

2024 Festival Program

22-23 March 2024

'The little festival with the big heart'



LAKE BOLAC
EEL FESTIVAL
KUYANG LAPAKIRA
- PLENTY EELS -

FRIDAY 22 MARCH

Art Auction and Indigenous Dinner

5-7pm

At the Lake Bolac Memorial Hall. Pre-view of artworks for the 4th regional art auction and drinks, Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, chamber folk music.

7-9:30pm

Auction and feast on a delicious dinner by Castlemaine's **Murnong Mummas**.

SATURDAY 23 MARCH

The Festival

10:30am til 11pm

Come camp by the ancient lake, home to the short-finned eel, where the Djabwurrung and neighbouring tribes have gathered for millennia and, today, hosts a thriving rural community.

- 11am **Welcome to Country**
- 11:15am – 1pm **Festival Forum** addressing the festival theme of 'Song, Story, Dance; Ceremony and Celebration'
- music program
- workshops to broaden your mind
- meaningful activities for children
- smoked & grilled eel, tantalising tasty food vans, craft market and information stalls.

7.30pm

Twilight Celebration

As the sun sets, the Festival centrepiece, the Twilight Celebration, will unfold as the fires are lit and the traditional dancing begins.

MUSIC LINE-UP

1:30-11:00pm

Brett Clarke is a Kirrae Whurrung/Gunditjmarra artist, singer/songwriter, composer and producer who writes and records his own works to create cultural and environment awareness.

Geelong 5-piece folk/rock outfit, **Seal Prince and the Roof Rats** will play. The Rats offer Paul-Kelly storytelling about socio-economic gaps, set upon waves of soaring fiddle.

Born in nearby Terang and based in Melbourne, **Bruce Watson** is an Australian singer-songwriter who performs around Australia and internationally at festivals and clubs. His style is generally contemporary folk music.

Skyglass is a trio of violin, guitar and shakuhachi performing original music. From spacious soundscapes to driving polyrhythms, each instrumentalist incorporates sung and spoken word into engaging and moving performances.

Tim Scanlan mixes old world melodies with modern beats and sounds, bringing harmonica, guitar and foot percussion into a new dimension.

Gabby Steel is a very popular South West artist. Her music and vocals are striking which is why her star is rising in the national music scene.

Andy Alberts Band led by a proud Gunditjmarra man who performs all over Victoria and is a long-time Eel Festival performer. He returns with his band The Walkabouts.

Neil Murray, Warumpi Band founding member and now maverick award-winning song man. And an array of talent awaits you at the **Buskers Stage**.

WORKSHOP LINE-UP

Spend some time with Gunditjmarra artist and master weaver, Bronwyn Razem, learning about traditional **basket weaving** and creating your own woven basket.

Cook your own **deadly damper on a stick** with Julie Green and Steve Verde.

Water fun with Stuart McCallum exploring **water bugs** and creating **rainbow water**.

Brett Clarke, shares his vast knowledge of local **bush foods** and their connection to the six seasons of Gunditjmarra country.

Join master craftsman Eli Beke of Wedge and Edge and learn the basics of **greenwood carving** to craft your very own butter spreader.

Face painting for the kids.

Emily Sheppard and Yyan Ng demonstrate the different stages of making an **eel-skin instrument**. Followed by a science storytelling performance on eel-skin violin and guitar with scientist Malcolm Johnson.

Let your creativity loose as you translate the mesmerising colours and patterns of native invertebrates onto paper and canvas at the **"ARThropod"** workshop (for all ages), with local entomologist and artist, Dr. Elia Pirtle.

Join in the fun with Peter Day and Amanda Perry-Bolt making your own magical and unique **head wear** and **masks using plant foliage**.

Create **'Extravagant Birds'** with Veronica Phillips and give farm waste new life by sculpting it into the form of local bird species.

iNaturalist: Your personal pocket taxonomist. Local ecologist Dr. Elia Pirtle will guide you through all the ins and outs of using the iNaturalist app. Make sure to download the app ahead of time and make a free account! Join the **ukulele** tsunami with Bruce Watson, who knows how to make it easy and fun. For beginners and intermediate players. Bring your own uke - there will only be a few spares. Come along and join in **painting tattoos** and **making cards** with Catherine van Wilgenburg, renowned visual artist.

Have a yarn with The Connies and collect some awesome environmental **swap cards**.

Brett Clarke invites you to join him as he shares an **Indigenous perspective** on our **festival theme** 'Song, Story, Dance; Ceremony and Celebration'

**Program subject to alteration*

TICKETS NOW at www.eelfestival.org.au

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Ararat Rural City

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CMA



SOUTH WEST TAFE



Community Bank
Willaura and Lake Bolac

 Bendigo Bank



REGIONAL arts AUSTRALIA

REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA

Running sheet

SATURDAY 23 MARCH

Festival Forum

11.15am-1.30pm

John Clarke, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC), will chair the forum.

Speakers

- Men's and women's Indigenous dance practice by Festival Cultural Adviser Adeline Thomas and Indigenous Cultural Artist Brett Clarke
- Tasmanian geographer, ecologist, eel advocate and PhD candidate Malcolm S. Johnson
- Deakin University's Honorary Associate Environmental Humanities Professor, Dr Rod Giblett, on environmental history of the Hopkins River
- Wergaia/Wamba Wamba Elder and Yoorrook Justice Commission chair, Prof. Eleanor Bourke

Music

1.30 pm	Brett Clarke
2.30 pm	Seal Prince and the Roof Rats
3.30 pm	Bruce Watson
4.30 pm	Skyglass
5.30 pm	Tim Scanlan & Mana Okubo

6.30 pm	Gabby Steel Band
7.30pm (sunset)	Twilight Ceremony
8.30 pm	Andy Alberts Band
9.30 pm	Neil Murray and band
11.00 pm	CLOSE

SESSION TIMES	WORKSHOP – Bookings made on arrival at festival entrance	PROVIDER
11am–5pm	Roaming/yarning/giving away biodiversity and First Nations cards	The Connies
12noon–4pm	Deadly Damper on a stick	Julie Green, Steve Verde
12noon–4pm	Rainbow water	Stuart McCallum
12noon–4pm	Water bugs	Stuart McCallum/Erin Wilson
2–3.30pm	Make a wooden butter spreader	Booking required Eli Beke
11.30–1.30pm 2–4pm	Basket weaving	Booking required Aunty Bronwyn Razem
11am–5pm	Temporary tattoos and card-making with endangered animals focus	Catherine van Wilgenburg
11am–5pm	Botanical headbands and masks	Peter Day and Amanda Perry-Bolt
1.30–2.45pm	Ukulele for beginners and intermediate players. BYO ukulele – limited spares	Booking required Bruce Watson
3–4pm	iNaturalist – pocket taxonomist. Before the workshop Download the app	Booking required Elia Pirtle
4.30–5.15pm	ARThropod – revealing the art of the invertebrate world - for all ages	Booking required Elia Pirtle
1.30–2.30pm	Demonstration – make an eel skin instrument Performance – science story-telling with eel skin instruments	'Where Water Meets' – Emily Sheppard, Yyan Ng and Malcolm Johnson
11am–5pm	Extravagant Birds – creating sculptures using farm waste	Veronica Phillips
3–4pm	Presentation – bush foods and the six seasons of Gunditjmara country	Booking required Brett Clarke
4.30–5.30pm	Presentation – indigenous perspective on festival theme 'Song, Story, Dance; Ceremony and Celebration'	Booking required Brett Clarke
12.30–3.30pm	Face painting	Makayla