

Culture by numbers

This month's top 15 cultural and sports events, plus a sneak peek at what's happening in June.

COMPILED BY **ROBERT BADMAN**



Theatrical production *The Wheel House* rolls into the Fremantle Heritage Festival in Western Australia

1

NSW

WHAT Sydney Writers' Festival

WHERE Various locations

WHEN May 16-22

swf.org.au

"Writing is easy," said American author Gene Fowler. "All you do is stare at a blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead." It's a safe bet the 400 international and Australian writers appearing at this festival of ideas relate to the sentiment. Hear their travails and triumphs at 300 events and don't miss American activist Gloria Steinem and eloquent Brit Julian Barnes.

2

VIC

WHAT High Country Harvest

WHERE Various locations

WHEN May 13-22

highcountryharvest.com.au

From hunting and gathering to gold prospecting, bushrangers' plundering and beyond, Victoria's High Country has always been rich in bounty. The region's produce will be the focus in a program of 40 events, including the Village Bonfires at Falls Creek and King Valley, among other spots, where you can enjoy mulled wine, pulled-pork rolls, music and a well-lubricated yarn or seven.

Get crafty at Good Beer Week in and around Melbourne



3

VIC

WHAT Scorsese

WHERE Australian Centre for the Moving Image

WHEN May 26-September 18

acmi.com.au

Martin Scorsese has a justifiably venerated position within the pantheon of great directors. From *Mean Streets* to *The Wolf of Wall Street*, his antiheroes have memorably coloured his films – often with crimson tones. Much of the American's near-60-year career to date is covered at this exhibition featuring more than 600 objects and plenty of footage.

4

WA

WHAT Fremantle Heritage Festival

WHERE Various locations

WHEN May 27-June 6

fremantlestory.com.au

It's been more than 185 years since the ship *HMS Challenger* sailed into waters off the West Australian coast and claimed the "Swan River Colony" for England's King George IV. A lot's happened there since, including a name change, and this festival celebrates it all with fine Freo produce, a bevy of rock and classical music acts, museum tours, films and more.

5

NT

WHAT Garrmalang 2016

WHERE The Darwin Entertainment Centre

WHEN May 20-22

yourcentre.com.au

Darwin's renowned Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural festival is back with a diverse three-day program of contemporary Indigenous dance, storytelling at the Spun: True Stories Told in the Territory event, theatrical acts and great music, headlined by three-time ARIA Award-winner Dan Sultan and his talented band.

6

VIC

WHAT Good Beer Week

WHERE Various locations

WHEN May 13-22

goodbeerweek.com.au

Any week is a good week for the amber nectar but this one in particular should have craft-beer enthusiasts drooling into their bushranger beards. More than 150 venues in Melbourne and slightly further afield will host a total of 270 hops-happy events with live music and food to savour, too, including a special dégustation at Vue de Monde restaurant. We'll drink to that.

7

NSW

WHAT We Will Rock You**WHERE** Sydney Lyric theatre, The Star complex**WHEN** April 30-June 12🌐 sydneylyric.com.au

The title of this musical provides a confident boast but, with a cast that includes Aussie rocker Brian Mannix and lung-buster Casey Donovan from *The Sapphires* stage production, it's likely to deliver. British motormouth Ben Elton will direct and 24 of rock band Queen's greatest hits will feature in a tale of Bohemian rhapsody and rebellion.

8

VIC

WHAT Great Ocean Road Marathon**WHERE** Lorne to Apollo Bay**WHEN** May 14-15🌐 greatoceanroadmarathon.com.au

If you're going to run a heap of kilometres in one hit, you may as well make it a scenic route. With six events to choose from, ranging from the 1.5-kilometre Kids' Gallop to the 60-kilometre Ultra Marathon, participants of all fitness levels and ages will take in the rugged coast and sweeping Southern Ocean views as they pound the Great Ocean Road on their way to Apollo Bay.

9

WA

WHAT Ord Valley Muster**WHERE** Kimberley, various locations**WHEN** May 13-22🌐 ordvalleymuster.com.au

This festival has become an institution in the north-west over the past 15 years and has grown to 30 events, largely of the palate-pleasing variety. Music fans won't want to miss Powderfinger frontman Bernard Fanning rocking the stage at the Kimberley Moon Experience, while a dégustation dinner by Fervor chef Paul Iskov is one of many highlights for foodies.



10

NSW

WHAT Lovedale Long Lunch**WHERE** Lovedale, Hunter Valley**WHEN** May 14-15🌐 lovedalelonglunch.com.au

You don't have to be an advertising exec to appreciate a long lunch. Anyone can buy into the afternoon delights at this Hunter Valley weekend of eating and drinking. Visit as many of the seven participating Lovedale wineries as you can manage and enjoy food from the region's foremost chefs. Or just settle in at one of them. "Waiter..."

11

NSW

WHAT Country v City Origin**WHERE** Tamworth**WHEN** May 8🌐 nswrl.com.au

The representative rugby league season continues with an "oomph" at this annual clash of prime footballing talent. NSW Origin legend Brad Fittler has signed on to coach the city slickers this year, while his former Roosters teammate, Craig Fitzgibbon, will help the country mob. A great chance for players to impress Origin selectors, the match is always fast and furious.

12

QLD

WHAT Noosa Food & Wine festival**WHERE** Noosa, various locations**WHEN** May 20-22🌐 noosafoodwinefestival.com.au

About 50 of the country's leading chefs, including Frank Camorra and Pete "Paleo" Evans will be participating in an all-consuming extravaganza, with more than 40 tantalising events taking place at indoor and outdoor venues. Be sure to catch the live cooking demos at the Producers Meet the Chefs event at Noosa Farmers Market on the festival's final day.

13

QLD

WHAT Brisbane Racing Carnival**WHERE** Eagle Farm Racecourse; Doomben Racecourse**WHEN** May 14-June 11🌐 brc.com.au/brisbane-racing-carnival

Dust off your fascinators or dry-clean your best suit and head trackside to be part of the well-dressed throng of Brisbane's racing scene. Featuring Group 1 action, including the AAMI Stradbroke Handicap, and the Channel Seven-hosted Carnival Ball, there's plenty for serious punters and partygoers alike.

14

SA

WHAT Tasting Australia**WHERE** Adelaide, various locations**WHEN** May 1-8🌐 tastingaustralia.com.au

You could easily gorge yourself into a blissed-out state of immobility at this eight-day food festival focusing on the produce and producers of South Australia. Directed by chef Simon Bryant and wine expert Paul Henry, the festival features an enticing array of events and a melting pot of culinary luminaries including Maggie Beer and writer Mark Kurlansky (*Salt: A World History*).

15

ALL STATES

WHAT Mother's Day Classic**WHERE** Various locations**WHEN** May 8🌐 mothersdayclassic.com.au

One in eight women and one in 688 men will develop breast cancer in their lifetime and the runners/joggers/walkers who take part in this event, at more than 100 locations, do so in the name of research to combat the disease. Mother's Day is already a special date but this, Australia's largest breast-cancer fundraiser, makes it extra meaningful for many. ●

**Coming up**

Get out your calendar – June is shaping up to be an inspiring month for food and the arts.

WHAT Variety of Chefs 2016**WHERE** Australian Technology Park, Eveleigh, Sydney**WHEN** June 4🌐 varietyofchefs.com.au

With more top chefs sharing kitchen space than you can poke a fork at – including Maz Valcorza, Justin North, Adrian Richardson, Telina Menzies, Michael Moore and John Ralley – this promises to be the tastiest charity event of the year. It's one of the most worthy, too, with proceeds going to Variety, which helps kids who are sick, disadvantaged or have special needs.

WHAT Disney on Ice Magical Ice Festival**WHERE** Perth, Adelaide, Wollongong, Brisbane**WHEN** June 2-6, 10-13, 16-19, 23-27🌐 disneyonice.com.au

A theatrical production of Disney's smash-hit film *Frozen*... on ice? The synergy could scarcely be richer. Grab the family and get along to a skate-tastic spectacular that also features acts and music from *The Little Mermaid*, *Tangled* and *Beauty and the Beast*.

WHAT Melbourne International Jazz Festival**WHERE** Various locations**WHEN** June 3-12🌐 melbournejazz.com

"Life is a lot like jazz... it's best when you improvise," said American composer George Gershwin. True enough but this festival, with its line-up of international and local stars, is worth planning for.

Book your spot at the Sydney Writers' Festival