



Media release

****STRICTLY EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM SATURDAY 5 NOVEMBER, 2016****

RESPECT

WORLD PREMIERE

VENUE: The Spiegeltent, Aotea Square

DATES: 22-24 March, 2017

ARTISTS: Aaradhna, Annie Crummer, Bella Kalolo, Esther Stephens

Fifty years ago, Aretha Franklin dropped her smash hit *Respect* and the world was never the same.

In March, at Auckland Arts Festival 2017, four of New Zealand's most powerful Queens of Soul, Aaradhna, Annie Crummer, Bella Kalolo and Esther Stephens, pay respect to Aretha's call-to-action in a world premiere event that spans genre and generations.

An anthem that spurred change, *Respect* was a Grammy Award-winning protest song and landmark for the feminist generation. Following the sell-out success of *Lady Sings the Blues* and *Dust to Dusky*, this Auckland Arts Festival production and spectacular Spiegeltent performance promises to be as potent as it would have been in 1967.

Multi-award-winning singer-songwriter Aaradhna made headlines with her latest album, *Brown Girl*, which was written in direct response to the racist abuse she suffered growing up in New Zealand. In an open letter she wrote to her fans on release of the album, she said, "Growing up as an Indian and Samoan New Zealander, I've seen and witnessed others including myself being automatically 'labelled' for what we look like, what we wore, the way we spoke, where we resided... I feel confident in what I do and am ready for anything that comes my way."

Annie Crummer's immense talent, ongoing contemporary relevance, heartfelt honesty and worldwide popularity haven't faltered in her 25+ years in the business; from the earliest days when, as a 19-year-old, her backing vocals on The Netherworld Dancing Toys' hit *For Today* made her a household name in New Zealand, to today, when she is still considered one of New Zealand's very best female artists.

Bella Kalolo is a passionate, vibrant and commanding New Zealand soul singer who has performed with the likes of Fat Freddy's Drop, Dave Dobbyn, Hollie Smith and Don McLashlan, among many others. She was awarded Best Female at the 2012 Pacific Music Awards and has performed at the renowned Glastonbury Festival.

Esther Stephens has not only proved herself as a powerful singer able to cross genre and eras with ease, the *Westside* actress has recently come off the back of a hugely popular season playing New Zealand's most famous feminist, Kate Sheppard, in the Auckland Theatre Company production of *That Bloody Woman*.

Accompanied by Auckland Jazz Orchestra, these iconic New Zealand musicians bring a blend of funk, soul and original R&B, along with a selection of Aretha's classics.



PERFORMANCE DETAILS

TICKETS	GA \$55 GA Conc/Group \$49 Booth (8 seats) \$440
WHEN	Wed 22 Mar 7.00pm, Thur 23 Mar, Fri 24 Mar 9.30pm
WHERE	Spiegelent, Festival Garden, Aotea Square
BOOKINGS	ticketmaster.co.nz 09 951 2501
DURATION	1hr 30mins no interval
MORE INFO	www.aaf.co.nz
FOLLOW	@aklfestival #aklfest
ABOUT THE AAF	<p>Taking place annually in March, the Auckland Arts Festival is a globally recognised event that celebrates people and culture, and showcases the unrivalled location, cultural diversity and vibrant energy of New Zealand's largest city.</p> <p>Over 1.6 million people have attended the Festivals to date.</p> <p>Auckland Arts Festival is governed by the Auckland Festival Trust. Trustees are John Judge (Chair), Rick Carlyon, Evan Davies, Sarah Judkins, Tarun Kanji, Margaret Kāwharu MNZM, Jim Moser, Ben Taufua and Fred Ward. The Trust receives core funding from Auckland Council through the Auckland Regional Amenities Funding Act, and Creative New Zealand through the Toi Tōtara Haemata programme.</p> <p>Significant support for AAF 2017 is received from Foundation North, Pub Charity, NZ Community Trust and The Lion Foundation.</p>
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