

BY CORRINA BONSHÉK & COLLABORATORS

SONG TO THE OCEAN CALLING TO THE WHALES

Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales is a love-song to the planet, an immersive, live music event for a walking audience who stroll through a sea of musicians and experience nature sounds and music up-close.

It includes a profound opening exchange between local First Nations Elders and Maori Sonic Weaver, WHAIA under the night sky surrounded by awe-inspiring light sculptures.

We offer extensive music and visual art community engagement.

**STROLL THROUGH A
SEA OF MUSICIANS**



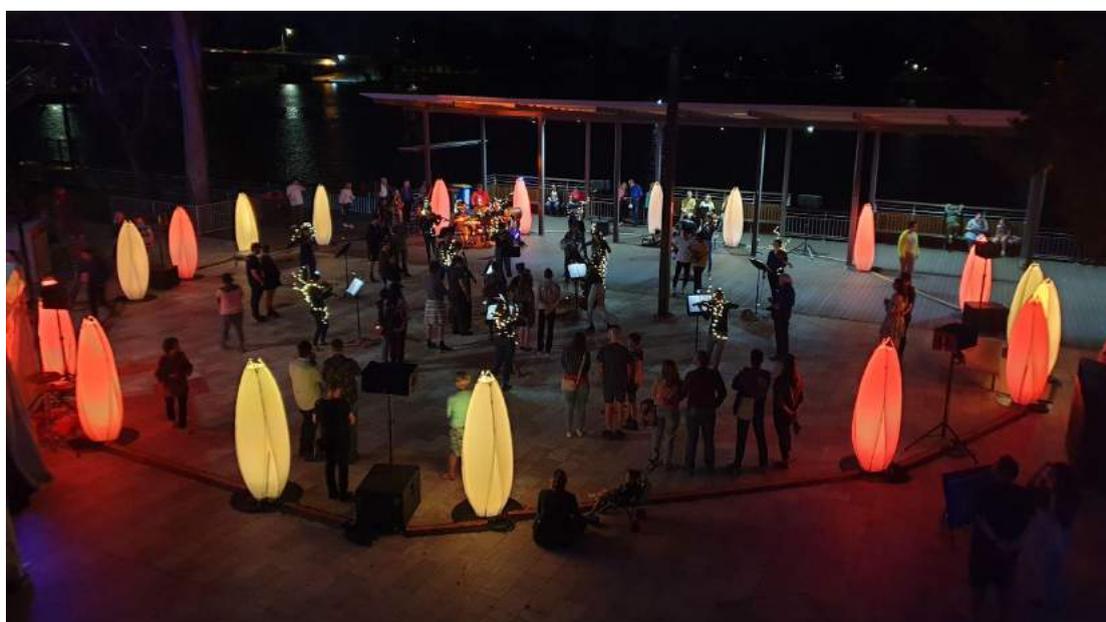
**"SONG TO THE
OCEAN WAS SO
EVOCATIVE AND
A GIFT OF DEEP
REVERENCE"**
AUDIENCE MEMBER



Song to the Ocean
highlights video

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Sister project 'Song to the Earth' tech run at the Rockhampton River Festival 2022

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More info: <https://www.cbcollab.com/song-to-the-ocean/>

COMPANY PROFILE

Corrina Bonshek & Collaborators Company was founded in 2021 to bring artists and audiences from all cultural backgrounds together to celebrate our shared connection to the spectacular, biodiverse ecosystems that support us.

It is led by award-winning Gold Coast based composer & artistic director Corrina Bonshek, and is supported by the long-term producing relationship of Corrina Bonshek & Greta Kelly. Kelly and Bonshek have been working together since 2016, beginning with the highly successful sister project *Song to the Earth* presented by Bleach* Festival 2017 & 2018, 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Arts & Culture Festival, Flowstate Southbank 2018, Rainforest Fringe Festival Sarawak Malaysia 2019, and Phoenix Central Park Sydney 2019, Redlands Performing Arts Centre, Kingston Butter Factory, Rockhampton River Festival 2022.

Bonshek & Kelly secured \$300,000 in national, state and local council funding to deliver *Song to the Earth* and *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales* across Queensland in 2022-2023.

In 2021 Corrina Bonshek & Collaborators were awarded Gold Coast City Council Triennial funding to support first stage creative development of new works and to provide producing support to secure additional funding to premiere and tour their productions.

Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales premiered at Hervey Bay Whale Festival 2021, and will be staged at Home of the Arts, Gold Coast, Moreton Bay and North Australian Festival of Arts, Townsville in 2023.

ABOUT THE SHOW

SHOW SYNOPSIS

(for MARKETING COPY see Page 13)

In *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales*, audiences are serenaded by First Nations and multicultural performers while they walk or sit or lie down next to gong orchestra. They are encircled by 18 light sculptures plus an immersive sound design of whale song and marine sounds that react to the live music.

Feature performers are Whaia Maori vocalist and multi-instrumentalist, Greta Kelly on shah kaman (Persian violin), Michael Askill with two expert lead gong players/percussionists, Tsoof Baras and Jamee Seeto leading a gong orchestra of community musicians, and artistic director/composer Corrina on laptop triggering whale song, marine and ambient sounds.

There is also the option to include:

- Additional First Nations musician(s) from your region (we suggest sourcing local artist fees via RADF).
- OR a First Nations headline artist from our wide pool of collaborators such as Bunna Lawrie, a Mirning Senior Elder and Whale Songman of the Yinyila Nation. This is the place of the great white Dreamtime whale Jeedara. (we suggest additional partnership funding to support Bunna's performance).

This extraordinary production can include deep community engagement in areas of First Nations cultural consultancy and involvement, music performance and visual art. See page 8 for more.

Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales is an adaptation of *Song to the Ocean* which premiered at the Hervey Bay Whale Festival in 2021. *Song to the Ocean* will be staged at Home of the Arts, Gold Coast, Moreton Bay and North Australian Festival of Arts, Townsville in 2023.

Performance area: 20m diameter circle or equivalent, bordered by illuminated sculptures & speakers PA speakers are positioned facing into the performance zone.

Touring musicians: 6 performers (3 x gong players + 1 x solo voice/ multiinstrumentalist + 1 x shah kaman (Persian violin) + 1 x laptop triggered marine sounds and ambient textures..

Local musicians: 5-6 performers (1-2 local First Nations performers plus 4 x high-school aged music students or mature adult musicians with the ability to read music and an interest in participating in the gong workshop and performing in Michael Askill's gong orchestra)

Local artists: 18-36 emerging and professional local visual artists are invited to attend a 4 hour workshop to create silhouette art to be exhibited during the performance inside the light sculptures.

Audience walking inside: 150-200 PAX. Entry/exit to the performance zone is cued by voice-over.

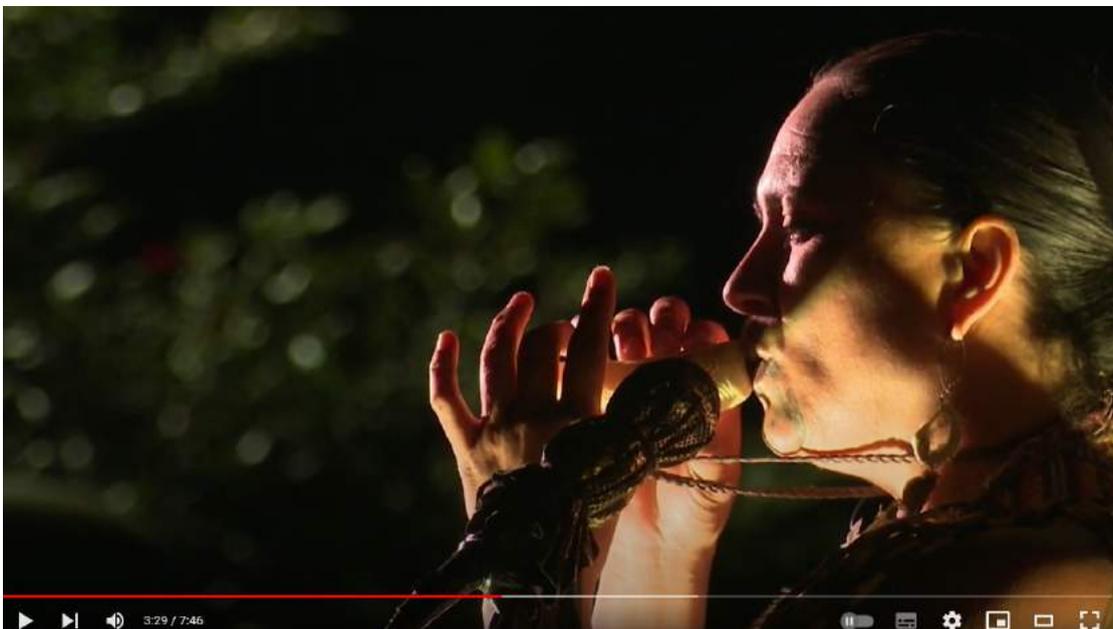
Audience picnicking outside: 300-1000 PAX

VIDEO LINKS

Song to the Ocean - [promotional video](#) (one minute) NOTE: This includes footage of the string Movement which is not part of *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales*



The [six minute highlights video](#) of *Song to the Ocean* (NOTE: ditto)



ARTFORM

- Interdisciplinary
- Live classical music
- Live contemporary music
- Visual art

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We firstly acknowledge the Butchulla Peoples, Custodians of the land, waters and culture, where we first premiered Song to the Ocean.

Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales is an adaptation of *Song to the Ocean*, which was co-commissioned by Fraser Coast Tourism & Events and Fraser Coast Regional Council, with assistance of the Australian Government through the Festivals Australia program and the Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF), a partnership between the Queensland Government and Fraser Coast Regional Council to support local arts and culture in regional Queensland.

This work has roots in *Song to the Earth* which was co-commissioned by City of Gold Coast, Bleach* Festival and the Queensland Government through the Regional Arts Development Fund and the Office of the Commonwealth Games and other funding sources, and premiered at Bleach* at Festival 2018.

Artistic director & music composition: Dr Corrina Bonshek

Performers & improvising musicians: Whaia Maori Sonic Weaver, Greta Kelly, Dr Michael Askill, Tsoof Baras, Jamee Seeto leading a team of local musicians

Creative cultural consultant: Whaia

Large-scale light sculptures: Mimi Dennett

Wearable & small scale light installations: Tiffany Beckwith-Skinner

Prototyping and facilitation for silhouette art: Tiffany Beckwith-Skinner

Lighting design: Blake Howson

Sound design: Dr Corrina Bonshek with marine recordings by The Oceania Project

Live sound: Marco Foxlee

TARGET AUDIENCE

The show attracts audiences aged 1-100 from varied social backgrounds and walks of life. It creates wellbeing via music that is peaceful, grounding and enlivening. It enhances audiences' connection to the ocean, and grows their appreciation of marine and shore ecosystems, and their desire to protect them. The combination of heart-expanding music, awe-inspiring lighting, and interactive immersion is immensely appealing to audiences who get to walk through the performance, and go on a sound adventure.

Families with young children can participate in the pre-show art-making workshop and enjoy strolling through the performance space. Families with teenage children who play strings, wind or brass instruments can participate in the music workshops and perform in the production. Older people enjoy the meditative, grounding music.

Participating artists and musicians feel differently about their creative practice after being part of this show. They feel part of an arts community that transcends belief systems and other differences. They also feel a deeper appreciation of and connection to our oceans and marine life.

PERFORMANCE SPECIFICS

TOURING AVAILABILITY

The cast and crew are available to tour in 2023 in Queensland Australia, and 2024 and 2025 nationally and internationally.

DURATION

50 minutes (plus a Welcome to Country at the start)

SUITABLE VENUES

This production is designed for outdoors. It best suits a flat grassed area with access to 3-phase power, that can accommodate a 20metre diameter performance circle and has minimal traffic noise. We have adapted this work for a variety of sites and can perform in different configurations. Please talk to use for more option.

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERFORMANCES PER WEEK

5 performances in one location + workshops

TOURING PERSONNEL

The touring party consists of 9 people.

| Name | Role |
|--------------------------|---|
| Corrina Bonshek | Artistic director, composer and laptop musician |
| Whaia Maori sonic weaver | Vocals, instruments and creative cultural consultant |
| Michael Askill | Percussionist and workshop facilitator |
| Greta Kelly | Shah kaman (Persian violin), producer, community engagement |
| Jamee Seeto | Percussionist |
| Tsoof Baras | Percussionist |
| Blake Howson | Lighting & production manager |
| Marco Foxlee | Sound production |
| Tiffany Beckwith-Skinner | Artist workshop facilitator, dresser |

SCHEDULED PERFORMANCES

| Year | Venue | Number of performances |
|------|--|------------------------|
| 2021 | Seafront Oval, Hervey Bay Whale Festival | 2 |
| 2023 | Gold Coast, Redcliffe, Townsville | 5 |

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LOCAL INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Optional consultation with local Elders/performer to craft a 'welcome to country' or opening call and response exchange/performance that is integrated into the start of the show. Whaia, Maori Sonic Weaver, will facilitate this collaboration.

Optional feature performance within the show by local musician/Elders. This inclusion is facilitated by artistic director Corrina Bonshek with support from Whaia.

Whaia is a New Zealand born, Ngati Kahungunu woman who was raised in the outback desert of Western Australia, her roots, the land and her Aboriginal Grandmother of the Yindjibarndi people shaping her story from age six. She has carved a path of self reclamation, guiding & inspiring women through their rights of passage for the past seven years as part of her work with Kurawaka Australia - 'Empowering Women Through Culture & The Arts'.

Corrina Bonshek & Collaborators have developed this Cultural Protocols Framework to support our engagement with first nations peoples.

<https://www.cbcollab.com/our-first-nations-protocols/>

SILHOUETTE ART WORKSHOP

Silhouette art-workshop (1 x 4 hours) for 18-36 local artists co-led by artist Tiffany Beckwith-Skinner and a local indigenous artist reflecting on the region's marine life from a variety of perspectives including local indigenous stories.

Silhouette artworks are installed in the show light sculptures and exhibited as part of the performance.

As an artist, building connections is at the core of my work. So being involved in a project like this is a way of reaching out to others in my local community that crosses beliefs or boundaries. I can say something and perhaps affect someone in a way that is gentle and peaceful. The quality of light fascinates me and being able to play with a new technique was fabulous. It's also about connections with other artists and creatives and we so need to stay in contact with each other to thrive as an arts community.

Lesley Dubroy, participating artist

Participants for the Silhouette Workshops for artists are invited by the presenter through targeted communication with local art galleries and art-making groups. Artist can be hobbyists or professionals wishing to experiment with a new medium.



YOUNG MUSICIAN WORKSHOP SERIES

Michael Askill, percussionist will conduct a workshop with 4 local musicians who can be both high school or local adult musicians who can read music. Marketing for the callout and engagement is co-managed by the Song to the Ocean team and presenter.

My students gained so much from this experience... The value to the music students and Community of Hervey Bay from this wonderful cultural event will be long lasting.

Lindy Kleinschmidt, participating teacher

Thank you so very much for including Fraser Coast Anglican College in such an amazing experience. The students are still buzzing about it, and it meets my

*ideals perfectly - great music, immersive and combining the Arts so beautifully.
Thank you again. I hope to work with you guys again soon.*

Ian Slater, Teacher, Fraser Coast Anglican College

CHILDRENS' ILLUMINATED ART WORKSHOP

60min Illuminated Art Workshop targeted at children aged 6-15 on the day of the show. Children are invited to parade their creation during the show. Parental/carer assistance is required for younger children.

Participants reached via show event page, and associated publicity.



PRODUCTION DETAILS

TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This production is designed for outdoors. The installation is a 20m diameter circle that the audience enters via designated entrances/exits.

It is bordered by illuminated sculptures, and the performers have separate fixed positions within the performance zone. They wear illuminated costumes.

Entry/exit to the performance zone is cued by voice-over.



PA speakers are positioned facing into the performance zone. The lead musicians are amplified, whereas community musicians are not. There is sound design (nature sounds) in addition to live music.

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

Schedule of a full version of *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales* including cultural exchange and workshops.

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Not specified | Series of Zoom meetings to start collaboration with local Indigenous Elder/performer |
| Thurs | First face-to-face meeting to start collaboration with local Indigenous Elder/performer Production meeting and markup performance space |
| Fri | Bump in lights + PA (from 6am) Silhouette Art Making Workshop Art Installation in lights Soundcheck, Rehearsal + Tech run |
| Sat | Rehearsal Welcome to Country Show Bump out |

CREW REQUIRED FROM VENUE

Bump-in and bump-out crew x 2
Stage Hands x 2
Front of House x 5 (some can be volunteers)

STAGE

See stage/circle diagram links below, plus tech supply lists, Audio and LX details in the *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales* Production Details.

<https://www.cbcollab.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Song-to-the-Ocean-Stage-Plan-Gongs.pdf>

Tech Specs:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1tHxHCMwPR1cx_2MUtI5b0jdX-sxXcfjsrk_JMvTLIA/edit?usp=sharing

FREIGHT NOTES

Once freighted into the country (or if an Australian presenter, the production travels in a 3 tonne truck.

MARKETING

MARKETING COPY

Stroll through an ocean of music, surrounded by light sculptures.

SHORT - SAMPLE ONLY

(New copy will be provided in the lead up to the show)

Join Maori Sonic Weaver Whaia, master percussionist & South East Asia gong expert Michael Askill, and Persian violinist Greta Kelly for a euphoric musical experience under the night sky.

Take a walk through an ocean of musicians, illuminated by awe-inspiring light installations with original contemporary classical music by award-winning Australian composer Dr Corrina Bonshek that is inspired by cycles and patterns of nature.

This extraordinary collaboration features visual designs by local artists, and sounds of the extraordinary biodiverse marine life.

CHILDRENS' ILLUMINATED ART WORKSHOP WITH TIFFANY BECKWITH-SKINNER

Create your own miniature illuminated and wearable art inspired by the ocean. Bring your illuminated creation to the evening performance of *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales* and play with light alongside the performers. Workshop led by visual artist Tiffany Beckwith-Skinner, the creator of wearable & small-scale lighting installations and facilitator of backlit installation art workshops with professional artists on the Fraser Coast for Hervey Bay Whale Festival.

The workshop suits ages 6-17. Parental/carer assistance is required for younger children.

Capacity: 30

Duration: 60 mins

MARKETING RESOURCES

Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales media releases will be sent to all major print, radio and online avenues. The team aims its marketing at a wide range of audiences including older music lovers (via ABC and local radios), a wide range of music festival goers (via the internet), and special interest audiences (via community organisations).

In the past, the team has partnered with related interest groups, and local music schools, music teachers and music shops to help communicate information about workshops and shows.

The production team have the follow assets:

- one minute *Song to the Ocean* [highlights video](#)
- and [six minute highlights](#) of *Song to the Ocean*
- media release
- images and copy for socials

AUDIENCE REVIEWS

I wanted to congratulate you on a wonderful event to open our Whale Festival. Your Song to the Ocean was so evocative and a gift of deep reverence to the ocean - thank you. It's so important our community has opportunities like this to connect more deeply to the ocean and grow in appreciation and the desire to protect it. Thanks again for your creative genius and profound offering in our community.

Bianca Clifton, audience member

Walking amongst the musicians at night, with the mixture of lights, sounds, and music was just magical. It was really effective to be amongst the musicians as they passed the notes along the circle around me, and gave a real sense of immersion in the whole experience.

Heidi Mauders, audience member

COLLEAGUE RECOMMENDATIONS

Rosie Dennis Artistic Director Bleach* Festival

The short-time I have known Corrina she has demonstrated a passion and commitment to create new works that challenge western music genres and elevate powerful female voices and musicians.

rosie@placemakers.org.au

Mik Auckland, Director, Programming HOTA

Corrina Bonshek is a talented composer whose music is distinctive, original, accessible and celebrates cultural diversity via her collaborations with artists from diverse cultural backgrounds both in Australia and overseas. She has a strong track record in conceiving and creating immersive, music-led performances as can be seen with the highly successful Song to the Earth.

auckland@hota.com.au

Aunty Joy Bonner, Butchulla Community Linguist & Elder talking about working with Whaia and Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales.

To give permission for Whaia to sing on country was such a beautiful spiritual moment. Not only for me but for everyone who attended. Song to the Ocean was a beautiful way of engaging our younger generation on our beautiful Butchulla Country.

joycebonner3@gmail.com

BIOGRAPHIES

Corrina Bonshek (PhD Western Sydney University) is an award-winning composer best known for her immersive, site-responsive large-ensemble works inspired by nature. Her music has been described as 'sonically attractive' (Loudmouth 2020), 'meditative and euphonious' (Journal of Music 2021), with 'pared-back language and gentle, reflective motion' (The Irish Times) and 'connected to the essence of South-East Asian music – timelessness' (Chinary Ung, 2015).

She regularly composes for festivals and has created music for Taipei International Festival of the Arts (2017), Rainforest Fringe Festival Sarawak Malaysia (2019), Singapore Arts in Your Neighbourhood Festival (2022), Bleach* Festival (2017,2018, 2021), 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Arts & Culture Festival, and more. In 2021, she formed Corrina Bonshek & Collaborators Limited, to support the creation of innovative music-led events that open the heart, uplift the spirit, and celebrate the connection of humans to nature and each other.

Dr Michael Askill (PhD – University of Queensland) is a percussionist, composer, musical director, musical ambassador and educator - an icon of Australian music, known and admired for his enduring contribution to the Australian contemporary music landscape and his original blending of Asian and Western Sounds. Before embarking on a successful independent career, he was Principal Timpanist with the Melbourne Symphony and then Principal Percussionist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. His collaboration with one of Australia's most highly respected choreographers, Graeme Murphy, resulted in a number of ballets including *Free*

Radicals, Salome, Air and Other Invisible Forces for Sydney Dance Company. Michael is Percussionist Specialist at the Queensland Academy - Creative Industries Campus, Lecturer in Percussion at the University of Queensland and was a featured artist at the 2016 Australian Percussion Gathering held at the Queensland Conservatorium where he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Percussive Arts Society.

Whaia Maori Sonic Weaver

Hailing from Aotearoa, Whaia was raised by her Aboriginal Grandmother in the Australian outback desert, her roots, the land and family of the Yindjibarndi people shaping her story from a young age.

Singing in her native tongue, Whaia blends intuitive melodies made of Taonga Puoro/Traditional First Nations Instruments and crystal singing bowls. A consummate vocalist, alchemical performer, First Nations multi-instrumentalist, designer, creative cultural producer and visionary facilitator, makes this woman one potent mama.

Passionate about reviving and celebrating her ancient practices, she is a clear cultural and spiritual ambassador. Walking with global elders in Egypt for the Earthrise Collective - Weaving Ancient Wisdom & Activism she joins the United Nations Culture COP 27 in hope to inspire and educate indigenous voices around the world.

Greta Kelly

Greta plays shah kaman (Persian spike-fiddle by luthier Peter Biffin), violin and theremini and has collaborated with renowned artists from Iran, Turkey and Iraq. She is a founding member of internationally touring groups DeepBlue and Mzaza and she also performs:

- with composer and sound designer Corrina Bonshek, Maori sonic weaver, Whaia and percussionist Michael Askill in *Song to the Earth, Song to the Ocean* and *Song to the Ocean - Calling to the Whales*;
- with Corrina and Lebanese vocalist Samira El Koussa in *Love, Always Love*;
- and with slam poet/rapper Luka Lesson in *Agapi and Other Kinds of Love*.

After studying at University of Queensland she lived in Prague for four years where she discovered eastern European folk music. She travelled with her shah kaman throughout Greece and Turkey studying classical, folk and sufi music. In 2011 and 2019 Greta received funding to study, conduct music workshops and perform in Iran.

SAMPLE IMAGES - *New hero images be provided in lead up to the show*



Photographer Mark McManus



Videographer Selwyn Connell



Photographer Derek Repchuk



Photographer Derek Repchuk



Photographer Derek Repchuk



Photographer Mark McManus

CONTENT WARNINGS / AUDIENCES TO AVOID

Nil

SPONSOR AND OTHER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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GOLDCOAST. BLEACH*

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