

create.

east gippsland shire's culture and creativity program



book now!



jan-june 2026



EAST GIPPSLAND
SHIRE COUNCIL

THE FORGE



acknowledgement to country

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and Bidawel people as the Traditional Custodians of the land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire.

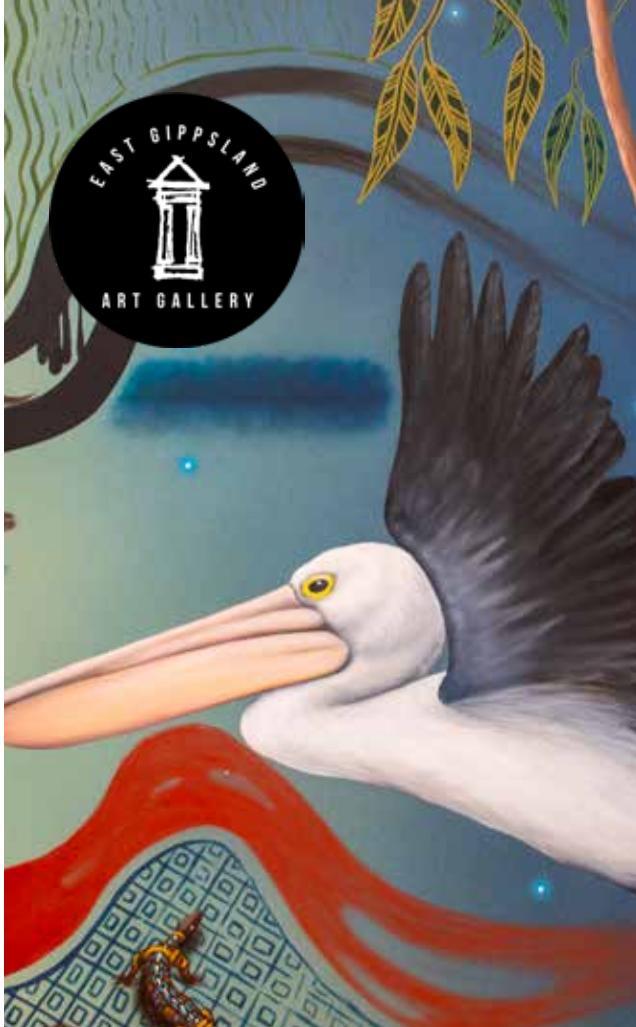
We pay our respects to all First Peoples, their Elders past and present, and their deep and enduring connection to Country, knowledge and stories.



Stay up to date by following **bravearts** on facebook



Find out more about the 2023-2033 east gippsland **culture and creativity strategy**



12 June – 25 th July
south east NOW 2025

The much anticipated group show of artists with a connection to Gunai Kurnai Country. Join us in celebrating creativity, culture, and community.

Image supplied: Ray Thomas, *Borun's Country. The Origin of the Gunnai of Gippsland.* Acrylic on canvas

a note from the CEO



It is my pleasure to welcome you to this season's Create program, a program that continues to inspire, challenge and bring our community together through the magic of live performance.

For those who have experienced The Forge Theatre, you'll know it's more than just a venue. It's a place you as an audience member leave feeling uplifted and connected, reminding us of our shared humanity.

I'm proud to see creativity thriving across our region, thanks to the dedication of artists, volunteers and staff who pour their passion into the space. Their work strengthens our sense of belonging and helps us imagine a vibrant, inclusive future for East Gippsland.

East Gippsland is full of creative people and ideas, and we're committed to supporting them through the implantation of the Culture and Creativity Strategy that aims to make it easier for people to create locally. The Culture and Creativity team host monthly Creative Catch Ups across the region, which is a chance to connect, share ideas and build a creative shire together. Make sure you join our creative database and be part of these gatherings.

Whether you're stepping into The Forge Theatre for the first time or returning as a long-time supporter, thank you for being part of it and supporting a creative shire.

Fiona Weigall
CEO, East Gippsland Shire Council

Creative
Australia



tenzin choegyal: whispering sky

Proudly holding the nomadic lineage which is central to his repertoire, Tenzin's music connects deeply to the wandering people of his homeland. His performances encompass soaring nomadic melodies, sublime flute pieces, sacred poetry, and playful folk tunes, bringing traditional Tibetan sounds and practices into a contemporary setting.

Tenzin takes audiences on a musical journey which transcends cultural boundaries and reveals ancient wisdoms.

the forge presents

the forge theatre
saturday 7 february
7:30pm

nowa nowa
community hall
sunday 8 february
2:00pm

THE AUSTRALIAN INXS TRIBUTE SHOW
FEATURING
DELACOMA RIO

The Australian INXS Tribute Show is a fully immersive "Wembley Style" INXS experience with a show that must be seen to be believed. Hailing from Melbourne, Australia, this unique INXS theatre experience delivers a breathtaking 'Australian Made' rock show unlike anything you've seen before!

thursday 12 february
7:30pm



saturday 14 february
7:30pm

**celebrate the
soundtrack that
saved motown**

This powerful show brings to life the timeless classics of Marvin Gaye, The Temptations, The Rolling Stones, Aretha Franklin, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Smokey Robinson, and more!

Performed by a world-class band and presented as an entertaining narrated show fronted by two Australian powerhouse vocalists:

Judah Kelly –
Winner of The Voice Australia 2017

Asabi Goodman –
Acclaimed star of Chicago and Hairspray

“

**She effortlessly
rules the stage.**

- Time Out



kitty flanagan - glad game

Kitty Flanagan's new stand-up show is coming to Bairnsdale. Asking but not necessarily answering all the big questions. Were we smarter before social media? Has your call ever been used for training purposes?

This is your chance to see the award-winning star of Fisk, Utopia and Have You Been Paying Attention? doing what she does best, stand-up comedy, live on stage at a theatre near you – like, actually near you, possibly just down the road depending on where you live. Point is, Kitty's doing all the travelling so you don't have to. Don't miss it!

wednesday 18 february

8.00pm

thursday 19 february

8.00pm

friday 20 february

8.00pm

book now!



luke kidgell - good intentions

Luke is known for his viral crowd-work interactions that often lead to some fairly unusual, yet hilarious encounters. Despite not having much control over his impulsive thoughts, Luke insists that deep down he means well, and this year he's on a mission to prove it.

After touring the US, Canada, NZ & Europe Luke is coming back home with his brand-new show Good Intentions. This is not one to miss!

saturday 21 february

7.30pm

AKMAL



akmal

Akmal returns with a smash-hit tour after a spiritual journey to India to find himself. Unfortunately, when he got there, he couldn't see himself anywhere...

Stand-up, movies, sketch, radio DJ, talk show host and author, Akmal is one of Australia's most respected, successful and accomplished comics. Lightning quick and a master of unscripted comedy gold.

**saturday 28 Feb
7:30pm**



dolly forever: a celebration of music, heart, and a touch of sparkle!

Joanne Caligiuri brings her talents to the rhinestone-studded world of Dolly Parton, in a heartfelt and entertaining tribute show that celebrates Dolly's humor, heart, and unforgettable songs.

Expect to sing along to classics like Jolene, 9 to 5 and I Will Always Love You, as well as heartwarming tales of Dolly's life and legacy.

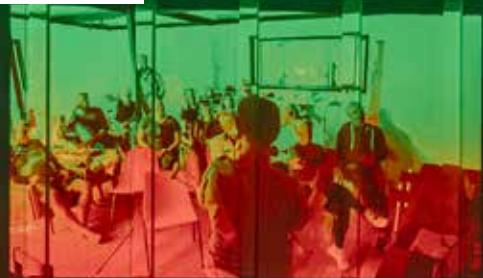
Whether you're a lifelong fan or new to her music, this show is sure to leave you inspired, uplifted, and smiling from ear to ear.

A show that celebrates one of the most famous women in country music history, the forever fabulous... Dolly Parton!

**sunday 8 march
2:00pm**

**High tea included after the show*

the forge presents



immersive - throughout march 2026

IMMERSIVE asks what happens when we open the doors to the creative community?

A showcase and celebration of our region's creativity. This month-long program transforms The Forge into a space where artists can come together to experiment, develop and share what their creative process looks like.

More than just a showcase, IMMERSIVE offers a glimpse into the process, passion and play that fuels artistic practice. Whether you're an artist, a curious observer or someone looking to get involved, IMMERSIVE is your invitation to connect with creativity in action.

creative summit

Rounding off our IMMERSIVE month, celebrate the diverse, creative culture throughout East Gippsland with The Forge in this 2-day event.

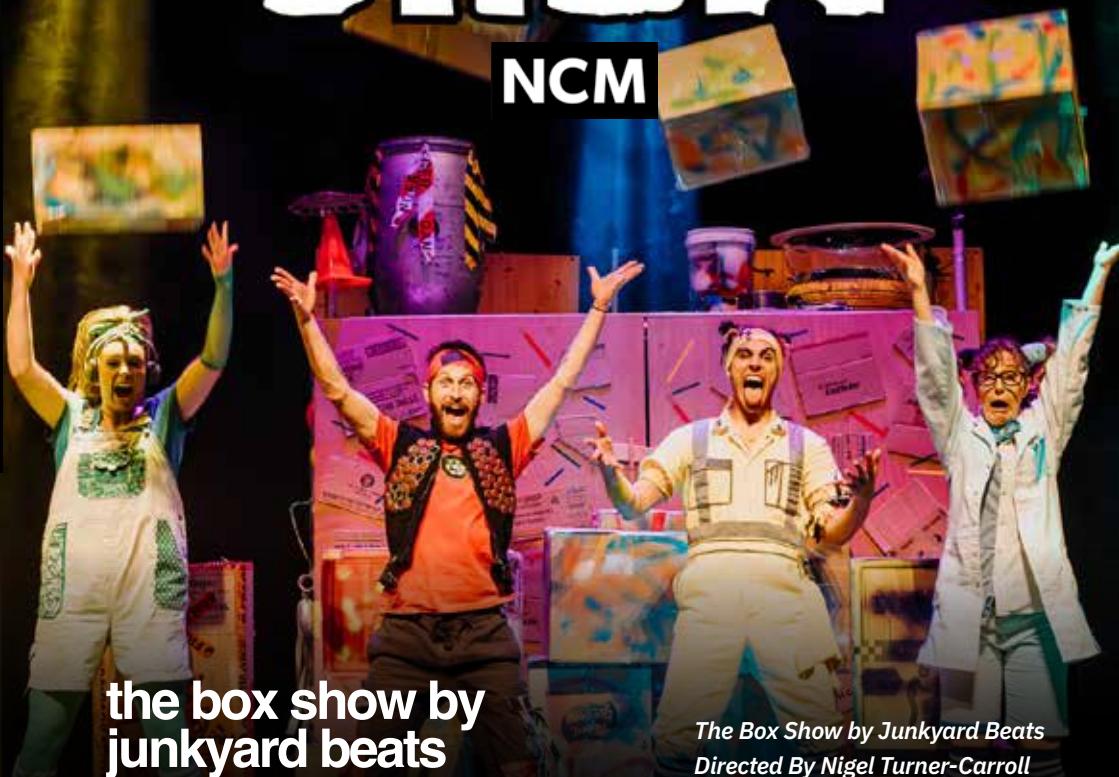
Bringing creatives from far and wide in East Gippsland to network, share and recognize our shared love for both East Gippsland and the Arts.



friday 27 march
& saturday 28 march

THE BOX SHOW

NCM



the box show by junkyard beats

You'll never look at a cardboard box the same way again!

Tag along for a day in the life of a bunch of musical misfits as they reinvigorate the junk that the world has forgotten.

Learn about sustainability with this high energy, imaginative music-in-education performance combining drumming, dance, theatre and comedy.

For children aged 4- 10 years

*The Box Show by Junkyard Beats
Directed By Nigel Turner-Carroll*

Creative
Australia

tuesday 31 march
10:00am & 1:00pm

Ross Wilson & THE PEACENIKS

NOW
LISTEN.
WE'RE
STEPPIN'
OUT!



ross wilson and the peaceniks - now listen! we are stepping out! 50 years of hits

Ross Wilson is hitting the road with his all-star band The Peaceniks to celebrate over "50 Years of Hits" including all the Daddy Cool and Mondo Rock favourites you'd expect along with the latest offering from an almost 6-decade career, tracks from his latest EP on Bloodlines Records, "She's Stuck On Facebook All The Time", and everything in between.

Ross Wilson is one of Australia's most awarded, respected, and well-known artists! From the legendary band Daddy Cool whose number one

**sunday 12 april
4:00pm**

anthem "Eagle Rock" and debut album "Daddy Who?" smashed all previous sales records in Australia an astounding 50 years ago in 1971, to the 1977 formation of Mondo Rock, delivering 80's hits 'Cool World', 'State of The Heart', 'Chemistry', 'No Time', and 'Come Said The Boy' and into the 21st century as a solo performer, Wilson has never been out of the limelight.

His latest release in 2023 "She's Stuck On Facebook All The Time" is a modern-day tragicomedy in the blues genre. Twice inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame, Wilson's live performances are legendary.

book now!



the forge presents

fred smith: domesticity

Domesticity features songs selected from across Smith's broad catalogue and collectively they cover subjects like marriage, mortgages, parenthood and the inevitability of eventually having to deal with ageing family members.

He excels in his use of the every day mundane details of life to spark recognition and understanding in his audience before often delivering quite profound messages. Issues are tackled with a raw honesty in these songs

**sunday 19 april
2:00pm**

**High tea included after the show*

& Juliet

guest production:

Bairnsdale Production Line Theatre Company

& juliet

& Juliet is a jukebox musical that offers a “what if” scenario from Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, where Juliet decides not to die but instead embarks on a journey of self-discovery and new beginnings, finding her own path to life and love.

Includes all your 2000’s favourite music! Roar, Since you been gone, larger than life and more!

fri 01 may	sun 10 may
sat 02 may	thur 14 may
sun 03 may	fri 15 may
fri 08 may	sat 16 may
sat 09 may	sun 17 may



the forge presents

damian callinan: hall stories

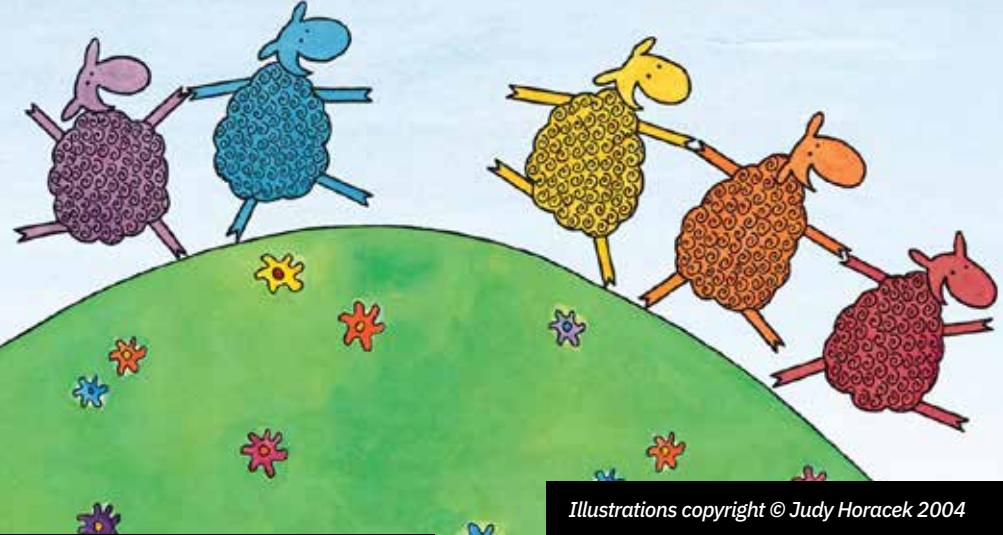
Each hall has a story to tell, and Callinan will be the walls that talk.

Hall Stories is Callinan doing what he does best. He knows how to talk over a bubbling urn; wind up when the CWA start cutting up the passionfruit sponge and stack chairs at the end of the night. Let him know where to get the hall key, and he'll do the rest!

Using his skills as a comedian, storyteller, he'll pull back the curtain on his own tour stories & examine the quirks, traditions & characters of rural Australian halls and meeting places.

lake tyers hall
wednesday 20 may

johnsonville hall
saturday 23 may



Illustrations copyright © Judy Horacek 2004

the forge presents

Monkey Baa Theatre Company and QPAC's Out of the Box

Based on the book by Mem Fox and Judy Horacek. Written for the stage and directed by Eva Di Cesare. For children aged 0 - 6+ years.

where is the green sheep?

An immersive visual theatre experience based on the beloved children's book by Mem Fox and Judy Horacek.

We meet Blue Sheep who loves blue flowers and Red Sheep who loves to cartwheel in the fields, Bath Sheep who loves bubbles and Bed Sheep who loves to bounce... But where IS that Green Sheep?

thursday 21 may
6:00pm

Where is the Green Sheep? is a co-production with QPAC's Out of the Box in association with Arts Centre Melbourne, The Sydney Opera House and The Art House, Wyong.

book now!



choirboys presents run to paradise: great australian rock n roll stories

Part concert, part story, Run to Paradise is a raw, hilarious, and jaw-dropping journey through the golden era of Australian pub rock. Told in their own words, the Choirboys share the stories you were never meant to hear—wild nights, backstage madness, and the kind of insanity only a rock band could survive.

What was Chuck Berry's strange backstage habit? Did Deep Purple really leave Mark with a limp? And what exactly happened to Iggy Pop's pants?

Set to a soundtrack of the era's most legendary tracks, from AC/DC, The Angels, Dragon, Screaming Jets, Deep Purple, Divinyls, and more - plus all the Choirboys' hits including Boys Will Be Boys, Never Gonna Die, Strangletown, and of course, Run to Paradise.

friday 29 may
8:00pm

patron advice
18+. This performance contains coarse language and adult themes.

THE BEATLES ANTHOLOGY

the beatles anthology

Join us on a Magical Mystery Tour to relive the years of The Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band of all time.

The Beatles need no introduction.. THE most influential, highest selling, most important band in music history.

In this live 2 hour show, we will take you down the Long and Winding Road – from the “Fab Four” days of matching suits and matching mop hair, to the “experimental” days of Tangerine

Trees, Marmalade Skies, and Kaleidescope Eyes

It's all there - the costumes, the hairstyles, the banter, the left-handed “Paul”.

All You need is love... and a ticket to this show!

**thursday 04 june
7:30pm**



primal

A provocative circus inspired by the animal kingdom!

Get ready for Primal, the sensational new show from the creators of Rouge! Dive into a thrilling, sexy and hilarious circus experience designed exclusively for adults.

Inspired by the raw energy of the animal kingdom and the complexities of human relationships, this nonstop spectacle explores identity, sexuality and perception.

**the forge presents
highwire entertainment**

**friday 26 june
& saturday 27 june
7:30pm**

patron advice
18+. This performance contains adult themes and includes nudity.



EAST GIPPSLAND WINTER FESTIVAL

19 JUNE TO 19 JULY

Be welcomed by friendly locals and creative communities for a region-wide celebration of luminous art, epic winter feasts, lively music, dark skies and roaring fires.



Partner



THE FORGE

80 McKean Street, Bairnsdale 03 5152 1482 www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/theforge