



Media Release 2 – Opening Night

## OPENING NIGHT TRIBUTE PERFORMANCE ONCE UPON A TIME IN...LEONE AND MORRICONE SATURDAY 23 MAY, 2009

MEDIA RELEASE

7 May 2009

The Official Opening of the 2009 Melbourne Italian Festival is set to captivate its audience with a magnificent concert that pays tribute to legendary Italian film director **Sergio Leone**.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of **Leone's** death who in partnership with one of the most famous and influential film composer's of his time **Ennio Morricone** created visual and musical magic for the international big screen. Most well known for his Spaghetti Western films such as 'Man with no Name' and 'Once upon a time in the West', his unusual style and original soundtracks made his work unique.

Leone and Morricone created set pieces that were equally crafted both musically and visually. Leone's innovative creativity and Morricone's musical brilliance saw them create a myriad of film masterpieces which were unprecedented for their time.

The Melbourne Italian Festival has brought together the finest Australian Musicians to recreate Leone's legacy with a live performance at BMW Edge, Federation Square on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 8pm. Assembled by renowned Trumpeter, **Gianni Marinucci**, these outstanding musicians include **Tony Gould**, one of Australia's most respected pianists, **Imogen Manins**, a gifted cellist, **David Jones** an innovative drummer and **Ben Robertson**, a brilliant acoustic bass player.

Gianni Marinucci is one of Melbourne's most popular musicians and has performed with many of Australia's finest Jazz artists. His quartette has a big Melbourne following and has been the featured act at jazz clubs and festivals all over the country.

*"Our opening night concert will be a spectacular event to celebrate the inspirational creativity of Italian Film maker Sergio Leone" says Festival Director, Franca Smarrelli..... "We are delighted to present such a brilliant ensemble of musical talent to perform Ennio Morricone's moving scores and set the tone for the 2009 Melbourne Italian Festival which celebrates Europe's Year of Innovation and Creativity and embraces the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Futurism".*

The Hon. James Merlino, Minister assisting the Premier on Multicultural Affairs, will officially open the Festival at the concert. MC for the evening will be popular Italian radio personality Tony Tardio. Amongst other regular radio spots, Tony presents the Friday Morning Program on Rete Italia and is a respected news journalist for Melbourne's 3AW.

The **Opening Concert** will kick off the Melbourne Italian Festival which runs for two packed weeks from 22 May to 7 June. The Festival embraces the spirit of Italy through all aspects of the performing and figurative arts at venues across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

The Melbourne Italian Festival includes free and ticketed events for the entire family. Tickets are now on sale and can be booked online and direct with the venues.

Visit [www.melbourneitalianfestival.com.au](http://www.melbourneitalianfestival.com.au)

**Details: 2009 Annual Melbourne Italian Festival**

**Date: Official Opening of Festival & Salute to Leone Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May**

**Venues:** BMW Edge, Federation Square, Cnr Swanston & Flinders Street, Melbourne

**Ticket prices:** \$35, Concession: \$30

**Festival Program and On-line bookings: [www.melbourneitalianfestival.com.au](http://www.melbourneitalianfestival.com.au)**

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**More Information & Interviews**

Melbourne Italian Festival

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