



ROEBOURNE BUILDING SOCIAL HARMONY THROUGH MUSIC, TEA & STORY

Peace is a human right. **Songs for Peace** on **Saturday 29th September** is not just a one-off event with incredible music, it's designed as an iconic event to encourage social harmony. On the surface it is a way of coming together with friends, family and community over a cup of tea, making music, and sharing songs and stories by the fire. However, Songs for Peace is a remarkable week-long immersion in the art of making peace, as families, friends and communities join with musicians in music workshops, rehearsal, conversation, tea-making, and fireside exchange.

These are fractious times around the country. From Parliament, to city street to fake news, social harmony is in short supply, and Roebourne is exploring new ways to build harmony and champion peace-making, in their home town. In the lead up to the concert, a program of workshops celebrating family and community through music, creativity, and digital image, are being delivered to build skills pride and resilience with young people, but also across all generations. Every day, community members and elders are gathering at the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation's **Ngurin Cultural Centre** for songwriting workshops with musicians from around the country to hone their craft and celebrate their stories through song.

After school young people are learning music, MC-ing, dance, songwriting, video, digital photography, drone piloting, and audio recording. Each day they are out and about hand-delivering digital invitations on iPads across town to their families, neighbours and elders, taking digital connectivity to the streets.

Peace and social harmony are also vital in prison and each week a program of music workshops and performances brings the Songs for Peace concert inside Roebourne District Prison. Grammy Award-winning slide guitarist Lucky Oceans, Ngarluma singer Patrick Churnside, living legend Archie Roach, Byron Bay reggae musician Hamilton Blasket and Big hART's Aaron Hopper are among the musicians ensuring the whole community are involved, not just those on the outside.

In the week before the concert, the John Pat Peace Place in Roebourne will become the centre of intercultural peace-making and exchange. Every day at dusk a fire will be lit in the fire pit bringing the community together for story, song, tea and a sharing of cultures involving Elders, young people, families and musicians.

This year, this cultural exchange will feature Sri-Lankan tea maker Varuni Kulasekera, and Shakuhachi flute player Brian Ritchie (Violent Femmes) sharing the practice of tea and music with Elders and community. These enchanting, contemplative sounds and aromas will combine with the beauty of the Pilbara at dusk, encouraging conversation and building community connections. Simple gestures such as these are the premise is what this complex intercultural project.

Songs for Peace has its foundation in 8 years of deep cultural exchange between the Roebourne community and Big hART. Central to this exchange is the strong support of Wirlu-Murra Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation and Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation. Big hART would also like to acknowledge the support of Fortescue Metals Group, Coins Foundation, Pilbara Development Commission, Perpetual, Australian Government Building Better Regions Fund, and the Blasket family.

Big hART is Australia's leading campaigning arts organisation. In Roebourne, at the invitation of Elders, Big hART continues to work with all language groups, building skills and creating opportunities for Roebourne to tell its story. Songs for Peace is the latest in a series of projects shining a light on Roebourne's cultural strength.

Since 1992 Big hART has worked in over 50 communities, with over 8500 individuals in urban, rural, regional and remote Australia winning over 45 awards.



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