

MEDIA RELEASE

THIS IS A VOICE EXCLUSIVE TO THE POWERHOUSE MUSEUM

Blending science, technology, art and performance, *This is a Voice* is an exhibition that reveals the power of the voice before and beyond words. Exclusive to the **Powerhouse Museum** from **11 August 2017 - 28 January 2018**, the immersive exhibition explores how the voice is fundamentally connected to identity and what it means to be human. *This is a Voice* is presented in partnership with **Wellcome Collection**, London. The exhibition will be a highlight of this year's **Sydney Science Festival** program.

"*This is a Voice* epitomises MAAS' commitment to working with the best partners internationally to explore the intersection of art and science. In exploring the human voice, physically and psychologically, this is a unique look at an aspect of humanity that is at once deeply personal and universal," said **MAAS Director and CEO Dolla Merrillees**.

"We are also thrilled to be working with some of Australia's top artists, co-presenting performances at Performance Space at Carriageworks and Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art," said Ms Merrillees.

This exhibition is an acoustic journey that brings together international and Australian artists, vocalists and artefacts from both the MAAS and Wellcome Collection features a number of specially commissioned works and performances including major new works by Australian artist and composer [Lawrence English](#). *A People's Choir* is a giant interactive sound 'chandelier' that invites everyone to contribute to the creation of the work by recording their aspirations and dreams for the future. *Utterance* featuring 14 historical gramophone horns from the MAAS collection, brought to life in a sound installation that considers what it means when voices from some communities are not permitted to speak, especially in complex political times.

Also featured in the exhibition is the diary of **Virginia Woolf** from the **British Library**, detailing her struggle with 'hearing voices,' an interactive on the changing dynamics of Sydney accents and an Indigenous language reclamation work by **Lille Madden** in collaboration **Jonathan Jones**. Alongside these installations are medical models of the human larynx, research into 'babytalk', a chatbot designed to provide psychological care to Syrian refugees and a paintings by Emily Kngwarreye and Yukultji Napangati that express the deep relationship between ancestral voices and songlines.

Visitors can connect with and challenge the way their understanding of the physiology and psychology of the human voice at a range of special events. These include turning voice patterns into wearable jewelry, a 24 hour endurance vocal mass public choir and discovering how infants acquire sounds and grammar in a series of interactive demonstrations and games.

Celebrate the launch of *This is a Voice* at **MAASive Lates: Science** at the **Powerhouse Museum** on 10 August. Join British artist Anna Barham's performance using Voice Recognition Software on 12 August The **Super Critical Mass 24 Hour Choir**, will make history with an endurance exercise for the voice as a mass choir performs over a 24 hour period from 1pm 2 - 3 September at Observatory Hill. **Agatha Gothe-Snape's Rhetorical Chorus**, featuring **Joan La Barbara**, will be performed at **Carriageworks** from 19-22 October, presented in collaboration with **Performance Space** as part of their **Liveworks Festival of Experimental Art**.

This is a Voice exhibition 11 August 2017 - 28 January 2018

Curators: Katie Dyer, MAAS and Bárbara Rodríguez Muñoz, Wellcome Collection
Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street, Ultimo

Admission: Free with general admission: \$15 adult, \$8 concession, kids under 16 years free

A Wellcome Collection exhibition in collaboration with MAAS.

For full program details please visit www.maas.museum/event/this-is-a-voice/

MEDIA CONTACTS: Matt Fraser matt@cardinalspin.com.au P: 02 8065 7363 M: 0401 326 007

About the Museum of Arts and Applied Sciences

Powerhouse Museum, alongside Sydney Observatory and Discovery Centre, is part of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (MAAS), Australia's contemporary museum for excellence and innovation in applied arts and sciences. The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences has a vast and diverse collection of over 500,000 objects.

About the Wellcome Collection

Wellcome Collection is the free visitor destination for the incurably curious. Located at 183 Euston Road, London, it explores the connections between medicine, life and art in the past, present and future. The newly expanded venue offers visitors contemporary and historic exhibitions and collections, lively public events, the world-renowned library, a café, a shop, a restaurant and conference facilities as well as publications, tours, a book prize, international and digital projects. Wellcome Collection celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2017. Wellcome Collection is part of Wellcome, a global charitable foundation that exists to improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive. Both politically and financially independent, we support scientists and researchers, take on big problems, fuel imaginations and spark debate.