welcoming space for stories, books, rhymes and literary events at The Story Place on the mezzanine level of the State Library of Western Australia. Come and bask in the glorious glow of words as you listen, imagine, build and share stories inspired by some of your favourite books.

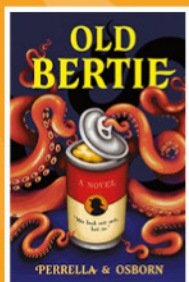


- The Story Place, State Library of WA
- Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm
- Free



CREATE YOUR OWN DYSTOPIA!

Ages: 9+ • Literature • Perrella & Osborn • Origin: WA



Join the authors of the new young adult dystopian-comedy *Old Bertie* as they explore the fun of creating their own rich fictional world. The workshop will explore the authors' unique collaborative approach to writing, the techniques they used to create their novel, and how young authors can do the same!

- Geographe Room, State Library of WA
- Thurs 1 Oct, 10 am
- 60 minutes
- \$10 per child, accompanying adults free

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOGWB



CLAY MEELYU WITH DR HOLLY BRADLEY

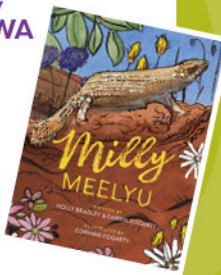
Ages: 3+ • Literature • Dr Holly Bradley • Origin: WA

Join author and conservation biologist Dr Holly Bradley for a special story time with her picture book, *Milly Meelyu*. Follow Milly Meelyu on a journey to find a new home and discover the importance of caring for nature. Created with Badimia Elder Darryl Fogarty and illustrated by Corinne Fogarty, this dual-language book (English and Badimia) celebrates conservation and guardianship. After the reading, Holly will share her inspiration and answer questions. Then, join a workshop to learn about camouflage and sculpt your own Meelyu from air-dry clay to colour and take home.



- Education Room, State Library of WA
- Sat 3 Oct, 11 am
- 60 minutes
- \$10 per child, accompanying adults free

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOGVZ



A PERFECT CITY

Ages: 5+ • Creative Hub • Charlotte Meagher • Origin: WA

What would your perfect city look like? Join artist Charlotte Meagher in this collaborative visual art experience where children and families work together to imagine, design and build a city for everyone.

- Woodside Learning Studios, WA Museum Boola Bardip
- Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm
- Free



HISTORY HUNTERS

Ages: 9+ • Literature • Mark Greenwood • Origin: WA

Join award-winning author Mark Greenwood for this AWESOME history hunting workshop. Search for *The Dragon's Treasure*. Delve into the story of *The Vanishing*, *The Deadly Diamond* and other baffling mysteries. Investigate *The Wonder Horse* and other unsolved cold cases. Collect clues to *The Unlucky Pirate's* loot and design your own pirate flag and crystal skull.



- Woodside Learning Studios, WA Museum Boola Bardip
- Fri 2 Oct, 10 am
- 60 minutes
- \$10 per child, accompanying adults free

Available here:
trybooking.com/DOGWD



SHOW CREDITS

Stellarphant







Hermit



PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY



Skills & Thrills Circus



Madame Penelope & Her Pet Lizards

Please Wait Here

Boat of Faith

The Zebras



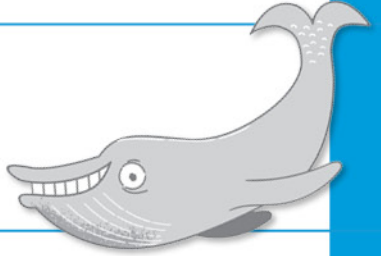
Amazing Astro Animals

History Hunters

A Fear Less Storytime with Kelly Canby

Book Launch – Kep Barna: Water Creatures

Clay Meelyu with Dr Holly Bradley



Create your own dystopia!



Juvenilia



Perth

YOUR INSIDER PASS TO FAMILY FUN IN THE CITY

From festivals and interactive exhibitions to playgrounds, parks and school holiday adventures, the city is packed with experiences the whole family will love.

Plan your next family day out at visitperth.com



SCHEDULE

PERTH CULTURAL CENTRE & YAGAN SQUARE

Act/activity/event	Venue	Artform/Genre	Page
All Ages			
Amazing Astro Animals: Exhibition	State Theatre Centre of WA	Exhibition	7
AWESOME Kids Market	State Theatre Centre of WA	Community	10
Boat of Faith	Yagan Square Mall	Street Performance	11
Imagination Playground	State Theatre Centre of WA	Walk-up activity	8
Juvenilia	State Library of WA	Exhibition	12
Little Impressions	State Theatre Centre of WA	Exhibition	10
Madame Penelope & Her Pet Lizards	Yagan Square Mall	Street Performance	11
Please Wait Here	Yagan Square Mall	Street Performance	11
Skills & Thrills Circus Play	State Theatre Centre of WA	Circus	10
The Story Hub with Storyteller-in-Residence Glenn Swift	State Library of WA	Literature	14
The Zebras	Yagan Square Mall	Street Performance	12
Uptown Brown's Pinball Palace	State Theatre Centre of WA	Walk-up activity	10

Ages 0-5			
A Fear Less Storytime with Kelly Canby	State Library of WA	Literature	13
Clay Meelyu with Dr Holly Bradley	State Library of WA	Literature	15
Hermit by Simone De Jong Company	State Theatre Centre of WA	Theatre	8
Kooky Finds Home: A sensory adventure	State Theatre Centre of WA	Creative Play	9
Book Launch - Kep Barna: Water Creatures	State Library of WA	Literature	13
Snuggleplay	State Theatre Centre of WA	Sensory Theatre	9
Touch & Go	State Theatre Centre of WA	Dance	9

Ages 5+			
Amazing Astro Animals: Book Launch	State Theatre Centre of WA	Literature	7
A Perfect City	WA Museum Boola Bardip	Creative Hub	15
Book Boogie - A Storytime Experience	State Library of WA	Interactive Theatre	13
Stellarphant by James Foley	State Theatre Centre of WA	Theatre	6

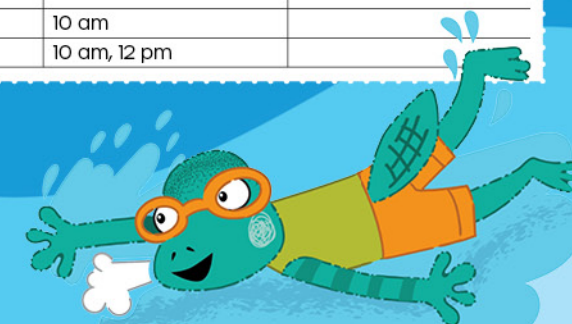
Ages 8+			
Create your own dystopia!	State Library of WA	Literature	14
History Hunters	WA Museum Boola Bardip	Literature	15
Spontaneous Stories with James Foley	State Library of WA	Literature	14

TUES, 29 SEPT	WED, 30 SEPT	THURS, 1 OCT	FRI, 2 OCT	SAT, 3 OCT
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
	10 am, 11:10 am		12 pm, 1:10 pm, 2:20 pm	10 am, 11:10 am
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
9 am - 8 pm	9 am - 8 pm	9 am - 8 pm	9 am - 5:30 pm	10 am - 5:30 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
12 pm, 1 pm, 2 pm		10 am, 11 am		
10 am, 11:10 am		12 pm, 1:10 pm, 2:20 pm	10 am, 11:10 am	
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
	12 pm, 1:10 pm, 2:20 pm			12 pm, 1:10 pm, 2:20 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm

	10 am			11 am
10:15 am, 11:45 am	10 am, 11:30 am	10 am, 11:30 am	10 am, 11:30 am	10 am, 11:30 am
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10:30 am				
10:30 am, 1:30 pm	10 am, 1 pm	10 am, 1 pm	10 am, 1 pm	10 am, 1 pm
12:30 pm	9:45 am, 11:15 am	9:45 am, 11:15 am	9:45 am, 11:15 am	9:45 am, 11:15 am

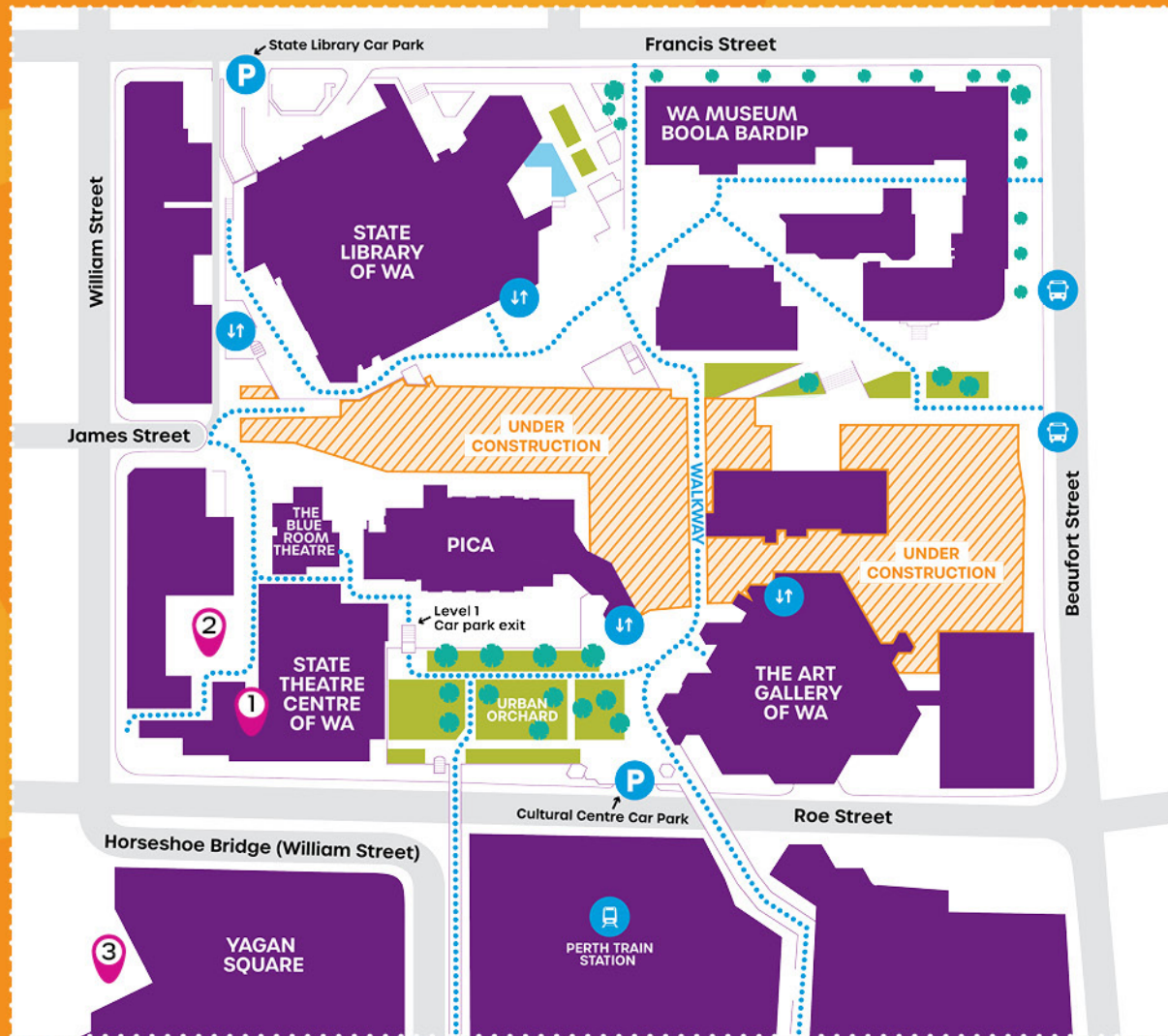
2 pm				
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10 am, 1 pm	11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm

		10 am		
			10 am	
		10 am, 12 pm	10 am, 12 pm	



FESTIVAL MAP

PERTH CULTURAL CENTRE & YAGAN SQUARE



KEY

- 1 Box Office/Information 2 Courtyard, State Theatre Centre of WA 3 Yagan Square Mall

..... Accessible pedestrian paths

- P** Parking Train Lifts Bus



WHAT IF?

Wed 30 Sept
11 am – 4 pm

Join "what if", a brand-new project inviting kids and teens to help shape the future of Barking Gecko Arts. Come along to a creative workshop, get stuck into hands-on making with a professional artist, and tell us what a day at the Festival is really like for you. There are no right or wrong answers – just your honest thoughts on creativity, art, and what events for young people should feel like. Your ideas will help launch our new Children and Young People Advisory Council, so what you say here could shape festivals, theatre productions and workshops for years to come. All you need to bring is yourself.

Want a free day out at the festival?
Festival + Show + workshop = free
Spots are limited, so book now!

KIDS WORKSHOP WITH JAMES FOLEY

Ages 8–12 • Full day of Activities

Calling all 8–12-year-olds! Join world-renowned children's book author James Foley for a playful, hands-on workshop at the State Library of WA. Through games, movement, and making, you'll explore what creativity means to you, share what your day at the festival has been like, and help imagine what a Children's Advisory Council could look and feel like. No sitting still filling in surveys just fun, active ways to have your say and be heard.

Stellarphant,
Heath Ledger Theatre,
State Theatre Centre of WA,
2 pm

Workshop,
State Library of WA,
3 pm

A ticket admits one plus an accompanying adult, including entry to the performance.

trybooking.com/DOJCT



TEENS WORKSHOP WITH SOPHIE MINISSALE

Ages 13+ • Full day of Activities

Travel to Creativity City! In this zine-making workshop with artist Sophie Minissale, young people aged 13–18 are invited to imagine themselves as the newly elected mayor of Creativity City. Through illustration, writing and collage, you'll design your own travel guide, deciding what the city looks like, what's worth seeing, and who runs it (and how). It's a playful way to share your real thoughts on creativity, access, and what you want the future of the arts and your Advisory Council to look like.

Walk of the Whales,
Subiaco Arts Centre,
2 pm

Workshop,
Subiaco Arts Centre,
3 pm

A ticket admits one plus an accompanying adult, including entry to the performance.

trybooking.com/DOJDF



Hear what kids and teens shared with us at the "what if" workshops, then be among the first to apply for our new Children and Young People Advisory Council. Join Barking Gecko Arts Chair and host Hon David Templeman AM at the launch event.

Friday 2 October, 11:30 am

Amphitheatre, Subiaco Theatre Gardens

SCHEDULE

SUBIACO ARTS CENTRE

Act/activity/event	Venue	Artform/Genre	Page
All Ages			
Artist in Residence Nicholas Kirkness	Gallery	Exhibition	9
AWESOME Kids Market	Front Lawn	Community	9
Crash! Bang! Kaboom!	Amphitheatre	Music	6
Foundation Housing Cubbies	Front Lawn	Community	10
Imagination Playground	Front Lawn	Walk-up activity	10
Indian Rhythms	Amphitheatre	Music	5
Love Makes a Family Hub	Front Lawn	Community	10
Madame Lark	Amphitheatre	Comedy	7
OOMPAH!!!	Amphitheatre	Music	6
Play in Process	Front Lawn	Creative Play	8
The Change Maker Tent	Front Lawn	Community	10
The Extraordinary Adventures of Furry Friends: An Original Story with Live Music	Amphitheatre	Classical Music	5
Upsound Instruments – Make & Play Workshop Area	Multipurpose Room	Creative Hub	7
Uptown Brown	Front Lawn	Street Performance	7
Walken Story Time	Front Lawn	Literature	8
Wild Symphony	Amphitheatre	Classical Music	6
Woven Wonders	Front Lawn	Creative Play	8

Ages 5+			
Experts Radio Lab	Front Lawn	Walk-up activity	9

Ages 8+			
The Zine Factory	Studio	Walk-up activity	8
Walk of the Whales by Nick Bland	Main Auditorium	Theatre	4

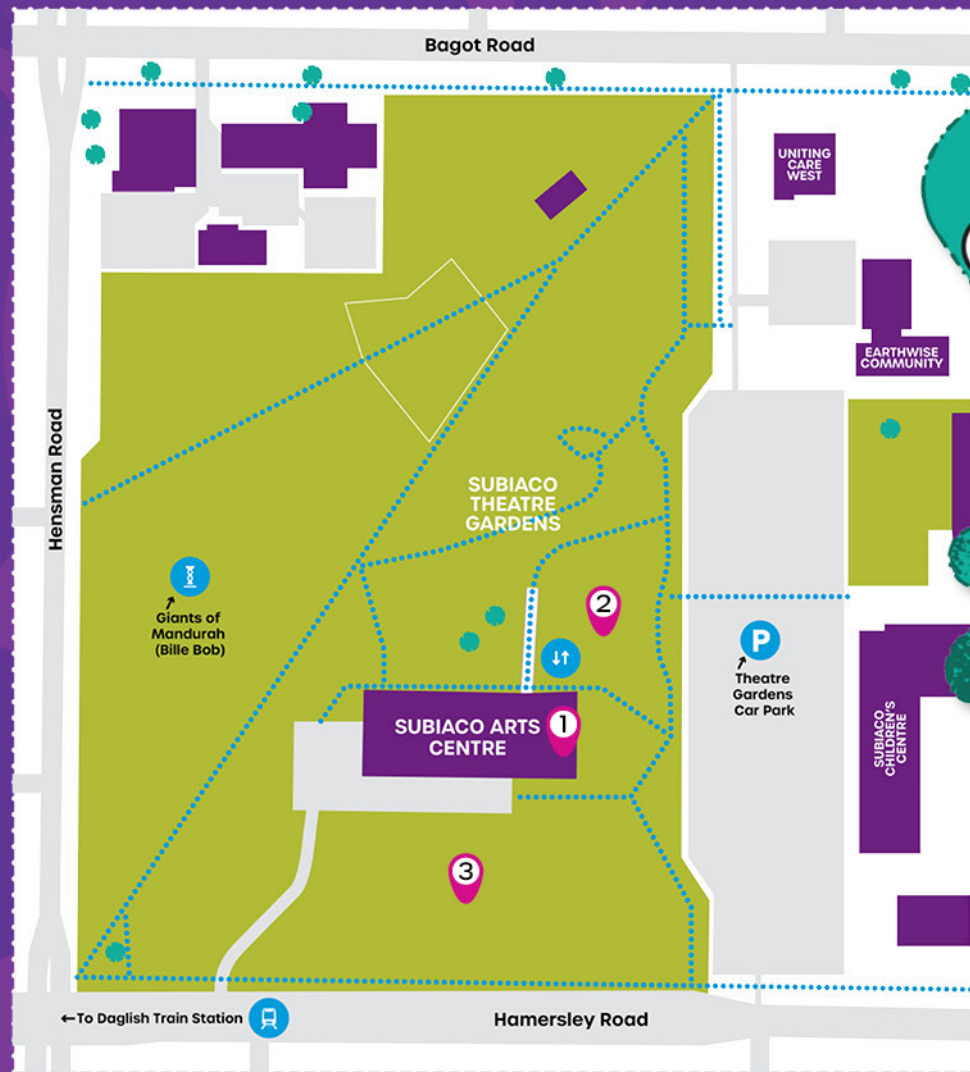
TUES, 29 SEPT	WED, 30 SEPT	THURS, 1 OCT	FRI, 2 OCT	SAT, 3 OCT
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
		10:30 am		
		10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
				10:30 am
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
11:30 am, 1 pm	9:30 am, 11:30 am	11:30 am, 1 pm	11:30 am, 1 pm	
10:30 am				
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
			10:30 am	
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
12 pm, 2 pm	10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm	10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm	10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm	10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm
				11:30 am
	10:30 am			
10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm

10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm

10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm	10 am - 3 pm
11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm	11 am, 2 pm

FESTIVAL MAP

SUBIACO ARTS CENTRE



KEY

- 1 Box Office/Information
- 2 Bean Bag Proms/ Amphitheatre
- 3 Front Lawn

..... Accessible pedestrian paths

- P** Parking
- Train
- Ramps/Lift access

BARKING GECKO

2027

A YEAR OF MYTH AND MYSTERY



THE MYSTERY OF MS J

Ms J has mysteriously vanished from Saint Rhubarb's School for Ratbags and Rebels. Only you can solve the case! In this interactive show, you shape the story, make choices, and vote in real time. Dive into a world of intrigue, laughter, and surprises where the ending is up to you.

Years 3 - 6

May - Jun

THE PLAY'S THE THING

Three misfits are mistaken for actors by Hamlet and offered a fortune to perform a play that will reveal his uncle as a murderer. Out of their depth, they must use their wits to stage a show and save themselves. With help from Hamlet, Ophelia, and the audience, they improvise, sing, and create a one-of-a-kind performance. But with danger lurking, comedy could turn to tragedy at any moment. Filled with sword fights, true love, and a goat named Sir Toby, *The Play's The Thing* is a fast-paced, modern romp through Shakespeare's world.

Years 7 - 10

Jul - Aug

IN A DARK DARK WOOD

A magical retelling of Hansel and Gretel, *In a Dark Dark Wood* brings the classic fairy tale to life for a new generation. Pippa and her brother Mo set off into the woods to help their struggling family, only to find themselves lost in a world full of surprises. With imagination as their guide, they must outsmart the dangers and find their way home. With magical creatures, spooky puppets, and fast-paced storytelling, this show is perfect for primary school audiences in Years 1 to 4.

Years 1 - 4

Sept - Nov

Expressions of interest for school bookings will open mid-November.

THE AWESOME

FESTIVAL RETURNS FROM 28 SEPT - 2 OCT 2027, transforming public spaces into places for kids and families to play, imagine and belong.

JOIN US AT SUBIACO ARTS CENTRE FROM 12 - 15 JAN AND 20 - 23 APR FOR OUR SCHOOL HOLIDAY WORKSHOPS.

Additional venues and dates will be announced soon.

For more information on any of the 2027 programs, please contact gecko@barkinggecko.com.au

To stay up to date with all our happenings, follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

@awesomeartsau

@awesomeartsfestival
awesomearts.com

2026



FESTIVAL IS HITTING THE ROAD!

We're taking our premier program of quality arts experiences for young people to communities across Western Australia these school holidays.

KUNUNURRA

Step right up for free circus fun at the AWESOME Festival Circus Hub at Kununurra Leisure Centre!

From 5 - 9 October, families are invited to drop in and discover the joy of Yip Yip Circus. Packed with hands-on circus activities, playful challenges and plenty of opportunities to learn new skills, it's a welcoming space where children can juggle, balance, spin, play and laugh together.

Whether you're staying for an hour or the whole afternoon, the Circus Hub is the perfect place to get active, get creative and experience the magic of the AWESOME Festival.

 Kununurra Leisure Centre

 5 - 9 Oct, 12 pm - 4 pm

 Free entry - everyone is welcome!

BEVERLEY

What does your dream play space look like? Build cubbies, forts, and blanket caves, or create your own bookshop, café, doctor's office, or teddy bear zoo. Let your imagination run wild in a creative space where you can design and build anything you want! This free activity is ideal for children aged 4 to 12.

 Beverley Station Arts

 5 - 9 Oct, 10 am - 2 pm

BUNBURY

Thousands of local children and families joined us at BREC in 2024 for an unforgettable 2 days of imagination and adventure, and we're excited to do it all over again!

We're returning to Bunbury with a packed lineup, including *Walk of the Whales*, fresh from its Perth premiere, Experts Radio Lab from Scotland, Glenn Swift our Storyteller in Residence, hands-on workshops, a Pop-Up Talent Quest, and fan favourites like the Silent Disco and AWESOME Kids Makers Market. Come explore, create, and play. Entry to the entire festival is completely FREE!

 Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre

 7 - 8 Oct, 10 am - 3 pm

 Free entry - everyone is welcome!

ALBANY

Join us in Albany for a special day of AWESOME! Be swept up in *The Song Catchers*, a new musical adventure from West Australian Opera and Breaksea about Tipu the fox and Marri the echidna, and their journey through the Albany bush to the mythical Listening Tree. Plus, dive into hands-on artist-led activities and explore the AWESOME Kids Market for all the homemade treasures on offer!

 Albany Entertainment Centre

 24 Oct, 10 am - 3 pm

 For tickets and more information on *The Song Catchers*, visit waopera.asn.au. Tickets from \$20.

KIDS ACCESS ALL AREAS VOUCHERS

Got a Kids Access All Areas Voucher?
Use it towards your Festival tickets!

The Kids Access All Areas Vouchers program helps WA children aged 5 to 15 attend arts and culture events, with your voucher claimed back as a rebate after you buy your tickets.



HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

- 1 Buy your tickets from an approved venue or provider (that's us)
- 2 Keep your tax invoice, you'll need it to claim your rebate
- 3 Head to the Passes tab on the ServiceWA app and follow the prompts
- 4 Once your claim is approved, your rebate lands in your account in around 7 working days

Head to the ServiceWA app to apply for a voucher or visit The Kids Access All Areas Vouchers program page for more information.



FIND
OUT
MORE



THANK YOU

The 2026 AWESOME Festival is made possible by the contributions of many talented and generous individuals. We sincerely thank our dedicated staff, production crew, and partner venues for their invaluable support, along with our wonderful designer, Chloe Wilkinson, and our illustrator, Jasmine Berry, for bringing this year's program to life.

Barking Gecko Arts would also like to sincerely thank the local businesses that support our Festival program: Baking Corner, Chicho Gelato, Crumbs Patisserie, Hoodburger, Ruck Rover, Subiaco Bookshop, Jacksons and Pinos Empanadas.

And we cannot thank our incredible team of volunteers enough for generously donating their time, skills, smiles, and infectious enthusiasm to the 2026 AWESOME Festival. We truly appreciate you!

GIVE THE GIFT OF AWESOME

A regular ticket to a show at AWESOME Festival costs \$75. Because of our generous donors, we can offer tickets for as little as \$10 and make most events free.

We believe every child deserves the magic of an AWESOME experience, regardless of circumstance. Your support lets us reach more children, keep prices low, and bring creativity to communities across Western Australia.

Donate now to keep the magic accessible for WA families.
All donations above \$2 are tax-deductible.



**DONATE
NOW**


SHOW CREDITS

The Change Maker Tent

**NO PLACE FOR
POVERTY**

Artist in Residence



DADA

Play in Process



Love Makes a Family Hub



rainbow families
connecting & supporting communities



RAINBOW FAMILIES
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Help shape the future of the
arts for young people!

The Zine Factory



Wild Symphony

PERTH
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

OOMPAH!!!



Foundation Housing Cubbies



40 YEARS OF HOUSING & COMMUNITY

Crash! Bang! Kaboom!



The Extraordinary Adventures of
Furry Friends: An Original Story
with Live Music



Walk of the Whales by Nick Bland



MINDEROO
FOUNDATION



Woodside
Energy



STAN PERRON
CHARITABLE
FOUNDATION



~ ALL FOR THE BETTER ~

IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND

All ages · Walk-up Activity

Using giant *Imagination Playground* blocks, children can build a new world every day of the Festival. This interactive activity is comprised of a wide variety of loose parts including cubes, bricks, cylinders, cogs and curves for children to move and transform a play space including imaginary houses, skyscrapers, ships or even animals. *Imagination Playground* is child-centred and encourages self-expression through play.

FOUNDATION HOUSING CUBBIES

All ages · Community · Foundation Housing

For over 40 years, Foundation Housing has created safe, secure and affordable homes across WA, guided by one vision: a home for everyone. At AWESOME Festival, they're bringing that spirit to life with two hands-on activities. Make your own keychain, a small key for a big idea, that everyone deserves somewhere to belong. Then get building at the cubby-making station, where kids construct their own mini home from scratch, just like the real foundations Foundation Housing helps build every day.

THE CHANGE MAKER TENT

All ages · Community · No Place for Poverty

Kids' Voices Matter! You have big ideas, kind hearts and strong voices. When you speak up about what's fair, what's kind, or what needs fixing, grown-ups listen. That's what the Change Maker Tent is all about – helping you to use your voice to make the world better.

Join us in a welcoming space to explore an important issue facing lots of West Aussies, you'll find the tools to speak out against poverty in WA and join in a simple but powerful way to be part of the solution.

LOVE MAKES A FAMILY HUB

All ages · Community · Rainbow Families

Every family looks different, and we want to celebrate yours! Join Lex Randolph in our artist-led collage hub and create an artwork of your own family, then add it to a growing community masterpiece that fills out over the festival. What is a family? Who's in yours? What makes it different? Grab some glue, and help us build something that says: what unites us is our difference.

Front Lawn,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



Photo credit: JE Mode Photography Studios

Front Lawn,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Thurs 1 Oct – Fri 2 Oct,
10 am – 3 pm

Free



Photo credit: Catch Create

Front Lawn,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



Front Lawn,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free

Don't miss a storytime session
with author Manuao TeAotonga,
reading from *Walken* –
11:30 am, Sat 3 Oct.

EXPERTS RADIO LAB

Ages 6+ · Walk-up activity · Alice Mary Cooper ·
Origin: Scotland

Experts Radio Lab is a live radio show where young people are interviewed as experts. Set within a fun, colourful 80s-style radio studio, the Lab invites young people to talk about what they know, what they love, or what they are 'experts in'. The interviews are broadcast live to an audience in a specially designed listening area.

Originally commissioned by Imagine for the Edinburgh International Children's Festival Family Day at the National Museum of Scotland.

Front Lawn,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Interviews are
approximately 5 minutes

Free



Photo credit: Ruth Armstrong

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE | NICHOLAS KIRKNESS

Visual Arts · Community Event · DADAA · Origin: WA

Nicholas Kirkness is an artist from Fremantle, Western Australia. He loves fishing and all the amazing creatures that live underwater. He enjoys drawing, origami, and making fish sculptures. He even creates his own fishing lures. "I really do love fish. Catching fish, eating fish, looking after fish—I love it all!"

Meet Nicholas at the Festival as this year's Artist in Residence. Watch him make art, ask him questions, and have fun creating your own fishy artwork.

Gallery,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



AWESOME KIDS MARKET

The AWESOME Kids Market is back! The next generation of local young creatives and entrepreneurs have been busy creating a vast array of homemade creations which they'll have on sale throughout the Festival. Come along and check out all the glorious goods on offer.



Front Lawn,
Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Photo credit: Catch Create

PLAY IN PROCESS

All ages • Creative Play • Mud Buddies Perth • Origin: WA

Discover a magical world where art and play come together! Mud Buddies: Play in Process is an immersive, nature-inspired sensory play hub where children can paint, build, weave, discover, and create through open-ended play. With no instructions and no right or wrong way to explore, every visit is powered by curiosity, creativity, and imagination.

Front Lawn, Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



WOVEN WONDERS

All ages • Creative Play • Louise Snook • Origin: WA

Woven Wonders invites festival-goers of all ages to slow down, create and connect through weaving. Drop in for a few minutes or stay a while as you explore fabric scraps, wool, yarn, and a variety of looms—from simple sticks and cardboard to repurposed frames. Create a small sample or a bold woven artwork to take home, or contribute your piece to a growing community weaving.

Front Lawn, Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



THE ZINE FACTORY

Ages 7+ • Walk-up activity • Sophie Minissale • Origin: WA

Clock in at the Zine Factory! You're invited to our drop-in, artist facilitated zine making workshop and pop-up library.

Studio, Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



WALKEN STORY TIME

Ages 2+ • Literature • Manuao TeAotonga • Origin: WA

Gather in the Love Makes a Family Hub for a very special story time with author Manuao TeAotonga as he shares his beautiful picture book, *Walken*.

A gentle celebration of love, identity and belonging, *Walken* explores the many different ways families are made with warmth, honesty and joy. Through storytelling and conversation, Manuao invites children and their grown-ups to celebrate kindness, connection and the importance of every child seeing their family reflected in the stories they read.

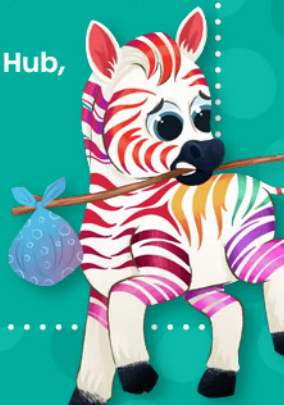
A heartfelt event for families of all kinds.

Front Lawn at the Love Makes a Family Hub, Subiaco Arts Centre

Sat 3 Oct, 11:30 am

60 minutes

Free



MADAME LARK

All ages • Comedy • Christine Johnston • Origin: NSW

She has a musical saw and a zeal for the many and varied voices of birds. Madame Lark offers her own vocal interpretations of the things around her... Along with her particular interest in hair, drawings, shapes and pedestrian elements of society, she gives an affectionate nod to the chatter and warblings of the air dwellers with surprisingly accurate Australian bird calls.

Photo credit: Michelle McFarlane



UPTOWN BROWN

All ages • Street Performance • Origin: VIC



Photo credit: Reza Behnood

Uptown Brown is a singing gentleman-adventurer who brings the sounds of 1920s and 1930s jazz and blues to life with his own one-man band. His unique setup, made from cedar, leather, and brass, is a clever mix of creativity and resourcefulness. He sings and plays fingerpicked ukulele, both amplified through vintage megaphones to capture the feel of an old 78 record. This act offers lively music and roaming entertainment in the classic style of vaudeville and ragtime.

Photo credit: Danny Wootton

UPSOUND INSTRUMENTS – MAKE & PLAY WORKSHOP AREA

All ages • Creative Hub • Jacob Plooij • Origin: The Netherlands

Craft your own musical instrument from upcycled materials! At this fun, hands-on workshop area, you'll transform used, foraged and found objects... into musical masterpieces. Reimagine the classics and make a guitar, trumpet, drum or kazoo. Or let your imagination run wild and build a one-of-a-kind creation. Whatever you choose, you'll get to take home your own Upsound instrument!

Photo credit: Juri Hiensch

Amphitheatre, Subiaco Theatre Gardens

Tues 29 Sept, Thurs 1 Oct, Fri 2 Oct
11:30 am & 1 pm
Wed 30 Sept
9:30 am & 11:30 am

20 minutes

Free



Front Lawn, Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept, 12 pm & 2 pm
Wed 30 Sept – Sat 3 Oct,
10 am, 12 pm & 2 pm

45 minutes

Free



Multipurpose Room, Subiaco Arts Centre

Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
10 am – 3 pm

Free



OOMPAH!!!

All ages • Music • OOMPAH!!! • Origin: WA

Oompah! is a Bavarian brass band with a big, joyful sound that gets everyone moving. Traditional German tunes sit alongside songs the grown-ups will know, like *Sweet Caroline* and *Long Way to the Top*, all played with plenty of energy. Wherever they set up, a dance floor tends to appear.



Amphitheatre,
Subiaco Theatre Gardens

Tues 29 Sept, 10:30 am

60 minutes

Free



WILD SYMPHONY

All ages • Classical Music • Perth Symphony Orchestra • Origin: WA



The Perth Symphony Orchestra invites you to explore the storytelling magic of classical music. Come along with Fiona Campbell as she introduces you to the wonderful world of the string quartet, presenting #1 New York Times best-selling author Dan Brown's *Wild Symphony*, a picture book and live concert experience detailing the adventures of Maestro Mouse and his companions from the animal kingdom.

Amphitheatre,
Subiaco Theatre Gardens

Wed 30 Sept, 10:30 am

60 minutes

Free

CRASH! BANG! KABOOM!

All ages • Music • Kaboom Percussion • Origin: WA

Join Kaboom Percussion as they transform everyday objects into extraordinary musical instruments in a high-energy, interactive performance for audiences of all ages. Using a mixture of traditional instruments, recycled objects, and quirky homemade creations, the show celebrates creativity, rhythm, and the idea that music can be made from almost anything!

Photo credit: Micheal Bell

Amphitheatre,
Subiaco Theatre Gardens

Thurs 1 Oct, 10:30 am

60 minutes

Free

Photo credit: Joey Eng



7

THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF FURRY FRIENDS: AN ORIGINAL STORY WITH LIVE MUSIC

All ages • Classical Music • Australian Baroque • Origin: WA

Inspired by their beloved pets, this charming family performance welcomes all into a story of furry friendships, brave moments, and joyful surprises. Told in a story-time style with live music, every scene is brought to life with sound. Two generations of the Vandervel and Kruger families narrate and perform live music, creating a unique musical experience for all ages. Perfect for families, this performance celebrates imagination, music, and our special bond with animals.

Amphitheatre,
Subiaco Theatre Gardens

Fri 2 Oct, 10:30 am

60 minutes

Free



Photo credit: Brad Coleman



INDIAN RHYTHMS

All ages • Music • Pavan Kumar Hari • Origin: WA

Step into a world where music is created right before your eyes. Using a keyboard and live looping, Pavan Kumar layers rhythms, melodies and unexpected sounds into vibrant musical landscapes. Watch one idea grow into a whole orchestra, discovering how creativity, imagination and play can transform simple sounds into something extraordinary.

Amphitheatre,
Subiaco Theatre Gardens

Sat 3 Oct, 10:30 am

60 minutes

Free



Photo credit: Stephen Heath Photography

6



WALK OF THE WHALES BY NICK BLAND

Ages: 8+ • Theatre • Origin: WA

Whales leave the ocean and wander into Seaside, squeezing onto trains and taking over the swimming pool. At first, everyone is amazed. Then the mess starts. Amid the confusion, young Frida asks the one question no one else will: "Why did you leave the sea?" Based on Nick Bland's much-loved book and adapted by Gita Bezard, *Walk of the Whales* is a magical play about friendship, home, and cleaning up the mess we've made.



 **Main Auditorium,
Subiaco Arts Centre**

 **Tues 29 Sept – Sat 3 Oct
11 am & 2 pm**

 **Audio Description & Tactile
Tour and Auslan
Wed 30 Sept at 11 am**

 **55 minutes**

 **\$10 General Admission**

**Available here:
trybooking.com/DOBRM**



OUR TEAM

Ryan Taaffe
Chief Executive Officer

Jenny Simpson
AWESOME Festival Director

Sam Longley
Barking Gecko Arts Artistic Director

Stewart Campbell
Production Manager

Megan Fitzgerald
Deputy Production Manager

Rebecca Nelson
Producer, New Works, Tour Delivery
& Artistic Programs

Brianna Wotzko
Manager, Impact, Inclusion & Evaluation

Aiman Ridzuan-Morley
Manager, Audience & Belonging

Nadia Bischof
Manager, Community & Access

Kim Walsh
Manager, Creative Learning

Natalie Di Risio
Manager, Creative Sector, Development
& Growth

Carla Nirella
Manager, Creative Pathways & Practice

Kristy Cheng
Manager, Financial Strategy, Governance & Risk

Céline Fitzpatrick
Finance Coordinator

Heather Bongiovanni
Coordinator, Engagement & Access

BOARD

Hon David Templeman AM

Kaylene Gulich PSM

Tony Chong

Chris Turner

Vivien Wong

Francesca Catalano

Sam Lynch

Janis Carren

Andries Weidemann

Kamal Thuraiarajah

AMBASSADORS

James Foley

Jodie Cant

Dr Kate Raynes-Goldie

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Volunteers are at the heart of the AWESOME Festival, and we're always looking for enthusiastic people to join our team!

Volunteering with us offers the chance to work alongside creative professionals, gain valuable hands-on experience with a leading arts organisation, and help create unforgettable experiences for children and their families.

If you're 15 or older and ready to join the fun, we'd love to hear from you!

Email: volunteers@barkinggecko.com.au



PARTNERS

Major Partners



Creative Futures Partner



Presenting Partners



Marketing & Promotional Partners



Regional Partners



AWESOME ACCESS GUIDE

The Festival supports the Social Model of Disability. We are proud to work with children, artists and audiences within the disability community. Our approach to access and inclusion is informed by the voices of the community.

If you have a child with access or additional needs, we have created a guide to help you and your child get the most out of your Festival experience. We understand that all children are different, so the guide is designed to help you make informed choices based on your child's specific needs. The guide is available at awesomearts.com. If you have a question about accessibility not covered in the guide, please contact us by calling (08) 6184 4905 or emailing gecko@barkinggecko.com.au, and we'd be happy to assist.

How to Book

Use the ticket link on the show or workshop page or visit awesomearts.com to book tickets online. You can also call us on (08) 6184 4905 during business hours. We're here to help!

Companion Cards

You can use your Companion Card at any Festival event. If you have a Companion Card, please call our office at (08) 6184 4905 during business hours, 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, or email gecko@barkinggecko.com.au

Getting Here

Parking at Subiaco Arts Centre is limited, so we highly recommend hopping on the train or bus if you can.

Subiaco and Daglish Train Stations are both an easy walk to the Centre (15 and 10 minutes, respectively). Catch bus 25 straight to Hamersley Road, or buses 26 and 27 to Bagot Road, or bus 28 to Hay and Rokeby Roads. Visit transperth.wa.gov.au or call 13 62 13 for up-to-date information on routes, timetables, and service alerts.

Driving? Head for the Theatre Gardens Car Park off Bagot or Hamersley Road (a fee applies), or the Rowland Street Car Park just 5 minutes away, with your first hour free.

Accessible parking is available in the Theatre Gardens Car Park, with 3 ACROD bays.

Connect with us

facebook.com/awesomeartsau

[@awesomeartsfestival](https://www.instagram.com/awesomeartsfestival)

#2026AWESOMEFestival
awesomearts.com



international arts festival
for bright young things
presented by barking gecko arts

2026



Flip over
for the
Perth Hub

Subiaco Arts Centre:
Tuesday 29 September – Saturday 3 October