

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL TUESDAY 26 JULY 2022 6AM

MEDIA RELEASE

FACEBOOK WHISTLEBLOWER FRANCES HAUGEN TO HEADLINE FESTIVAL OF DANGEROUS IDEAS' POTENT IN-PERSON LINEUP OF GLOBAL THOUGHT-LEADERS.

Truth, trust, tech, tattoos and the taboo: Australia's original disruptive festival, the **Festival of Dangerous Ideas (FODI)**, has today unveiled a compelling and incisive in-person program of big ideas, dicey topics and critical conversations. A razor-sharp line-up of thinkers, artists, experts and disruptors from around the world and across Australia will converge on Sydney to dissect and discuss the spikiest and most pressing issues of our moment in a huge weekend of panels, talks and events at **Carriageworks, Sydney** from **17-18 September**.

American data engineer and Facebook whistle-blower, **Frances Haugen**, leads an exciting international roster of speakers, all joining the festival live and in-person. Appearing exclusively at FODI, Haugen – who made global headlines when she leaked tens of thousands of internal company documents, revealing the many ways Facebook repeatedly put profit over public safety – will speak to corporate culpability, Australia's strained relationship with the tech giant and the weaponisation of social media.

Presented by The Ethics Centre, FODI's eleventh program explores an 'All Consuming' theme. Its characteristically unfiltered and forward-reaching line-up will ask audiences to consider what we consume, what we are consumed by and what *should* or *could* come to consume us. Returning to live audiences for the first time since 2019, and from the new venue of Carriageworks in Eveleigh, FODI remains Australia's foremost festival for critical thinking, providing a space for insightful and challenging conversations and commentary on the agenda-setting issues that will shape our future.

"Following two years of digital-only FODI events and offerings, I am beyond thrilled to be launching the 2022 Festival of Dangerous Ideas live program," said **Danielle Harvey, Director, Festival of Dangerous Ideas**, "We're incredibly lucky to have this exceptional array of the most insightful international and Australian voices, viewpoints, lived experiences and expert opinions here to interrogate some of the trickiest, meatiest and most uncomfortable issues we face as a society. And they're not zooming in from their basements and attics either, they're here, in the flesh, in front of a live audience."

"In a world of information silos and online echo chambers it has never felt more important to provide a space for audiences to break out of their own newsfeeds and be exposed to different ideas, often some that they may not agree with, but to listen, to discuss, to be led by curiosity and perhaps even see things from a different perspective."

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Along with **Frances Haugen**, FODI will play host to a formidable program of some of the world's most sought-after thought leaders, academics and writers.

Amidst war, climate change and looming recession, acclaimed UK historian **Adam Tooze** will explore why it is that society just can't seem to get our act together and do better. At the forefront of the finance world, Tooze has quickly become one of the world's most influential economic commentators, combining historical expertise and current data analysis to reconsider – and even solve – the convergence of crises threatening the modern world.

Historian, educator and expert commentator on power and propaganda, **Ruth Ben-Ghiat** (USA) examines the authoritarian playbook and the rise of the strongman in today's geo-political environment. From Russia and China to America, Turkey, and beyond, Ben-Ghiat unpacks how corruption, leader cults, machismo, disinformation, and violence have historically been deployed to ensure illiberal leaders get to power, expand their influence, and stay in control, sometimes for decades.

Taking from their own experience as a gender non-conforming artist, **Alok Vaid-Menon** (USA) will encourage the audiences to see gender not in black and white, but in full colour. As an acclaimed writer, poet, comedian and public speaker, Alok pushes beyond the gender binary to redefine beauty standards, colonial expectations and the parameters of identity.

Pre-eminent psychologist, **Steven Pinker** (CAN) is no stranger to controversy. He will deliver the Hitch Memorial Keynote (named in honour of the first FODI speaker and renowned thinker, Christopher Hitchens) with an impassioned defense of the ideals of enlightenment and the necessity of reason. A two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist, Pinker has been recognised for his research in visual cognition, psycholinguistics and social relations and was previously named one of Times "100 Most Influential People in the World Today."

At a time when it seems nothing is sacred, UK historian and academic **Joanna Bourke** reaches for the last taboo in her discussion of bestiality and its enduring intrigue across art, crime and culture. As a prize-winning author and professor of history, Bourke's work considers the deeply human topics of shame, pain, sexuality and violence.

Host of the hit *New York Times* podcast, *Rabbit Hole*, tech columnist **Kevin Roose** (USA) dives deep into the tangled web of the algorithm to uncover where the internet stops and ourselves begin. In his work at the NYT, Roose frequently writes and speaks on topics including automation, A.I., disinformation and online radicalisation.

In a powerful keynote address, *Words Are Weapons*, Noongar woman and author **Claire G. Coleman** will lay out the full story of Australian colonisation, a story that is ongoing, and invite audiences to consider that Australia has been defined by a story that was never built on truth. In turn, Coleman will posit that the stories we tell about ourselves as a nation are actually dangerous; they disenfranchise and dehumanise people, both the settlers and First Nations people.

With our borders firmly closed for close to two years, 'Protecting the lives of Australians' was the national pandemic mantra, but it was multicultural communities in Melbourne and Sydney who bore the brunt of the toughest lockdowns. In her FODI keynote, *Precious White Lives*, award-winning author **Sisonke Msimang** asks if preserving rich, white people's lives was the template for pandemic policy-making in Australia, what does this mean for how we value black lives?

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Hot-blooded, unpredictable and startlingly candid, **Senator Jacqui Lambie** is known as one of the most fierce and outspoken politicians in the country. And she's even done the unthinkable, for a politician; she's changed her mind and admitted to it. Lambie will unleash her trademark frankness once again when she delivers the 2022 festival's opening keynote, discussing her unusual political career, Australia's socio-political landscape and the shape of what's to come.

Beyond the weekend's keynote speakers is a line-up of powerful panels and salient conversations: from a special live recording of *A Rational Fear* on Australia's secretive tendencies as dissected by the country's best investigative humourist voices, to a timely analysis of the (possibly) dwindling potency of the Australian passport with **Peter Greste** and **Kylie Moore-Gilbert**, and a dialogue on censorship and cancellation in the world of political cartoons with **Badiucao** and **Cathy Wilcox**.

In *World Without Rape*, **Joanna Bourke**, **Saxon Mullins**, **Jess Hill** and **Sisonke Msimang** consider why rape and its use in war, the home and in society remains such an enduring part of history and modern life. For *Harmful Thoughts*, panellists including **Michael Salter**, **Matt Tyler**, **Emma A Jane** and **Jayne Crossling** examine if more can be done to pre-emptively prevent child sexual abusers from ever offending.

International guests are joined by journalist **Nick Bryant** for a discussion of America's declining political, social and cultural powers in *American Decadence*, while *Just Be Evil*, led by **Sam Mostyn** as chair, and including *Woke Capitalism* author **Carl Rhodes** investigates corporate responsibility in our new woke world order. At *Join the Rebellion*, hosted by **Osher Günsberg**, panellists will ponder if it's the things that make us human that will ultimately secure our job security in an increasingly automated future.

Principal partner UNSW Sydney will support the presentation of *Fresh Blood*, showcasing original insights from some of the country's brightest emerging thinkers, and *Unthinkable*, a fast-paced exhibition of illuminating bite-sized talks on a variety of hot topics. The Ethics Centre's powerful *Circle of Chairs* returns after 30 years, encouraging attendees to unpick today's most dangerous ethical dilemmas, together.

And the danger doesn't stop at talking. Across the Carriageworks precinct creativity and ideas collide with an extended program of art, installation and the experiential unfolding as part of the 2022 festival.

In a breathtaking world premiere installation, commissioned specially for FODI, globally-lauded Wiradjuri artist **Brook Andrew** presents *MURUNY/Breathe*. The monumental new work depicts the brain, illuminated in two halves, seemingly breathing with different ideas. Andrew, whose practice is grounded in his perspective as a Wiradjuri and Celtic person from Australia, depicts this symbiotic relationship as a metaphor for the complex historical and contemporary interwoven relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

The weekend-long live action installation *Whole Glory* sees US provocateur and tattoo-artist-to-the-stars **Scott Campbell** asking audience members to simply trust him. He will ink you, for free. The only catch? It will be without meeting, looking or talking to you at all. He will do what he wants. A permanent memento from a celebrated celebrity tattooist and a great tale awaits those brave enough to bare their flesh.

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FESTIVAL OF DANGEROUS IDEAS

ALL CONSUMING
CARRIAGEWORKS
17-18 SEP 2022

Rounding out the festival's arts program is 'period preacher' **Lucy Peach** and her multimedia soiree celebration of the menstrual cycle, *My Greatest Period Ever*; the sinister game show experience, *Truthmachine* by **Counterpilot**, which promises to reveal participant's darkest truths; and physical theatre practitioners, **Legs On The Wall**, will push themselves further than ever before in *Tipping Point*, a complex improvisational work based on trust.

Programmed by Festival Director, Danielle Harvey, along with co-curators Dr Simon Longstaff AO, Executive Director at The Ethics Centre, and Ann Mossop, Director of the UNSW Centre for Ideas, FODI was co-founded by The Ethics Centre and the Sydney Opera House in 2009.

Of the 2022 program, co-curator **Ann Mossop**, said: "Offering a rich, live experience for audiences, the 2022 FODI program is ready for consumption. This is a festival for anyone who wants to go deep into the topics that command our attention now: from the rise of the strongman in global politics and the limitations of the gender binary, to our struggles with the practices of ethics of big tech and our failing societal report card."

Co-curator **Simon Longstaff** added: "When we first conceived of FODI, more than a decade ago, it was with a serious intent – to create a world class ideas festival that would defend that ever shrinking sweet spot: the middle ground. This legacy continues today and feels as vital as ever – amidst an increasingly censorious cultural landscape and through increasingly testing times. It's good to be back."

– ENDS –

NOTES TO EDITOR

- The Festival of Dangerous Ideas 2022 runs from 17-18 September at Carriageworks, Sydney
- Tickets are now on sale via <https://festivalofdangerousideas.com/>
- The theme of the 2022 event is 'All Consuming'
- The 2022 program features local and international guests, all appearing live and in person
- The Festival of Dangerous Ideas is presented by The Ethics Centre, an independent not-for-profit that advocates for a more ethical society. The Centre's programs are recognised for stimulating public awareness and understanding, creating a space for open, honest and often difficult conversations.

MEDIA KIT

Imagery, video and speaker sheets are available [here](#).

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