

Unsolicited Evaluation Comments: DFoV 2016

i just wanted to say a huge thankyou for such a wonderful festival of voice the stories, voices and poetry still swirling around my head !!!

Cecile Williams

What an amazing festival you created!!! It was really wonderful and I appreciate all the hard work at all levels that went into its creation. Truly fantastic! Thank you

Jenny Hill, poet

a belated but huge thank you for enabling us to do a billet for tickets swap, firstly, and secondly a huge thank you for such an absolute awesome Festival. wow. I'm not sure what I can say that hasn't already been said. I used to take high school students up to Perth ever year for PIAF so I know about Arts Festivals and the Festival of Voice is without question a world class Arts Festival - here, in tiny Denmark, amazing! The organization, the balance, the local artists, the WA artists, the Australian artists, the free stuff, the kids stuff, the around town stuff- it really is incredible- and it's all down to you Vivienne you're the visionary and energy and sheer hard work (at the head of an amazing army of other hard workers and volunteers!)... Denmark is an amazing organism as we all know but to be a lens to focus that light, that's a gift, thank you, from the whole organism!

Neil Riddell

I just wanted to drop you a quick note to thank you for hosting me at last weekend's Festival of Voice and congratulate you and your team on such a fantastic event.

To be able to experience so many quality acts in such a varied and comprehensive program over one weekend was a huge treat. I was especially moved by Poco Tutti and the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir as two highlights of this year's Festival. In addition, the works presented by many of the local groups, particularly in the Café Program was a testament to the year round work of regional arts groups such as yourselves.

I felt the real star of the show was the Denmark Arts Society itself – to present more than 80 acts in 12 venues over two and a half days takes considerable planning, commitment and a lot of sweat and tears. I was particularly impressed with the massive volunteer army you and your staff had organised to assist in the smooth running of the whole event.

In the end, I came away feeling uplifted by the music and encouraged by the wonderful community spirit on show from both residents and visitors alike – two key hallmarks of a wonderful Festival.

Congratulations once again.

Paul McPhail, A/CEO Country Arts WA

'We were visiting Perth to make a sculpture (*The Wandering*) at the new Perth Sports Stadium and were able to attend the Festival of Voice in Denmark in June. It was a remarkable Festival with a host of high quality, unforgettable performances, including the unique *Dangerous Song*: a remarkable piece where the two performers using voice and instrumental sound were seen through an incredible set of images (endangered species) projected onto the gauze mesh which enclosed them. Also the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir with their extraordinary 150-year history, singing in German, English and several Aboriginal languages. It is so rare for a cultural festival to be dedicated to diversity and inclusiveness and this Festival was so special in its showcasing hugely talented poets, musicians and singers from marginalised or less visible groups. We felt very privileged to be there.' Chris Drury, UK

I have been describing u as a magician, a visionary ! Your fest. was phenomenal ! I hav been to so many fests across Aust. + your 2016 fest was unrivalled. Huge thnx,

Kerry Fletcher

I've just had the most inspiring, uplifting weekend for many a year! it was brilliant.

Wendy Corrick

I just really wanted to say what a fantastic weekend for the festival! You have once again succeeded in putting together an excellent performance.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be a part of the festival for 2016.

It was a very successful weekend for my business- Chilli Lime Salt Cafe and was worth the extra time, staff and huge effort by all. Financially, Saturday was bigger than boxing day last year.

I felt that the stage in the courtyard was used to its full potential.

The shire allowing Denmark Arts to put up the vinyl blinds, allowed it stay warm and cosy under the courtyard area. The customers felt comfortable to sit for long periods of time and enjoy all the performances and also purchase items from the cafe.

The feedback from customers about the festival, was all very positive. Infact I have heard that people have already booked their accommodation for next years festival.

I also had the opportunity to cater for 5 days for the Central Australian Aboriginal Womens Choir.

What a privilege! 35 amazing women with all their own stories to tell. My kids were able to chat and learn more about their culture and lives in the outback. And to see them for who they really are...themselves. And not at all how a they are sometimes perceived on tv.

A perfect financial top right before out quieter winter months.

I am certainly hoping that i will be invited once again to participate in next years Festival.

Monika Bennie, owner Chilli Lime Salt Café

I'm writing to congratulate you and Denmark Arts for a fantastic Festival of Voice. I've spoken to a number of people who were all very impressed. These ranged from residents, visitors to Denmark, artists, accommodation providers who experienced increased trade, and councillors. What an amazing event!

Cr Peter Caron, Shire of Denmark

many thanks again for inviting Equus to be a part of the Festival of Voice. It was a wonderful event in every aspect. Audiences were generous - venues divine - and sound crew nothing short of excellent... We were made to feel very welcome and were able to present ourselves at our best.

Peter Kennard, musician, Equus

The BIGGEST of BIGGEST Congratulations to you and your team. What a marvellous weekend!! I haven't had THAT much fun in a long time. It meant the world to hear so much beautiful music. Reminded me why I become a music teacher. Singing in choirs and conducting is my ultimate passion and I LOVE that I could share that with my gorgeous students.

Anyway the fact that you had us perform on Friday meant the world to our kids and their parents. They worked SOO HARD and loved the process. What a sense of accomplishment for them and what a positive experience. I've already had one student announce that he wants to do music at Uni and wants to sing accapella. FINALLY haha!!! I've waited a year for ONE person to say that!! Maybe we'll have an all male barbershop ready for next year!

Meghan Webber, DSHS Music Teacher

This year's festival has created some pretty significant shifts of thinking for me and I am deeply grateful for its catalytic effect.

I think the things that helped create deeper meaning for me were the presence of a much larger number of story-tellers and poets (even though I only saw a couple of them) and the stories that came with the Central Australian choir. I was gob-smacked by the way that song has connected people through time and place.

I experienced this year's Festival as deep, rich and poignant but also joyous, and I think the shift of focus that you started last year is really bearing fruit. I hope you will be willing to direct the Festival again next year – I think you have created a really valuable point of differentiation from the other music festivals on offer, and I'd love to see this creative direction continued.

About the Choir: I talked to the choir members last night. They really enjoyed the participation and involvement of the crowd. This was something new to them, as Mount Barker audiences are pretty reticent. Their faces during the performance glowed and they also said in reflection that they really enjoyed themselves. I'm really proud of what we did.

About her son: We experienced it as a very rich event. Julian (son, part of youth program) "had a blast" and "thought it was a brilliant Festival overall". He, Caitlin and Clay, who played together on Friday night to rave reviews, are keen as beans to perform together again. This Sunday will be the first of their planned weekly rehearsals to develop more material. I think the Festival has galvanised them into action. I realise that you got some talented performers to run workshops with these students and that, along with the opportunity to perform before a big crowd, has been really helpful for them.

So hats off to you and to everyone in Denmark Arts who puts so much time, thought and energy into the Festival! Finding acts that will move and connect people, linking performers with the school and the community, creating a vibrant Fringe Festival that would bring the whole town to life, interweaving song with stories and poetry, creating down-time spaces (oh, that RSL Yurt!!) – these are all pieces that I think contributed to the overall effect of a really wonderful festival.

Sonia Anderson, Choir Director

Thanks for a deeply inspiring festival!!!

The ripples of warmth and goodness will go out and out and on and on.

So much more than soulful and brilliant music. So much more than a good fun weekend.

Your vision and hard work changes lives and makes the world a richer place!!

Heartfelt thanks

Jude Iddison, musician/choir director

Just want to say a huge thank you for your brilliant VISION. Such mind blowing acts, and I had really wonderful experiences both as an audience member, and as a workshop presenter. Thankyou for letting me be part of your vision. You are to be truly treasured.

Rachel Hore – choir director/leader of Big Sing

Congratulations on a brilliant show. We had a great weekend, I had to keep reminding myself I was actually working!

Thanks for having us, the vision is looking really good.

I'll be in touch again when we have a broadcast date.

Thanks again, Ali and Julian

Ali Colvin – ABC

CONGRATULATIONS for a wonderful festival! Big applause to you and the whole team for pulling off a fantastic event. You have organised a terrific lineup of talented people, it was pure joy.

Anna Ramrath

I congratulate Demark Arts for putting on such an outstanding event! It is extraordinary how many events you managed over the weekend and everything ran on time and went extremely smoothly. An exemplary event for regional arts!

Barb Howard, Project Manager, Country Arts WA

Thanks for your efforts towards another fantastic festival – it was a super program! Such a privilege to have such a diverse group of artists together in one place.

Craig Sinclair

I'm emailing to congratulate Denmark Arts on its superb 2016 FoV program. We went to about 15 events and enjoyed each one. The diversity and quality was first class as was the value for money. There was not one show we went to that we did not thoroughly enjoy and would not recommend. Some were just brilliant.

Greg Davis

I just want to comment on how terrific the program looks. Both from the incredible range of the performers to the organisation and graphic design of the program itself.

Some members of the Safety in Numbers choir went to the Festival of Voices in Hobart last year and we found their website and program very confusing... Plus, the visit to Hobart made us even more aware of what an incredible and intimate festival is right nearby in Denmark. Love it.

Corinne Hine

I'd be happy to personally endorse the festival as I thought it was a gargantuan effort on behalf of Denmark Arts. The quality of the performances and performers was of a national and I daresay international standard as testified by the inclusion of the Central Australian Aboriginal Choir, a true national living treasure.....

Dr Helen Rusak, WAAPA

I didn't want to wait too long to send you a thank you for the weekend. It was lovely to see, hear and feel Denmark being powered by such a multitude of voices. Congratulations! I enjoyed my readings very much, and also reading under the banner of Hallowell Press, as it were, was very precious for me.

Lucy Dougan, poet

[A slightly belated congratulations on this years DFOV.](#)

[Everyone is proclaiming it the best ever with just a huge variety of acts.](#)

[You seem to have prodded Denmark awake somehow!](#)

Matthew Clements – Voicemale Director

Thankyou for your incredible love and work you put into this years amazing Festival of Voice
The richness and diversity were awesome. I loved every minute I was there. Congratulations!

Lumari McGuinness

I have to say we all had a great time due in no small way to your terrific support and excellent organisation and so on behalf of Poco Tutti and the Sisters of Invention I really want to say a **GREAT BIG THANKYOU!** ...to all of you.

Pat Rix – Poco Tutti

Hope you were able to unwind after a fantastic festival and I hope you guys soaked up all the great reviews that were flowing in town after it.

Patricia Roux – Curry and Chai tent

I had an amazing time at the festival, it had so much heart, Vivienne, thanks so much for all of your hard work

Renee Pettitt-Schipp, poet

Massive thank you to you. We all absolutely loved being included in the festival, It was so special to be supported by the community, as well as meeting the incredibly inspiring Roger and Bev (billets). We all felt at home instantly with such a warmly welcome. The wonderful experience wouldn't be possible without your hard work and dedication. Ajak was also thrilled to collaborate with the talented Cathy, Tony and Olly. We hope to continue this special collaboration going forward.

Ajak Kwai and Abe Nouk, musicians

Thank you for the festival. I know that it is all a team effort, but congratulations to you unilaterally for your most excellent artistic direction.

Tony King, musician

Thanks for a great Festival, thanks for organising year after year this great event. As an audience member and performer I really enjoyed it. A great range of performers. The best are the surprises, acts you accidentally stumbled upon and people you meet on the way. The Sunday dance party was great fun yet again.

John Davey, musician

Thank you for a hugely successful Denmark Festival of Voice! There were so many acts to see and workshops to attend. I think my choir had a great time, and my daughter especially was blown away by the feedback she received from her sets. Someone saw our first set outside Luscius, and “followed” us the next day to see our second set at Chilli, Lime, Salt. They then asked her for a cd! This was really her first big performance as a soloist so a cd hadn't even been conceived yet. It has certainly inspired her to pursue that path more determinedly.

Gillian Parker, choir director/musician

The Barbra's would like to thank you for organising us to perform in such wonderful venue's, they really suited our style of performance.

Congratulations on organising a wonderful festival, a job well done,

Jenney Wylde, musician

one of the roles of the Chamber of Commerce...advocacy to support you guys, who can then put on fabulous cultural extravaganza's that inspire us and give us the hope to keep going!!

Liz Jack, Manager, Denmark Chamber of Commerce