

Olympic Games

Olympic Arts Festivals are “reaching the world”

The Olympic Arts Festivals, the cultural programme of the 2000 Olympic Games, takes to the international stage next year with Australian companies and artists visiting more than 150 cities in 50 countries. “Reaching the World”, the third instalment of the programme, celebrates Australian culture on a global scale, touching each of the five continents represented by the Olympic symbol: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania. It provides a unique opportunity to highlight to the world the extraordinary breadth of Australia’s cultural and artistic life.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s 10th anniversary tour of the United States signals the opening of this third Olympic Arts Festival programme. The orchestra opens its series of concerts in 11 US cities at New York’s Carnegie Hall under the baton of Chief Conductor Edo de Waart.

Australian companies and artists representing the Olympic Arts Festivals in 1999 include: The Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Sherman Galleries, the National Gallery of Australia, Legs on the Wall, Barking Gecko, Youth Music Australia, Stalker Theatre Company, Expressions Dance Company, Sydney Dance Company, Company B Belvoir, Circus Oz, Meryl Tankard Australian Dance Theatre, Gondwana Voices, and the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Touring to three continents with the assistance of “Reaching the World” are the acclaimed indigenous performers Leah Purcell and Deborah Cheetham, whose shows “Box the Pony” and “White Baptist ABBA Fan” were featured in the first two Olympic Arts Festivals: “The Festival of Dreaming” and “A Sea Change”.

“Reaching the World” will also provide financial assistance for five Australian companies (Bangarra Dance Theatre, the Mornington Island Dancers, Slava Gregoryan, The Backsliders and Mara!) to tour to the acclaimed WOMAD (World of Music Art and Dance) festivals being staged in Johannesburg (South Africa), Auckland (New Zealand), Singapore, Reading (Great Britain) and Seattle (United States of America).

A major exhibition in September 1999 at the Royal Institute of British Architects in London will mark the one-year countdown to the Opening Ceremony of the 2000 Olympic Games. In Paris, the Gallery Gabrielle Pizzi also marks the one-year countdown to the Opening Ceremony with a major exhibition of Aboriginal painting and photography, “Myth and Reality”.

In the area of publications, *Olympic Design of the New Millennium* documents in extraordinary detail the most ambitious urban design and architectural project ever undertaken in Australia: the design and construction of the stadiums, public parks, meeting places, arenas, exhibition halls and transport facilities for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. In addition, the Olympic Arts Festivals has enlisted the cooperation of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the Special Broadcasting Television and Radio Service (SBS), Film Australia, and the Australian Film and Television and Radio School and independent producers in an exciting initiative, *Australia On Show: The Guide to Australian Arts Broadcasting*. This will document for the first time in a single publication the

extensive range of arts programmes available for international broadcast at a time when the eyes of the world are increasingly turning to Australia as the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in 2000 approach.

Australian children “share the spirit” of the Games

The creative and artistic talents of Australia’s children are displayed in a limited-edition series of Sydney 2000 merchandise. The “share the spirit” art programme attracted more than 25,000 entries from children in between the ages of six and 12.

Eight state and territory winners, a national winner and a further 40 winners in both individual and group categories were announced in June this year. A selection of their designs are featured on T-shirts, boxer shorts, pins, mugs, fridge magnets, tea towels, ties, postcards, placemats, coasters and key rings. The children were asked to create artworks around the themes of “Welcoming the World”, “Friendship”, “Sport” and “Multiculturalism”. Proceeds from the sale of the limited-edition product range will support the Australian Olympic Team and the staging of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney in 2000.

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