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Theatrical thriller and Australian exclusive *ROHTKO*, breathtakingly beautiful visual opera *Operation:Orfeo*, and internationally lauded Australian band The Avalanches announced as first events for Perth Festival 2027



Perth Festival today revealed that its 2027 program will open with the Australian exclusive season of spectacular production ***ROHTKO*** from trailblazing Polish director Łukasz Twarkowski, centred on one of the biggest real-life scandals in the art world. Fusing theatre, tech and live cinema to create a monumental work that explores art and authenticity in a fast-changing world, it tells the story of a couple who purchase a painting by Latvian-Jewish artist Mark Rothko for $8.3 million in 2004. Years later, it turns out not to have been painted by Rothko, but by a Chinese maths teacher from Queens.

With pumping techno beats, two huge video screens and stunning set design, and brought to life by Dailes Theatre (Latvia) in collaboration with Twarkowski's close creative team and actors from Latvia, Poland and China, it asks: 'Can a fake painting evoke real feelings?' 'What is real art and what is it worth?' *ROHTKO* runs from 5–13 February at His Majesty's Theatre.

Perth Festival Artistic Director Anna Reece said: "There is a new wave of theatre-making emerging out of Europe that is completely redefining what can happen on a stage, and Łukasz Twarkowski is at the forefront of it. *ROHTKO* is theatre on an extraordinary scale, fusing live cinema, performance, choreography, music and phenomenal production design to create something visceral, exhilarating and entirely its own.

"From the major stages of Europe – Holland, Vienna, London, Amsterdam and beyond – *ROHTKO* now comes to Perth for its Australian premiere, exclusively for Perth Festival. This is the kind of work I want Perth Festival audiences to experience. Bold, technically audacious, intellectually thrilling and made with outstanding ambition. I'm incredibly proud that, for one exclusive season, it will be presented at Perth Festival, and I hope theatre lovers from across the country will consider treating themselves and joining us this summer to experience it."

The 2027 Festival will also feature ***Operation:Orfeo***, a hypnotic depiction of the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice told through remarkable voices, light, architecture and illusion. Part opera, part visual artwork, it takes audiences on a descent into the underworld in a work of astonishing precision and beauty. Created by Denmark's legendary Hotel Pro Forma, this masterpiece is opera stripped back and radically reimagined.

First seen in Australia in 1996 as part of Barrie Kosky's Adelaide Festival, *Operation:Orfeo* has become a landmark of contemporary performance. Now, nearly three decades later, the work has been brought back to life as part of a major retrospective celebrating the magnificent legacy of Copenhagen's visionary director and Hotel Pro Forma founder Kirsten Dehlholm (1945–2024).

In 2027, the production will feature the Latvian Radio Choir performing Ib Michael's sensuous libretto as symphonic a cappella singing, alongside music by Bo Holten, with excerpts from John Cage and Christoph Willibald Gluck. *Operation:Orfeo* is at His Majesty's Theatre for four performances only from 25–27 February.

Internationally lauded Australian band **The Avalanches**, whose 2000 album *Since I Left You* remains one of the most forward-thinking and influential albums of this century, will perform at the festival's major cultural precinct, the East Perth Power Station on the final night of the 2027 Festival, showcasing their new album *No Bad Memories* alongside career highlights.

Inspired by the simultaneously magical and insidious ways that advertising and name-brand technology wraps itself around our memories, *No Bad Memories* is an ambivalent ode to the nostalgic pull of commercial jingles, proprietary start-up sounds and long forgotten audio logos. Collaborators on the album include Jamie xx, Haley Joel Osment, Mike Patton, Suzanne Ciani and Khadija Al Hanafi.

The Avalanches – Robbie Chater, Tony Di Blasi, Andy Szekeres – close out Perth Festival on Sunday 28 February at East Perth Power Station.

Previously announced to perform at the Power Station on its opening weekend is acclaimed Northern Irish troubadour **Foy Vance** joined by Australia's indie folk rock heavyweights **The Paper Kites**. Counting Sir Elton John among his fans and an Emmy winner with Ed Sheeran for the *Ted Lasso* soundtrack, Vance brings his distinctive blend of folk and soul to Perth Festival, celebrating his albums *The Wake* and *If*.

With decades of acclaim, distinctive artistry and exceptional live reputations, Vance and The Paper Kites come together for one special night on Sunday 7 February, performing some of their most beloved songs in a rare and unforgettable live experience.

Comments attributed to Premier Roger Cook: "Perth Festival's lineup is going to be huge – bringing big name international and local acts to East Perth Power Station for a summer of fun.

"Every year this iconic event attracts tourists to our city and helps generate great local jobs and I thank Lotterywest once again for their support."

Comments attributed to Minister for Creative Industries Simone McGurk: "Perth Festival is an iconic part of summer in Perth and the 2027 lineup looks set to be exceptional.

"The Festival is going from strength to strength – last year a record 350,000 people enjoyed the work of over 1000 artists. Importantly, Perth Festival showcases work that invigorates, challenges, and celebrates who we are as a State.

"It's also great to see the East Perth Power Station reactivated as a venue for another year to deliver memorable music and events."

Anna Reece said: "I'm incredibly proud that two of Europe's great artistic visionaries will bookend this Festival. We open with Łukasz Twarkowski's *ROHTKO,* contemporary theatre at its most ambitious, cinematic and audacious, and close with Hotel Pro Forma's *Operation:Orfeo*, a work of sublime visual and musical beauty, brought back to life in celebration of Kirsten Dehlholm's remarkable legacy. Together they represent two very different but equally thrilling possibilities for what live performance can be.

"And at the heart of it all, a reminder that East Perth Power Station is back, our iconic riverside home for summer with The Avalanches dropping into our lineup. I'm delighted to reveal our opening hand a little early. Clear your diaries. We're not planning a quiet summer."

Tickets for ***ROHTKO***, **Operation*:Orfeo*** and **The Avalanches** are on sale from midday today AWST for Festival Club members. General release tickets will be on sale on Friday 11 September at midday AWST via **perthfestival.com.au**.

Tickets for **Foy Vance** and **The Paper Kites** are on sale now.

Lotterywest Films Voucher Packs for UWA Somerville Auditorium also go on sale from midday today AWST for another unforgettable season of world-class cinema under the stars, along with **Perth Festival Gift Certificates**.

The full program for Perth Festival 2027 will be announced on Thursday, 29 October.

ROHTKO
5–13 February at His Majesty's Theatre
Supported by Perth Festival Medici donors

Operation:Orfeo
25–27 February at His Majesty's Theatre
Supported by Perth Festival Medici donors

The Avalanches
Sunday 28 February at East Perth Power Station
East Perth Power Station is supported by Lotterywest and Synergy

Foy Vance and The Paper Kites
Sunday 7 February at East Perth Power Station
East Perth Power Station is supported by Lotterywest and Synergy

Press images can be found here.

Media Contact:
Tatia Sloley | TS Publicity | 0403 305 395 | tatia@tspublicity.com.au
Mary Thompson | TS Publicity | 0415 745 910 | mary@tspublicity.com.au