



16 December 2004

## **Launch of Cockatoo Island Festival – Easter 2005**

The inaugural “Cockatoo Island 2005” festival will celebrate the cultural diversity of Sydney on an island off limits to the public for the best part of 165 years.

To be held over three days at Easter 2005, the festival was officially launched today by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, with the release of program details and artist line-up.

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust executive director Geoff Bailey said the festival would take place in the industrial and convict precincts of Cockatoo Island.

‘A contemporary music, art and performance festival set amid the industrial fabric of a great shipbuilding yard and the remnants of a colonial prison is an unbeatable combination of vibrant cultural diversity and the echoes of history,’ Mr Bailey said.

‘Together they will generate an exciting festival for the whole community in one of the most beautiful settings in the world. Sydney has rarely seen such an exciting juxtaposition of contemporary culture and unique location.’

Eight stages will be located around the island, ranging from outdoor venues such as the Concert Stage on the northern apron and the Jailyard Stage in the convict courtyard, to indoor venues in former maritime buildings such as the Polishing Shop, Electroplate Building and the Joiners’ Shop. An underground tunnel will become a subterranean nightclub, while a disused factory will play host to the latest sounds in alternative music.

‘Music will cater to the most eclectic tastes: folk, pop, indie rock, world, dance, acoustic, techno, roots, blues and cabaret. The stages will also host writers, poets, comedians and performance artists. Other buildings and outdoor spaces will host art galleries, photographic exhibitions, markets, cinema, a record and collectables fair, community stalls, yoga and massage,’ Mr Bailey said.

‘The revival of Cockatoo Island as a harbour attraction is part of our plan for the future of this historic site. “Cockatoo Island 2005” will breathe new life into a setting that tells us so much about Sydney’s history.’

Mr Bailey said the legacy of Cockatoo Island was central to three main outcomes proposed for the island by the Harbour Trust: the re-introduction of small scale maritime industry; events and cultural attractions; and telling the island’s convict, maritime and industrial story.

‘The festival will be a celebration of this wonderful island and the cultural mix of the city. Cockatoo Island is about to become a big contributor to Sydney’s cultural landscape.’

**For more information about the ‘Cockatoo Island 2005’ festival details, program and line-up, contact Scrabble PR: (07) 3216 0733**

**For more information about the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and Cockatoo Island, contact Patrick Fletcher: (02) 8969 2114 or 0413 021 079**