

**Sydney, Australia**

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## VIVID SYDNEY ILLUMINATES THE HARBOUR CITY

Sydney has been transformed tonight into a colourful canvas of light with the launch of the third annual Vivid Sydney festival – the largest celebration of light, music and ideas in the Southern Hemisphere, from the 27 May – 13 June 2011.

Over 40 light installations were illuminated to mark the start of the festival including the amazing ‘Lighting the Sails’ on the iconic Sydney Opera House created by French design team SUPERBIEN.

Thousands lined the edge of Sydney Harbour to watch the first showing of ‘Lighting the Sails’; explored a playground of interactive and low-energy light art displays by a global field of artists from countries including Germany, Singapore, New Zealand, The Netherlands, France, Thailand and Australia; and witnessed FireDance the largest fire performance ever seen in Australia.

To celebrate the opening night of Vivid Sydney, SUPERBIEN produced a special 15 minute lighting performance to music, giving onlookers a taste of the 3D mapping designs being projected onto the sails over the 18 nights of the festival.

SUPERBIEN let their imagination go wild with a swirling psychedelic journey of organic forms and colourful digital sea monsters, taking over Australia’s favourite building. The artwork also includes a specially commissioned soundscape.

The music program at Vivid Sydney, Vivid LIVE at the Sydney Opera House curated by Stephen Pavlovic, opened with UK’s Spiritualized, performing their modern masterpiece *Ladies and Gentlemen we are Floating in Space* with orchestra, gospel choir and band, ahead of a line-up including local and international music acts such as The Cure, who will perform their first three albums in their entirety at two very special shows exclusive to Vivid.

Other music acts performing at Sydney Opera House include 2manyDJs (Belgium), Bat for Lashes (UK), Sonny Rollins (US), Yo Gabba Gabba (US) and Odd Future (US) – creating an eclectic mix of established and emerging artists.

Executive Producer of Vivid Sydney, Ignatius Jones, known world-wide for his ambitious major event productions, said Vivid Sydney is a special type of festival, unique to the popular harbour city.

“In a world where the vast majority of festivals are held at the height of summer, Sydney’s mild winter nights make our city the perfect setting to play with light.

“And what a stage we have for an outdoor festival with Sydney Opera House, Circular Quay and The Rocks the stage for best and brightest local and international creative minds to showcase their talent through light, music and ideas.

“Vivid Sydney brings us one of the world’s most iconic buildings, the Sydney Opera House – singing and dancing in a way few great monuments ever could, or ever would,” he said.

Around 400,000 Sydneysiders and visitors are expected to attend the festival, which also includes free public events on the business of creativity at Vivid Creative Sydney, and a program of creative industry business events aimed at fostering collaboration and new ideas with some of the best global creative thinkers converging on Sydney during Vivid.

Vivid Sydney is a major celebration of the creative industries and positions Sydney as the creative hub of the Asia-Pacific region. The festival is one of five signature events on the NSW Events Calendar.

The full Vivid Sydney program is available at <http://vividssydney.com>

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**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

**Ignatius Jones** is one of the world’s leading Major Event Directors, Creative Strategists and Event Script-Writers. Ignatius Jones’ 2010 credits include Artistic Director of the Opening Ceremony of World Expo 2010 Shanghai China, the largest major event in peacetime history, as well as Artistic Director of the Ceremonies of Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games. The Vancouver Opening Ceremony was awarded three Emmy Awards for best direction, best lighting and best music.

In 2006 Ignatius was Artistic Director of the Ceremonies of the 2006 Asian Games in Doha, Qatar. An Olympic event, the Asian Games are the largest sporting event after the Summer Olympics, and the Ceremonies were watched by an estimated 3 billion people, across Asia and the world. In 2000, Ignatius directed the beginning of the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney Olympics, the spectacular Man from Snowy River charge of 121 horses into the stadium and the performance of the Australian Anthem by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

**SUPERBIEN** Unique and compelling, each of their creations is an immersive experience tailored to the site and the mission – seamlessly integrating every possible technique into new forms of multimedia expression.

Their work is featured everywhere, from Kanye West’s blog to Dior’s latest launch, work so compelling that it’s transmitted virally at speeds approaching the light from which it’s made. Having refined the art of projecting beautiful 3D images onto complex surfaces, they will bring their skills to bear on the ultimate artistic and technical challenge; the sophisticated organic geometries the Sydney Opera House. For Vivid Sydney 2011, SUPERBIEN have titled their ‘Lighting the Sails’ artwork ‘La Macula’.