

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
Wednesday 16 August 2023



## **Dan Sultan launches Tarnanthi Festival 2023 exhibition and opening weekend activities at AGSA**

**Adelaide, Australia:** One of Australia's most loved and celebrated singer-songwriters, Arrernte/Gurindji man Dan Sultan will kick off the opening weekend celebration of Tarnanthi, the Art Gallery of South Australia's festival of contemporary Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art in 2023. Sultan will open the free public event on AGSA's North Terrace forecourt on the evening of Thursday 19 October, before audiences experience the Tarnanthi exhibition at AGSA alongside hundreds of artists from across the country, who will descend on Adelaide for the opening weekend.

Tarnanthi Artistic Director, Barkandji curator, Nici Cumpston OAM says, 'The opening weekend of Tarnanthi is always a special event – presenting an opportunity to meet artists from across Australia, to gain deeper insight into who they are and their lived experiences through their works of art. Like so many artists in Tarnanthi, Dan Sultan's voice will be the first to shine as we launch Tarnanthi festival 2023 before the exhibition officially opens.'

The festivities will begin with a Kaurna Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony by Adelaide's Kuma Kaaru. The event will be hosted by Shelley Ware – a proud Yankunytjatjara and Wirangu woman, one of Australia's most respected and recognised female presenters of AFL football, she is a media and TV personality, corporate speaker and educator. Robert Fielding, cultural leader and respected contemporary artist of Western Arrernte, Yankunytjatjara, Pakistani and Afghan descent will deliver a key-note address to artists and audiences from across the country.

With six ARIA Awards, NIMA awards, top five ARIA charting albums, Sultan is thrilled that Tarnanthi will be his only Adelaide date on his upcoming national tour. 'To launch this festival that showcases the extraordinary talents of our country's First Nations people and culture is a real honour. I know there were some disappointed fans when we announced my National Tour,

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and we left off Adelaide, but we promised we had something special for you and with Taranathi Festival, we definitely have that. To perform on the steps of Adelaide's premiere cultural institution there will be a real buzz as we open Australia's leading First Nations Art festival,' Sultan says.

AGSA Director Rhana Devenport ONZM says, 'A brilliant First Nations musician, Dan Sultan is emblematic of the great talent and dynamism witnessed across Tarnanthi. We are thrilled to have his extraordinary voice launch AGSA's acclaimed festival of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art.'

Following Dan Sultan's performance, Naarm (Melbourne) based Indigenous Australian DJ and producer Swayfever will bring his raucous energy and excitement to the AGSA courtyard as the exhibition opens to the public.

The opening weekend of Tarnanthi includes a series of artist talks, free public events at AGSA, as well as a *panpapanpalya*, meaning conference in the Kurna language, featuring leading Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, curators, and academics in a free insightful forum held in the AGSA courtyard.

The popular Tarnanthi Art Fair also returns at a new venue – the Adelaide Entertainment Centre – offering a unique opportunity to meet and learn from artists firsthand about the thousands of works of art available for sale. The Art Fair is also held online in 2023, with all proceeds from the in person and online sales going directly to the artists and their communities.

At its heart, the Tarnanthi Festival is a series of exhibitions, artist talks, performances, and events, showcasing and celebrating contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art. The 2023 Gallery-wide exhibition will present works of art from studios, art centres, institutions, and communities.

The full Tarnanthi 2023 program will be announced in mid-September. Visit [agsa.sa.gov.au](https://agsa.sa.gov.au) for further details.

**ENDS****ABOUT DAN SULTAN**

Dan Sultan is an undeniably important artist. One of Australia's most loved singer-songwriters, Sultan boasts numerous accolades to his name, including 6 ARIA Awards, NIMA Awards, Top 5 ARIA-charting albums and an ARIA-certified Gold record in Blackbird. Previous albums *Aviary Takes* (2019), *Killer* (2017), *Blackbird* (2014), *Get Out While You Can* (2009) and *Homemade Biscuits* (2006) have seen Sultan navigate the country a number of times playing headline shows to sold-out crowds, as well as supporting the likes of Bruce Springsteen, and as a guest on some of Australia's biggest festivals, including *Splendour in the Grass*, *Blues Festival* and *Falls Festival*, to name a few. Sultan releases his long-awaited fifth studio album 'Dan Sultan' on Friday 18 August and is an intimate and raw look into the singer's personal life and experiences.

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### **KEY DATES**

Tarnanthi 2023 | 20 October 2023 – 21 January 2024  
Media Preview | AGSA | 19 October, 11am  
Official Launch | AGSA | 19 October, 6pm  
Tarnanthi Art Fair 2023 | Adelaide Entertainment Centre | 20 – 22 October

### **IMAGES**

Available for download from: [agsa.sa.gov.au/media/tarnanthilaunch](https://agsa.sa.gov.au/media/tarnanthilaunch)

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

@agsa.adelaide @tarnanthi #tarnanthi

### **Tarnanthi at a glance 2015 - 2023:**

- 1.6 million people have attended Tarnanthi exhibitions and events
- More than \$6.6 million of art has been sold at the Tarnanthi Art Fair, with all money going directly to artists and communities
- 6000+ artists have been included in exhibitions, art fairs and events
- \$115.2 million in economic expenditure has been generated in South Australia since 2015

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**Header image caption:** Tarnanthi 2019 launch, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide. Photo: John Montesi