

MELB
INT'L
JAZZ
FEST

Melbourne International Jazz Festival

2020 Festival Report



CONTENTS

Festival Overview	5
Premieres, Commissions & Launches	6
Artists	8
Sector Development	12
Audience & Reach	14
Our Supporters	16
Our Team	18

Acknowledgement of Country

The Melbourne International Jazz Festival respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our Festival takes place, the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, as well as to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the wider Melbourne community and beyond. We are honoured to contribute to the over 60,000 years of music making and storytelling that has taken place on this land.

Principal and Major Partners



“There’s something undeniably moving about watching musicians step onto a stage during lockdown and remind themselves of who they are.”

– The Age



Belle Bangard

The → Numbers

144,000 + engaged with MIJF

62,900 + attendees

16,000+ international viewers

90+ international and Australian artists

100% free program

26 online events

1,800+ emerging artists supported through

our sector development programs

6 international performances

3 commissioned works by MIJF

2 album launches

FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

In 2020, we heard new words and phrases bandied about in response to arguably the greatest challenge our sector will ever face. 'Unprecedented', 'social distancing', 'uncertain times', 'the new normal'. This new and foreign vocabulary is at odds with the true spirit of a jazz festival: assembly, union, collaboration, conversation, intimacy.

Luckily for the artists, audiences and professionals who together make up the Melbourne International Jazz Festival (MIJF), improvisation is what we do best.

In April 2020, we made the difficult but necessary decision to cancel the annual Festival just days before our scheduled program was due to go on sale. Rather than conceding altogether, we rose to the challenge to deliver an entirely online, COVID-safe Festival, These Digital Times.

Streaming live in high definition to homes across Melbourne, Australia and the world, MIJF harnessed state-of-the-art technology to deliver three days of programming featuring over 90 international and local artists. In a commitment to our community and to increasing access and participation, our entire program was free.

Our program focused on showcasing the strength, talent and diversity of our local music scene. Thanks to the digital nature of the Festival, international viewers accounted for more than 30% of our audience – significantly raising the profile of the Australian jazz scene.

MIJF continued to play a critical role in providing an unrivalled platform for emerging and mid-career musicians to assemble, forge professional networks and learn from some of the industry's brightest. We delivered free online panels to over 800 musicians.

In all its digital glory our artist development and gender equity initiative, Take Note, had even greater impact. Jazz Leader and saxophonist Holly Moore led her sextet in a performance of new work at the Festival, which was rebroadcast on ABC Jazz to 20,000 listeners. We took the school engagement aspect of the program entirely online, which enabled us to reach even more students and schools across Victoria.

In a year of uncertainty, despair and disbelief, our organisation and its community rallied together to learn, adapt and grow. I am incredibly proud of my team, infinitely grateful to our partners, supporters and audiences for standing by us, and in awe of the strength of our artists. Amongst all the change, one thing remained: no matter what is taking place in the world, the world still needs music. We were thrilled to still find a way to showcase and celebrate all there is to love about jazz.

In October 2021, we look forward to returning to a more familiar festival format, breathing life back into our city's beloved music venues and streets with an enviable line-up of local and international talent. We look forward to seeing you there.

Hadley Agrez
CEO & Program Director



PREMIERES, COMMISSIONS & LAUNCHES

MIJF is an annual platform for the presentation of exciting new work that defines, defies and extends the genre of jazz. During a time of empty venues and state-wide lockdowns, we were delighted to present world premieres and unveil never-before-seen work by exciting new talent alongside Australia's leading jazz musicians.



26 artists



41,000 audience members engaged



5 new works/premieres

FEATURED ARTISTS

Andrea Keller's Five Below

Adrea Keller's award-winning ensemble threw music into a new light, launching their second album and debut studio release *Life is Brut[if]al*.

Julien Wilson's STOCK

After almost a decade of performing together, Julien Wilson's electrifying quartet released their highly anticipated debut album, *STOCK*.

Barney McAll: *Precious Energy*

ARIA-winning composer/pianist Barney McAll premiered new material from his forthcoming album *Precious Energy*.

Holly Moore Sextet – MIJF Take Note commission

MIJF commissioned Holly Moore to develop and perform new work as part of our Take Note artist development program.

Gretchen Parlato & Mark Guiliana (US)

Welcoming us into the living room of their Los Angeles home for an intimate live performance, Parlato and Guiliana treated audiences to a repertoire of past projects alongside new original compositions and never before played material selected especially for this concert.

“The cake was the rare nobility of sound that Wilson extracts from the instrument... It is a sound that held up the melodies like trophies, while the band cut through the streaming divide.”

– The Age



Rita Satch in Barney McAll's *Precious Energy*



INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS

With flights grounded and borders closed, we brought some of the world's leading jazz artists direct to living rooms across Melbourne, Australia and beyond. Our programming focussed on supporting artists from countries hit particularly hard by the global pandemic.

Our international program featured rising stars alongside award-winning artists and descendants of jazz royalty, performing music spanning across traditional and contemporary approaches, from acoustic to electronic, transcending genre boundaries to feature a joyous, rich and diverse suite of jazz and improvised music from across our dividing seas.

FEATURED ARTISTS

Gretchen Parlato & Mark Guiliana (US)
Taylor McFerrin feat. Marcus Gilmore (US)
Joey DeFrancesco (US)
Federico Casagrande (Italy)
Luca Ciarla (Italy)
Vince Abbracciante (Italy)

Proudly supported by



MODERN MASTERS

In 2020, we inverted the 'international' aspect of our Festival, instead broadcasting the best of local talent to Australia and the world. We raised the profile of our thriving Melbourne jazz scene, showcasing music from the country's leading artists.

Our Modern Masters program featured award-winning jazz and improvised musicians at the top of their game, performing across the spectrum of musical influence and practice – from an intimate solo performance to powerhouse vocalists, longform improvisations to an Ethio-jazz infused party.

FEATURED ARTISTS

Kate Ceberano*
Paul Grabowsky*
Soloman Sisay
Joe and Olivia Chindamo*
David Jones and Friends

*Proudly supported by





KAIIT

RISING STARS

Each year, we unearth the most exciting new voices in jazz and improvised music. Our digital festival spanned the spectrum of contemporary music, from neo-soul to fun and fierce improvised music, and New Orleans inspired trad jazz.

"It was a great event, and a nice way to bring the jazz community together. It is a social music after all, and festivals facilitate these connections and relationships. It was a really nice reminder of the jazz community in Melbourne and the strength it has."

– Flora Carbo

FEATURED ARTISTS

KAIIT
Sugarfoot Ramblers
Flora Carbo
Kathleen Halloran Trio



Teeny Tiny Stevies

FAMILY PROGRAMMING

MIJF is committed to presenting programming for every jazz-enthusiast, no matter what age. In 2020, we initiated the next generation of music lovers with ABC Kids favourites the Teeny Tiny Stevies who performed their catchy tunes alongside animations by Simon Howe, award-winning pianist and composer Nat Bartsch, who performed a suite of re-interpreted lullabies, and a DIY music making workshop by Junkadelic Brass Band, using recycled materials as their instruments.

FEATURED ARTISTS

Teeny Tiny Stevies
Nat Bartsch's Lullaby Project
Music Making Workshop
with Junkadelic Brass Band





SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

In a year like no other, we remained committed to providing a platform for emerging and mid-career musicians and industry leaders to assemble and advance. Through dedicated programs and initiatives, MIJF continued its legacy in shaping the future of Australian jazz.




CAREER DEVELOPMENT PANELS

Our series of capacity-building panels focused on fostering tangible skills critical to professional development and sustainability. Streamed live via Zoom, attendance more than tripled on previous years.

Panel topics:

- > Surviving & Thriving: Mental Health & Wellbeing in the Music Industry
- > The Funding Landscape: The World of Grants, Fundraising and Philanthropy
- > Old Media, New Media: Marketing and Publicity for Independent Artists
- > Roundtable Discussion: Leadership and Professional Pathways in Improvised Music

Presented in association with the Australian Art Orchestra

 **4 panel discussions delivered**
 **20 industry panellists**
 **800+ online attendees**

Proudly supported by







TAKE NOTE

Artist Development & Gender Equity Program

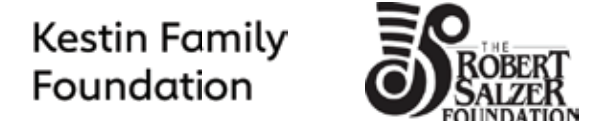
Building on the success of the 2019 pilot program and adapting to the challenges of a constantly shifting global context, Take Note flourished to become one of the highlights of the 2020 Melbourne International Jazz Festival.

With a focus on increasing the visibility of female jazz leaders in Australian music, Take Note supports the professional development of an early-career female jazz musician through a bursary, professional development opportunities, and a public performance opportunity at the Festival. The selected artist also undertakes a state-wide tour of high schools, leading interactive masterclasses for aspiring jazz musicians.

In 2020, Take Note was adapted to be delivered entirely online. Jazz Leader Holly Moore's new work reached more than 3,500 virtual attendees, and 20,000 listeners on ABC Jazz. The digital delivery of the program also increased the Festival's capacity to reach more students in more schools across Victoria. MIJF and Holly worked together to produce and deliver a series of digital workshops that were accessed by more than 1,000 students in 58 schools across the state.

 **1 new work commissioned**
 **23,500 audience members**
 **58 schools engaged**
 **1,150 students participated**

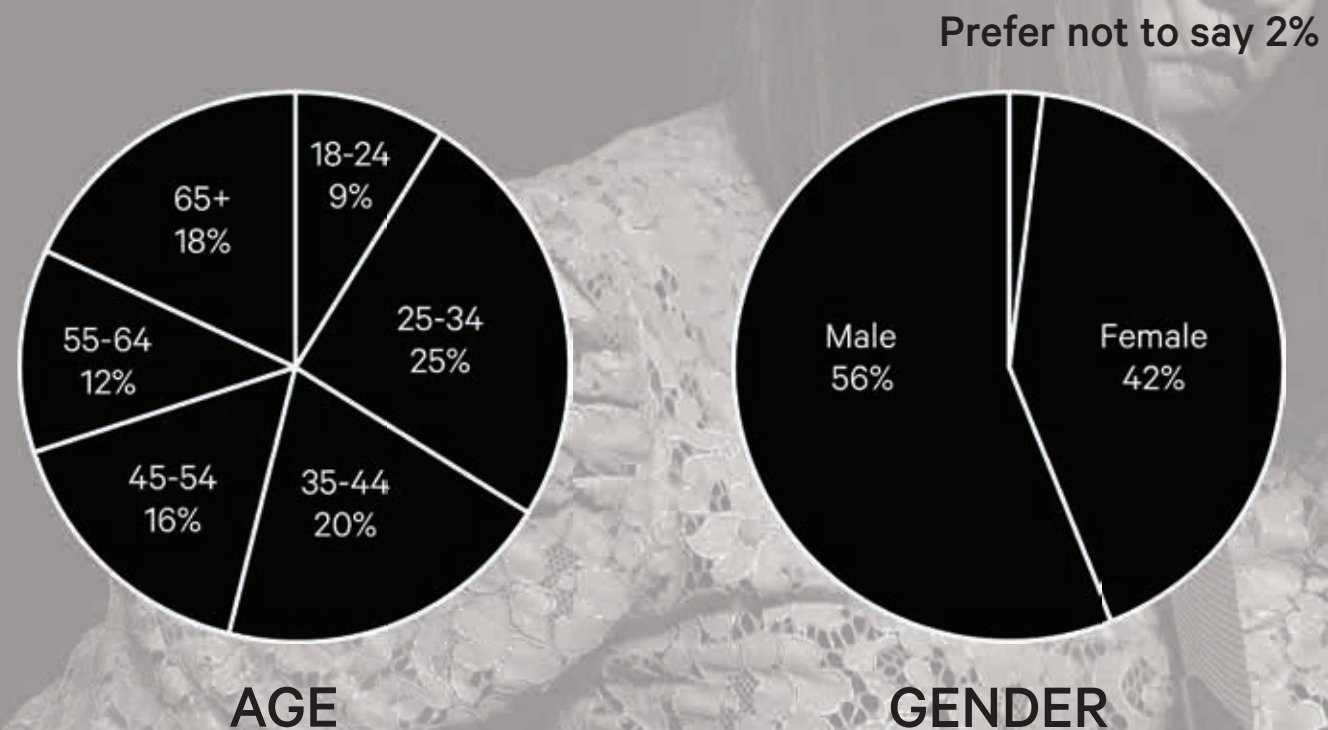
Proudly supported by



AUDIENCE & REACH

"It is testament to the quality of the production that some of the performances moved me to tears... I was just happy to put my headphones on and let my imagination do the rest."

– Audience member 2020

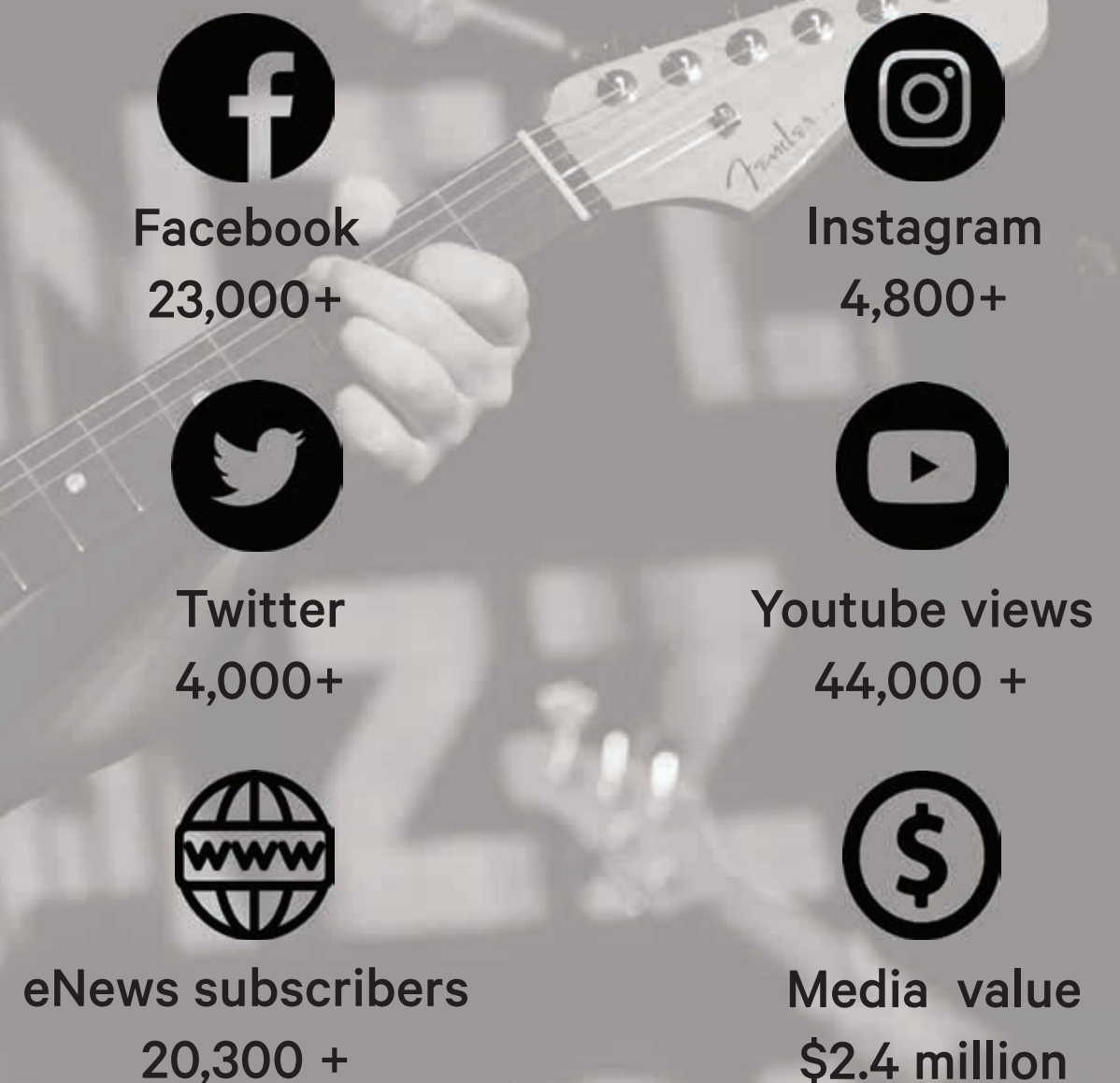


DIVERSITY

- 19% identify as cultural & linguistically diverse
- 4% identify as LBGTIQ+
- 5% identify as living with disability
- 30% international viewers

In 2020, the Festival continued to connect with its diverse audiences by growing our highly engaged online community. Our Youtube channel housed the majority of the Festival's programming content, attracting over 44,000 viewers and engaging 900 subscribers. Our eNews database increased by 5%, up almost 900 subscribers from last year.

Our digital festival garnered editorial coverage to the value of over \$2 million, while our long-term media partnership with ABC Jazz more than doubled the Festival's broadcasting reach, engaging an additional 80,000+ listeners.



OUR SUPPORTERS

As a not-for-profit organisation, MIJF relies on the generous support of our patrons to deliver Australia’s leading international jazz festival. In a year that challenged our Festival and its artists, the community dug deeper than ever before to support the presentation of new work by exciting artists, as well as the delivery of critical professional development initiatives which help the sector to face the ongoing challenges of a new world.

VISIONARIES

John Stanhope AM and Sue Bailey
David Walker and Jennifer Darbyshire

CHAMPIONS

Greg Currie
Tim Danielson and Athalie Williams
Luke Mckinnon
David Valmorbida
Moyna Wilson
Anonymous (3)

PIONEERS

Robert MacFarlane

PATRONS

Michael Agrez
Michael Augello
Michael Backerra
Robert Boscarato
Damian Curry
Jude Gun
Michael Hayward and Sophia Valente
Julie Johnston
Miriam McDonald
Mark Morand and Jenni Morris
Sian Owen
Murray Piper
Daniel and Tanja Stoeski
Damjan Vukcevic

In memoriam: A tribute to Harry Kestin

The team behind MIJF was incredibly saddened by the news of Harry Kestin’s passing this year. Harry pioneered philanthropic support for our Take Note program, reflecting his life-long pursuit to enact positive social change through arts and culture. Since first partnering with the Kestin Family Foundation in 2019, Take Note has inspired over 1,500 music students and supported two female jazz leaders to commission and present new work at the Festival. We thank Harry for his continued support of the Festival and know that his contribution to the arts will live on as his legacy.

MIJF members

In a display of heart-warming generosity and support of the sector, many of our beloved members chose to donate the equivalent of their membership fee towards the organisation. Thank you for your continued support during these unprecedented times.

OUR PARTNERS



Principal Government Partner



Major Government Partner



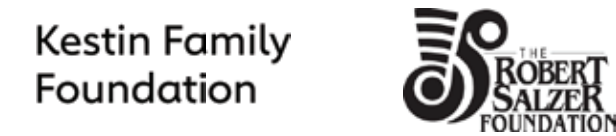
Major Event Supporter



Presenting Partners



Philanthropic Partners



Festival Supporters



Media Partners



Cultural Partners



OUR TEAM

A big thank you to everyone who made the Festival happen this year.

MIJF STAFF

CEO & Program Director: Hadley Agrez
Business & Operations Manager: Shirrah Comeadow
Marketing Manager: Casselly Main
Marketing Coordinator: Jackson Greatz
Development Manager: Dawn Ho
Senior Producer: Tom Browne
Program Manager: Holly Norman (to April 2020)
Acting Program Manager: Claire Cross (from April 2020)
Production Manager: Fiona Murray

BOARD

John Stanhope AM, Chairman
Michael Tortoni, Artistic Director
Rebecca MacFarling, Company Secretary
Sarah Bradly-McKay, Director
Toby Chadd, Director
Jennifer Darbyshire, Director
Liza Maimone, Director
David Valmorbida, Director

EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS

Bookkeeping: Sam Ryan, SAYSO Pty Ltd
Design & Brand: Motherbird
Publicity: Ben Starick, Starling Communications
Risk Management: Tracey Wall, Safety In Numbers
Ticketing: Red61
Website: Design by Wolf & Efront

This work was developed in a studio managed by the City of Melbourne's Meat Market tenancy program.



“The opportunity to perform live with the group at this time was incredibly rewarding and inspiring. In place of an entire East Coast tour and NZ tour, the chance to perform our album launch as part of the online festival experience was invaluable.”

– Julien Wilson





**MELB
INT'L
JAZZ
FEST**

