



Syd Stirling
ACTING CHIEF MINISTER

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FESTIVAL OF DARWIN KICKS OFF IN THE DRY

Darwin's biggest arts festival is about to kick off, with the program for the unique event to be launched tonight.

Acting Chief Minister, Syd Stirling, will unveil the "image" of the Darwin Festival at a special ceremony at the George Brown Botanic Gardens on behalf of Chief Minister, Clare Martin.

"The Darwin Festival is a celebration of our city's uniqueness and celebrates our multicultural community," Mr Stirling said.

"There is no festival anywhere like the Darwin Festival – and this is why the Territory Government is proud to support the event with \$471 500 in funding this year."

Mr Stirling said the Darwin Festival has a reputation for presenting the highest quality Indigenous performing and visual arts in Australia.

"The people of Darwin and the many visitors we have at this time of year will be able to enjoy free public events like the *Santos Concert* on the Esplanade which showcases north Australia's vibrant Aboriginal music scene," he said.

"This year the concert will feature the magnificent *Pigram Brothers* from Broome, who will be ably supported by Territory favourites *Nabarlek* and the newest kids on the block, *Wildflower*.

"This year the Darwin Festival will present a major free outdoor spectacular by the internationally acclaimed performance troupe *Strange Fruit*, who have presented their show to over a million people at festivals all over the world.

"This will be an incredible experience for everyone to enjoy in the heart of Darwin's beautiful Botanic Gardens."

Mr Stirling said another highlight of this year's program is *Keating* - a show by Melbourne comedy group *The Drowsy Drivers*.

"With caricatures of Bob Hawke, Paul Keating and John Howard, not to mention the sight of Alexander Downer in fish net stockings – this is one festival show not to be missed."

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