



21–23 April 2017 Wollongong, NSW

A community gathering on the theme of love through workshops, activities, discussion, art, music and dance.

www.love2017.org

PROGRAM

FRIDAY

7.00—8.30 pm

Film Night

Video screenings — Love Makes A Way & Love in Full Colour

SATURDAY

Venue—Eros

Venue—Agape

Venue—Anteros

7.30—9.00 **Breakfast**

9.00— 10.30 Workshops

Heart Song

Compassion

10.30—11.00 **Morning tea**

11.00—11.30 Welcome event

Welcome to Country

11.30— 12.30 Opening event

Self introductions & collective discussion

12.30—2.00 **Lunch**

2.00—3.30 Workshops

Defending yourself & others

Love, sex & democracy

Writing with love

3.30—4.00 **Arvo tea**

4.00—6.00 Workshops

Silent Disco

Tender

Politics of Love

6.00—7.00 **Feast**

7.00—7.30 Lantern Parade

7.30—Late Concert & DJs

SUNDAY

7.30—9.30 **Breakfast**

9.30—11.00 Workshops

Permablitz—love in action

Men in love

11.00—11.30 **Morning Tea**

11.30—1.00 Workshops

Moving at the speed of
love

What is love?

1.00—2.00 **Lunch**

2.00—3.30 Closing Event

Group discussion



WORKSHOPS

Opening Event

The *Love: Art, Ideas, Music, Politics* organising group would like the gathering to be a welcoming and open space where we can all feel comfortable with one another. To help create such an atmosphere we will facilitate a number of small group discussions followed by a discussion with the whole group in which we will ask everyone to share something about yourself and your reasons for participating in the festival. We hope this opening event will set the stage for the joint exploration and celebration of love that we would like to see evolve over the next two days.

Perla Aura - Heart Song

Perla's Voice is a stream of love that lays a pathway to the heart. Singer and percussionist whose original sound is inspired by spirit, emotion and nature. Perla tunes into intention and love to produce powerful vocals to open up a space for you to self-heal. Inspired Sound Sculptress, Perla's heart song will hold and nurture you to a world of authentic peace and connection. Holding a space to explore the freedom and joy of singing, using breathe, sound, harmonies, chants, comMusication, movement and rhythm.

Matt Moore - The Tactical and transformative dimensions of compassion

We often think of compassion purely in terms of its idealistic qualities, as a loving gift without any thought to its practical effects. The selflessness of compassion is one of its great virtues, but also a quality that might make it seem next to useless to the pragmatically minded. Compassion's capacity to transform people and relationships can also make it a profoundly useful interpersonal tool whose transformative capacities remain largely unexplored. In this workshop we will explore the capacity of compassion to transform interpersonal relationships involving difficult dynamics such as jealousy, envy, enmity and greed, as well as its potential to transform the way we engage in practical world-shaping practices from law, politics, agriculture and resource distribution to ecology and activism. *(For the past few years Matt has been exploring & integrating the spiritual, theoretical, & practical aspects of conscious living. He runs a DIY sustainability & event space in Leichhardt.)*

Sharon Callaghan & Brian Martin - Defending yourself and others

At the workplace or in other spheres of your life, you are potentially vulnerable to harassment, rumour-mongering and power plays. If you speak out in defence of others, you may be subject to reprisals. Online, you might be targeted with abusive messages; your identity could be stolen; comments you make on social media could be used against you by your detractors or employer. How can you protect yourself and other people from abuse? We will explore the most effective ways to engage with like-minded activists online and face-to-face to see how we can promote constructive and supportive public conversations even when others in the conversation are powerful and have a harmful approach. *(Brian Martin is the author of 15 books on dissent, nonviolence, scientific controversies and other topics. Sharon Callaghan is interested in activism and the lessons we can take from community, union and other political engagement.)*

Josh Dubrau - The strength to write [with] love

When we think of writing and love, maybe the romance genre is what springs immediately to mind. There are plot twists and turns, misunderstandings and mistrusts, maybe even hurts to get past. But the reader knows that there will inevitably be a happy ending, where everything is resolved. All of us (romance readers included) know that this is not necessarily true in real life. There are other types of love besides romantic love. Love between people is often flawed, weak, or can be gone, suddenly or slowly. It can also continue unconditionally through tremendous hurts inflicted on it. Honouring the complexities of love in writing requires us, as writers, to crack ourselves open, to find the strength to make ourselves vulnerable in the space of love, to look unflinchingly at relationships and situations, and see ourselves as agents within this system, not as detached reporters. It requires us to examine our own wants, needs, and flaws. This will be a one and a half hour workshop with a focus on writing exercises, and some group discussion. There will be some resource materials available beforehand (more information closer to the date). My suggestion is that participants consider an aspect of love in their lives that they have been struggling to articulate. A difficult relationship, love/hate or past hurts are all things we can hopefully understand better by writing through them, with love. Participants are welcome to write in any form they choose.

(Josh Dubrau holds a PhD in English (Creative Writing) from the University of New South Wales. She has taught short fiction, poetry and writing theory and is a practicing poet who is still learning to tell the truth in her own work.)

Bridget Dougherty - Love, sex and democracy— We talk a lot about love in our culture. It is the theme of countless movies, novels, songs as well as poetry and art. But this does not necessarily equate with more love. In fact it appears that the opposite is the case. For example, we are seeing an increase in intimate relationship violence, an increase in loneliness especially in men, and an increase in casual sexual liaisons especially where young people are concerned. This workshop will explore what we mean by the word 'love' in a practical, everyday sense. I will talk briefly about the history of love in western culture, and how it became associated with women, emotions and irrationality. I will demonstrate how this impacts on our capacity to love as equals, and we will do some exercises around how we can free our sexual voice, which is also our ethical voice, from the chains of patriarchy. This will be a practical workshop to explore how we can create more love (real love) in our lives. (*Bridget has recently completed a PhD exploring a new form of love emerging in western culture. She works as a mental health advocate, counsellor and teacher.*)

Organised by the Communiversity (Annette Maguire & Sara Motta) – Politics of Love — What would it look like to practice politics as love in action? What would it look like to place love at the centre of society and our communities, and at the centre of political & economic decisions and practices? And what would it look like to embody love in our current ways of thinking about politics? Currently the values, practices and spaces of politics are skewed towards those with substantial privilege & resources, since they rely on freedom from the enormous amount of caring work - the "labours of love" - that goes on behind the scenes, but is indispensable to keep life ticking over. Because the lion's share of this work is done by women, politics is marked by the absence of women (even in 'radical' circles). In this workshop we want to mark this absence, because those who are missing are in many ways the people we need most in the project of social transformation. Then we want to venture into imagining together from this experience and space of absence: what would our politics look like if it were built upon and through these experiences, and how would we change how we connect & organise in a way that supports our caring lives, rather than cutting across them? In our session we want to explore & express these possibilities together, using participatory methods and employing words and imagery, to look at this reflexively, critically and tangibly. — (*Sara is a mother, critical theorist, and popular educator who currently works in the Discipline of Politics at the University of Newcastle, NSW Australia.*)

Tender - Film & discussion - Tender is a life-affirming documentary film about the Port Kembla community's determination to provide more affordable funerals, to help people be more involved in providing palliative care at home and for those wanting choice in their own deaths. Described as a "valentine to the can-do spirit" of local residents and a "compassionate and often gently funny tale" the film documents the beginnings of non-profit Tender Funerals which has now set up shop in the old Port Kembla fire station. Tender won the TV documentary prize at the Australian Academy of Cinema, Television Arts awards in 2015. The film & questions/discussion following it will be presented/facilitated by Amy Sagar (*Tender Funerals Director*).

Silent Disco Squad — We'll meet up, circle up, countdown and press play... and transform the lush bushland of Mt Keira into a spontaneous dance party, spreading joy and happiness (and our favourite dance moves) to a love-themed playlist, before ending with a group hug. Workshop participants will be need to bring their own headphones and device (mobile phone or MP3 player). As mobile phone reception is limited on site, we highly recommend you download the dance track prior to heading to Love 2017, and make sure your device is fully charged. Go to www.silentdiscosquad.com and click on Love: Art, Ideas, Music, Politics. (Test it out to make sure it's working, but do try to resist the urge to listen beforehand).

Permablitz is 'love in action'— Sheryl, Kristy, Bec and Jacqui started with the seeds of an idea inspired by Permablitz Melbourne and created Permablitz the Gong - a thriving community of Illawarra folk who are willing to lend their time, muscles, and energy to create edible and productive urban spaces in their community, sharing skills related to permaculture and sustainable living while having fun and eating together. There's no money involved, we do this for the love of earth, people and community.

Alexander Brown & Matthew Kocher – Men in love— Men often find it difficult to love. The structures of capitalism and patriarchy continue to isolate us, encouraging us to be strong even though we may feel weak and to 'act like a man' by exercising power over others. Patriarchal masculinity is a set of beliefs and practices which encourage men to engage in less of the nurturing and caring work that is essential to building love and to rely on women to carry out this work. It also legitimises male dominance in the family, at work and in the life of the community. As men, we often internalise these patriarchal beliefs and practices. We might become isolated or withdrawn, refuse to commit to love or even resort to domination and violence. However, discussions about how to overcome capitalism and patriarchy continue to grow and deepen. How can we live our lives in a way that confronts and refutes the reproduction of these structures of power and privilege? How can we refuse patriarchal masculinities, learn how to love and form equal relationships with other people? We would like to share our own struggles to love better and create an open space where everybody can talk about their experiences of loving and being loved by men. (*Alexander and Matt are two fathers of young children who would like to love better.*)

Caitlin Wood - Moving at the speed of love—an Open Floor workshop

What happens if we step off the information super highway and onto a different path? When we follow the rhythm of the body and feel the earth beneath our feet, a whole new territory opens. We find room to breathe and to finally catch up with ourselves. Step by step we rediscover the simple joys of life and the common ground on which we walk... Using universal movement principles, such as breath, grounding and centering, we will explore ways to become more embodied (or at home) for this beautiful ride of life, present for anything and everything – loving, losing, learning, creating, colliding, connecting. (*Caitlin is an experienced Dancing Freedom facilitator and an Open Floor teacher-in-training.*)

Nick Southall – What is love? How powerful is it? - In 2014, those attending the first *Love* gathering shared a diversity of views, experiences, and understandings of love. So, at *Love 2017* we get the opportunity to revisit this question. In a time of systemic crisis and historic global transformations it's hard to know what we can, or should, do. Facing unprecedented existential concerns and wide-spread danger, despair and demoralisation, a global movement of love is rising to meet the challenges of our epoch. But is love really powerful enough to trump hate? (*Nick has been writing and teaching about love, democracy & peace for a number of years. He has also been involved in a wide range of social movements and struggles.*)

Closing Event— To bring the gathering to a close we would like everyone to join us for a group discussion on - How has your understanding of love changed or been enhanced during the weekend? What experiences moved you the most? What will you take away with you into your everyday life? A member of the Love organising collective will facilitate an open discussion starting from these questions.



ART

Lantern Parade— We will be kicking off the Saturday night celebrations with a joyful lantern parade. A big thank you to *Culture Bank Wollongong* who have provided a grant for materials to make this happen.

Virtual reality art installation – Maralinga & love of country— *Collisions*, directed by artist/filmmaker Lynette Wallworth, is a virtual reality journey to the homeland of indigenous elder Nyarri Morgan and the Martu tribe in the remote Western Australian Pilbara desert. Morgan recounts his profound first contact with Western culture, and the dramatic collision between his traditional world view and the cutting edge of modern technology.

Love notes — a noticeboard featuring a collection of love quotes/sayings and blank 'love notes' & pens made available so people can add their own contributions, comments, favourite quotes about love, drawings, etc. to the exhibit.

Bread clip mandala – Gavin Moores— Join in the creation of a love-themed art work using only bread clips and the help of friends. Working on a flat horizontal surface we will lay out the clips without securing them in place, creating a work that is unique to this event in both time & space. Gavin will design the image on site and it will be photographed during construction.



MUSIC

The Lurkers— The Lurkers play acoustic hillbilly punk about super-profits, civil disobedience and the post-post-feminist revolution. They released their debut album *Shoot to the Moon* in 2009 and their second album *Who's Got a Padlock and Chain?* in 2011. They were also the winners of the 2013 Songs for Social Justice' Award, presented by the Alistair Hulett Memorial Fund for their song *Mining Man*, a protest song about Coal Seam Gas mining.

The Awesome (feat John Passant) - The Awesome's original songs on the theme of love and John Passant's poetry will be interspersed. The Awesome will also set two of John's poems to song. The Awesome's jazz/blues/swing virtuoso performances are a combination of a rich vocal, dazzling guitar playing, a strong bass rhythm basement and just the right mix of covers and originals. Their album *A Little Magic* is receiving national air play and they have just released a new album *Poplar Road*. John's book of poetry, *Songs for the Band Unformed* has just been published by Ginninderra Press.

DJ Alma & Sunrunner— Andrea is originally from Chile, but lives in Sydney since 2006. Her addiction to electronic music began after her first Rainbow Serpent Festival in 2008. Since then, she's acquired a unique taste for powerful, melodic and danceable progressive psytrance. Her love for dancing and music led to the creation of ALMA, her DJ project focused on sharing the joy she feels dancing to powerful, bouncy and fun beats! Sunrunner seeks to create a musical journey that is hypnotic and deep, inviting and warm; melodic, wandering and positive. Incorporating his own live improvisations and productions, his sets cover a wide variety of artists intersecting techno, progressive and electronica.