



30 January 2012

PRESS RELEASE

PAKO TURNS 30!

Pako Festa, now in its thirtieth year, is Geelong's much loved, award-winning, free, annual community arts festival - the biggest of its kind in Australia. Managed by Diversitat and held on the last weekend of February in Pakington Street, Geelong West, "the multicultural heart of Geelong", it incorporates an extravagant street parade featuring around ninety floats and hundreds of performers representing forty-five affiliated ethnic communities and around sixty other community groups and organisations. The street is lined with stalls selling traditional foods and arts and crafts, and nine separate stages in the precinct offer performances of music and dance as well as interactive workshops and exhibitions. Pako Festa has become Victoria's premier multicultural event, attended by well over 100,000 people in each of the last three years and estimated to inject close to \$2.5 million dollars into the local economy just over the course of the day itself.

Pako Festa offers a unique opportunity for those 100,000-plus participants to socialise and celebrate in an arena of ethnic diversity and harmony, as well as gaining an appreciation of the great variety of artistic and cultural expression within Geelong's multicultural community

30 Carmen Miranda's will lead the parade down 'Pako' creating colour and movement representing each of the years the great procession has transpired.

The Pako Festa Street Parade starts at 11am, embodies Colour, Culture & Celebration and is one of the most important events at Pako Festa! Encapsulating the very essence of our nation – diversity, dynamism and colorfulness, and above all else cooperation, community inter-connectedness, creativity and the promotion of our humanity – Pako Festa sends a strong message in these troubled times in which we live: our preparedness to interact with, work with and treat each other with dignity and respect demolishes the walls of division and conflicts; bringing everyone together in a spirit of understanding, acceptance and celebration of life itself.

A very important aspect of Pako Festa lies in its provision as a vehicle for the CALD communities to affirm and honour their contribution to Pako Festa over its 30-year history.

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Date:	30 January 2012
For release:	Immediately
For comments:	Luisa La Fornara, Festival Director, 5221 6044



Highlights at this year's event include:

- Back to Back performances on five stages starting at 12pm.
- Roving Street performances.
- Freeza Youth Stage 12-5:30pm.
- Workshops, Craft displays & Kids activities.
- Giant screen showcasing images and footage from the past 30 years.
- Smorgasbord of Multicultural food.
- Come help us celebrate our 30th Birthday with the Pako Festa After Party on Saturday 25th February from 6.30pm in the Geelong West Town Hall.

In 2012, 30 communities will be represented in the parade and on stage:

Afghan	Indian	Russian
Bosnian	Iranian	Scottish
Bulgarian	Italian	Serbian
Chinese	Karen	Slovenian
Congolese	Karenni	Spanish
Croatian	Liberian	Sudanese
Dutch	Lithuanian	Thai
Filipino	Macedonian	Ukrainian
French	Malay	Welsh
Greek	Maori	Zimbabwean
Hungarian	Mexican	
Indonesian	Polish	

Additionally 20 communities will have a food stalls selling their cultural cuisine. The Filipino, Indonesian, Irish, Italian, Malay, Polish, Ukrainian, Welsh, Spanish, Chinese Scottish, Macedonian, Iranian, Croatian, Indian, Greek, Maori, Slovak and Serbian communities will tantalise your tastebuds with food from far and wide.

Full program details can be found on the website www.pakofesta.com.au

Pako Festa will be held on Saturday 25th February 2012, Pakington Street Geelong West.

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