



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY

Tuesday 30th April 2019

Mr Ernesto Ottone Ramirez, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO

Mr Herbie Hancock, Co-Convener, International Jazz Day, **Mrs Gigi Hancock** and **Ms Jessica Hancock**

Mr James Morrison AM, Co-Convener, International Jazz Day and **Mrs Judi Morrison**

Mr Tom Carter, President Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz and **Mrs Cheri Carter**

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

Tony and I warmly welcome you all to Government House to the Opening of International Jazz Day.

As I am sure those gathered here are well aware, each 30 April sees International Jazz Day, bringing together countries and communities to celebrate the art of jazz.

I am proud that this year, this special day, celebrated in more than 190 countries around the world, is being launched right here in Melbourne.

We are proud that across two days, there will be a wide range of jazz performances, educational programs and community service initiatives featuring more than a dozen celebrated jazz masters.

And of course, these events will culminate in an All-Star Global Concert at Melbourne Arts Centre's Hamer Hall this evening, co-directed by iconic jazz pianist Herbie Hancock and our own acclaimed trumpeter James Morrison AM, with John Beasley, from the USA, serving as the evening's musical director.

We will be treated to a feast of performances by an international roster of artists. So too will a broadcast and webcast audience of some 1.4 billion people around the world.

But first, this morning, we will shortly have the joy of watching the next generation of jazz musicians from the NSW Public Schools Jazz Orchestra perform original compositions from two young musicians and composers, Naomi Nogawa-Lewy and Flynn Poppleton, and we are so glad that they could both join us here this morning with their families.

So, International Jazz Day is truly a day of great opportunity for music lovers around the world.

It is also much more than that.

As people gather the world over to celebrate jazz concerts, jazz-themed films, lectures, book readings, theatre performances and panel discussions, as well as jam sessions, master classes, and radio and television broadcasts, they will gather around the common language of music.

It is a commonality that encourages dialogue, and highlights similarities more than any differences between us. It serves to unite communities across all UNESCO member States, with its apolitical vision of diversity and social unity.

Those themes have a particular resonance for us here in Victoria: a State which celebrates the richness of its diverse community with people from 200 different backgrounds and 130 different religions.

This is also a State which is known for its culture, and for its major events and festivals.

I know that jazz events are being held in other parts of Australia as well, but how proud I am that the focus is here in Victoria.

I am sure that our many international guests will enjoy Melbourne with its grid-style central city area and atmospheric laneway restaurants and bars, vast parklands and gardens, coffee culture and fantastic food scene.

If you are lucky to venture into regional Victoria, there is also great beauty and activities, in addition to the terrific music that you will be enjoying.

I thank the Co-Artistic Directors, Herbie Hancock and James Morrison AM and their teams for all their hard work and vision, and Ernesto Ottone Ramirez, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture for his commitment and support of this event.

It is my pleasure to officially open the International Jazz Day for 2019 here in Melbourne Australia.